

WASHINGTON STATE BIODIVERSITY COUNCIL SUMMARY MINUTES

DATE: December 16, 2004
TIME: 9:00 a.m.

PLACE: Sawyer Hall
Lacey, Washington

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Brad Ack	Puget Sound Action Team
Ken Berg	US Fish & Wildlife Service
Dave Brittell	Department of Fish & Wildlife
Bill Brookreson	At-large
Bonnie Bunning	Department of Natural Resources
Brian Collins	Skokomish Nation
Maggie Coon	The Nature Conservancy
Donna Darm	NOAA Fisheries
Rob Fimbel	State Parks
Peter Goldmark	Double J. Ranch
Mel Moon	Quileute Tribe
Jackie Reid	Thurston County Conservation District
Ken Risenhoover	Port Blakely Tree Farm
Mark Schaffel	Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers Association
Naki Stevens	At-large
Steve Tharinger	Clallam County
Wade Troutman	At-large
Dick Wallace	Department of Ecology
Steve West	University of Washington
Megan White	Department of Transportation

ACTIONS TAKEN

Item	Action	Reference
Minutes - October 14, 2004	Motion Approved	Page 2
Draft Bylaws	Motion Adopted	Page 5
Mission and Vision Statements	Motion Adopted	Page 8
2005 Meeting Schedule	Motion Approved	Page 8
Officer Nominations	Motion Approved	Page 8
Ad Hoc Search Committee	Action Approved	Page 9
Working Groups for Incentives, Pilot Projects, and Science Assessments	Action Approved	Page 9
Adjourn	Motion Approved	Page 9

OPENING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTIONS

Carole Richmond, staff member at the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC), opened the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

Dee Frankfourth, meeting facilitator, asked each member to give a brief introduction.

Carole reviewed the meeting agenda.

Dee stressed the importance of this meeting in determining where the Council is headed and how to get there.

MEETING MINUTES

The October 14, 2004, meeting minutes were discussed. Naki Stevens suggested that, in the future, the action items be listed at the beginning to make it easier to see decisions made. Dick Wallace **MOVED** to accept the minutes. Donna Darm **SECONDED**. Minutes were **APPROVED**. Brian Collins **ABSTAINED** from the vote.

REVIEW OF BYLAWS

This agenda item was presented by Maggie Coon. Other members of the Bylaws Workgroup are Mel Moon, Donna Darm, and Bill Brookreson.

Attendance

There was discussion concerning the consequences of Council members being absent for two or more consecutive meetings. Dick Wallace suggested the following change to the final paragraph: "If illness or other unforeseen circumstances prevent a member from attending two or more consecutive Council meetings, the chair may, after consultation with the member, request the Governor's office to name a replacement for that member." Council members agreed that exceptions should be taken into consideration.

Rob Fimbel asked about voting by proxy. Maggie stated that the group would work on adding a provision for proxy.

Officers

The role of the Council chairperson was discussed. Brad Ack feels the vice-chair should not automatically become the chair after a one-year term. Members agreed to strike the following sentences from the draft bylaws: "The vice-chair shall automatically succeed the chair at the end of the chair's term. A new vice-chair shall be elected at that time."

Executive Committee

Mel noted one of the functions of the Executive Committee would be to maintain regular communication with the full Council.

Bill stated another role of the Executive Committee would be to monitor what's going on between meetings with the Standing Committees.

Brian Collins would like the Executive Committee, if it meets, to send out a memorandum summarizing its activities one week before each Council meeting.

Brad suggested opening membership on Executive Committee to others beside committee heads. Several members were opposed to this suggestion. It was decided not to add additional members to the Executive Committee at this time.

Other Committees

Maggie pointed out that added participation on the committees could come from outside the Council, such as staff, but that they would not be voting members. She also stressed that each Council member is expected to serve on at least one standing committee.

Mel suggested adding a provision for vice-chair, in addition to chair, to the committee structure.

Compensation of Members

Carole clarified that in Resolution #2004-01, concerning compensation of meeting expenses that was adopted at the October meeting, non-governmental members include Tribal representatives and other non-state members.

Maggie recommended setting aside approval of the bylaws until after the mission statement has been discussed and adopted. Members concurred.

REVIEW OF BIODIVERSITY COMMITTEE REPORT AND EXECUTIVE ORDER

Carole Richmond gave a PowerPoint presentation entitled "Direction and Expectations" (see handout for details).

Mel asked about the Governor's Sustainable Washington Advisory Panel and its connection to the Biodiversity Council.

Maggie noted that Governor Locke saw the connection between the two groups and wanted to be sure there was no duplication of efforts.

Peter Goldmark, a member of the Governor's Sustainable Panel, reported how the two groups are complementary. He would like to have a discussion at a later meeting about the number of sustainable efforts going on in the state.

Ken Risenhoover commented on Appendix B of the Strategy Report and how it is right on target in terms of what the Council should be doing.

Steve Tharinger feels one thing that is missing in the strategy is information on conservation programs that are going on so the public can understand and be supportive.

