



STATE OF WASHINGTON

RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

September 2008

Item #10b: **Proposed Changes to Park Population Proximity Statute**

Prepared By: Heath Packard, Policy and Planning Specialist

Presented By: Heath Packard, Policy and Planning Specialist

Approved by the Director:

Proposed Action: Decision

Summary

Staff has drafted a bill to revise the statute that requires the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (Board) to give funding preference to park projects in or near urban areas. At its June 2008 meeting, the Board noted that it wants to preserve the intent of this law—placing parks near people – while updating the statute to reflect modern planning approaches and recreation needs. Staff conducted stakeholder outreach regarding this proposal, and is presenting the Board with four options that reflect different approaches to address stakeholder interests.

To advance this agency request legislation, staff must submit the proposal to the Governor by September 29. The Governor will approve or decline the request by December 1. If approved, staff will work to secure legislative support and pursue passage of this legislation in the 2009 legislative session (January – May).

Staff Recommendation

Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) staff recommends that the Board approve and advance Request Legislation Option 2 to the Governor. This option modernizes the



parks population proximity statute and related policies, and addresses the issues raised by some stakeholders.

Resolution #2008-045 is provided for Board consideration.

Background

In 1980, the legislature adopted RCW 79A.25.250 (Attachment A), which requires the Board to give preference to park projects that are in or near urban areas, based on urban area population and county population density.

Nearly 30 years of changes in park planning and public use, combined with challenges for some grant programs, led the Board to request that staff review the statute and its modern applicability. At the June 2008 board meeting, staff presented the following findings:

- The approaches used to locate parks and other recreation sites and facilities have improved since 1980. These include improved park and recreation planning, the RCO's proposed "level of service" methodology, and the state's Growth Management Act.
- The factors influencing the location of recreation sites and facilities have changed. These factors include participation patterns, demand for recreation sites, and new trends in developing pedestrian-friendly communities and regional trail systems. Modern planning considers a recreation site's relationship to population growth patterns, urban development, highway congestion, transit access, and related energy consumption.
- The current statute has made it difficult for the Board to address the needs of multiple communities that would benefit from the development of regional trail systems or regional athletic facilities. The statute also has made it difficult for the Board to address the need for recreation facilities in smaller communities that have large seasonal populations.
- Since 1980, the Board has implemented the parks population proximity statute in 13 grant program categories through the evaluation criteria (Attachment B). These programs fund a diverse array of recreation and conservation projects including motorized boating facilities, multiple use trails, local parks, regional sport complexes, and urban wildlife habitat. The applicants vary by program and may include state agencies, local governments, tribes, and not-for-profit organizations. However, experience has shown that the narrow statutory definition of urban areas does not serve some program objectives. As a result, the Board has awarded few points for population proximity in some programs.

After reviewing these findings in June, the Board asked staff to draft a bill to update the parks population proximity statute. In addition, the Board asked staff to assess stakeholders' support and opposition to the proposed legislation.

Analysis

The intent of the proximity statute—placing parks near people—makes good sense, but using the same criteria for different types of parks and park users does not. There should be different approaches used for siting a neighborhood play area, a regional athletic complex, or interconnecting regional trail system.

The Board could more effectively meet the intent of RCW 79A.25.250 if the law recognized contemporary planning approaches, modern recreation considerations, and the recreation needs of Washington’s citizens.

Stakeholder Input

Staff drafted a bill to update the parks population proximity statute, contacted the key stakeholders affected by this proposal, and asked for public comments (Attachment C). Staff published this call for comments on the RCO website and in the newsletters of the Washington Recreation and Parks Association, the Association of Washington Cities, and the Washington State Association of Counties.

Nineteen individuals representing 14 agencies, organizations, or interest groups provided feedback (Attachment D). One state agency and one interest group issued concerns about the proposal. The rest of the comments were generally supportive of the proposal.

In response to the stakeholder feedback, staff drafted four options, as described below, for Board consideration. Staff then circulated these options to key stakeholders for additional comment. All of the responses (Attachment E) gave either full support, conditional support, or a neutral position for Option 2.

