

**WASHINGTON STATE BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL  
SUMMARY MINUTES**

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**DATE:** August 16, 2007  
**TIME:** 9:00 a.m.

**PLACE:** Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge  
Olympia, Washington

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Ken Berg	US Fish & Wildlife
Dave Brittell	Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife
Bill Clarke	At-Large
Maggie Coon	The Nature Conservancy
Donna Darm	NOAA Fisheries
Rob Fimbel	Washington State Parks
John Marzluff	University of Washington
Jackie Reid	Thurston County Conservation District
Dave Roseleip	Agriculture & Forestry
Ron Shultz	Puget Sound Partnership
Pene Speaks	Washington Department of Natural Resources
Kate Stenberg	At-large
Naki Stevens	At-large
Steve Tharinger	Local Government
Dick Wallace	Ecology
Josh Weiss	Washington Forest Protection Association
Megan White	Washington State Department of Transportation

**PRESENTERS and GUESTS:**

Elizabeth Rodrick	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
John Pierce	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
John Gamon	Washington Department of Natural Resources
John Garner	Tacoma METRO Parks
Kathleen Deason	Foster Creek Conservation District
Jay Kehne	North Central Washington RC&D
Nancy Warner	The Nature Conservancy
Marc Daudon	Cascadia Consulting
Laila Parker	Cascadia Consulting

**STAFF:**

Lynn Helbrecht  
Sarah Gage  
Matthew Green  
Tammy Owings

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**ACTIONS TAKEN**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Meeting minutes	Approved	Page 2
Legislature Request	Approved	Page 6

## HANDOUTS DISTRIBUTED AT MEETING

Updated Agenda (yellow)  
Minutes of April Council meeting (white)  
Memo on Proposed Increase in Phase I Budget (white)  
Draft Revised 07-09 Budget (white)  
Biodiversity Conference Overview (white)  
Biodiversity Conference Draft Outline (white)  
Part 1: The State of our Biodiversity (white, 20 pages)  
Part 2: Recommendations for Action (white, 23 pages)  
Pierce County Biodiversity Alliance (blue-green)  
Healthy Lands Initiative (yellow-green)

## MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- The Council changed the December meeting date to Wednesday, December 12.
- The Biodiversity Conservation Conference will be held December 4 at Bell Harbor Convention Center (Seattle)
- The Council endorsed the revised approach to the conservation priorities maps.
- Pilot project participants and staff presented final results and key learnings.
- The Council authorized the Executive Committee to submit a supplemental budget request; all Council members are invited to participate.
- Subcommittees were set up to review revised language on regulatory approaches and new education recommendations, prior to publication of the draft.
- Staff reported on stakeholder input, and the Council provided comment on Part 1 and Part 2 of the draft strategy.

## CONVENE AND WELCOME

Maggie Coon, Chair, opened the meeting at 9:15 a.m.

Dick Wallace provided an update on the overturned truck on I-5 and resulting heavy traffic that caused the meeting's late start.

### Introductions, overview, and announcements

Council members, staff, and guests introduced themselves. Maggie reviewed the agenda.

Lynn Helbrecht announced the availability of three new Council publications:

- The Council's new brochure (hard copy or website)
- The Proceedings from the Washington Forum on Conservation Incentives (hard copy or website).
- "The Effects of Climate Change on Biodiversity in Washington," a white paper by University of Washington researchers Josh Lawler and Molly Mathias (website).

Washington has been chosen to be a pilot state in the new web-based Encyclopedia of Conservation Lands and Priorities. The National Geographic Society, NatureServe and other partners selected Washington in part because of the Council's Washington Biodiversity Project website. Pene Speaks noted that they expect to have the pilot states' websites up and running by October 2008.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT** on agenda:

None

### **COUNCIL BUSINESS ITEMS:**

#### Approval of Minutes

Maggie called for a **MOTION** to approve the June 12, 2007 meeting minutes. Dave Britnell **MOVED** approval of the minutes. Kate Stenberg **SECONDED**. The minutes were **APPROVED** as presented by unanimous roll call vote.

#### Proposed change in Phase I budget

Lynn reviewed two handouts: (1) a proposed revised budget for the biennium, and (2) a memo detailing the need for the change. Lynn explained how the budget and work plan have been updated.

Steve Tharinger **MOVED** approval of the revised budget. Ken Berg **SECONDED**. The revised budget was **APPROVED** by unanimous roll call vote.

#### Upcoming Meetings

Lynn presented this agenda item. The October 16–17 meeting will be held at the Best Western Lakeside Lodge in Chelan.