Naki would like the Council to focus on the reality of what is happening on the ground in Washington, in terms of species listings and becoming endangered, and critical habitats, and what is falling through the gaps and how we can make a difference.

Carole said she would provide the Council with information about the House floor debate on SB 6400.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Council members met in executive session during lunch to discuss staffing options. Leading the discussion were Maggie, Mel, Donna, and Bill. The decision was made to define the position of biodiversity project manager and put together a job description to hire someone as soon as possible. This person would be supervised by members of the Executive Committee. IAC would continue to administer contracts and expenses for the Council.

Laura Johnson, IAC Director, informed the Council that she looks forward to working with the Executive Committee.

MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT DISCUSSION

The Council discussed the mission and vision statements as presented by the Bylaws Workgroup (see Draft Bylaws).

Brad voiced the need to keep the mission statement simple.

For the vision statement, Dee challenged the members to describe the world as the Council would like it to be.

Several members noted that listing the 2035 date was not necessary.

Dick noted that the vision statement should be about what we're trying to do.

Peter added that it should focus on where we're going. He prefers "passing along to our children" instead of using the 2035 date.

Rob suggested "working landscapes" be reflected in the vision.

Bonnie prefers "healthy and harmony" rather than "sustainable".

Mel voiced concern with listing plants and animals without including fish. Vision statement should be more inclusive, not just land-based.

Steve suggested expanding the definition of “biodiversity” in both the vision and mission statements.

Brad expressed a sense of urgency in moving on to a discussion about goals and objectives. He suggested reversing the order of the agenda and coming back to the mission and vision statements. Members concurred.

Bill Brookreson **MOVED** to accept the bylaws as amended, excluding the mission statement. Wade Troutman **SECONDED**. Motion **APPROVED**.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A copy of the draft goals and objectives, prepared by the Workplan Committee, was provided in the members’ notebooks. Members of the Workplan Committee are Maggie, Bonnie, Rob, Jackie Reid, Jeff Koenings, and Kate Stenberg.

Dee suggested the group talk about strategies first, and come up with four or five approaches to advancing the mission.

Bonnie gave a brief overview of the objectives, explaining that objectives three through six come from the seven desired outcomes from the strategy report, and objectives one and two deal with conservation.

Rob noted that since the listed tasks are given as examples only, the group should just focus on the objectives.

Naki voiced the need to be more specific in stating our goals as we develop a conservation strategy. She would prefer the objectives reflect a more holistic, proactive approach in preventing future endangerment of species.

Maggie noted that the overarching charge, as stated in the Executive Order, is the 30-year strategy. The draft document is the committee’s attempt to begin outlining the key elements of reaching the strategy.

Brad suggested doing a gap analysis before proposing a strategy. He stressed the need to answer the following questions before determining how to organize the work:

- What is important to protect in Washington State?
- What is being done now to conserve our biodiversity?
- Where are the gaps and what are we going to recommend?

Bonnie explained that the needs assessments are listed in the tasks to identify the gaps in each objective.

Wade noted the daunting process of implementing environmental sustainability plans into a massive local working group. We need to understand the social structure in our local communities first to achieve our goals.

Dee provided the wording from Oregon's biodiversity strategy and goals: "The primary goal is to develop a pragmatic statewide strategy to conserve Oregon's native biodiversity. The strategy is intended to reduce the risk of future endangered species designations and give landowners more flexibility in resource management decisions."

Ken Berg expressed concern that the public lands conservation element was not included in the draft goals and objectives. All seven of the desired outcomes should be incorporated into the goals.

Ken Risenhoover noted that the Council should be supporting private land stewardship programs and encouraging private citizens to do more by developing non-regulatory efforts.

Dick would like one of the goals to be to bridge the gap between advancing biodiversity and local community values.

Peter sees the need to provide direct economic incentives and rewards for the kinds of activities that create the biodiversity that already exists. This could be difficult to do in the current environment of a rural economy. Need to be more imaginative and creative than just listing existing incentives.

Brad explained that when we get the answers to our questions about what needs to be protected, what is being done, and where the gaps are, then we will be able to see the big picture and the barriers to achieving our goals at the different levels. We may be constrained by our resources, but we can do a lot with the existing groups that are already doing the work.

Naki discussed the need to have a bottoms-up approach. We could hold scoping meetings and ask people what would make it possible for them to sustain biodiversity on their land – and then really listen to what they say. People should have their values and economic situations addressed.

Bill would like to see the process be driven as much as possible at the local level so people feel ownership in that process and the outcome.

Brian noted that, in order to develop objectives, strategies, and tasks, we need to go out into communities and ask what's important to them. It may take time to do this, but getting public acceptance would be worth the additional time spent.

Ken Risenhoover suggested hiring staff to get pilot projects started. Make a decision on goals, relative to our mission, and put into a workplan.

Steve West is puzzled by all the discussion on goals since the four goals are listed in the executive order – just need to work on objectives and tasks.

