

Advisory Committee Charter

Program: Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Critical Habitat, Natural Areas, and Urban Wildlife Habitat

Reference: RCW 79A.15.040; WAC 286-27

RCFB Policy Manual: #10b, Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program – Habitat Conservation Account

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Approved:



Purpose

The Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Habitat Acquisition advisory committee (advisory committee) advises the Recreation and Conservation Office's (RCO) director regarding issues that affect the WWRP Critical Habitat, Natural Areas, and Urban Wildlife Habitat programs, primarily:

- Project Selection

And also including:

- Policies;
- Procedures;
- Legislative issues; and
- Statewide planning.

Task and Function

In order to accomplish its purpose, the advisory committee:

- Provides technical counsel on project merits;
- Evaluates and scores grant proposals that results in a ranked list of projects for fund consideration;
- Provides recommendations as needed on allowable uses of grant project sites; and occasionally;
- Assists in the development and application of program policies and procedures;
- Provides counsel on legislative issues and statewide planning.

The advisory committee uses the project selection process adopted by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) to evaluate and rank grant requests. The director considers the advisory committee's grant evaluations as advice when recommending projects

to the board.

Administration

The director assigns a liaison to the advisory committee to provide administrative support, including arranging meetings, writing meeting summaries, and providing information on program issues and grant requests.

Member Duties

Advisory committee review and evaluate grant applications. Members also help achieve program policies, goals, and objectives as established in this charter, the program manuals, and other relevant rules and documents. Member tasks are limited to those requested by RCO. Members must not use committee time to advocate for personal goals. Members do not represent RCO or the advisory committee in external forums or deliberations.

Standing and Composition

Except for ex-officio members, advisory committee members have equal status and shall share fully in all activities and duties:

The advisory committee shall typically have 12-14 members representing:

Regular Members	
Type	Number of Seats
Community members, local agency, nonprofit representatives, Tribal government representatives	10-12
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	1
Washington Department of Natural Resources	1

RCO will strive to find representatives knowledgeable in:

- Acquisition of habitat properties
- Fish and wildlife or natural resources management
- Watershed management and planning
- Biology, botany, ecology, forestry, geology, or zoology

The advisory committee shall also have additional members who participate and contribute in the technical review process, but do not participate in final project evaluations. These are ex-officio members of the advisory committee or RCO staff whose role is to assist in the technical review of projects.

Ex-Officio Members	
Type	Number of Seats

Along with habitat preservation expertise, RCO's Director will work to ensure that appointees represent the full range of Washington's diversity. The advisory committee should include individuals with a variety of different perspectives. RCO strives to appoint advisory committee members with diverse life experience, age, perspectives, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, mental and physical abilities, education, socioeconomic status, and affiliation with cultural, or other groups.

Attributes

RCO shall seek advisory committee members who have one or more of the following attributes:

- Are available for and have a high interest in advisory committee participation.
- Are knowledgeable about issues affecting habitat conservation or land acquisition.
- Are passionate about WWRP habitat acquisition activities.
- Demonstrate an understanding of views of those with diverse interests.
- Demonstrate an appreciation of the wide variety of habitat across the state.

Ethics

Advisory committee members must uphold a high ethical standard. It is extremely important to avoid both the appearance and actual conflicts of interest.

See [RCO's Conflict of Interest Policy for Grant Review and Evaluation Advisory Committees](#) for more detail.

Advisors who have a conflict of interest with 20% or more of the projects in a grant category will be asked to recuse themselves from scoring all projects in that category.

Appointments

The Director appoints members based on an assessment that includes:

- Review of the application for advisory committee membership;
- Applicant attributes (as described above);
- Previous performance history (meeting attendance, participation/contributions);
- Advice from RCO staff and other parties; and
- Endorsements from organized groups.

Terms

Advisors will serve a term of four years. Advisors' terms will overlap to ensure continuity of experience on the committee. The director may reappoint members to two additional years of service, for a maximum of six years of service. Any additional years of service will be at the discretion of the director. Members who work for other state agencies serve at the pleasure of their agency head.

Out of State Applicants

Unless specifically approved by the director, only Washington state residents may serve on this advisory committee.

Removal

The director may dismiss any advisory committee member for reasons including, but not limited to, lack of participation in committee activities, an unexcused absence from meetings, and actions that are contrary to RCO's mission, the advisory committee's charter, or RCO statutes and policies.

Meetings

Typically, RCO staff facilitates advisory committee meetings. Advisory committee decisions are made by general agreement.

Project Evaluation

RCO's goal is to have at least eight advisory committee members available for review and evaluation of project applications.

Stipends

Stipends may be available for advisors who are not otherwise compensated to participate on an advisory committee. Stipend rates and procedure is outlined in RCO's "Advisory Committee and Workgroup Compensation" policy.

Reimbursements

Reimbursement for child and/or adult care may be available advisory committee members. Rates and procedures are outlined in RCO's "Advisory Committee and Workgroup Compensation" policy.

Reimbursement for travel may be available. Reimbursement for travel and per diem costs commensurate with state employee rates may be available for community member representatives and those local agency representatives whose agencies cannot absorb the cost. Reimbursement is not available for state or federal government representatives without expressed approval of the director or deputy director.