

Washington Forum for Conservation Incentives

January 5, 2007

7:30–8:20

Breakfast & Registration

8:30–8:45

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Maggie Coon, Chair, Washington Biodiversity Council

John Mankowski, Natural Resources Policy Advisor, Governor Gregoire

Marc Daudon, Forum Facilitator

8:45–9:30

Setting the Stage

Gene Duvernoy, President, Cascade Land Conservancy

Dennis Canty, President, Evergreen Funding Consultants

A profile of the role voluntary approaches play in conservation, a brief overview of the range of programs offered in Washington and highlights of key issues and opportunities.

9:30–10:30

Perspectives from the Field

A presentation of different perspectives on the following questions:

- ◆ How to improve integration and coordination between incentive programs
- ◆ How to better address conservation of biodiversity
- ◆ How to improve landowner access to and benefit from incentive programs

Panelists – Mike Shelby, Executive Director, Western Washington Agricultural Association, Ken Miller, Washington Farm Forestry Association, Monty Mahan, District Manager, Pierce Conservation District, Sara Vickerman, Senior Director, Biodiversity Partnerships, Defenders of Wildlife

10:30–11:00

Break

11:00–12:00

Emerging Directions

A snapshot of important trends and developments in the world of conservation incentives.

What to Expect in the 2007 Farm Bill – Don Stuart, Northwest States Director, American Farmland Trust

New Tools for Development – Michelle Connor, Vice President, Cascade Agenda

The Growth of Conservation Markets – Bettina von Hagen, Vice President, Ecotrust

12:00–1:15

Lunch – Roof Garden Ballroom (6th Floor)

Breakout Group Discussion Topics

Doric Hall

Ionic Hall

Mt. Bachelor Hall

Gothic Ballroom

The purpose of these facilitated small group sessions is to identify what is needed to improve the effectiveness of conservation incentives. Session leads will briefly introduce the topic or tool under discussion and then work with the participants to discuss the following questions:

- ◆ *What related initiatives are currently underway and who are the key players?*
- ◆ *What is needed to move forward?*
- ◆ *Is there a specific recommendation which can/should be forwarded in the Washington Biodiversity Council's 30-year strategy (to be delivered to the Governor and Legislature in December, 2007).*

1:15–2:15

Conservation Easements & Transfer of Development Rights

Discussion Lead – Charlie Raines, Cascade Land Conservancy

This session will discuss how conservation easements are being used to conserve biodiversity in resource, rural and urban lands. We will also discuss how transfer of development rights can expand our ability to conserve lands, where needs exceed the scale of traditional public funded acquisitions. This session will look at existing programs and new proposals and partnerships.

Conservation Banking

Discussion Lead – Jan Cassin, Parametrix

Natural resource banks are vehicles designed to mitigate the loss of wetlands (mitigation banking) or of individual listed species (conservation banking). Conservation banks place a dollar value on restored habitat through credits that are purchased using mitigation fees and/or voluntary investments and can bring a market approach to conservation. We will review what is currently underway in Washington to expand this tool and how efforts can be enhanced and further developed.

Conservation Action Registry

Discussion Lead – Gina LaRocco, Defenders of Wildlife

The Conservation Registry will be an online database to record, track and present conservation action information on multiple scales across the landscape. The ultimate goal of the Registry is to provide current information on conservation actions as they occur and provide such benefits as reducing redundancy and maximizing efficiency in conservation. Defenders of Wildlife and partners are developing a pilot registry project in Oregon, Washington & Idaho with the intention and potential for national application.

Regulatory Flexibility

Discussion Leads – David Burger, Stewardship Partners & Josh Weiss, Washington Forest Protection Association

Many landowners have pointed to the need to remove disincentives as one of the most effective ways to increase voluntary conservation. We will discuss existing programs and identify new opportunities to meet both conservation goals and landowner needs through regulatory incentives.

2:15–2:30

Break – Corinthian Ballroom

Breakout Group Discussion Topics

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Gothic Ballroom

2:30–3:30

Statewide Incentives Clearinghouse

Discussion Lead – Don Stuart, American Farmland Trust

An incentive clearinghouse is a tool to simplify landowner access to stewardship and conservation incentives. A staffed clearinghouse could serve as a first point of contact with landowners and work closely with incentive program providers to provide appropriate referrals, program marketing and assistance to landowners. We will review proposals currently in development and discuss key considerations and components that should be included in a clearinghouse.

Ecosystem Services Payments

Discussion Leads – Denise Pranger, Northwest Natural Resources Group & Paula Swedeen, Earth Economics

Ecosystem services are those functions that are of value to humans and include climate regulation, purification of air & water, mitigation of floods & droughts, generation & renewal of soil and soil fertility, and many more. We will overview a few examples of ecosystem service payments for carbon, biodiversity and water quality and explore initiatives and opportunities to expand this tool in Washington.

Certification Programs

Discussion Leads – Larry Nussbaum, Stewardship Partners & Ian Hanna, Northwest Natural Resource Group

By providing an independent “seal of approval”, labeling and certification programs help participating businesses distinguish themselves in the marketplace to appeal to the growing consumer interest in environmentally responsible products. Current certification programs which address habitat and biodiversity include Salmon Safe and Food Alliance for agricultural practices and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) for forest management.

Tax Incentives

Discussion Lead – Ted Sullivan, King County Department of Natural Resources & Parks

An important conservation tool available to local government is the current use assessment program. By offering tax reductions to participating landowners, these programs promote protection and management of natural resources beyond that mandated by regulation. This session will explore with participants opportunities to expand the use of this tool and ways to address current limitations and challenges.

3:30–3:45

Break – Corinthian Ballroom

3:45–4:30

Summary, Next Steps and Closing Remarks

Marc Daudon, Forum Facilitator & Session Leads
Maggie Coon, Chair, Washington Biodiversity Council

4:30–5:30

Reception – Join us in the Gothic Ballroom for networking and refreshments after the closing remarks