Rob explained that the workgroup decided that there was the single goal of the 30-year comprehensive strategy, with everything else being components, or objectives, of this strategy.

Peter voiced the need to implement, not just plan, and to do it quickly. He believes there's nothing preventing the Council from starting pilot projects and, with the help of the legislature, developing incentives. There are a lot of opportunities to increase the biodiversity on privately owned land through relatively straightforward efforts. Peter stated that he would rather dream big and work hard than be limited by a rather truncated scope of effort.

Ken Risenhoover stated that one of the Council's research charges was to look at incentives already out there and why they aren't being used.

Mel suggested adopting the goals, assigning them to committees where they could discuss objectives and tasks, and bring their ideas back to the whole Council to discuss.

Ken Berg feels there will be a lot of emergent information coming out of the pilots that will be very helpful in finding out which incentives work, how well assessments apply on a local scale, and how consistent they are.

Naki would like to send the draft workplan out for public comment and feedback.

MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS CONTINUED

Dee handed out updated copies of the mission and vision statements that incorporated some of the earlier comments.

Bonnie would like to add "for future generations" to the end of the mission statement.

There was discussion on whether to use "protect", "restore", or "promote" in place of "sustain" in the mission statement.

Amended Mission Statement: "Working to sustain and promote biodiversity as the full range of life in all its forms, explain its vital importance in Washington's economy and our quality of life, and encourage citizens to advance the stewardship of our natural heritage for future generations."

Amended Vision Statement: "In our lifetimes, the native plants and animals, along with their air, water and land habitats, are healthy and in harmony with our working landscapes and residential communities. The vital importance of biodiversity conservation is recognized in principle and practice. Washington citizens see themselves as stewards of our natural resources diversity and accept a responsibility to pass this heritage along to their children and future generations in a healthy condition."

Bill **MOVED** to adopt the Mission and Vision Statements as amended. Peter **SECONDED**. The motion **PASSED**.

2005 MEETING SCHEDULE

After a discussion on proposed meeting dates, the following schedule for 2005 regular meetings of the Biodiversity Council was adopted:

February 16, 2005
April 27, 2005
June 14, 2005
September 22, 2005
December 8, 2005

Special meetings may be added as needed.

OFFICERS

Naki, Rob, Bill and Peter volunteered to serve on the Nominating Committee. Those willing to serve as Council chair or co-chair were asked to submit their names to the committee for consideration.

Members of the Nominating Committee met during the break. After deliberation, Maggie Coon was nominated for Council chair and Brad Ack for vice-chair.

Bill **MOVED** to accept nominations. Mark **SECONDED**. Motion **PASSED**.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Dee commended the initial workgroups that developed the draft bylaws, vision and mission statements, and goals and objectives, for their tremendous efforts in advancing the Council to where it is now.

Council members discussed several options for committees and workplan development. Among the ideas suggested were committees for incentives, pilot projects/public involvement, and education/expanding awareness

Steve West feels that the committees may not all need to start at the same time.

Wade **MOVED** to create two committees – an Incentives Committee and a Pilot Projects Committee. Bill **SECONDED**.

Rob suggested a third committee that would work on science assessments to identify priority areas for conservation, among other tasks.

Megan White and Steve Tharinger agree with adding a science assessment group as this could help weave together what exists and where the gaps are.

Brad noted that the science assessment work could be time consuming and members may not have enough time to work on this. He suggested assigning a project manager or staff person(s) to work with this group.

Maggie reminded members that, as stated in the bylaws, each member is expected to participate on a standing committee.

Dave Brittell suggested each committee should have a charge before signing people up.

Donna would rather form groups to brainstorm concepts for their charge, develop recommended work plans, discuss resources, and then come back to the Council's next meeting with the information. At that time, the Council could make a decision on how to organize the standing committees.

Instead of committees, it was decided to form the following three workgroups:

- Incentives Workgroup – Dick, Wade, Bill, Peter, Ken Berg, Ken Risenhoover, and Steve Tharinger. Dick will lead this group.
- Pilot Program Workgroup – Mark Schaffel, Brian, Jackie, and Rob. Brian will lead this group.
- Science Assessment Workgroup – Donna, Megan, Rob, Naki, Jeff, John Marzluff, Mel, and Ken Risenhoover. Rob will lead this group.

Maggie asked for volunteers to serve on an Ad Hoc Search Committee to find staffing for the Council. Bill will work with Maggie and Brad on this committee.

Wade withdrew his MOTION to form two committees. Rob withdrew his SECOND.

Maggie suggested that each group convene at least once before the next Council meeting on February 16, 2005. She would like each group to come back with an initial work plan for formulation of actual standing committees. She reminded members that outside people can be recruited to help on the workgroups.

Brad asked the lead person of each group to check in with him and Maggie in late January.

Brad and Maggie will work with staff on changes to the draft goals and revisit that at the next meeting.

Dave made a **MOTION** to adjourn. Wade **SECONDED**. The motion **PASSED**.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Next meeting: February 16, 2005