Appendix E: RCO Survey Summary

Results of the Online Stakeholder Survey

The purpose of the stakeholder survey was to gather observations, opinions, ideas, and recommendations from people that have been involved in the WWRP in order to identify issues and a range of possible actions.

The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) e-mailed links to the online SurveyMonkey questionnaire on September 15, 2015 to more than 4,000 WWRP stakeholders listed in the RCO PRISM database. In addition, some stakeholder organizations provided the link to their members through e-mail and newsletters.

The survey captured 485 responses before closing October 18, 2015. In addition to analyzing responses to the closed-ended (multiple-choice) questions, the RCO policy team reviewed 3,010 responses to open-ended questions. Open-ended responses were grouped by common themes and sorted by the number of times a particular theme or issue was mentioned.

QUESTION 1: In what way have you been involved with the WWRP? (Check all that apply)

Response (in descending order of response count)	Response Count	Response Percent
Preparing a grant application	221	45.6%
Managing a funded project	174	35.9%
Advocate for WWRP's programs and funding	139	28.7%
Advocate for a specific project or class of projects (for example, trails or farmland preservation)	128	26.4%
Other (please specify)	110	22.7%
Planner (for example, recreation, resource, environmental, land use, transportation)	99	20.4%
Technical advisor (for example, engineer, architect, biologist, researcher, lawyer)	77	15.9%
Serving on a WWRP advisory committee	62	12.8%
Administrator or financial manager	54	11.1%
Elected official	33	6.8%
Policymaker	31	6.4%

QUESTION 2: Is your experience with the WWRP based on being associated with a: (Check all that apply)

Response (in descending order of response count)	Response Count	Response Percent
Nonprofit organization	166	34.2%
City or town government	122	25.2%
State agency	112	23.1%
County government	88	18.1%
As an unaffiliated individual	60	12.4%
Other (please specify)	57	11.8%
Park and recreation district or metropolitan park district	39	8.0%
Other local governmental entity, such as a port or school district	32	6.6%
State legislature	22	4.5%
Native American tribe	17	3.5%

QUESTION 3: When it created the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program in 1990, the Washington State Legislature found that 'if current trends continue, some wildlife species and rare ecosystems will be lost in the state forever and public recreational lands will not be adequate to meet public demands.' The purpose of the program is 'to acquire as soon as possible the most significant lands for wildlife conservation and outdoor recreation purposes before they are converted to other uses and to develop existing public recreational land and facilities to meet the needs of present and future generations.' Does this direction, as set forth by the 1990 Legislature, continue to reflect current needs and future trends in recreation and conservation?

Response	Response Count	Response Percent
Yes	383	80.5%
No	93	19.5%
Total	**476**	**100.0%**

A total of 192 people provided additional comments (69 from those who answered no, 120 from those who answered yes, and 3 from respondents that did not choose either). Comments fell into 68 themes. Below are themes with comments made by three or more people. Many responses were general comments on the WWRP rather than specifically addressing Question 3.

Number of Responses	Comment
18	Provide a greater emphasis on public access to conservation land
17	Include farmland conservation
13	Need for more stewardship, stewardship funding
10	Important to keep pace with population growth/pressure
8	Emphasize development and stewardship before additional acquisition

Number of Responses	Comment
7	Include forestland conservation
6	Important to address climate change as a threat
5	Prioritize habitat corridors/connectivity
5	More overall funding
5	No more spending on acquisition
5	Important to address at-risk ecosystems and ecosystem resiliency
4	Include working lands
3	Recognize importance of marine shoreline
3	Need a clear statement of acquisition priorities
3	Conservation land takes farmland out of production

QUESTION 4: Which of the 11 WWRP grant categories are you familiar with?[1]

Response (in descending order of average rating)	Very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Not very familiar	Unfamiliar	Rating Average[2]	Response Count
Trails	162	166	62	31	3.09	421
Local parks	169	147	72	34	3.07	422
Natural areas	143	186	71	28	3.04	428
Riparian protection	155	175	64	36	3.04	430
Critical habitat	154	171	70	40	3.01	435
Water access	146	148	82	50	2.92	426
State parks	106	142	105	60	2.71	413
Farmland preservation	99	149	97	67	2.68	412
Urban wildlife habitat	98	122	117	57	2.66	394
State lands restoration and enhancement	83	129	109	86	2.51	407
State lands development and renovation	70	125	108	95	2.43	398

QUESTION 5: Do you believe these 11 grant categories adequately address current needs and future trends in recreation and conservation?