Legislative Request Options

Option 1: Original staff proposal (Attachment C)

Advance the proposal originally circulated by staff for stakeholder and public comment.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Supported by 12 of the original 14 respondents.	Likelihood of success (both legislatively and through the Governor’s office review process) is low, given the strong opposition from both the Association of Washington Cities and the Washington Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development.

Option 2: *Update the intent language and definition of “urban areas” and give direction to the Board to prioritize projects serving greatest population density (Attachment F)*

This option:

1. Uses the updated intent language from the original staff proposal;
2. Replaces the “in or near urban areas” prioritization with “in urban areas”;
3. Defines “urban areas” as “the area within the boundaries of any city or town or any ‘urban growth area’ pursuant to RCW 36.70A”;
4. Deletes the existing “urban areas” definition: “any incorporated city with a population of five thousand persons or greater or any county with a population density of two hundred fifty persons per square mile or greater”; and
5. Directs the Board to develop policies to give priority to projects that serve the greatest population density and policies to determine the project types and programs to which the statute applies.¹

Advantages	Disadvantages
Addresses the major concerns expressed by the Washington Dept. of Community, Trade, and Economic Development and the Association of Washington Cities.	Stakeholders would not know which grant programs, and project types the revised statute would apply to until the Board and staff update the policies and procedures after the legislative session.
Developing evaluation criteria to give priority to projects that serve the greatest existing or potential population density complements the goals and objectives of the Growth Management Act and can support other unique conservation tools such as the transfer of development rights. It does not arbitrarily advantage cities with the highest populations (Attachment G).	
Board determines application of this statute for grant programs and project types and may omit (or assign lower weights) those that fund regional trail systems, boating facilities, ORV trails, and other regional projects or state parks that most often fall outside of urban areas. The Board would work with stakeholders in developing these policies.	

¹ The Washington State Office of Financial Management maintains data for population density within city jurisdictional boundaries (<http://www.ofm.wa.gov/popden/>). Population density and potential density in urban growth areas would be developed in Board policy in collaboration with CTED, with stakeholder participation.]

Option 3: Update “urban areas” definition (Attachment G)

This option:

1. Replaces the “in or near urban areas” prioritization with “in urban areas”;
2. Defines “urban areas” as “the area within the boundaries of any city or town or any ‘urban growth area’ pursuant to RCW 36.70A”; and
3. Deletes the existing “urban areas” definition: “any incorporated city with a population of five thousand persons or greater or any county with a population density of two hundred fifty persons per square mile or greater.”

Advantages	Disadvantages
A narrow amendment could be the least time consuming approach for staff and legislative resources, if there is no organized opposition to the approach.	Stakeholders prefer option 2 to this option.
	Likelihood of success (both legislatively and through the Governor’s office review process) may be low if some of the stakeholders prefer a different approach.
	Does not offer amended intent language to give the Board better guidance on implementation.

Option 4: No statutory changes. Use existing Board authority to address definitions via policy changes

Under this option, the Board and RCO would not seek legislative changes to the current parks population proximity statute. The Board would direct staff to develop recommendations to update the policies that implement the existing statute. Policy recommendations would include:

1. Defining the terms “parks” and “in or near urban areas,”
2. Determining which grant programs fund “parks”
3. Determining which programs are best suited for population proximity evaluation criteria, and
4. Deciding how those criteria should be updated.

Advantages	Disadvantages
RCO saves staff resources otherwise spent working towards a legislative solution.	The Board may not be able to address all of the issues related to the outdated statute through policy-making.

Next Steps

If the Board decides to advance this agency request legislation, staff will submit the request to the Governor's Office by September 29, 2008. If the Governor's Office approves the request, staff will:

1. Develop a legislative strategy
2. Secure legislative sponsors for the bill (December 2008),
3. Have the bill introduced in both the state House and Senate (Jan 2009),
4. Request bill hearings in both chambers, provide testimony at hearings, and work to secure passage of the legislation (Jan and Feb 2009);
5. Request the Governor's signature if passed by Legislature (April 2009), and
6. Update WWRP manuals to reflect statute changes (November 2009).

