



STATE OF WASHINGTON

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Washington Biodiversity Council Names New Executive Coordinator

OLYMPIA – The Washington Biodiversity Council has picked Olympia resident Lynn Helbrecht as its new executive coordinator.

Helbrecht will manage the work of the council, which was created in 2004 by then Governor Gary Locke to develop and promote the conservation of Washington's biodiversity.

Washington is permanent or temporary home to 140 mammal species, 470 freshwater and saltwater fish species, 341 bird species, as well as another 20,150 animal species and 3,100 plant species.

Biodiversity, sometimes referred to as the “web of life,” includes the habitats in which life occurs, the ways that species and habitats interact with each other, and the processes that support those interactions. According to the 2003 *Washington Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Report*, Washington is in danger of losing much of its diversity of plant and animal life in the next few generations because of habitat fragmentation, degradation, and conversion, as well as from global climate change and a constant and rapid invasion of exotic plant and animal species.

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The Governor tasked the 23-member Biodiversity Council with developing a 30-year strategy and implementation plan by the end of 2007. The council also will complete an assessment of landowner incentive programs, create two pilot programs using those incentives and develop public education and outreach programs, including a Web site.

Helbrecht will take over as executive coordinator on April 18, 2005. She currently is the sustainability coordinator in the Governor's Executive Policy Office and has provided staff support for the 22-member Governor's Sustainable Washington Advisory Panel, charged with developing a sustainable development action plan for the state.

Before that, Helbrecht worked at the Washington Department of Ecology as a senior environmental planner in the area of toxics reduction. She has represented the states of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington on the National Pollution Prevention Roundtable board of directors.

"We are very excited for Lynn to be joining the council," said Maggie Coon, Seattle, the council chair. "She brings a wealth of environmental knowledge as well as an outstanding track record in working effectively with landowners and businesses."

For more information about the Biodiversity Council, visit its Web site at <http://www.iac.wa.gov/biodiversity>.

The Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) was established in 1964 to finance recreation and conservation projects throughout the state. The IAC Office provides administrative support for the Washington Biodiversity Council.