

**WASHINGTON STATE BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL
SUMMARY MINUTES**

DATE: June 3, 2009

TIME: 9:00 a.m.

PLACE: Lacey Community Center
Lacey, Washington

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Josh Weiss, Chair
Dave Roseleip, Vice Chair
Jim Armstrong
Leonard Bauer
Ken Berg
Dave Brittell
Rob Fimbel
Mitch Friedman
John Garner
Pete Heide
John Marzluff
Ikuno Masterson
Mike Mosman
Lynda Ransley
Ron Shultz
Clay Sprague
Kate Stenberg
Kathy Taylor
Jamie Tolfree
Megan White

WA State Association of Counties
WA Agriculture & Forestry Education Foundation
Local Government
CTED (now Department of Commerce)
US Fish and Wildlife
Department of Fish & Wildlife
State Parks
Conservation Northwest
Tacoma Nature Center
WA Forest Protection Association
University of Washington
WA Planning Association
Port Blakely
Puget Sound Partnership
WA Conservation Commission
Department of Natural Resources
Scientist
Department of Ecology
Skamania County
WA State Department of Transportation

PRESENTERS and GUESTS:

Erica Baker
Dave Brunke
Kaleen Cottingham
Alicia Dunkin
John Gamon
Jim Keany
Maria Horde
Kelly McAllister
Mark Mead
John Pierce
Bill Robinson
Owen Rowe
Steven Walters
Jen Watkins

Pacific Education Institute
Aberdeen School District
Recreation and Conservation Office
Office of Financial Management
Washington Natural Heritage Program
EDAW
WA Senate
WA Department of Transportation
Seattle Parks and Recreation
Department of Fish & Wildlife
The Nature Conservancy
WA House of Representatives
University of Washington
Conservation Northwest

STAFF and CONTRACTORS:

Marc Daudon
Lynn Helbrecht
Sarah Gage
Rachel LeBaron Anderson

Cascadia Consulting

Actions Taken

Item	Action	Reference
Council Slate	Approved	Page 2
Meeting Minutes	Approved	Page 2

Resolution 2009-1
Resolution 2009-2
2009-11 Budget

Approved
Approved
Approved

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SUMMARY OF MEETING ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Elected new Council leadership. Approved minutes of March 12, 2009 meeting and approved the 2009-11 budget and workplan.
- Passed Resolution 2009-1, delegating authority to the Executive Committee to pursue appropriate opportunities in advancing the Council's Leadership Strategy and to participate in discussions about reorganizing the natural resource agencies.
- Passed Resolution 2009-2, endorsing engagement with the Washington Habitat Connectivity Working Group and the Western Governors Association, in order to guide policy development and facilitate stakeholder involvement. The Executive Committee and staff will work with the Governor's Office to develop a more detailed description of the Council's role for discussion at the October meeting.
- Received updates and reviewed progress for three early action projects: Habitat Connectivity, Biodiversity Scorecard, and Hands-on Student Education Project

OPENING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Josh Weiss, Acting Chair, opened the meeting at 9:04 a.m. In his opening remarks, Josh announced that Maggie Coon had retired at the end of April. Recruitment to fill her seat is underway.

Governor Gregoire recently appointed five new members to the Council:

- Pete Heide (Senior Director of Forest Policy, Washington Forest Protection Association) and Mike Mosman (Vice President, Port Blakely Tree Farms). Both attended the March meeting.
- Clay Sprague, Deputy Supervisor, Department of Natural Resources; Mitch Friedman, Executive Director, Conservation Northwest; and Lynda Ransley, Deputy Director, Puget Sound Partnership. This is their first meeting.

Josh gave an overview of the agenda and Lynn Helbrecht reviewed each document in the packet.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

COUNCIL BUSINESS ITEMS:

With Maggie Coon's retirement, the first order of business was to approve a new leadership team. Josh reviewed the nomination process and the slate of nominees: Chair, Josh Weiss; Vice Chair, Dave Roseleip; Executive Committee: Ken Berg, Dave Brittell, Rob Fimbel, Mike Mosman, Ron Shultz, David Troutt.