Attachments

Resolution 2008-045

- A. Existing parks population proximity statute (79A.25.250 RCW)
- B. Analysis of grant programs that use 79A.25.250 RCW as project evaluation criteria
- C. Proposal circulated for public comment
- D. Summary of stakeholder feedback on proposal
- E. Summary of stakeholder feedback on Options 1-4
- F. Legislative Option 2 – Draft legislation
- G. Legislative Option 3 – Draft legislation

RESOLUTION #2008-045

Requesting Legislative Update of Parks Population Proximity Statute

WHEREAS, in 1980, the Legislature adopted RCW 79A.25.250, which requires the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (Board) to give preference to park projects that are in or near urban areas, based on urban area population and county population density; and

WHEREAS, the approaches used to locate parks and other recreation sites and facilities have improved since 1980 including improved park and recreation planning, the Recreation and Conservation Office’s proposed “level of service” methodology, and the state’s Growth Management Act; and

WHEREAS, the Board has adopted a strategic objective to fund projects that provide recreation that is “close to home” for Washingtonians; and

WHEREAS, the factors influencing the location of recreation sites and facilities have changed since 1980 including trends in participation patterns, developing pedestrian friendly communities, and addressing transportation issues; and

WHEREAS, the Board has adopted a strategic objective to use information about trends in recreation when making investment decisions; and

WHEREAS, the statute has limited the Board’s ability to consider these changing approaches and factors when establishing funding priorities; and

WHEREAS, the statute has made it difficult for the Board to address the needs of multiple communities that would benefit from the development of certain recreation areas such as regional trail systems or regional athletic facilities; and

WHEREAS, the statute has made it difficult for the Board to address the needs for recreation facilities in smaller communities that have large seasonal populations; and

WHEREAS, the stakeholder review and public comment processes used to develop the proposed amendment language support the Board’s goal use broad public participation and feedback, and its strategy to ensure that its work is conducted in a fair and open manner;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board hereby approves the request legislation to amend the parks population proximity statute RCW 79A.25.250 as reflected in Option 2 (Attachment F); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby recommends to the Governor the request legislation as reflected in Option 2 (Attachment F) for further consideration.

Resolution moved by: _____

Resolution seconded by: _____

Adopted/Defeated/Deferred (underline one)

Date: _____

Attachment A: Statute Requiring Park Proximity to Urban Areas (enacted in 1980)

RCW 79A.25.250

Acquisition, development, etc., of urban area parks by recreation and conservation funding board.

Recognizing the fact that the demand for park services is greatest in our urban areas, that parks should be accessible to all Washington citizens, that the urban poor cannot afford to travel to remotely located parks, that few state parks are located in or near urban areas, that a need exists to conserve energy, and that local governments having jurisdiction in urban areas cannot afford the costs of maintaining and operating the extensive park systems needed to service their large populations, the legislature hereby directs the recreation and conservation funding board to place a high priority on the acquisition, development, redevelopment, and renovation of parks to be located in or near urban areas and to be particularly accessible to and used by the populations of those areas. For purposes of RCW 79A.25.250 and 79A.05.300, "urban areas" means any incorporated city with a population of five thousand persons or greater or any county with a population density of two hundred fifty persons per square mile or greater. This section shall be implemented by January 1, 1981.