The December meeting was originally set for December 5 but with planned conference on December 4, staff proposes moving the meeting date to December 12. **The Council agreed to this change.**

#### Meeting with Governor's Staff and 2008 Supplemental Budget Request

Several of the Council members met with the Governor's staff to discuss the draft strategy. Governor's staff present were Ron Judd, Keith Phillips, Kathleen Drew, Deborah Feinstein, Jim Cahill, John Mankowski.

Maggie Coon gave an overview of the discussion.

- How we communicate with the governor's office is very important to the success of this project. Need links between biodiversity and Puget Sound, climate change, and other issues the Governor is working on.
- An executive order to continue the council would need positive legislative support.
- Governor's staff expressed most interest in development of pilot projects, but cautioned that the supplemental budget is designed only for crises and emergencies.

Maggie proposed that the Executive Committee take the lead on developing the supplemental budget request, with others on the council welcome to participate.

#### Discussion:

- Need stronger linkages to other groups. Biodiversity conservation is one of the basic tenets of the Puget Sound Partnership—great opportunity for linkage.
- Governor's office interest is in a pilot project at a larger geographic level—perhaps take an ecoregion and demonstrate how all our recommendations would work together there.
- Need to educate legislators.
- Need to keep the Council away from the regulatory end of things.

#### **DECEMBER CONFERENCE UPDATE:**

Matthew Green presented this agenda item. Handout: draft conference outline

- Conference Theme "Biodiversity Conservation Strategies: What Works, What's Next."
- Tuesday, December 4, 2007
- Invited but not confirmed: Governor Gregoire and Norm Dicks
- Location: Bell Harbor Convention Center (Seattle)
- Steering Committee Meeting: August 22, 9:00 a.m.
- Goal: conference about the strategy and more. People are doing a lot of biodiversity conservation; want to energize and motivate to do more.

Lynn invited Council members to participate on the steering committee. Dave Britnell promised \$5,000 from WDFW and in-kind support from Elizabeth Rodrick.

#### **OVERVIEW OF DRAFT STRATEGY AND NEW MATERIAL:**

Marc Daudon presented this agenda item with a PowerPoint presentation. He explained that the Council's task for the day was to supply feedback and guidance on parts 1 and 2 of the draft strategy.

Overview of changes:

- Part 1, foundational text. Several items combined since last version.
- Part 2, includes an outline for the maps section. The strategies and recommendations were re-ranked based on work done at the June meeting. Added what problem each strategy addressed and key connections. Also added recommendations to the achieving results section.
- Schedule: August 31 public review draft, October 16 Council meeting, October 24 final plan ready for design and printing, November 28 report available, December 4 conference.

#### Discussion:

- Council members suggested clarifying what the council wants from the public review. Useful to provide questions to guide feedback.
- Lynn clarified that stakeholders will be asked: will the recommendations serve as an effective strategy? What are their top five priorities? What could be eliminated? What did we miss?
- Suggestion to structure the October 16 Council meeting around questions and feedback also.
- Council members made suggestions for additions to the reviewer list.
  - A new group: Washington Association of Land Trusts (WALT)
  - More development, business interests (Association of Washington Businesses)
  - Bill Clarke is helping arrange a meeting with realtors.
- Staff spent a whole day with a group of educators.
- Staff has contacted tribes; hope to be able to arrange meeting.

#### CONSERVATION PRIORITIES (Part II, Section 1):

Lynn presented this agenda item with a PowerPoint presentation.

#### Narrative

Issues from April Council Meeting were:

- Concern about messages that inadvertently "de-value" lands indicated as "low biodiversity value".
- Concern about emphasis on only the top tier of priorities when strategies and responsibility exist for all areas of map and all landowners.

The outline for the narrative is in the handout. The Science Committee has reviewed it; staff are drafting text. Several changes have been made, including providing detailed descriptions and examples for the four corners: low/low, low/high, high/low, and high/high.

#### Council Discussion:

- Suggestion to get away from the word "low." Title the four corners to capture what key strategies would be.
- The examples add a lot to the maps.
- Lynn noted that most stakeholders really like the maps, but they express concern about how they will be used. Examples are only from one ecoregion. She asked Council members to provide other examples if they have them.
- Make sure to touch base with the areas (e.g., Lincoln Park) used in the examples.
- Caution about making recommendations to a city about its planning.
- Be sure to indicate highest priority areas; that is very important to Department of Transportation.
- Concern that the examples suggest that it is the government's problem to take care of these lands. Need examples with private interests (e.g., developer leaving open space).

