

Wildlife Diversity Advisory Council

Meeting Agenda

Wednesday June 29, 2022; 8:00am – 10:55am

Review Materials: March 2022 Minutes (*Action Item*)
 Current WDAC Charter
 Current membership and subcommittee status (agenda, page 2)

TIME	SUBJECT	TOPIC LEAD/SPEAKER
8:00	Welcome and Review Agenda	Wildermuth
8:10	WDFW Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserving Washington’s Biodiversity decpac • Recovering America’s Wildlife Act • Capital Campus Pollinator Garden • Washington Shrubsteppe Restoration and Resiliency Initiative 	Anderson
8:40	Committee Report-outs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Species of Conservation Concern • Wildlife Area Planning • WAC 220-610-110 review 	Cotten/Gorrell/Wildermuth
9:00	BREAK	
9:10	Gratitude and Accomplishments	Anderson
9:20	Council Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision: review and approval of March minutes • Charter review • Current membership and future recruitment 	Wildermuth/VanSweringen/ Anderson
10:00	Discussion: considerations for future structure	All
11:00	Adjourn	

WDFW Updates

- Restoring Washington’s Biodiversity decpac
 - Pushing for \$46 million, largest single decision package from the agency historically
 - Outcomes sought include: To achieve persistent and sustainable wildlife and fish populations; Reduce regulatory burden, focus conservation action to prevent listing; Improve effective, relevant and meaningful conservation through local jurisdictions
 - Important to note that the investments are not about a “new shiny” thing, but to adequately support the priority work we already engage in.
 - Actions to be undertaken include: 1) Recover species and habitats by identifying and implementing actions to mitigate threats; 2) Protect habitat with non-regulatory tools and restore habitat quality and function to support SGCN vital rates; 3) Determine SGCN population distribution, size, trend, life history traits, and habitat association to ascertain status, threats, and to inform conservation action
 - For the Wildlife Diversity Division this will add 15 FTEs in Olympia and 19 FTEs across the regions PLUS provide \$4mil/BN in additional funding for projects/actions. Similarly robust increases in staff and project funding would be made in Habitat Program, as well as increases in Fish Program & Outreach and Education.

- o Anne K appreciates that the Agency is digging in. Curious how the Agency messages what happens if we DON'T conserve biodiversity/ecosystem services. Response is that we haven't generated costs THAT way but we do need to be clear about the detail in the narrative (e.g., pollinators produce food).
- o Kara pointed out that it's only going to get harder.
- o Trina loves a really bold ask, happy to see it. Also, appreciates that we're not creating a new thing, just asking for adequate resources to meet our mission. Also, asks what IS the mismatch between what we need to do and the resources we need to do it – what is the sentiment of the public with the majority not participating in stewardship. How do people fit in? how does climate resilience fit in?
- o Todd thinking on ecological services – DNR hired Deloitte to do an assessment of all of the ecosystem services that DNR lands provide. It's probably much for difficult to quantify the services provided by individual species.
- o Anne K – conflicts that come up in the future between biodiversity and other values (e.g., commercial prospects) – question will always be what takes priority. Suggests that we start preparing for such conflicts.
- o Hannah will distribute the powerpoint to the group.
- o Doug asked what the agency did within the Dec Pac prep to address SMA and GMA. Recommended increasing regional staff BECAUSE they specifically work with local governments to influence conservation. And the Hydraulic Code is very out of date in inconsistent with current science. Kara summarized what her Section is doing to address some of Doug's points, staffing up to address 10-yr CAO updates.
- Recovering America's Wildlife Act
 - o Passed in the House. There is still good commitment from Speaker Schumer that they'll take it for a vote this session.
 - o Passage may change the Dec Pac request – we will be required to provide match to RAWA, so we will still be in need of funding.
 - o Approximate funds to WA would be about 21 million annually BUT it's a formula and there may be a little bit.
- Capital Campus Pollinator Garden
 - o Department of Enterprise Services, Woodland Park Zoo, Xerces, and Department of Agriculture joined WDFW to create and unveil pollinator garden on the capital campus. Governor Inslee gave some remarks.
 - o It's an interpretive garden – first one on a capitol campus in the country (as far as we know). Signs were designed by the zoo, they include QR codes to more information, seed packets were provided. DES will maintain in perpetuity. Having conversations about how to engage students in it's use. The garden will become part of a formal capitol tour.
- Washington Shrubsteppe Restoration and Resiliency Initiative – did not have time to present. Call Hannah or Janet with any questions or progress update.