Attachment B: Analysis of grant programs that currently use 79A.25.250 RCW in project evaluation criteria

Program	Project types	Eligible applicants	Evaluation criteria points
WWRP – Local Parks	Acquisition, development, or renovation of property or facilities for active or passive outdoor recreation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ City, town & county ○ Native American tribe ○ Special purpose or port district ○ Other political subdivision 	Maximum 3 of 68 points 4.4%
WWRP –State Lands	Development or renovation of outdoor recreation facilities on existing state recreation land. Trails must be non-motorized and cannot be part of a street, roadway or sidewalk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ WDNR ○ WDFW Only 	Maximum 1 of 56 point 1.8%
WWRP – State Parks	Acquisition and/or development of state parks. Projects involving renovation of an existing facility are ineligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ State Parks 	Maximum 3 of 53 points 5.6%
WWRP – Trails	Acquire, develop, or renovate pedestrian, equestrian, bicycle, or cross-country ski trails (may include land and/or facilities such as trailheads, parking, and rest/picnic/view areas and restrooms directly related to existing/proposed public trail. Trails must be non-motorized and cannot be part of a street, roadway or sidewalk.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ City, town & county ○ Native American tribe ○ Special purpose or port district ○ Other political subdivision ○ State Parks ○ WDNR ○ GA ○ WDFW 	Maximum 3 of 78 points 3.8%
WWRP – Urban Wildlife Habitat	Provides habitat for wildlife species, food fish, shellfish, or freshwater or marine fish. (e.g. wildlife corridors, public use for wildlife interpretation and observation, development of facilities limited to fencing, interpretive/observation trails, interpretive signs/kiosks, rest rooms, parking, and creation or enhancement of habitat)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ City, town & county ○ Native American tribe ○ Special purpose or port district ○ Other political subdivision ○ State Parks ○ WDNR ○ GA ○ WDFW 	Maximum 10 of 80 points 12.5%
WWRP – Water Access	Includes projects that provide physical access to shorelines for non-motorized, water-related recreation activities such as boating, fishing, and beach access. (Acquisition, development, or renovation may include facilities that support water-dependent recreation such as parking, restrooms, picnic areas, access trails, fishing piers, platforms, swim beaches, boat access facilities, and water trails for non-motorized watercraft such as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ City, town & county ○ Native American tribe ○ Special purpose or port district ○ Other political subdivision ○ State Parks ○ WDNR ○ GA ○ WDFW 	Maximum 3 of 63 points 4.8%

Program	Project types	Eligible applicants	Evaluation criteria points
	canoes and kayaks.)		
Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA)	Purchase, improvement, or protection of aquatic lands for public purposes, and for providing and improving access to aquatic lands. “Aquatic lands” means all tidelands, shorelands, harbor areas, and the beds of navigable waters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ City, town & county ○ State government ○ Native American tribes 	Maximum 1pt of 71 points 1.4%
Boating Facilities Program	Facilities that support motorized watercraft recreation (e.g. land acquisition and development of boat launches and guest moorage facilities).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ City, town & county ○ Park and recreation districts ○ Public utility and port districts ○ Native American tribes ○ State agencies 	Maximum 1pt of 76 (local) or 73 (state) points 1.3% local 1.4% state
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)	Acquisitions, development or renovation of public outdoor recreation facilities (e.g. athletic fields, courts, playgrounds, skate parks, marine facilities, campgrounds, picnic shelters, community gardens, golf courses, natural areas, open space, shooting and archery ranges, ski areas, ice skating ponds, snowmobile facilities, swim beaches, pools, support facilities such as parking, restrooms, storage, and utilities, trails, view points, fishing/hunting areas).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ City, town & county ○ Native American tribes ○ Park and recreation districts ○ School districts ○ State agencies ○ Port and public utility districts 	Maximum 1pt of 47 points 2.1%

Program	Project types	Eligible applicants	Evaluation criteria points
<p>Non-highway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities (NOVA) Program Categories: - Non-motorized - Off-road vehicle</p>	<p>Land and facilities that support motorized, non-motorized, and non-highway road recreation (e.g. development of trails and trailheads, maintenance of intensive use areas like off-road vehicle sports parks).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ City, town & county ○ Federal agencies ○ Native American Tribes ○ Nonprofit organizations ○ State agencies 	<p>Maximum 2 pts of 72 (non-highway/non-motorized) or 67 (ORV)</p> <p>2.8% (non-hwy & non-motor)</p> <p><u>3.0% (ORV)</u></p> <p>Uses modified urban area approach for 1pt: w/in 30 mi radius of cities > 25,000 pop.</p>
<p>Youth Athletic Facilities</p>	<p>New, improved, and better maintained outdoor athletic facilities serving youth and communities.</p> <p><i>An athletic facility is a facility dedicated to the purposes of sports and athletics.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ City, town & county ○ Non-profit organizations 	<p>Maximum 1 pt of 62</p> <p>1.6%</p>