Approval of Council Slate of Officers and Executive Committee

Josh called for a **MOTION** to approve the Council Slate. Jim Armstrong **MOVED** approval of the Council Slate. Leonard Bauer **SECONDED**. The Council **APPROVED** the Council Slate as presented by unanimous voice vote.

Approval of Minutes

Josh called for a **MOTION** to approve the March 12, 2009 meeting minutes. Dave Brittell **MOVED** approval of the minutes. Dave Roseleip **SECONDED**. The Council **APPROVED** the minutes as presented by unanimous voice vote.

2007-2009 Budget and Workplan Highlights. Lynn gave an overview and highlighted accomplishments. She noted that the completed tabletop display was available to view at the meeting, and also available for Council member use at other events.

Introduce 2009-2011 Budget for Later Review and Adoption. The proposed budget assumes the Council will continue for two years and not sunset in 2010. It aims to:

- Forward the Biodiversity Strategy,
- Fund projects from Council workgroups(\$32,000), and
- Revamp the website (\$20,000) to include elements of the biodiversity scorecard and the conservation opportunity framework as well as determine how best to make the site the state hub for biodiversity conservation.

Discussion:

- The Council has not been actively soliciting outside funding.
- Josh noted that the Council will continue to try to leverage other monies as it has consistently done in the past.
- Dave Brittell promised another \$10,000 from WDFW, despite the current budget climate, because of the importance of the effort.
- Rob Fimbel suggested that the Council may want to pursue funding in the 2010 session's supplemental budget.

Review the Proposed 2009–2011 Workplan. The proposed workplan assumes the council will continue for two years and not sunset in 2010 and that the Council will continue to support and move forward with the Biodiversity website. The Council will decide later in the meeting whether to continue support for Habitat Connectivity Project. Josh Weiss reminded the Council to think about impacts on dollars and staff time during its discussions.

POLICY DISCUSSIONS:

Josh Weiss gave background information on the topics of a) putting forward legislation to establish a standing biodiversity council, and b) developing Council input for the Governor's office initiative to reorganize natural resource agencies.

Background: Executive Order 08-02 directed the Council to develop a proposal for providing ongoing leadership and accountability for implementation of the biodiversity conservation strategy, which the Council delivered in November 2008. After stakeholder review, the Leadership Strategy concluded that a standing council would best meet the state's needs. The Council prepared draft legislation, but the Governor's office asked the Council not to submit it during the last session because of the Governor's initiative to reduce the number of boards and commissions. The Council will need to decide whether to propose a permanent council in the 2010 session, and if so, to ask for legislation or an executive order. Today's meeting is the last time the Council will meet before the September 1 deadline for adding request legislation.

Josh introduced Kaleen Cottingham, Director of the Recreation and Conservation Office, to review the status of the Governor's initiative to reorganize the Natural Resource agencies ("transforming the naturals"). She noted that the first meeting will be on Monday June 8, 2009, and the Governor's office is creating a document to discuss the scope. A proposal will be due September 15, 2009. Kaleen can represent the Council in those discussions.

Discussion

- Is there concern about Biodiversity becoming a permanent council?
 - No, just concern over establishing a council when others are being disbanded.
- With no assurance from the Governor's office that the Council will be permanent, should we really go forward with the leadership recommendations?
 - The timing is awkward but the Governor's office is not saying no, or that the Council is not worthy.
 - Governor's staff have been extremely supportive of the Council's work.
- Part of the Council's success is that it looks at the big picture; it doesn't try to get the spotlight but works with other priorities such as Puget Sound and climate change.
- Biodiversity conservation as an umbrella concept, the Council's guiding principles—these may be important contributions to the "transforming the naturals" discussions.

