

Biennial Forecast

The lands group is required to produce a biennial forecast of potential acquisitions and disposals and to establish procedures for publishing the forecast in an easily accessible format. The lands group is using data collected from agencies in preparation for the annual forum to create the forecast and a GIS-based map of potential acquisition and disposal sites. The first prototype of a biennial forecast map was presented at the July forum. Like other lands group tasks, the biennial forecast is due to the legislature on or before July 31, 2012. RCO staff will brief the board on progress of the draft forecast in March 2010.

Lands Group Quarterly Meeting

On July 29, the lands group held a quarterly meeting, at which workgroups provided progress reports and discussed next steps for accomplishing tasks by the 2012 deadline. These tasks include centralizing coordination of federally-funded habitat and recreation land acquisition, and an approach for monitoring the success of acquisitions. The group decided to invite new members, including representatives from the Trust for Public Lands and the Puget Sound Partnership.

Members discussed the role of the lands group in the Governor's process for transforming the natural resource agencies. Since then, lands group members were invited to aid the process by participating in the land management workgroup for reforming the agencies. The lands group is being offered by the Natural Resources Subcabinet as a model for lowering costs, improving service, and reducing duplication and complexity related to land management.

Lands group members also discussed budget issues. The lands group is currently unfunded, so members are concerned about the cost of producing the biennial forecast and establishing procedures for publishing the forecast in a web-based format. The group also must develop recommendations to the legislature by 2012 for (a) an interagency GIS-based documentation system for habitat and recreation lands and (b) standardizing record-keeping and centralizing acquisition data. Funding is needed to implement these systems.

Next Steps

The lands group will follow-up on the first annual forum by helping agencies network about specifically identified sites. The lands group is considering using the Sharepoint program to assist agencies in sharing information.

In addition, the lands group will prepare for the next annual forum and work to develop the biennial forecast and accompanying maps. A data-focused workshop will develop GIS data layers for an interagency coordinated database to make available to agencies, local governments, non-government organizations, and the public. This database will house data related to potential acquisitions and disposals, including land acquired with federal funds. It also will incorporate a component for monitoring the success of state land acquisitions.

Finally, the lands group will update its action plan and will report its progress in its annual report to the Office of Financial Management. RCO staff will maintain its support role, including hosting the lands group website and providing updates to the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board.