Attachment C: Legislative Option 1 - Proposal circulated for public comment:

Proposed amendment to RCW 79A.25.250

[~~strikethrough~~ indicate proposed deletions, underline indicates proposed additions]

New Section **Sec. 1.**

It is the intent of the legislature to invest in parks, trails, and other recreation sites and facilities that promote livable communities, healthy populations, a thriving tourism economy, and that protect Washington's environment. Parks, trails, and other recreation sites or facilities should be located near the people that use them and accessible to all Washington residents. Local comprehensive plans, parks and recreation plans, and level of service methodologies are important tools to help communities and state funding agencies determine what recreation sites are needed and where they should be located. Different types of parks, trails, and other recreation sites and facilities justify varying proximities to the populations that use them. The recreation and conservation funding board shall develop criteria for ensuring that these sites and facilities are best situated to provide the greatest benefits to Washington's residents in both rural and urban areas.

Sec. 2. Amending chapter RCW 79A.25.250 to read as follows:

~~Recognizing the fact that the demand for park services is greatest in our urban areas, that parks should be accessible to all Washington citizens, that the urban poor cannot afford to travel to remotely located parks, that few state parks are located in or near urban areas, that a need exists to conserve energy, and that local governments having jurisdiction in urban areas cannot afford the costs of maintaining and operating the~~

~~extensive park systems needed to service their large populations,~~
~~the legislature hereby directs the~~ The recreation and
conservation funding board shall ~~to~~ place a high priority on the
acquisition, development, redevelopment, and renovation of parks,
trails and other recreation sites or facilities to be located in
~~or near~~ urban areas and to be particularly accessible to and used
by the populations of those areas. The board may place a high
priority on the acquisition, development, redevelopment, and
renovation of parks, trails and other recreation sites or
facilities outside of urban areas if the project helps implement
an adopted local or regional plan and the project connects more
than one community or meets a larger regional or statewide need.
The board shall develop policies and procedures to ensure that
the provisions of this section are implemented. For purposes of
this section, RCW [79A.25.250](#) and [79A.05.300](#), "urban area" means
~~any incorporated city with a population of five thousand persons~~
~~or greater or any county with a population density of two hundred~~
~~fifty persons per square mile or greater. This section shall be~~
~~implemented by January 1, 1981.~~ the area within the boundaries of
any city or town or any "urban growth area" pursuant to RCW
36.70A.

Attachment D: Summary of Stakeholder Comments on Original Proposal

Agency Positions Parks Population Proximity		
Agency/Contact	Agency Position	Comment Summary
Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development Leonard Bauer	Concerns	CTED supports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intent of proposal • Proposed language to define urban areas consistent with the Growth Management Act (GMA) • Proposed language placing a high priority on providing recreation facilities in urban areas CTED has the following questions and concerns: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If the intent is to prioritize parks in urban areas then the board should not place an equal priority on parks outside of urban areas. The “may place a high priority” on facilities other than those located in urban areas may conflict with this intent. 2. It may be problematic to determine if a project “helps implement an adopted local or regional plan.” CTED suggests deleting the word “helps,” so that there is a clear direction that a project must demonstrate clear implementation of a plan. 3. Some parks and recreation facilities outside of the urban growth areas require urban level of services (e.g. wastewater, transportation, and public safety services). However, larger regional facilities that require urban levels of service contradict state policies articulated in the GMA that requires urban levels of service to be focused in urban areas. CTED suggests amendments stating that park and recreation facilities that are intended to serve a regional or statewide need and require urban levels of service be sited primarily in urban areas. If there is a demonstrated need for a facility to be located outside of an urban area, projects should be required to document its need for urban services, and to demonstrate how those services will be provided consistent with GMA.
Department of Natural Resources Pene Speaks (360) 902-1916 pene.speaks@wadnr.gov	Support	DNR agrees with RCO staff analysis and proposal.