#### Maps: Stakeholder Feedback

- Most liked the maps. Saw as a potentially valuable tool for getting funding to conservation work in high priority areas. Could be an important screen to use in awarding grants.
- Caution about unintended consequences of maps: alarming landowners, inflating land prices. Could be perceived as a "land grab" or a regulatory tool. Messaging absolutely critical.
  - Make being in the "red zone" (high priority category) a good thing for a landowner. Increase eligibility for conservation grants or other incentives.
- Freshwater, corridors/connectivity, marine, nearshore need to be addressed.
- Climate change and restoration potential should be addressed in future map editions.
- Local experts' review of data in each ecoregion enhances credibility of maps.

- Local officials will need to understand how the maps were developed and their potential uses.

#### Maps: Approach

- Change color scheme, change title, and develop up front messaging. Provide strategies for all areas.
- Address freshwater (aquatic elements), nearshore and marine conservation opportunity maps by: investing in future work and referring to other available analyses/tools.
- Address restoration potential and climate change in text as much as possible and through future work.

#### Proposed changes to the conservation priorities section

Lynn acknowledged all the good work that John Pierce has done on this section. The Council needs to make two decisions about the maps

1. Biodiversity significance tiers change from a relative measure to an absolute measure.
  - Why: More consistent with the way the future risk thresholds were determined.
  - Makes values more consistent across ecoregions.
2. Future risk levels eliminate distinction between public, private, and tribal land.
  - Why: Private landowner concern that it sends the wrong message (i.e., that private landowners are not good stewards).

After discussing the pros and cons, **the Council endorsed these changes.**

#### Draft recommendations for conservation priorities section

- 1.1 Use the ecoregional maps to establish priorities for investments, incentive programs, stewardship, monitoring programs and off-site mitigation.
- 1.2 Use the ecoregional maps as a tool to encourage planning at the landscape and regional level.
- 1.3 Encourage and provide support for local governments, planners, and developers to develop localized versions of the maps
- 1.4 Invest in better maps for marine ecosystems.

She noted that stakeholders made the following recommendations:

- Prepare a set of similar maps to indicate restoration potential
- Integrate data on freshwater systems and conservation priorities into future map products
- Address habitat connectivity in future map products, or additional layers.
- Address how climate change will affect these priorities. Possible to address in a map product?
- Fund demonstration projects in high priority areas.

The Council made these additional suggestions:

- Make a recommendation that the underlying data be made available for others to use.
- Have transparency of how the nine-ranked system was achieved, so people can verify on own.
- Make a recommendation to update data periodically

#### LUNCH BREAK

#### **PILOT PROJECTS – FINAL RESULTS AND KEY LEARNINGS:**

Sarah Gage presented this agenda item. She gave an overview of the projects and what they accomplished. While the projects were significantly different, they exhibited some similar themes:

- Citizen science makes opportunities for engagement, fills gaps in knowledge. It's relatively inexpensive
- Local networks useful for dialogue, stewardship, idea exchange on how-to.
- Local government important—it can facilitate or impede efforts
- Demonstrations of cooperative community stewardship (Pierce County: Crescent Valley Alliance, Friends of Lower White River. North Central Washington: Healthy Lands Coalition working with Resource Conservation & Development District and Economic Development District)
- Innovations needed in incentives and markets.

Nancy Warner, Jay Kehne, and Kathleen Deason from the Healthy Lands Initiative and John Garner from the Pierce County Biodiversity Alliance talked about their projects and answered questions.

What did the Council's \$20,000 buy?

- In North Central Washington, funds primarily used for education and outreach. Many constituents changed their perspective as a result.
- In Pierce County, the money paid for the BioBlitz, including outreach, supplies, equipment.
- The Council's funding was well leveraged in both projects; it allowed them to receive additional funds and in-kind contributions. The funding heightened the projects' credibility.

The two projects met together at an April retreat. They made the following recommendations:

- Regional Biodiversity Councils
- Fund regional biodiversity council coordinators
- Develop regional biodiversity council website that link to state site
- Establish regional habitat-based stewardship councils
- Support the development of regional learning networks that link statewide

Maggie thanked the groups for their good work.

### **STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT (Part II, section 2):**

Marc introduced the afternoon session. Lynn reviewed the new format and changes made since the last Council meeting.

#### Overview of stakeholder input

Many types of feedback received: big picture, strategic, specific. Consensus is that strategy is generally on the right track.

- Need to prioritize actions.
- Build excitement into strategy.
- Word "biodiversity" still a tough sell for some but not really any way to go around it.
- Recommend continuing to quantify benefits of biodiversity and get that information to policymakers.