Marc Daudon, Cascadia Consulting, shared a PowerPoint presentation on the Council's potential involvement in "transforming the naturals." Marc clarified that he has no official role in the initiative at this time.

Discussion:

- The legislature often has a perspective that is separate from the Governor's office; Marc should add it to his analysis.
- The more complex the changes are in the natural resource agencies, the more the legislature will be involved. This will be a lot to go through one session.

- Pressure for accountability is even greater during these economic times; the council can play a valuable role.
- The "transforming the naturals" report, due in September, will likely not make it into a January session. The timeline is too tight.
- Let's be more proactive about showing that our broad representation is a productive way to do business and get more accomplished.
- The Council's future and whether the Council wants to be part of the natural resource agencies' reorganization are not necessarily connected.
- Perhaps the Council should have a coordination and communication role for the agencies.
- Current budget projections show worse cuts coming next year. Natural resources took bigger cuts than any other function of government in this round.
- The Council needs to make the case that it will help make natural resource management more effective, streamlined, and cost-efficient.
- The Council's mandate is to look at land owner incentives, and the legislature likes that approach. The legislature does see a lot of value in boards and commissions, which is why few boards were actually cut.

Jamie Tolfree, Josh Weiss, Ken Berg, Megan White and Lynn Helbrecht will develop language for a resolution to delegate authority to the Executive Committee (see Resolution 2009-1 below).

BREAK

EARLY ACTION PROJECT: Habitat Connectivity

Lynn introduced Kelly McAllister (Washington Department of Transportation), Joanne Schuett-Hames (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife) and Jen Watkins (Conservation Northwest), all members of the Washington Habitat Connectivity Working Group.

Joanne thanked the Council for the funds to expand the Working Group's communication effort.

- The Working Group will include a landscape integrity approach that complements its focal species approach to connectivity.
- March 2010 is the target date for a statewide connectivity analysis. They are now doing modeling (GIS).
- First stage of peer review of their study plan is nearly finished; comments have been extremely helpful. Feedback confirmed that Washington is doing very good connectivity work.

Jen reported how the Working Group has used the Council's funding.

- The group successfully leveraged the Council's funding and has received additional money (\$2500 from Defenders of Wildlife).
- They have produced an informational one-pager, an internal website, and a listserv.
- Robinson Research (Spokane) created their survey. They are now testing the wording..
- Their goal is to get 200 survey responses (June to August) from targeted interest groups.
- The Working Group plans two sets of one-on-one interviews, one in Olympia, the other in Spokane (if funding obtained).

Questions and answers.

- The group would be glad to expand the number of responses beyond 200 if they could.
 - They welcome Council members and others helping them prioritize and target respondents.
 - She invited Council members to take the survey and to suggest other respondents.
 - When administering the survey, they provide brief context about connectivity issues.
- Josh invited the Washington Habitat Connectivity Working Group to report back in October.

BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL ROLE IN ADVANCING THE HABITAT CONNECTIVITY ISSUE

Lynn introduced the issue brief, "Identifying a role for the Biodiversity Council in the implementation of Habitat Connectivity in Washington." The Governor's office sees a need for a lead entity to guide policy and implementation of the Habitat Connectivity work as part of the state's response to the Western Governors' Association's Wildlife Corridor Initiative, adopted in 2008. The Governor's office has asked the Biodiversity Council to take on this leadership role.

Options identified in the issue brief:

1. The Biodiversity Council continues to partner with the Washington Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Working Group in developing maps and analyses.
2. The Council serves as lead for a "Connected Landscapes Partnership" (or other name), based on the maps and analyses to be produced by the Working Group. (John Mankowski's preferred option).
3. The Council is a partner in a "Connected Landscapes Partnership" that is convened and led by another entity.
4. The Council provides input and feedback, but does not participate as an active partner.

Discussion:

Council capacity. Council members expressed concern about the Council's capacity to guide implementation of landscape connectivity policy in light of its limited budget, staff, and uncertain future.