Agency Positions Parks Population Proximity		
Agency/Contact	Agency Position	Comment Summary
WA Conservation Commission Ron Shultz	Support	No problems with this proposal.
Department of Transportation Megan White & Ken Risenhoover	Support	No problems with this proposal.
State Parks and Recreation Commission Fred Romero and Bill Koss	Support, with suggestions	<p>State Parks (SP) has no concerns with the proposed legislation and no problem with RCFB requesting a legislative change to remove the definition found in RCW 79A.05.300. The proposed language can assist some parks that have been unable to obtain grants due to the inability to score points for 'population proximity'. Rural linear trails are a good example.</p> <p>State Parks has the following suggestions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In implementing this statute, it should not impede funding for state parks away from urban areas. The state's top 10 parks in attendance (2004) are: Deception Pass, Long Beach, North Beach, Moran, Centennial Trail, Cape Disappointment, Riverside, Fort Worden, Lake Sammamish and Birch Bay. Only three of these are in urban areas. 2. The planning component of this proposal should be consistent with existing planning requirements of the RCO/WWRP.
Department of Fish and Wildlife	Unknown	Not a major concern because habitat categories will not be affected.

Stakeholder Positions Parks Population Proximity		
Organization/ Contact	Org. Position	Comments
Association of Washington Cities Dave Williams Ashley Probart	Cannot support proposal	<p>AWC recognizes that all Washington residents - whether or not they live in cities, need and deserve park and open space opportunities. However, AWC is engaged in many policy discussions with agencies and stakeholders - all asking that cities develop more compactly (i.e., denser). This is promoted by the current Growth Management Act and supports other state goals to address both Climate Change and Puget Sound Recovery.</p> <p>Cities across Washington are under increasing pressure to provide both "brick and mortar" and "quality of life" infrastructure to growing populations. Our roads, sewers and water distribution systems are under stress - many needing repairs just to service existing residents, let alone an expanding population. Similarly, our parks and recreation facilities are in need of upkeep and expansion as cities become more densely populated.</p> <p>Therefore AWC cannot support this proposal because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It eliminated the priority to fund parks in cities. • Expands funding options to include areas outside cities and GMA urban growth area boundaries. <p>AWC appreciates that RCO operates a number of programs and must address the parks and recreation needs of all Washington citizens. AWC would like to better understand the variety of programs available for both urban, rural, regional and state parks and how this particular statute impacts funding decisions for them all.</p>
Chelan Ranger District Recreation Planner, and private citizen Margi Peterson	Support, with suggestion	<p>Strongly supports the addition of new Section 1 in the statute because it includes the importance of locating parks not just where the majority of people reside in their only or primary residence; but it also considers where the state's population actually goes to recreate – often the Eastern side of the Cascade Range. Many rural towns of less than 5000 population draw some tourism, but often lack the economic resources to have an actual parks department to provide for local parks for residents and tourist use.</p> <p>Section 2 is long overdue for updating. Support all the wording changes with the added suggestion of changing the word “may” in to the word “shall” in this sentence “The board may place a high priority (...) on recreation sites (...) outside of urban areas (...) if (...) meets a larger regional or statewide need.”</p>

