



December 26, 2003

Greg Lovelady
Interagency Committee
For Outdoor Recreation
PO Box 40917
Olympia, WA 98504-0917

Dear Greg:

Pursuant to item C of our contract, this letter summarizes the following from our point of view as professional facilitators:

1. The key outcomes/results of the process;
2. Follow up opportunities and recommendations; and
3. Successes and challenges.

Key Outcomes

As you stated in your draft report to the legislature, "Each recommendation was reached by unanimous decision and address all items required in SSHB 1698". This was the first key outcome we observed from the NOVA Advisory Committee process. A group of 18 diverse stakeholders, while each advocating for their own interests, were able to forge recommendations by consensus, recommendations which took into account the interests of all stakeholder groups.

A second key outcome was the committee's recommendations to IAC which are geared towards building an even sounder program: the inclusion of government agency partners in the Committee; the development of an accountability process for direct appropriations; and other policy recommendations which will facilitate the selection of the best projects for implementation.

The third key outcome is the least tangible but, perhaps, the most important. The Advisory Committee members began the process of building stronger relationships among the stakeholder groups and integrating a "new" group of recreation users. During the course of their eight meetings, we saw individuals move from highly

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positional statements to sincere efforts to understand the needs of others. They went from “caucusing” at breaks and lunch to talking to one another during these informal times. People left meetings shaking one another’s hands. No system can be successful without communication, respect and trust. This group of stakeholders was able to create these vital elements in their work together. Hopefully, this spirit will continue as the group works on policy issues and grant decisions over the coming years.

Follow Up Opportunities

Again, in your legislative report you have outlined many of the follow up opportunities that exist. Briefly, these include:

- Working together in the legislative process to explain and advocate for the recommendations;
- Jointly developing an accountability process with the government agency partners, one which may lead to greater understanding of how the agency’s use their direct appropriations and a greater understanding by the agencies of user needs;
- Working on a different grant process, one which will challenge the committee members – particularly through the competitive 10% of grants – to see the overlaps among the needs of various user groups; and
- Working with IAC on NOVA policies to develop an even stronger program.

Successes and Challenges

In the section on “Key Outcomes”, we stated the three greatest successes. There are, of course, many challenges remaining. Among them are:

- The impact of the pending lawsuit on both the program and the working relationships among stakeholders;
- Acceptance of the recommendations by the legislature; and
- The ability of the committee members to forge strong working relationships over the long haul.

With respect to this last challenge, we believe it is critical for members to understand that the communications, respect and trust that they built during the Advisory Committee process is just the beginning. Occasionally, we have seen groups think that things are “fixed” because they have worked together successfully on a project. We would recommend that the Committee continue to keep a set of ground rules and agreements on how they wish to work together and that they revisit these agreements periodically.

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It would also be most helpful if IAC continues to use the criteria for Committee members which the original Committee forged in June 2003. These criteria called for certain qualities in the individual, qualities which were certainly present among the Committee members who completed the legislative recommendation process.

Other Observations

I just want to conclude by saying again how much Eli and I enjoyed working with Scott and you. Your professionalism, attention to detail, flexibility and follow up skills made the two of you perfect partners in this venture. I believe the participants greatly appreciate the IAC staff's work and so do we.

If you need any further information, please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

Dee Endelman
Senior Associate

Cc: Scott Chapman, Eli Asher