

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Summarized Meeting Agenda and Actions, June 27-28, 2012

Agenda Items without Formal Action

Item	Board Request for Follow-up
Item 2: Management Report	No follow up action requested
Item 3: Selection of Subcommittee to Conduct Director Performance Evaluation	No follow up action requested
Item 4: Preview of Applications Submitted for Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Program Funding, Tier 1 and Tier 2	No follow up action requested
Item 5: Preparing for the 2013 Legislative Session, Budget and Request Legislation	This item will be brought to the board for decision in September 2012.
Item 7: Public Comment Received about the Subcommittee Proposals for Policies Related to Allowable Uses	This item will be brought to the board for decision in October 2012. Changes to the policy will be made as noted in the minutes.
Item 9: Briefing on Compliance Issue at Woodland Park in Lacey	This item will be brought to the board for decision in October 2012.
Item 10: Preview of the tour for June 28	No follow up action requested

Agenda Items with Formal Action

Item	Formal Action	Board Request for Follow-up
Consent Calendar	<u>Resolution 2012-03 Approved</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved board meeting minutes – March 2012 Approved eligibility for John Ball Park Property, Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation, RCO #12-1491 Continued FARR advisory committee and delegate authority to director to appoint members 	Correct typographical error on page 3
Item 6: Performance Review and Strategic Plan	<u>Motion to adopt revised board strategic plan Approved</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adds language to goal 3 regarding competition in grant processes Adds language to principle 5 regarding work to sustain board investments Adds language to strategy regarding economic and ecosystem benefits. 	No follow up action requested
Item 8: Follow-up to State Parks' Request to Allow Shower Facilities in State Parks Cabins	<u>Resolution 2012-04 Approved</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waives the cabin eligibility policy for project #12-1341 to allow State Parks to propose cabins that include the shower amenities Directs RCO to prorate costs of the shower facilities. 	No follow up action requested

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Summary Minutes

Date: June 27, 2012

Place: Port Angeles Red Lion, 221 N. Lincoln, Port Angeles, WA 98362

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Members Present:

Bill Chapman, Chair	Mercer Island	Craig Partridge	Designee, Department of Natural Resources
Betsy Bloomfield	Yakima	Larry Fairleigh	Designee, State Parks
Pete Mayer	Vancouver	Dave Brittell	Designee, Department of Fish and Wildlife
Harriet Spanel	Bellingham		
Ted Willhite	Twisp		

It is intended that this summary be used with the meeting materials provided in advance of the meeting. A recording is retained by RCO as the formal record of meeting.

Opening and Management Reports

Chair Bill Chapman called the meeting to order at 11:04 a.m. Staff called roll, and a quorum was determined. Representative Steve Tharinger, as well as Mayor Cherie Kidd and Nathan West of Port Angeles, welcomed the board to the area.

Consent Calendar

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) reviewed Resolution #2012-03, Consent Calendar. The consent calendar included the following:

- A. Approve board meeting minutes – March 2012
- B. Approve eligibility for John Ball Park Property, Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation, RCO #12-1491
- C. Continue FARR advisory committee and delegate authority to director to appoint members

Chair Chapman requested a typographical correction on page three (“worship” changed to “workshop”) of the draft March meeting minutes.

Resolution 2012-03 moved by: Dave Brittell and seconded by: Ted Willhite
Resolution APPROVED

Item 2: Management Report

Director’s Report: Director Cottingham introduced Leslie Frank as her new executive assistant, and reviewed organizational changes to manage retirements, resignations, and budget reductions. She also reported that the city of Port Townsend and Port of Port Townsend have settled their grievances related to Kah Tai Park. The RCO will be working with them to implement the resolution and ensure that the outcome protects RCO interests. The Director informed the board that she would be heading to

Washington, DC in July to work on funding for salmon programs, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and the Recreational Trails Program. She noted that Susan Zemek would be contacting board members to attend big check ceremonies. The Invasive Species Council will be working with other agencies to deal with tsunami debris.