Committee Report-outs

- Species of Conservation Concern
 - o Snowy plover goes to the Commission in August; Committee needs to review.
 - o Cascade Red fox – to Commission in September; Dave Wertz is working on a letter. Todd thinks the lean here may be to encouraging full endangered listing status.
 - o Pelicans – Denis provided letters for white and brown pelican – committee approved the recommendation on brown pelican but disagreed with downlisting white pelican. Letters have gone to Director, with copies to Hannah and the Commission.
 - o Species coming soon – Western Gray Squirrel, Orca, both out in a couple months, and we're close on a draft for peregrine Falcon and Bald Eagle (these will be the last for these as they've been delisted).
- Wildlife Area Planning

- Skagit (west) fully moving, with first draft plan slated June/July 2022, SEPA public review in October/November and Director approval January 2023. These timelines will likely push out a bit.
- Cowlitz (west) slated to start this year, was waiting for hiring of new planner, which occurred in spring.
- Methow (east) starting up with early planning meetings this week, final plan completion not expected until December 2024. This plan will include WDFW's pilot recreation planning module.
- LT Murray – had been initiated but was on hold due to turn over in WLA manager position; that position has been filled and it's picking back up, with plan completion expected Spring 2023 (may push farther out).
- Big Bend/Wells/Sagebrush Flats – in the queue with expected initiation date mid 2022.
- WAC 220-610-110 review
 - Circumstances resulted in not as much progress as desired. Taylor provided a list of top concerns and they discussed them, not a lot of resolution, but in Todd's mind there is a clear distinction between the role of the feds and state and that we need to think hard on what it means to recover a species. Encourages this to continue in committee next year. Use California and Oregon as points of reference.
 - These states include or exclude certain things we might want (e.g., listing of insects), or regulatory impacts of listing (listing influences management of public lands), etc.

Gratitude and Accomplishments

- Hannah thanked the group for their service.
- It's been difficult
 - Covid started right at the beginning of their term, we only had one in person meeting, and we've figured out how manage virtually
 - Much internal WDFW staff changes
- Despite all this, it's been very productive!
 - Agency structural deficit was fixed, Shrubsteppe Proviso was passed
 - Group informed both the Scatter Creek and the Sunnyside Snake River WLA management plan, has provided very meaningful input to multiple status reviews, started a path towards review of Listing WAC
- Potential future work that WDAC may want to weigh in on
 - 23-25 legislative session
 - FWC Big Tent Committee
 - Conservation Road map
 - RAWA spending plan
 - SWAP 2025 update
 - Standing committee work
- Denis made some comments about the Big Tent Committee and it's importance, opportunities to talk with commissioners. Hannah will provide the descriptor of what the committee is focused on. It's a place for discussion and briefings, but no decisions.
- Doug wanted to thank Denis particularly for attending commission meetings and reporting back to the group in such a meaningful way. Kara seconds this gratitude for all of Denis' participation, and share gratitude for all of the staff for their work facilitating and preparing for these discussions.
- It feels like commission is in crisis; focus on individual things is out of proportion to where the focus should be broadly across things.