- What are the costs associated with the above options, and how much staff time?
 - Hard to put a number on it at this point. Leading would take significant effort.
- Is there an issue with making the assumption that Council will continue?
 - Not seen as a problem. The Governor's office is asking the Council to take this on, i.e., option 1 or 2.
- This project would take the Council away from policy coordination and collaboration toward a management role. We don't have the capacity.
- Isn't this a task for Department of Fish and Wildlife?
 - This issue is broader than animals and Department of Fish and Wildlife; connectivity concerns plants and other species.
- Council doesn't have the budget for option 2.
- Connectivity has the potential to change the Council's scope and overtax the Council's resources.

Priority of the issue. Council members held differing views on the relative priority of habitat connectivity as a conservation issue.

- Habitat connectivity is important, but it is a small piece of what affects overall biodiversity. Land cover changes, habitat degradation from overuse, recreation, fragmentation are all bigger issues.
- Important to seize opportunities. This is a large high-quality effort with other states in region. Opportunity to link biodiversity at both inter- and intra-state level (between counties).
- The Governor's office is coming to us with this Western Governors' Association initiative at a time when we want to be relevant. The Council should be more aggressive than passive on it.
- Connectivity a top environmental priority for Department of Transportation.
- Connectivity is a big focus in land use for local government and land owners.
- If connectivity maps become the "best available science" they must be used by land owners and will become very important.

Process. Council members supported an inclusive process.

- The WHCWG's analyses are scientific tools; the Council's funding helps put public face to the maps and products.
- Important to get people involved as maps are being developed; the Council should help with that process even more. Should not throw the finished product at people.
- The outlined outreach process is good; appreciate inclusive process.
- If Council is to coordinate/implement this, need clarity on the deliverables and final policy product.

Council role. Council members discussed its appropriate role.

- The Council is not set up for a resource-intensive implementation effort.
- Connectivity information would benefit the conservation opportunity framework.
- The Council should be involved but does not need to "own" connectivity.
- The Council does have a role, but it is not an agency; an agency should be leading this.
- The Council can bring diversity and share stakeholder thoughts and inputs..
- Council has a role in promoting the work of the Washington Habitat Connectivity Working Group.
- Cross-entity statewide collaboration is a good role for the Council and provides a good example of Council's value.

- The Council should establish a mapping partnership, staff can provide coordination and support, identify conservation and habitat mapping already underway, identify how to coordinate current maps, and report back to council with a proposal of how to move forward.
- Connectivity could be a pilot project for us—it covers agency, private, and non-profit groups and could show the Council's ability to cover all those areas. The Council should enter this partnership with eyes wide open. This is riskier, but it is worth doing. The Council has always had a role of coordination and facilitation.
- This project will show us how to disseminate work in- and out-of- state.
- This Council has the broad view to make this go somewhere. The Council can come up with something stronger, better, and more implementable, then turn it over to another agency to work with on the ground. This is no different than what the Council has done in creating the conservation opportunity framework.
- The Council has the diversity of its members and can make the agencies' technical workers more successful.

After discussion, Josh, Lynn, and Marc volunteered to develop language for a resolution (see Resolution 2009-2 below).

Marc Daudon summarized the key principles from the discussion of the Council's preferred role:

- Employ guiding principles
- Guide policy and implementation
- Facilitate and coordinate
- Help and engage others with maps, science (not doing the work)
- Help with tools
- Others manage and implement
- Be wary, careful, and aware of the big picture
- Draw on council's diversity

WORKING LUNCH

RESOLUTION 2009-1

Give the Executive Committee the authority to explore and pursue appropriate opportunities to advance the Council's guiding principles and the concepts found in the Leadership Strategy, with the caveat that they consult with the full Council before significant proposals are endorsed or legislation proposed.

Approval of Resolution

Josh called for a **MOTION** to approve the Resolution 1. Jamie Tolfree **MOVED** approval of the resolution. Dave Roseleip **SECONDED**. The Council **APPROVED** Resolution 1 as presented by unanimous voice vote.