Stakeholder Positions Parks Population Proximity		
Organization/ Contact	Org. Position	Comments
Seattle Parks Foundation Karen Daubert	Support	Support this proposal. Suggest that there should be a more clear articulation of the priority of park funding for urban areas. The “shall” prioritize parks in urban areas and “may” prioritize projects outside of urban areas language should more explicitly articulate the policy to prioritize urban projects over those outside urban areas.
Washington Parks and Recreation Association Shelli Marelli	Support	RCO has developed a thoughtful approach that maintains the intent of the original statute while keeping the delicate balance of prioritizing funding for population centers but also recognizing new types of recreation like regional trails and water access facilities that are sometimes serving a regional or seasonal population. WRPA support this approach. One risk is the cost of land in the rural setting – might get more park acreage for the dollar but the question of who will it be serving is a critical one.
Washington State Association of Counties Rashi Gupta	Support	WSAC supports this proposal provided that when it is implemented any policy changes are consistent with and recognize existing planning requirements of our county governments. WSAC would not support related policy changes that would require new plans by counties or other unfunded mandates.
San Juan County Parks and Recreation Department Dona Wuthno	Support	San Juan County supports this approach because they have applied for WWRP grants in the past and not competed well because of points awarded to more populous counties and cities. However, the facilities they were seeking funding for are heavily used for recreation by an in-state seasonal population of visitors often from those same counties and cities that are outcompeting us in the local parks category.
San Juan County John A. Van Lund, P.E. County Engineer	Support	Supports the proposal because the current approach penalizes county parks by as much as 5 points when competing against urban parks for RCO grant funding? Strongly supports removal of the 5 point advantage for urban parks and putting everyone on the same equal footing when competing for RCO funding.
City of Entiat Susan Driver, Planner	Support	Agrees that the law needs to be revised to address different types of recreational facilities with different criteria. Specifically in favor of adding language to address small communities with large seasonal recreational populations.

Stakeholder Positions Parks Population Proximity		
Organization/ Contact	Org. Position	Comments
		Our laws need to work together. The Shoreline Management Act (SMA) promotes public access to water, but public access to water is seldom found in urban areas. People go to the small, rural communities (like Entiat) to get water access. We suggest that the Parks funding policies should support and compliment SMA requirements for local governments.
Citizens and Retired Park Rangers Carl Burger and Sandy Playa Olga, WA	Support	Support the proposed policy changes. The notion of "Rural" and "Urban" as distinct entities is becoming blurred. Two-thirds of the full-time residents in our County of San Juan have been here less than ten years. Strongly endorse such a change, which would allow Washington's "rural" park units access to broader-based sources of funding. Continued growth of the State is a given. Allowing our outlying units a chance to anticipate increased growth is a good thing.
Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition Mike Ryherd Marcia Fromhold Bill Robinson Joanna Grist	Support	The WWRC concurs with the RCO staff recommendation.

Attachment E: Summary of Stakeholder Comments on Options 1-4

Agency or Organization/ Contact	Position	Comment
Association of Washington Cities Dave Williams	Support (conditional)	AWC likes the direction you're headed and appreciates RCO's willingness to work with AWC's concerns. AWC supports RCFB/RCO advancing Option 2 in its current format to the Governor's Office for approval. AWC understands that its remaining concerns can be addressed by the Board through its policy making process. Specifically AWC would prefer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A definition of "urban areas" that only includes Urban Growth Areas that are zoned for urban densities. • With that - you're hearing from me/staff. I'll be taking this to our Legislative Subcommittee for official buy off.
Washington State Association of Counties Eric Johnson	Support (conditional)	WSAC is supportive of this concept but urges the RCFB/RCO to avoid unintended consequences. Specifically WSAC wants the Board to ensure that the related policy changes do not penalize densely populated counties whose only acquisition options for regional parks and open space are outside the Urban Growth Areas. Thank you for developing the policies to implement this new statute to ensure that Counties currently population proximity points are not disadvantaged under this new statute. WSAC also suggests that the board consider formal rule making to implement this statute because the policies will influence the allocation of hundreds of millions of dollars.
Department of Community Trade and Economic Development Leonard Bauer	Support	Option 2 accomplishes what the intent of RCOs proposal, while also addressing CTED's earlier concerns. CTED is not sure if options 3 or 4 would accomplish RCOs intent, but would be open to discussing those options further if RCO/RCFB chooses to pursue either of them.