Response	Response Count	Response Percent
Yes	319	68.9%
No	144	31.1%
Total	**463**	**100.0%**

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[1]The purpose of this question was to tabulate responses to later questions only for respondents familiar with a particular grant category.

[2]"Rating average" is calculated by assigning *very familiar* four points, *somewhat familiar* three points, *not very familiar* two points and *unfamiliar* one point.

A total of 158 people provided additional comments and recommendations. The most common themes were:

Number of Responses	Comment
25	Add new category for forests/working lands/community forests
15	Consolidate grant funding categories
12	Improve grant program design
10	Increase public access
10	Add new categories (ORV, indoor recreation, small works, rare or declining habitat, community gathering spaces, carbon sequestration, multi-use regional parks in rural areas, volunteer development, firearms and archery ranges, state lands)
7	Allow for, and acknowledge, multiple project benefits
7	Increase program funding
6	Add new category for urban parks
5	Rebalance grant program funding allocation
4	Maintenance
4	Add new category for ecosystem services, benefits and restoration
3	Add new category for wildlife corridors
3	Add new category for shoreline and riparian conservation
3	Add new category for drinking water quality
3	Add new category for hunting, guns and archery
2	Allow for nonprofit eligibility

QUESTION 6: How familiar are you with the statutory formula allocating funds between the current 11 grant categories?

Response	Response Count	Response Percent
Very familiar	46	9.6%
Somewhat familiar	164	34.4%
Not very familiar	164	34.4%
Unfamiliar	103	21.6%
Total	**477**	**100.0%**

QUESTION 7: Do you believe the current formula used to allocate funds between the 11 grant categories continues to reflect current needs and future trends in recreation and conservation?

Response	Response Count	Response Percent
Yes	48	10.0%
No	157	32.8%
I'm not familiar enough with the formula to respond	274	57.2%
Total	**479**	**100.0%**

QUESTION 8: If you answered "no" to the allocation formula question above, which of the following changes would you recommend? Assume the total amount of money remains constant so if funding in one category goes up, funding in another category must go down.

Response (in descending order of average rating)	Increase a lot	Increase	Keep the Same	Decrease	Decrease a lot	Rating Average	Response Count
Trails	49	60	44	18	19	3.54	190
Local parks	39	48	63	24	14	3.39	188
Critical habitat	41	49	57	28	19	3.34	194
Water access	35	47	72	21	18	3.31	193
State parks	24	57	66	29	15	3.24	191
Natural areas	30	47	65	30	19	3.20	191
Riparian protection	30	55	57	28	24	3.20	194
Farmland preservation	38	51	46	32	28	3.20	195
State lands restoration and enhancement	16	56	64	32	17	3.12	185
Urban wildlife habitat	16	36	61	49	26	2.82	188
State lands development and renovation	13	31	68	47	24	2.79	183

Although 57 percent of the respondents to Question 7 said they were not familiar enough with the formula to respond, 24 percent of these respondents unfamiliar with the formula then responded to Question 8, providing feedback on changes to the formula. This might be due to the survey question design—respondents didn't know the numeric breakdown of the formula (Question 7) but had a general feeling about how funds should be distributed differently (Question 8).

QUESTION 9: Do you believe that the WWRP's recreation grants in the local parks, trails, state parks, state lands development and water access categories are doing a good job addressing the needs of the following populations?