RESOLUTION 2009-2

The Council will initiate a habitat connectivity project, which will include engaging with the Washington Habitat Connectivity Working Group and the Western Governors Association, in order to guide policy development and facilitate and coordinate the involvement of stakeholders. Employing the guiding principles outlined in its Leadership Strategy, as well as the key principles outlined at its June 3, 2009 meeting, the Council Executive Committee and staff will work with the Governor's Office to develop a more detailed description of the Council's role. The Council will consider adoption of the detailed description at its October, 2009 meeting.

Approval of Resolution

Josh called for a **MOTION** to approve the Resolution 2. Leonard **MOVED** approval of the resolution. Jim Armstrong **SECONDED**. The Council **APPROVED** Resolution 2 as presented by unanimous voice vote.

EARLY ACTION PROJECT: Biodiversity Scorecard and Indicators

John Marzluff and Steven Walters gave a PowerPoint presentation.

- John asked Council members to write down three indicators they think are important for mesic forests and to note which ones they see in the PowerPoint.
- Steven overviewed the scorecard development process thus far and summarized its organization:

Ecological Systems (Mesic Forest, Urban, etc.) Indicator Sets (Species Diversity, Water Quality, etc.) Indicator Categories (Elements of Biodiversity, Relevant Ecological Processes, Relevant Human/Socioeconomic Processes, Ecosystem Services) Indicators Metrics
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Questions and Answers

- Is connectivity considered?
 - Yes, in the land use/cover change indicator
- What will the thresholds be? Will there be a level that indicates red light or green light? a
 - The Council wants to provide data, and let other decide how to measure and what to do with it.
- How will it stay objective using citizen science—people tend to look at what they think is important?
 - We are deciding what data we need and will develop citizen science to provide that.
- How is this coordinated with the indicator work that the Puget Sound Partnership is doing?
 - Dialoging with people at Puget Sound Partnership regularly; Scot Redman (staffing PSP Science Panel) is sitting on the Science Committee.
- Who is the audience for the scorecard and how will they be using it?
 - Many different audiences. The public may only be interested in “elements of biodiversity” whereas the science and policy communities need to know how all of it is functioning and related (all columns). The data would be presented differently for different audiences.
 - Goal is to be able to show that the “pulse” is up or down, and *why* the pulse is going up or down.
- Will the scorecard use historical data?
 - When possible, but for now they are taking a baseline measurement.

Marc asked the Council to work in small groups to discuss the following questions:

1. What “functions” do you think the scorecard needs to provide?
 - a. What kinds of statements, observations do you think it’s important to be able to make based on the Scorecard Data?
 - b. What kinds of policy decisions do you think the Scorecard should provide relevant information for?
2. Do you think the Scorecard is on the right track?

In the interests of time, Marc asked Council members to respond in roundtable format. The four columns discussed below are:

Elements of Biodiversity	Relevant Processes: Ecological	Relevant Processes: Human/Socioeconomic	Ecosystem Services/Effects
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Ken Berg—likes 4 columns (holistic approach), but it's too overwhelming and needs to be simplified. It should be a public persuasion tool. Maybe just 3 things in each column

Jim Armstrong—most land use managers look at all 4 columns, but it may be too comprehensive for general public. Need to make more accessible, simplify the terminology.

Dave Roseleip—agrees that it needs to be simpler in the end (business card size). He likes the 4 columns but wants to label the management functions—put the last three columns into one.

Kathy Taylor— a lot of good work has gone in to selecting the right data for good indicators. What's the best way to present it?

Ron Shultz—wants more discussion about concept of resilience and how these indicators are measuring that. Last two columns are not measures of biodiversity but of human activities and responses. Suggests separating first two and second two columns.

Josh Weiss— wants to emphasize the second two columns; they may not measure biodiversity but the council has always wanted to show management options.