Policy and Legislative Update: Steve McLellan, policy director, noted that the agency would be looking for ways to update the trails plan, which was last updated in 1991. Staff will look for ways to tie it into SCORP, and may seek funding from the legislature. He noted that the Puget Sound Partnership planned to approve the Action Agenda in August. It will be used in budget development for 2013-15; the board's programs have typically rated well in the previous action agendas. He concluded by explaining how policy topics will be brought to the board over the next year to 18 months for incorporation in the manuals for the 2014 grant round.

Member Willhite noted that there were no trail groups in the SCORP advisory committee and asked whether staff had been able to recruit a participant. Dominga Soliz responded that they had been trying to recruit a representative, but had not been able to get a positive response.

Grant management report: Deputy Director Scott Robinson updated the board on the progress of the 2012 grant cycle. Over 200 volunteers will participate in the grant evaluation process. He noted the status of a few evaluation cycles, reminding the board that they are using both in-person and written evaluations. A second group of applications is due in early July; as of yesterday, 215 applications had been received.

Member Mayer noted the drop in applications from 2010, and asked if staff would be doing any survey follow-up to determine what the reasons were. Robinson responded that they had asked informally, and that it appeared that match was an issue, along with the drop in WWRP funding in the last biennium which made applicants leery this cycle. Sponsor staffing capacity to apply for and implement grants also is an issue.

Member Brittell noted that downsizing staff was a factor for WDFW. The need for grant funding is there, but sponsors do not have the staffing capacity to apply for and implement funded grants.

State Agency Partner Reports

Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW): WDFW is trying to implement the projects that were in the jobs bill (supplemental budget), including nineteen boating access projects on the list. They would have been projects for RCFB grants in the future. They are very busy putting in RCO grants, and staff is excited about doing the work. They are involved in the tsunami response. In April, Okanogan County discontinued discussions about the agreement to do a joint economic analysis of WDFW's land acquisitions in the county. There has been great disagreement about payment in lieu of taxes and how values are set.

State Parks: Larry Fairleigh noted that State Parks is continuing its change process. He noted that they have seasonalized their ranger and maintenance force; they need to learn how to manage and recruit for that force. The Discover Pass revenue is slightly ahead of revised projections. He thinks the public will come to accept the fees, but that it will take two to three years. The Transformation Strategy continues to unfold. He noted that the operating budget request for the 2013-15 biennium will be between \$10 and \$20 million in general fund, including requests to cover "social good" exemptions (e.g., disabled veterans) and stewardship activities with no revenue potential. They will make a request of about \$40 million in capital funding. He also provided updates on Mount Spokane and Fort Worden.

Department of Natural Resources: Craig Partridge briefed the board on the Community Forest Trust program, which was passed in 2011. The program allows for acquisition of working forest lands that have important local community conservation and recreation value to be managed as working conservation lands. The legislature did not fund the program, so DNR is reaching out to communities to identify properties that they can take to the legislature for funding. They are looking for either private or state trust lands that are at risk of conversion to non-forest uses and significant community conservation values. The likely candidates will probably have recreation values as well, with self-sustaining revenue opportunities. They may have proposals coming from Yakima County, Jefferson County, Kitsap County, and the Nisqually area.

General Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Board Business: Briefings & Discussion

Item 3: Selection of Subcommittee to Conduct Director Performance Evaluation

Chair Chapman presented the process for conducting the director's evaluation in 2012 and invited members to contact him if they would like to participate in the subcommittee.

Item 4: Preview of Applications Submitted for Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Program Funding, Tier 1 and Tier 2

Marguerite Austin presented the applications received by the RCO for BIG funding, as described in the staff memo. She also explained the structure of the grant program and the funding that likely will be available. She described the next steps leading to the grant awards in March 2013. Director Cottingham noted the role of the advisory committee, and that it had rejected a project in the past for lack of community support. Austin noted that the committee also is responsible for evaluating Tier 1 projects when more than one is submitted.

Item 5: Preparing for the 2013 Legislative Session, Budget and Request Legislation
A loose wire on the sound system caused a number of breaks in the sound recording of this topic.

Steve McLellan presented the information about the budget requests as described in the staff memo. The RCO must submit a budget to the Office of Financial Management on September 5, 2012. The board will need to decide the amount to request for Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) and other grant programs on September 4. McLellan presented three options for board consideration: a WWRP request as a percent of general obligation funds, a WWRP request as a per-capita expenditure, and a WWRP request as a percent of the amount of funding requested ("need"). He noted that staff is asking for direction about additional information that the board is looking for.