Response (in descending order of average rating)	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Uncertain	Rating Average	Response Count
Urban populations	77	143	71	35	105	2.80	431
People with disabilities	49	132	96	50	109	2.55	436
Elderly	21	118	97	59	138	2.34	433
Small towns	33	104	102	86	108	2.26	433

Response (in descending order of average rating)	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Uncertain	Rating Average	Response Count
Rural counties	32	100	108	85	109	2.24	434
Ethnic and racial groups	15	93	106	62	156	2.22	432
Low income populations	16	93	104	82	138	2.15	433

A total of 92 of the people who responded to this question provided additional comments. The most frequent themes were:

Number of Responses	Comment
7	Revise criteria so that rural areas and small towns can compete more fairly with urban areas
4	Streamline application process—small towns often lack the staff resources needed to apply
3	Increase overall program funding
3	Create more recreational opportunities close to urban population centers and neighborhoods
2	Increase horse-friendly access for elderly who rely on stock to carry bags into back country
2	Fees discourage and prohibit use by low income and elderly populations
2	Reduce match for rural areas and small towns
2	Increase education about recreational opportunities

QUESTION 10: Who do you see as underserved populations?

A total of 304 people responded to this open-ended question. The most frequent responses were:

Number of Responses	Comment
59	Low-income and at-risk youth
55	Rural area and small town residents
28	Elderly
28	People with disabilities
22	Ethnic and racial minority populations
4	Children

QUESTION 11: Do you have suggestions as to how the WWRP be changed in order to improve access and use by these underserved populations?

Of the 267 people who answered this open-ended question, the most common themes were:

Number of Responses	Comment
19	Prioritize projects helping underserved
9	Staff support for grant process and securing matching funds
8	Bilingual outreach and education
8	Reduce passes, tolls, fees
7	Increase funding for parks and trails
6	New grant category or criteria for underserved
4	More sites/opportunities accessible via public transportation
4	Streamline grant and match process
4	Increase funding for local and urban parks
3	Seek them out and ask them
3	Link schools and families to outdoor opportunities
2	Increase indoor recreation facilities for underserved populations
2	Create opportunities closer to urban areas
2	Remove population criterion from evaluation scoring

QUESTION 12: Do you believe that the WWRP's conservation grants are doing a good job taking into consideration the following?

Response (in descending order of average rating)	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Uncertain	Shouldn't be a Consideration	Rating Average	Response Count
Preserving open space	58	165	94	26	61	20	2.74	424
Biodiversity	32	173	86	21	90	19	2.69	421
Protecting endangered species	51	153	92	31	81	16	2.69	424
Protecting threatened habitats	54	161	89	40	66	14	2.67	424
Protecting rare and threatened plant and animal communities	41	160	101	34	77	14	2.62	427

Response (in descending order of average rating)	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Uncertain	Shouldn't be a Consideration	Rating Average	Response Count
and their habitat								
Ecosystem processes	32	156	100	29	89	18	2.60	424
Providing public access to conservation lands	52	146	96	60	61	13	2.54	428
Ecosystem resilience	25	143	101	32	96	20	2.53	417
Preserving farmland	30	113	100	53	99	27	2.41	422
Preserving ranch land	22	74	99	51	128	42	2.27	416
Climate change	11	75	108	60	104	62	2.15	420

QUESTION 13: Are WWRP policies (including eligibility and evaluation criteria) doing a good job taking into consideration the following?

Response (in descending order of average rating)	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Uncertain	Shouldn't be a Consideration	Rating Average	Response Count
Outdoor recreation trends	36	148	105	52	80	12	2.49	433
New state-wide plans and associated priorities	25	112	93	46	134	15	2.42	425
New scientific information relating to conservation	20	118	89	63	126	11	2.33	427
Changing demographics of our population	16	102	137	51	101	23	2.27	430

Response (in descending order of average rating)	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Uncertain	Shouldn't be a Consideration	Rating Average	Response Count
Stewardship needs	25	82	122	103	88	7	2.09	427
Economic trends	15	61	130	72	111	38	2.07	427
Physical and mental health trends	18	52	92	74	149	43	2.06	428
Deterioration of existing facilities	10	66	106	154	85	12	1.80	433

QUESTION 14: How do you assess the communication and coordination among elected officials and state agency and nonprofit sponsors of planned projects within their jurisdiction?