Council Administration

- **Decision:** review and approval of March minutes
 - Doug moved to approve, seconded by Denis. Minutes approved.
 - This was Todd's last meeting as Chair, this will move to Anne Van Sweringen. She's excited about picking up the listing WAC discussion.
- Charter review
 - Hannah walked the group through the Charter.
- Current membership and future recruitment
 - Members should let Hannah know of their interest in continuing to participate by the end of July, as part of the recruitment. All applicants will be reviewed together.
 - Reviewed the current list of members and active participation. Covid has made things weird and difficult, but we'd really like an active council – this is the council's group.
 - Discussion around attracting more eastern WA representatives, or more rural representatives – we're missing some important representation. Nancy distinguished between identifying what the membership is missing and 2) how we recruit for that. Successfully recruiting for what we want may be difficult. Recruitment needs to call out in a welcoming way but not call out all types of diversity unless that is the WDFW practice. Hannah will look to the diversity statement the agency includes in job recruitments.

Discussion: considerations for future structure

- WDFW workloads in Covid have increased, and this is possibly true for others.
- Suggestion – as we move forward into the next WDAC term, how about 1-2 annual get togethers and independent subcommittee work?
- Todd suggested it's a little hard to judge right now, but maybe we're learning about a new normal. Todd favors 2 summits per year, in person, emphasizing that most of the work is done in committee and every member is a member of at least one committee. Committees report out to the full council at the summits.
- Kara recommends making it clear in the recruitment that expectations are clear – if we're thinking weekends vs. weekdays make it clear because either could be prohibitive for participants. Possibly split (if 2 annual summits) between week and weekend. And split between eastern and western WA.
- Also need to lighten the workload for staff.
- Nancy suggested piggybacking on webinars staff are already doing.
- Todd suggested having a secretary role to create a digest/newsletter of WDFW/WDAC actions/information, a newsletter that keeps everyone connected and aware.
- Hannah will work with Public Affairs to draft a recruitment press release with expectations we talked about, and work with Ann to adjust charter to reflect proposed structure, ensure that recruitment asks the right questions.
- Group should let Hannah know of interest in continuing to serve by the end of July. Recruitment will come out sooner
- Doug suggests both a formal and informal recruitment.
- Hannah will send a digital version of the WDAC handbook provided at the beginning of the term.

2019-2022 WDAC Membership **compiled 28 June 2022*

Name	Affiliation/interests	County	Status	Subcommittee
Trina Bayard	Audubon Washington	KING	Active	
Shawn Cleveland	Academic background in wildlife management and rangeland ecology, Former The Nature Conservancy land steward and private lands liaison.	THURSTON	Inactive	SOC
Whitney DalBalcon	Communications and Marketing Manager for Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium/Northwest Trek Wildlife Park	PIERCE	Inactive	
Denis DeSilvis	Tahoma Audubon Society	PIERCE	Active	SOC/WLA
Jeff Kozma	Biologist with the Yakima Nation, Snag Conservation Working Group, Hunter, Woodpecker specialist	YAKIMA	Active	WLA
Robb Krehbiel	Defenders of Wildlife, Orca Task Force Prey Working Group, Puget Sound Partnership Stormwater Strategic Initiative Advisory Team, Urban connections	KING	Resigned	n/a
Anne Kroeker	Wildlife Forever Fund/Education Legacy Fund	KING	Active	WLA
Nancy Lee	Former USFS and USGS, including NW Climate Center director and Pollinator Research Strategy coordinator	KING	Active	SOC
John Lehmkuhl	Chelan-Douglas Land Trust	CHELAN	Resigned	n/a
Edward Lisowski	Xerces Society, Washington Native Plant Society, formerly with the Dept. of Ag	YAKIMA	Active	WLA
Doug Pineo	WA Falconers Association, Pineo Ecological Services	SPOKANE	Active	WLA
David Ross	Marketing background, hunting	SNOHOMISH	Inactive	
Anne Van Sweringen	EBS-Environmental & Biological Services	THURSTON	Active	SOC
Dave Werntz	Conservation Northwest	OKANOGAN	Active	SOC
Kevin White	Hunter, angler, biologist on Yakima Training Center	KITTITAS	Inactive	SOC
Kara Whittaker	Washington Forest Law Center	KING	Resigned	n/a
Todd Wildermuth	UW Wildlife Law professor, Director of Environmental Law Program, hiker, birder, fly-fisherman, Seattle Audubon, WA Native Plant Society, WA Butterfly Association	KING	Active	SOC