Public Comment

Heidi Eishenhour, WWRC and Washington Association of Land Trusts, noted that it is important to ask for what the state needs. She highlighted some easements completed in Jefferson County that are creating a local farm economy, noting that it is a financial benefit of WWRP. She encouraged the board to request a healthy level of funding such as \$100 million. Kids, farmers, and others need recreation and conservation areas. In response to a question from Member Willhite, she asked that the board request the highest level of funding they can.

Tom Bugert, WWRC, said that they are at a crossroads. They are planning to make a recommendation to the board before the September meeting. Many stakeholders view this year as a turning point, deciding whether or not they will continue to use and support WWRP as a vehicle for their work. If they cannot get the support for WWRP, they may lose support. Member Bloomfield asked if an indexing methodology would be supported by WWRC. Bugert responded that yes, but none of the methodologies fully capture everything that is happening. They are using the same lenses, and also looking at capital budget cuts.

Board Discussion

Board members discussed the concept of "need" as presented by staff at length. In general, members agreed that the term "need" was inaccurate because the analysis by staff reflected the amount of funding requested, which is not the same as need. Members noted that it was too low to be need, and cited various studies that had placed need for recreation and conservation funding at much higher levels. Members also noted that sponsors may not be requesting funds in this cycle for several reasons, including decreased WWRP funding in 2011-13, lower sponsor staffing, and difficulty finding match. Chair Chapman suggested that staff replace "need" with "applications."

Board members asked staff to include the following data in the analysis for the September decision:

- A comparison of the amount the board had requested versus the amount appropriated over time
- The number of special local projects ("earmarks") that are also on the WWRP list

Member Fairleigh noted that WWRP is now institutionalized in the state capital budget so it lacks the sense of urgency that it had when it was created. They really need a problem statement and a solution to refresh WWRP.

Member Mayer noted that another challenge is asset preservation. Local governments do not want to add to the burden they already have right now. The board needs to help sponsors preserve what we have and help sponsors.

Member Bloomfield suggested that the board come up with an indexing approach that uses internal and external indicators, such as population growth, to connect the need for recreation and open space to actual expenditures. McLellan noted that while it could be useful in the future, doing that in-depth analysis would not be possible within the next month. Member Spanel noted that indexing can work against you.

Item 6: Performance Review and Strategic Plan

Rebecca Connolly presented the information as described in the staff memo, highlighting the causes of performance that did not reach targets. With regard to projects not closing on time, Connolly noted that a significant problem is bottlenecks following the end of the fiscal and calendar years. Board members suggested that if staff were to revise the targets, they should look at the typical time it takes to complete a project. Director Cottingham noted that the biennial grant round would give staff a year to focus on active grant management.

Agency Strategic Plan

Rebecca Connolly presented an overview of the changes proposed to the agency strategic plan, as described in the staff memo. Director Cottingham noted that the RCO strategic plan is an umbrella plan that encompasses the goals and missions of this board, as well as the Salmon Recovery Funding Board, Invasive Species Council, and the Habitat and Recreation Lands Group.

Chair Chapman noted that he was pleased to see the reference to environmental sustainability and the testing of the new criteria. He asked for clarification about where the lands group was mentioned in the plan. Director Cottingham responded that it was in the plan, but that the board had received only a summary of changes.

Member Fairleigh noted that that the strategies were very high level rather than measurable and asked if there was another document. Connolly responded that it was a lesson learned from the last plan, in which the strategies were too specific, and the agency had a difficult time writing a measureable work plan. She explained the work plan approach used by the agency with monthly reports to the director. Connolly noted that the work plan is updated in the off-years from the strategic plan, following approval of the biennial budget. Director Cottingham clarified that her performance review acts as a bridge between the two documents.

RCFB Strategic Plan

Rebecca Connolly presented the strategic plan adopted by the board in June 2010. The board agreed on the following changes:

Goal 3: We deliver successful projects by inviting competition and by using broad public participation and feedback, monitoring, assessment, and adaptive management.