Respondent (in descending order of rating average)	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Uncertain	Not Important	Rating Average	Response Count
State Agency	5	37	30	12	21	0	2.42	84
Nonprofit organization	11	45	35	29	33	1	2.32	120
All Respondents	26	122	126	80	94	3	2.27	354
Elected Official	1	12	11	6	2	0	2.27	30

When asked "How should communication and coordination with local elected officials be changed?" a total of 124 people provided additional comments and recommendations. The most common recommendations were:

Number of Responses	Comment
14	Provide educational outreach to all elected officials on WWRP and its importance; suggestions included using conferences, associations (WSAC, AWC), land trusts and other groups
11	Don't allow political interference
10	More input from local community and users
4	Presentations at meetings of elected officials or individually
4	Require written certification that consultation with elected officials took place
3	Coordinate with groups (such as friends groups) that coordinate with elected officials

Number of Responses	Comment
3	Local government and state agencies should have liaisons that work with each other

QUESTION 15: Currently, nonprofit land trusts are eligible to receive grants in the riparian protection and farmland preservation grant categories. Should nonprofit organizations be eligible to receive grants in any of the other WWRP grant categories?

Response	Response Count	Response Percent
Yes	262	68.8%
No	119	31.2%
Total	**381**	**100.0%**

A total of 361 people provided additional comments in response to this question. The most frequent comments supporting and opposing expanded eligibility of nonprofit organizations were:

Number of Responses	Comments Supporting Expanded Eligibility Of Nonprofit Organization
13	Nonprofits bring in additional funds, donations
12	Fill a niche for agencies that don't have sufficient resources
10	More responsive to community, understand local priorities
10	Better at providing stewardship of lands, including obtaining funding, expertise, dedication
6	Bring in volunteers, partners
6	Can move more quickly and flexibly in acquisition, management
4	Adds more competition for funding, therefore better projects
4	More trusted by landowners
3	More expertise (developing priorities, negotiating with landowners, acquiring conservation easements)

Number of Responses	Comments Opposing Expanded Eligibility Of Nonprofit Organization
15	Would increase competition with existing entities for limited funding
15	Lack of transparency and accountability
9	Lack of permanency due to loss of funding, dissolution
7	Limit to existing categories (Farmland Preservation and Riparian)
7	These functions are a role of government; let NGOs find their own source of funding
6	Loss of property tax revenues and taxable activities
4	OK to be partners in grants
4	NGOs don't adequately provide for public access
3	Different missions/agendas than governmental entities

Those supporting expanded eligibility of nonprofit organizations recommended nonprofits be included in the following categories:

WWRP Funding Category (in descending order of response count)	Response Count
Critical Habitat	67
Natural Areas	57
Urban Wildlife Habitat	46
Trails	44
Water Access	30
Local Parks	16
All categories	15

QUESTION 16: Landscapes can have a broad and diverse spectrum of values, including social, economic, environmental, cultural, spiritual and aesthetic. Is the WWRP doing a good job addressing multiple landscape values in its grant programs? If the WWRP is not doing a good job addressing multiple landscape values in its recreation and conservation programs, what changes do you suggest?

Response	Response Count	Response Percent
Excellent job	32	7.3%
Good job	156	35.7%
Fair job	103	23.6%
Poor job	39	8.9%
Uncertain	107	24.5%
Total	**437**	**100.00%**

A total of 94 respondents provided comments to the open-ended question. The table below lists comments made by two or more respondents.

Number of Responses	Comment
7	Concentrate on conservation of land first, especially for habitat protection
3	Provide incentives for large, landscape scale projects with multiple benefits
3	Less emphasis on public access
3	Difficult for projects with multiple values to compete in WWRP funding "silos"
2	More emphasis on recreational access
2	More focus on spiritual, aesthetic, and cultural values
2	Don't consider social values

QUESTION 17. Critical Habitat. Do you believe current policies in the critical habitat category (including project eligibility, evaluation criteria, matching requirements, allocation between acquisition and restoration/enhancement, and recreational access) adequately provide for future needs for critical habitat? If not, what changes do you recommend?

Comments were compiled from 172 respondents who indicated in Question 4 that they were *familiar* or *very familiar* with this category and, in addition, did not state a lack of familiarity within their comment. The table below lists comments made by three or more respondents.