<p>Seattle Parks Foundation</p> <p>Karen Daubert</p>	<p>Support</p>	<p>This approach appears to preserve the intent and objective so the Board while doing a good job of addressing the issues raised by concerned stakeholders.</p>
<p>Washington Recreation and Parks Association</p> <p>Shelli Marelli</p>	<p>Support</p>	<p>This approach appears to allow the Board to accomplish the same thing the original proposal would have allowed with a little more attention to how the statute is applied.</p>
<p>State Parks and Recreation Foundation</p> <p>Fred Romero Bill Koss</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>State Parks (SP) is okay with RCO/RCFB moving forward with Option 2. SP believes that the parks population proximity evaluation criteria are working fairly well for our projects and WWRP. SP conditions its neutrality on the request that the Board looks very closely at how the new statute affects State Parks outside of urban areas. SP wants to make sure that trails are not at a competitive disadvantage in WWRP categories that also fund parks and apply a population proximity statute.</p> <p>SP would prefer that the “may” prioritize projects outside of urban areas language in the RCO staff’s original proposal remain.</p>

Attachment F: Legislative Option 2, Draft Legislation

Proposed amendment to RCW 79A.25.250

[~~strike~~through indicate proposed deletions, underline indicates proposed additions]

Sec. 1. Amending chapter RCW 79A.25.250 to read as follows:

State investments in parks, trails, and other recreation sites and facilities should promote livable communities, healthy populations, a thriving tourism economy, and that protect Washington's environment. Parks, trails, and other recreation sites or facilities should be located near the people that use them and accessible to all Washington residents. Local comprehensive plans, parks and recreation plans, and level of service methodologies are important tools to help communities and state funding agencies determine what recreation sites are needed and where they should be located. Different types of parks, trails, and other recreation sites and facilities justify varying proximities to the populations that use them. ~~Recognizing the fact that the demand for park services is greatest in our urban areas, that parks should be accessible to all Washington citizens, that the urban poor cannot afford to travel to remotely located parks, that few state parks are located in or near urban areas, that a need exists to conserve energy, and that local governments having jurisdiction in urban areas cannot afford the costs of maintaining and operating the extensive park systems needed to service their large populations, the legislature hereby directs the~~ The recreation and conservation funding board shall ~~to~~ place a high priority on the acquisition, development, redevelopment, and renovation of parks to be located in ~~or near~~ urban areas and to be particularly accessible to and used by the populations of those areas. For ~~purposes~~ of this section, ~~RCW~~

~~79A.25.250~~ and ~~79A.05.300~~, "urban area" means ~~any incorporated city with a population of five thousand persons or greater or any county with a population density of two hundred fifty persons per square mile or greater. This section shall be implemented by January 1, 1981.~~ the area within the boundaries of any city or town or any "urban growth area" pursuant to RCW 36.70A. To implement the provisions of this section the board shall develop policies and procedures including, but not limited to, determining which programs and project types this statute applies to and to designing evaluation criteria that prioritize projects serving areas of greatest existing or potential population density.

Attachment G: Legislative Option 3, Draft Legislation

Proposed amendment to RCW 79A.25.250

[~~strike~~through indicate proposed deletions, underline indicates proposed additions]

Sec. 1. Amending chapter RCW 79A.25.250 to read as follows:

Recognizing the fact that the demand for park services is greatest in our urban areas, that parks should be accessible to all Washington citizens, that the urban poor cannot afford to travel to remotely located parks, that few state parks are located in or near urban areas, that a need exists to conserve energy, and that local governments having jurisdiction in urban areas cannot afford the costs of maintaining and operating the extensive park systems needed to service their large populations, the legislature hereby directs the recreation and conservation funding board to place a high priority on the acquisition, development, redevelopment, and renovation of parks to be located in ~~or near~~ urban areas and to be particularly accessible to and used by the populations of those areas. For purposes of this section, RCW 79A.25.250 and 79A.05.300, "urban area" means ~~any incorporated city with a population of five thousand persons or greater or any county with a population density of two hundred fifty persons per square mile or greater. This section shall be implemented by January 1, 1981.~~ the area within the boundaries of any city or town or any "urban growth area" pursuant to RCW 36.70A.