

June 27, 2005

**TO:** IAC Committee Members

**FROM:** Laura Eckert Johnson, Director

**PREPARED BY:** Jim Fox, Special Assistant to Director

**SUBJECT:** **WWRP Changes Resulting From ESSB5396**

ESSB5396 created four new funding categories in the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program:

- Restoration on existing state lands. At least ten percent of the Habitat Conservation Account (HCA) funds must be dedicated to this category. Only DNR and WDFW are eligible to receive grants.
- Development and renovation on existing state recreation lands. At least five percent of the Outdoor Recreation Account (ORA) funds must be dedicated to this category. Only DNR and WDFW are eligible.
- Riparian land acquisition, restoration and enhancement. If the total WWRP appropriation exceeds \$40 million, a portion of the amount over \$40 million goes to this program. State and local agencies and lead entities are eligible.
- Farmland preservation, ecological restoration and enhancement. If the total WWRP appropriation exceeds \$40 million, a portion of the amount over \$40 million also goes to this program. Counties and cities are eligible.

Assuming the WWRP application timeline is similar to that of past years, applications for the next grant cycle would be due in May of 2006. Before that deadline, the IAC must establish eligibility and evaluation criteria and an evaluation process for each of these new categories and formally adopt program policy manuals and rules (WACs). The proposed timeline is shown in Figure 1.

IAC staff recommends the establishment of an *ad hoc* advisory committee to assist with the development of policies for each of the four new programs. Members would be appointed by the Director and include representatives from agencies and entities eligible for grants, interested organizations and individuals, and technical experts. The committees would disband after the IAC adopts the program policies and rules, but would be asked to consider whether a permanent advisory committee is warranted, and if so, its role and composition.

In addition to the input from the advisory committees, staff recommends that draft materials be circulated via email and web postings for additional public review and

comment prior to the September and November IAC meetings. Staff is also considering the possibility of conducting public workshops in several areas around the state to get input on the riparian and farmland preservation programs. These would be held in late August or early September.

**Figure 1**

**Development of WWRP Policies For the 2006 Grant Cycle**