Principle 5. The Board will continue to work with federal, tribal, state, and local agencies, stakeholder organizations, and other interested parties to evaluate and improve the funding process. The Board also will continue to ensure that it funds the highest priority projects with integrity and impartiality and provides accountability to the Legislature and the public for to sustain that funding and those investments.

Strategy 3.A.2. – Increase public understanding of project benefits including economic and ecosystem benefits.

**Motion to approve the revised plan was made by: Dave Brittell and seconded by: Craig Partridge
Resolution APPROVED**

Item 7: Public Comment Received about the Subcommittee Proposals for Policies Related to Allowable Uses

Grazing Policy

Dominga Soliz presented the comments and the subcommittee responses as described in the staff memo. The board discussed the use of grazing leases on habitat lands managed by state agencies, and why working lands may be purchased with Critical Habitat funds.

Chair Chapman asked that the policy say that it be a market rate lease. Member Brittell noted that it was up to the sponsor agency to do the process correctly and that the revenue policy also applies. Chair Chapman asked that it be included as footnote. Soliz responded that the lease policy requires compliance with state and federal requirements, but that a footnote can be added.

Chair Chapman also referred to the comment that stated that there is no review about where the money goes from revenue generated. He thought that the first two bullets of the existing Income Use policy were too vague and risked losing the money. He would like to revisit that policy at some point in the future to narrow it. Soliz noted that they looked at this two years ago, and that it does have federal tax implications. Staff will look at it.

Telecommunications Facilities Policy

Dominga Soliz presented the comments and the subcommittee responses as described in the staff memo. Chair Chapman suggested that new structures may be appropriate in some circumstances (e.g., putting up lights that are needed, with the intent of mounting telecommunications facilities) and asked the subcommittee to look at if there is a way to do it without changing the intent of the policy. Director Cottingham noted that it would be inappropriate to put up structures just for the purpose of telecommunications. Soliz noted that the example provided by the chair is consistent with the intent of the policy, and that it may be a matter of clarification.

Tree Removal Policy

Soliz reviewed the eight comments about tree removal, mostly noting a need for clarifications, and explained the subcommittee recommendations in response to the comments.

Chair Chapman noted that he understood why the subcommittee removed the word "imminent," but suggested there should be some potential risk. Member Mayer noted that most agencies use ISA (International Society of Arboriculture) standards and stated that the board should defer to that established standard rather than creating their own standard. The board discussed the options for incorporating standards in the policy, agreeing that they should use established standards.

Member Willhite asked if the policy should include replanting following tree removal. Member Mayer responded that for local agencies, that would be covered by local ordinance. Director Cottingham reminded the board that other policies and laws already apply. This policy is designed to determine when sponsors need to come to the agency or board for permission to do something. Member Brittell noted that there already are checks in place through forest practices rules.

The board discussed whether to include language about tree removal "solely" for economic purposes. Member Partridge suggested "solely for revenue generation." Subcommittee members Mayer, Spanel, and Brittell recalled that they believed that the revisions should have included such language. Members agreed that "revenue generation" was better language than "economic purposes," and asked staff to soften the language so that it recognizes that while there can be economic benefit, it not be the sole intent of the tree removal.

Member Mayer suggested that a park master plan equate to a site specific stewardship plan in the policy.

Director Cottingham asked if it needed to go out for public comment again after it is revised again by staff. The board did not believe that a formal period would be necessary.

Clarification of "Conveyance of Property Interests" in conversion policy

Director Cottingham explained that the subcommittee recommended taking the leases off of the proposal because of issues raised by State Parks. The board had no comments.

Allowable Uses Framework

Soliz explained the framework proposal, comments received, and subcommittee recommendation not to change the proposal. Member Mayer suggested that in the boxes, it say "all of the criteria" on page 3 of Attachment A. He also suggested that the staff brief the board when the procedure is used. Chair Chapman suggested a few briefings until it becomes routine.

The board discussed various suggestions made by respondents for future policies. Director Cottingham reminded the board that the RCO has limited staff availability for policy considerations.

Board Business: Decisions

Item 8: Follow-up to State Parks' Request to Allow Shower Facilities in State Parks Cabins

Dominga Soliz presented the State Parks request to allow showers in two cabins proposed for development at Rasar State Park as described in the staff memo. Member Spanel noted that she thinks the assertions that showers would (1) expand the user base to the elderly and families with young children and (2) extend the season were inaccurate.

