

## **Agenda**

- Introductions
- Reschedule next quarterly meeting on July 27 (options include July 13 or July 20)
- Recap last quarterly meeting (January)
- Roundtable status reports
- Prepare for upcoming benchmarks (including Annual Forum in August 2011 and Monitoring Report in September 2011).
  - What are strategies for meeting benchmarks with little/no resources? (For example, how can the annual forum, biennial forecast, and biennial monitoring report be less resource intensive?)
  - What staff time resources state agency partners practically able to contribute?
- Key messages for final recommendations – Are there key messages the Lands Group should make to continue the coordination and transparency process in an era of scarce resources?

## Quarterly Meeting Summary

### *Attendance*

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Sean Graham, Senator Linda Evans Parlette's Office  
Bill Robinson, The Nature Conservancy  
Pene Speaks, Department of Natural Resources  
Dan Budd, Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Steve Hahn, State Parks and Recreation Commission  
Jeanne Koenings, Department of Ecology  
Dominga Soliz, Recreation and Conservation Office  
Josh Giuntoli, State Conservation Commission  
Sarah Gage, Biodiversity Council  
Dominga Soliz, Lands Group Coordinator

### *Updates and administrative issues*

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Reschedule next quarterly meeting - The July 27, 2011 quarterly meeting needs to be rescheduled since the coordinator will not be available. Other potential dates are July 13 and July 20. Dominga will send out a meeting scheduler to see what works best.

Member participation – Ken Risenhoover sent an email to let the lands group know his position and program (Ecological Mitigation Program) are likely to be cut. The email said that Ken can make a recommendation to his supervisor to continue WSDOT's participation in the lands group if the group feels it is important. Dominga will let Ken know that several group members think it is important for WSDOT to continue participating.

Jeanne Koenings announced that she will be retiring in March 2012, but that her position is expected to be filled.

Sarah Gage announced that her position will end in June 2011 since the Biodiversity Council will come to an end at that time. Sarah hopes the lands group's work will continue to support biodiversity.

### *Recap of the last quarterly meeting*

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State Land Acquisition Monitoring Report (due September 2011) - At the last meeting, the group reviewed and approved a proposal for the state land acquisition monitoring report. The report will be published on the lands group website and is intended to meet the group's statutory task of "monitoring the success" of state land acquisitions. It essentially asks the state agencies, "Did you do what you said you were going to do?" The group clarified that the report will compare projects completed in July 2011 with their proposals from the 2007-09 biennium.

Final Recommendations to the Legislature (due December 2011) - At the last quarterly meeting, the lands group reviewed the initial draft final recommendations to the Legislature. The group agreed that the final report should showcase the lands group's key deliverable: the information delivery that happens through the state land acquisition transparency and coordination process. Other messages are: the primary motivation for the lands group's enabling legislation was to make acquisitions more transparent to local governments, the lands group does not create new authority for state agencies to purchase land, and there was coordination before the lands group but it is enhanced because the lands group provides a means for project-level coordination. We also discussed a funding strategy to include in the final recommendations. Several options were considered, but there was no resolution.

### *Roundtable discussion about potential budget cuts*

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Most agency representatives reported significant potential cuts to their operating and capital budgets. For example, State Parks could potentially have no operating budget, and DNR's Natural Heritage Program and WSDOT's Ecological Mitigation Program could be nearly eliminated. Depending on the budget, state agency land purchases could be greatly reduced or eliminated. The group discussed how land purchases could be affected by the alternate WWRP budgets, and the potential budget proviso to prohibit state land purchases except those approved by the Legislature.

### *Upcoming Lands Group benchmarks*

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The group discussed the following upcoming benchmarks:

**August 2, 2011** – 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual State Land Acquisition Coordinating Forum

**September 2011** – 1<sup>st</sup> Biennial State Land Acquisition Monitoring Report

**December 2011** – Final Recommendations to the Legislature (including annual progress report)

**February 2012** – 4<sup>th</sup> Annual State Land Acquisition Coordinating Forum

**June 2012** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Biennial State Land Acquisition Forecast Report

**July 2012** – tentative sunset date

Annual State Land Acquisition Coordinating Forum (August 2, 2011) – At the forum, state agencies will present the following information:

- Projects recently approved for funding in the 2011-13 biennium
- Projects potentially planned for funding in the 2013-15 biennium
- High-level data that shows how projects completed by July 2011 compare with their proposals. This is a quick preview of the upcoming State Land Acquisition Monitoring Report.

The group agreed to reduce the length of the forum from 1.5 days to 1 day. Agency presenters are DNR, DFW, State Parks, Ecology's federal pass through grants, State Conservation Commission, and possibly DNR's Trust Land Transfer Program and WSDOT's Ecological Mitigation Program.

The last annual forum required extensive agency staff time to gather and standardize project data and maps, so the group agreed that preparation for the next forum can be more efficient by pulling project data from the PRISM database for state grant funded projects, and gathering data directly from the agencies for other projects. Dominga will work with agencies to develop the presentations, and will solicit lists of invitees from lands group members.

Biennial State Land Acquisition Monitoring Report (due September 2011) – The monitoring report shows whether the agencies acquired what they proposed to acquire. This report will compare the projects completed by July 2011 with their proposals from the 2007-09 biennium. The report will show the date each project was completed and, if the project wasn't completed by July 2011, it will provide an explanation. It will compare the following data to show how each completed project compares with its proposal:

- Cost
- Number of acres
- Project boundary (maps)
- Project description

The report will also roll-up the data to show a legislative district, county, and statewide perspective. Dominga will work with agency staff to compile and format the data.

In addition to the project data, the beginning of the report will include text that explains what the lands group is, what it does, and how it has improved the transparency and coordination of state land acquisitions.

### ***Other discussion***

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Lands Group relevance - Lands group members discussed how the group can best show its value to decision-makers. For example, the potential proviso that would prohibit state land purchases except those approved by the Legislature indicates the Legislature thinks visibility about state land acquisitions could still be improved. The group agreed to recommend that RCO's Director submit a letter to legislators that recognizes the importance of transparent state land purchases, and explains that the lands group was created by the Legislature for that purpose. The letter can also be used to invite Legislators or their staff to the upcoming State Land Acquisition Coordinating Forum. In addition, the forum and the monitoring report can be used to show that the lands group is asking whether agencies are doing what they said they would do.

Funding strategy - The group considered the funding strategy to propose in the final recommendations to the Legislature. The initial draft of the report lays out 3 options: 1) the lands group continues with no dedicated funding source 2) the lands group continues with dedicated funding and 3) the lands group is eliminated. Members agreed that the transparency and coordination process should continue whether or not funding is available. The group discussed the strategy of presenting all the options, including options for eliminating the group, and for dedicating funding. Another strategy is to show the Legislature that the group has already achieved what it set out to accomplish, and, therefore, there is value in continuing the work, even without funding.

Lands group members all indicated that they are committed to continuing the transparency and coordination work, even without funding. The group recognized that state agency participation is necessary to hosting the forum, and to developing the reports, but that the level of participation can be reduced from what was required last year. Time constraints prohibit continuing the regular workgroup meetings, but members will attend quarterly meetings and will provide staff support as necessary to prepare for the forum and the reports.

### ***Next steps***

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Dominga will send out a doodle poll to reschedule the July quarterly meeting. She will contact state agency representatives to develop presentations and collect invitee lists for the annual forum, and to prepare the monitoring report. Dominga will also coordinate a draft letter to the Legislature from RCO's Director. She will submit the draft to the lands group to review before sending.