Leonard Bauer—feels only the left columns are the only measure of biodiversity that people will understand. The right columns explain why the first two are important. He is wary of measuring iconic species even though it is interesting to the public.

Megan White—agrees with Ken. This is a tool for persuasion; simpler has more impact.

Dave Brittell—wants it to be simpler but wants some indicators for all four columns. Some indicators (e.g., predator information) are driven by funding/capacity.

Mike Mosman—some indicators in the first two columns are quantitative, some are qualitative. How will they be used? No place in indicators where checking with landowners about disincentives, roadblocks to conservation.

Jamie Tolfree—really overwhelmed. Suggested running it by college and 5th grade science classes.

John Garner—suggested looking at the National Wildlife Federation's data for trends over time. Important to run by public. Wary of bias toward terrestrial—match up with marine indicators (not just Puget Sound).

Pete Heide—thinks this is the right approach; likes seeing the model, starting broad and then narrowing down. Wary of too much roll up, where too many factors are averaged.

Rob Fimbel—it is important to have all the components.

Ikuno Masterson—a lot of hard work went into this; she will look into it more before making suggestions.

Linda Ransley—commended this work; she knows how hard this is. Puget Sound Partnership is deep into their indicator work, so she is glad Scott Redman is involved. She is happy to share tips from the Partnership's experience on how to convey this to the public.

REVIEW AND ADOPT 2009-2011 BUDGET AND WORKPLAN:

Approval of 2009-2011 Budget and Workplan

Josh called for a **MOTION** to approve the 09-11 Budget. Ron Shultz **MOVED** approval of the minutes.

Leonard Bauer **SECONDED**.

Discussion: Council members discussed funding for the scorecard. Steven Walters' contract goes through October, but the scorecard will need additional time. Working groups will be proposing projects for the Council's discretionary funds. The scorecard provides a good opportunity to look for additional funding. The Council will come back in October with ideas to refine the budget.

The Council **APPROVED** the budget as presented by unanimous voice vote.

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION WORKING GROUP:

Ikuno Masterson provided an update and Leonard Bauer gave an example of his "elevator" speech.

EARLY ACTION PROJECT: Hands-on Student Education Project

Erica Baker, Pacific Education Institute, and Dave Brunke, Science Coach from the Aberdeen School District presented an update on this project. Erica discussed the development of the Schoolyard Biodiversity Investigation. The product provides teachers step-by-step instructions to involve their students in mapping, an "alien planet habitat" survey, and schoolyard habitat and wildlife surveys.

Dave Brunke commented on the teacher training in the project. They connected teachers with the interpretive center at Ocean Shores, the local college, and with natural resource professionals. They are looking ahead to summer trainings and workshops for teachers. Tahoma School District, Issaquah, Everett, Waterville, and Enumclaw are now looking at these programs.

NEXT STEPS AND CLOSING COMMENTS:

- The Executive Committee will follow up on the Resolution 2009-1
- Lynn Helbrecht will follow up with John Mankowski and others to define principles and language for the October meeting, as directed in Resolution 2009-2.
- John Marzluff and Steven Walters will use today's feedback on the scorecard framework. They will also follow up on the budget proposal.
- Each workgroup will define project proposal(s).
- Lynn and Sarah will be getting in touch with Council members for a memory book for Maggie Coon.
- The Council has a vacant seat for a representative from an NGO.
- Josh urged everyone to attend the October meeting.

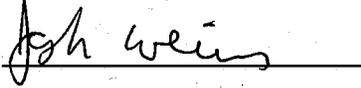
PUBLIC COMMENT:

Alicia Dunkin from the Office of Financial Management found the presentation and discussion on the scorecard very useful. It will really help to explain the scorecard to others.

Mark Mead from Seattle Parks and Recreation will be sharing what he heard today with his group, which is working to reforest urban parks.

CLOSING

Meeting adjourned at 3:20.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Josh Weiss", is written over a solid horizontal line.

Josh Weiss, Chair