Resolution 2012-04 moved by: Larry Fairleigh and seconded by: Pete Mayer
Resolution APPROVED

Board Business: Briefings & Discussion

Item 9: Briefing on Compliance Issue at Woodland Park in Lacey

Sarah Thirtyacre presented information about the board's compliance policies, as well as a conversion that the board will decide in October. She asked the board if there was additional information they needed before that decision. She noted that after the staff memo was written, the city suggested a second property as a possible replacement property. Although it has fewer recreational similarities to the converted property, it has a better location with improved access and better connectivity to other park properties.

Member Mayer asked if the second parcel had the same acreage; Thirtyacre responded that it would likely have a similar size and value to the first. Member Bloomfield asked if the seller was willing. Thirtyacre responded that it already had been purchased under a waiver of retroactivity. Member Fairleigh asked why the board could not vote on this topic today. Director Cottingham responded that the city needed to complete public comment. Member Spanel asked how many other conversions should be expected from Lacey. Thirtyacre responded that she was aware of only one other conversion that occurred when a road was rerouted for safety.

Item 10: Preview of the tour for June 28

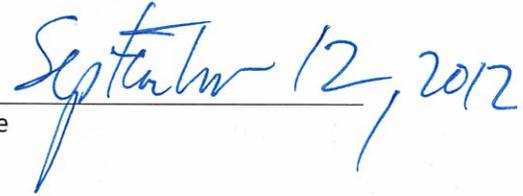
Sarah Thirtyacre provided an overview of the tour to be conducted on June 28, and an overview of the Olympic Discovery Trail. Driving directions were provided to members of the board and those in attendance.

The chair adjourned the meeting at 5:38 p.m.

Approved by:



Bill Chapman, Chair



Date

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Resolution #2012-03
June 2012 Consent Agenda

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following March 2012 Consent Calendar items are approved:

- A. Approve board meeting minutes – March 2012
- B. Approve eligibility for John Ball Park Property, Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation, RCO #12-1491
- C. Continue FARR advisory committee and delegate authority to director to appoint members

Resolution moved by: Brittell

Resolution seconded by: Willhite

Adopted/Defeated/Deferred (underline one)

Date: June 27, 2012

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board

Resolution #2012-04

Providing Policy Waiver so that Cabins with Shower Facilities at Rasar State Park are Eligible in 2012 WWRP State Parks Grant Round and Related Costs are Prorated

WHEREAS, the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) adopted a policy in 2011 making certain cabins and other overnight recreational facilities eligible in the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) State Parks category; and

WHEREAS, the board policy required that cabins and other overnight recreational facilities would not be eligible if they exceeded a "simple, basic design" as defined in policy; and

WHEREAS, State Parks has requested a waiver of the cabin eligibility policy so that they may submit a grant application that includes cabins that have shower facilities at Rasar State Park; and

WHEREAS, the Rasar State Park cabins meeting the definition of "simple, basic design" in all ways except the inclusion of shower facilities; and

WHEREAS, State Parks believes that shower amenities showers will help expand the user base of the park, lengthen the recreation season for overnight visitors, and provide more opportunities for the park to generate revenue; and

WHEREAS, providing the policy waiver could inform future policy discussions about the State Parks transformation strategy and the fundamental intent of the outdoor recreation grants and could provide a pilot so that staff can better understand the costs of added amenities and test the feasibility of prorating costs; and

WHEREAS, providing the policy waiver allows the project to proceed through the evaluation process and does not guarantee funding for the project; and

WHEREAS, providing a waiver supports the board's strategies to (1) evaluate and develop strategic investment policies and plans so that projects selected for funding meet the state's recreation and conservation needs and (2) provide funding to protect, preserve, restore, and enhance recreation opportunities statewide;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the board waives the cabin eligibility policy for project #12-1341 to allow State Parks to propose cabins that include the shower amenities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the project is funded, State Parks must purchase and install the shower facilities with non-board funds; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Recreation and Conservation Office staff will prorate costs as appropriate with regard to the shower facilities.

Resolution moved by: Fairleigh

Resolution seconded by: Mayer

Adopted/Defeated/Deferred (underline one)

Date: June 27, 2012