Number of Responses	Comment
57	Responded yes, some including comments
18	Increase or retain the level of support for acquisition
16	Increase funding for this category
12	Include nonprofit organizations (land trusts; friends groups)
9	Allow more public access
8	Limit or prohibit public access
7	Decrease funding for this category
4	Recognize large, landscape-scale projects with multiple values
4	Reduce the required match
4	Provide more opportunities for cities, ports, urban areas
3	Provide more flexibility in management of critical habitat lands
3	Increase the importance of habitat land connectivity

Although there were 18 recommendations for a greater focus on land acquisition (as opposed to restoration and development of critical habitat lands), a number of respondents qualified their answer, indicating that it is important to be able to take care of lands being acquired.

QUESTION 18. Farmland Preservation. Do you believe current policies in the farmland preservation category (including project eligibility, evaluation criteria, and matching requirements) adequately provide for future needs for farmland preservation? If not, what changes do you recommend?

Comments were compiled from 128 respondents that indicated in Question 4 that they were *familiar* or *very familiar* with this category and, in addition, did not state a lack of familiarity within their comment. The table below lists comments made by three or more respondents.

Number of Responses	Comment
31	Responded yes, some including comments
18	Increase funding
9	The $40 million allocation threshold should be abolished
8	Reduce the match
5	Ensure protection of important environmental values
4	Focus more on the value of the farm to the community rather than monetary value/acre, size, production value
3	Local land use regulations are as important or more so
3	Give a greater priority for farms near urban centers, including small farms

QUESTION 19. Local Parks. Do you believe current policies in the local parks category (including project eligibility, evaluation criteria, matching requirements, and allocation between acquisition and development) adequately provide for future needs for local parks? If not, what changes do you recommend?

Comments were compiled from 160 respondents that indicated in Question 4 that they were *familiar* or *very familiar* with this category and, in addition, did not state a lack of familiarity within their comment. The table below lists comments made by three or more respondents.

Number of Responses	Comment
55	Responded yes, some including comments
13	More emphasis on development rather than acquisition
12	Increase funding
11	Reduce match for small jurisdictions, rural areas, low income communities
4	Abolish the 50% acquisition-50% development formula or make it more flexible
4	Provide a separate pot of $ for small projects, small jurisdictions
4	Recognize and respond to recreational trends
4	Provide funding for maintenance
4	Increase the grant cap from $500,000 to $1 million
4	Higher priority for urban projects

QUESTION 20. Natural Areas. Do you believe current policies in the natural areas category (including project eligibility, evaluation criteria, matching requirements, allocation between acquisition and development, and public access) adequately provide for future needs for natural areas? If not, what changes do you recommend?

Comments were compiled from 148 respondents that indicated in Question 4 that they were *familiar* or *very familiar* with this category and, in addition, did not state a lack of familiarity within their comment. The table below lists comments made by three or more respondents.

Number of Responses	Comment
61	Responded yes, some including comments
13	Provide more recreational access (two respondents recommended less)
12	Increase funding
11	Include nonprofit organizations (land trusts frequently mentioned)
7	Emphasize acquisition over development
4	More funding for stewardship
3	Combine conservation categories
3	Reduce required match

QUESTION 21. Riparian Protection. Do you believe current policies in the riparian protection category (including project eligibility, evaluation criteria, matching requirements, public access) adequately provide for future needs for protection of riparian areas? If not, what changes do you recommend?

Comments were compiled from 148 respondents that indicated in Question 4 that they were *familiar* or *very familiar* with this category and, in addition, did not state a lack of familiarity within their comment. The table below lists comments made by three or more respondents.

Number of Responses	Comment
63	Responded yes, some including comments
16	Increase funding
6	Reduce funding
6	More public access
4	Need scientific justification for projects and priorities
4	More emphasis on acquisition
3	Reduce required match

QUESTION 22. State Lands Development and Renovation. Do you believe current policies in the state lands development and renovation category (including project eligibility, evaluation criteria, matching requirements) adequately provide for future needs for state lands? If not, what changes do you recommend?

Comments were compiled from 78 respondents that indicated in Question 4 that they were *familiar* or *very familiar* with this category and, in addition, did not state a lack of familiarity within their comment. The table below lists comments made by three or more respondents.

Number of Responses	Comment
23	Responded yes, some including comments
16	Increase funding
5	More funding for stewardship
5	More recreational access (especially trails)
3	Support large landscape-scale projects with multiple values

QUESTION 23. State Lands Restoration and Enhancement. Do you believe current policies in the state lands restoration and enhancement category (including project eligibility, evaluation criteria, matching requirements, public access) adequately provide for future needs for state lands? If not, what changes do you recommend?