#### *Incentives and Markets*

##### Stakeholder feedback on incentives

- Existing pool of incentive programs is too small
- Incentives are oversubscribed
- Recommendations do not yet address need for new resources to add to existing programs
- Affirmative comments about improving mitigation process
- Office of Farmland Preservation could implement some recommendations
- Baseline for making incentives and markets work is having effective and enforced regulations

#### Council Discussion

- Strategy needs to acknowledge existing regulations as part of the toolbox.
- Strategy needs to be comprehensive, including all elements (i.e., acquisition and enforcement)
- Acknowledge that we have robust regulatory tools, but need similarly robust incentives toolbox.

Subcommittee of Naki Stevens, Josh Weiss, Bill Clarke, and Steve Tharinger will look at the next set of wording the staff develops on incentives and regulation.

#### *Land Use and Development*

##### Stakeholder feedback on land use and development

- Increase emphasis on "enforce existing laws"
- No "big goal" is set (e.g., no net loss of farmland)
- No mention of Growth Management Act.
- Discuss regulatory baselines
- Support assistance to local governments

#### Council Discussion

- Industry can be supportive of enforcement and compliance; they want a level playing field.
- Existing laws may not be effective.
- Governor's office especially interested in working lands, climate change, Puget Sound.
- Objective for this section doesn't say anything about development.
- Need to address through long-term local planning—the permitting stage is too late.

#### *Education and Public Engagement*

Staff met with the educators and received their comments; staff rewrote much of the original document. Subcommittee of Jackie Reid, Kate Stenberg, Rob Fimbel, John Marziuff, and Naki Stevens will review the new draft ~~will be~~

#### *Science and Information*

##### Stakeholder feedback on land use and development

- Resistance to creating a new science panel and new data systems. The need for these must be clearly articulated.
- Department of Transportation endorsed the idea of more accessible information.

#### Council Discussion

- If we need them, we should recommend the science panel and data partnership. People often think things are in place that really aren't.
- Suggestion to combine the science panel with the data partnership.
- Suggestion to include strategies to improve conservation technologies.

#### **REVIEWING ACHIEVING RESULTS (Part II, section 3):**

Marc reviewed the new recommendations developed for this section of the strategy.

- *Identify funding options:* Need to go further in funding and address budget issues.
- *Provide leadership:* Extend the Biodiversity Council through Executive Order.
- *Provide information to the public:* Scorecard strongly supported.
- *Recommend pilot projects* to test recommendations

#### Council Discussion

- Suggestion to reorganize—start with leadership, monitoring, then funding options
- Recommend a first-year pilot with emphasis on monitoring.
- Needs more specificity on funding and budget requirements to be credible.
- Suggestion to work individually on priorities before October meeting; draft funding recommendations then.
- Cost estimates for early implementation items will make them more tangible.
- Need to flesh out pilot for supplemental budget request.
- Pilot our recommendations in an ecoregion
  - But many of our recommendations are not geographically focused; they are programmatic. Sequencing is critical.
  - Make the case that the pilots/early action items will inform longer term strategy.
- Link one pilot to Puget Sound Partnership and have another on the east side.
- Emphasize accountability, innovation.

**The Council agreed that the Executive Committee will work on the supplemental budget request.** The rest of the Council will be invited to participate in person, by phone, or by email.

#### **REVIEW DRAFT STRATEGY PART 1:**

Marc asked the Council to read "Why Biodiversity Matters" and requested feedback. The Council made a number of specific suggestions on language, content, and organization of this section.

The Council reviewed the other sections in Part 1. The Status and Threats report is summarized in section C. A thousand copies of that report have been reserved to send out with the strategy. The Council suggested specific changes in language, content, and organization of Part 1.

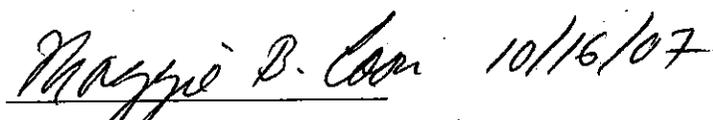
In the next two weeks

- Staff will incorporate today's comments and work with subcommittees on the public review draft.
- Staff will include a question about top five priorities with the public review draft.
- Executive Committee will convene to draft supplemental budget request
- First meeting of Conference Steering Committee on August 22.
- The public review draft will be ready for release August 31.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**CLOSING COMMENTS:**

Maggie thanked everyone for their involvement.  
Meeting adjourned at 3:53.

 10/16/07

Maggie Coon, Chair