

Habitat & Recreation Lands Coordinating Group (Lands Group)

Annual Land Acquisition Forum Draft Proposal

Discussion

HB5236 directs the HRLCG to “develop and convene an annual forum for agencies to coordinate their near-term acquisition and disposal plans”. Work Group 1 has been tasked with developing the proposal for who should participate in the forums and when they should be held. The WG1 has also considered expanding the forum to include local governments and other organizations engaged in conservation and recreation land acquisitions. Perhaps an alternating schedule could accommodate the more immediate needs of the state agencies and provide an opportunity for broader cooperation and coordination with other entities.

Goal

Use annual forums to share information and thereby increase efficiency, decrease duplication and better coordinate land acquisition activities among the natural resources land management agencies.

Objectives

- Provide the Departments of Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources and State Parks with information regarding short-term acquisition priorities for conservation and recreation lands.
- Identify opportunities for cooperation and coordination with local governments, private organizations and others for meeting land conservation and recreation objectives.

Approach

Host two different types of annual forums each biennium.

Odd-year forum

1. Held in odd-years, after the legislature adjourns and the Governor signs the budget.
2. Near-term planning focused on acquisition budget implementation and coordination.
3. Longer-term planning focused on future acquisition priorities.
4. The first forum (2009) will be held in May/June/July – post session, budget passage, with the “annual attendees”. One objective of the forum could be to develop an approach for the biennial acquisition forecast.
5. Third forum (2011), and all subsequent odd-year forums will include Annual and Biennial Attendees.
6. Consider using this forum as an expanded – long-term planning opportunity. Modeled after the PS Action Agenda forum.

Even-year forum

1. A 2-day workshop that includes multiple agency and partner staff
 - a. Should incorporate the GIS/Data tools developed by WG2
 - b. Should incorporate the TLT process and decisions

2. First even year forum will be held in early January 2010.
 - a. This falls just before the WWRP Letter of Intent is due. We will hold one for January 2010
 - b. This will enable agencies and partners to identify opportunities to coordinate grant requests.
 - c. The even-year forums are the “Biennial” meetings that coordinate with the partners.
3. Even year forums should focus on both:
 - a. Near-term WWRP application coordination, and
 - b. Long-term acquisition plans (higher level in scope) including providing opportunities for other entities to share their land acquisition objectives.
4. Figure out how to bridge the outcome of the January– even-year forum product with local government WWRP application/acquisition processes?
5. Considerations regarding confidentiality need to be part of the forum and acquisition planning process.

Annual (odd-year) participants

- WDNR
- WDFW
- SPRC
- WA Conservation Commission
- WSDOT

Biennial (even-year) forum participants

- Local Government (WSAC; AWC)
- The Nature Conservancy
- Washington Association of Land Trusts
- Cascade Land Conservancy
- Mt. to Sound Greenway
- US Forest Service
- US FWS
- others?

Format considerations

The format would likely take the form of a work session that allowed each agency to discuss where and what sites had been identified as priority for acquisition. Each agency would share information regarding what objectives were being met at individual sites. The meeting could utilize map-based information and should include staff with expertise in the conservation priorities identified.

Next Steps/Timeline

- 1/14/09 Workgroup 1 provides feedback on draft to Pene and Heath
- 1/15/09 Workgroup 1 provides document to Lands Group for review
- 1/21/09 Lands Group reviews, modifies and approves approach
- 4/15/09 Workgroup 1 develops a work plan for hosting 2009 forum
- 4/29/09 Lands Group members volunteer to help implement forum work plan