Comments were compiled from 83 respondents that indicated in Question 4 that they were *familiar* or *very familiar* with this category and, in addition, did not state a lack of familiarity within their comment. The table below lists comments made by three or more respondents.

Number of Responses	Comment
28	Responded yes, some including comments
10	Increase funding
5	More public access
4	More funding for stewardship
3	Decrease funding
3	Provide for management of these lands; change

QUESTION 24. State Parks. Do you believe current policies in the state parks category (including project eligibility, evaluation criteria, matching requirements, and allocation between acquisition and development) adequately provide for future needs for state parks? If not, what changes do you recommend?

Comments were compiled from 112 respondents that indicated in Question 4 that they were *familiar* or *very familiar* with this category and, in addition, did not state a lack of familiarity within their comment. The table below lists comments made by three or more respondents.

Number of Responses	Comment
30	Responded yes, some including comments
17	Increase funding
7	Decrease funding
7	More funding for maintenance and operations
4	Abolish or make more flexible the required percentage for acquisition
3	Automatically fund in-holdings
3	Allow nonprofits (land trusts, friends groups) to be partners
3	More public access

QUESTION 25. Trails. Do you believe current policies in the trails category (including project eligibility, evaluation criteria, matching requirements) adequately provide for future needs for trails? If not, what changes do you recommend?

Comments were compiled from 147 respondents that indicated in Question 4 that they were *familiar* or *very familiar* with this category and, in addition, did not state a lack of familiarity within their comment. The table below lists comments made by three or more respondents.

Number of Responses	Comment
51	Responded yes, some including comments
22	Increase funding
8	Allow nonprofit organizations (land trusts, friends groups) as recipients or partners
6	More preference for urban/community trails vs. regional trails
6	More funding for soft-surface trails
3	Less funding

QUESTION 26. Urban Wildlife Habitat. Do you believe current policies in the urban wildlife habitat category (including project eligibility, evaluation criteria, matching requirements, balance between state and local agencies, public access) adequately provide for future needs for urban wildlife habitat? If not, what changes do you recommend?

Comments were compiled from 97 respondents that indicated in Question 4 that they were *familiar* or *very familiar* with this category and, in addition, did not state a lack of familiarity within their comment. The table below lists comments made by three or more respondents.

Number of Responses	Comment
32	Responded yes, some including comments
8	Include nonprofit organizations
7	More public access
6	Increase funding
3	More preference for urban areas
3	Decrease funding

QUESTION 27. Water Access. Do you believe current policies in the water access category (including project eligibility, evaluation criteria, matching requirements, and allocation between acquisition and development) adequately provide for future needs for water access? If not, what changes do you recommend?

Comments were compiled from 131 respondents that indicated in Question 4 that they were familiar or very familiar with this category and, in addition, did not state a lack of familiarity within their comment. The table below lists comments made by three or more respondents.

Number of Responses	Comment
39	Responded yes, some including comments
14	Increase funding
7	More access for low income users and racial and ethnic minorities
6	Allow land trusts to participate
5	Recognize and limit environmental impacts

QUESTION 28: What else would you like us to consider regarding the WWRP?

A total of 195 respondents provided comments to this question. Comments were extremely diverse, addressing 91 different topics. The table below lists comments that were provided three or more times.

Number of Responses	Comment
20	More overall funding
11	Ensure greater recreational access
7	Prioritize land acquisition
6	Provide more funding for stewardship
5	Recommend more community outreach regarding the WWRP program and available opportunities
5	Prevent the Legislature from re-ranking lists or choosing projects to fund
3	Expressed a concern about taking property off the tax rolls (property tax; reduced economic activity)
3	Recommended less land acquisition due to concerns about providing adequate stewardship
3	More opportunities for nonprofit organizations
3	Recognize the importance of friends groups
3	Abolish the $40 M fund allocation threshold
3	More funding for the Farmland category
3	Relax matching requirements
3	Recognize multiple values of projects
3	Priorities should reflect current and anticipated trends
3	Limit pesticide use on WWRP funded lands