

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Summarized Meeting Agenda and Actions, April 2013

Agenda Items without Formal Action

Item	Board Request for Follow-up
Item 2: Management Reports	None Requested
State Agency Partner Reports	None Requested
General Public Comment	Staff has provided copies of the commenter's exhibits to Member Brittell, as requested.
Item 3: Recognizing Legacy Projects	Staff to prepare final proposal for board consideration in June.
Item 4: Stormwater Management and Related Facilities on Board-Funded Sites	Staff to prepare guidelines for board consideration in 2013.
Item 5: Farmland Program Review	Staff to prepare policy proposal for board consideration in 2013.
Item 6: State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)	Final report due to board for final approval in June 2013. Consultant to incorporate existing studies regarding health benefits, ecosystem values, and implications of fee-for-service park systems.

Agenda Items with Formal Action

Item	Formal Action	Board Request for Follow-up
Item 1: Consent Calendar	Board Meeting Minutes, January 31, 2013, approved by motion Revised Resolution 2013-02 <u>APPROVED</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approves Time Extension Requests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Project #08-1075D ○ Project #08-1337D 	None requested.
Item 7: Boating Infrastructure Grants: Delegation of Authority to the Director for Submitting Tier 2 Projects to the USFWS	<u>APPROVED</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delegates authority to the director to submit Tier 2 grant proposals to the US Fish and Wildlife Service before the grants are reviewed by the board for the supplemental grant round 	Projects to be brought to the board in June 2013.

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Summary Minutes

Date: April 4, 2013

Place: Natural Resources Building, Room 172, Olympia, WA, 98501

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board members present:

Bill Chapman, Chair	Mercer Island	Jed Herman	Designee, Department of Natural Resources
Betsy Bloomfield	Yakima	Larry Fairleigh	Designee, State Parks
Pete Mayer	Snohomish	Dave Brittell	Designee, Department of Fish and Wildlife
Harriet Spanel	Bellingham		
Ted Willhite	Twisp		

It is intended that this summary be used with the meeting materials provided in advance of the meeting. A recording is retained by RCO as the formal record of meeting.

Call to Order

Chair Bill Chapman called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Staff called roll, and a quorum was determined.

The chair asked for separate approval of the January 2013 meeting minutes.

Motion to approve minutes made by Ted Willhite. Seconded by Harriet Spanel.

Motion Approved.

Consent Calendar

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) reviewed Resolution #2013-02, Consent Calendar. The consent calendar was revised to include the following:

- A. Approve Time Extension Requests:
 - Clallam County Public Works, Project #08-1075D, Spruce Railroad Trail Tunnel Restoration Project
 - Kitsap County Parks and Recreation, Project #08-1337D, South Kitsap Regional Park-Phase 1

Revised Resolution 2013-02 moved by: Pete Mayer and seconded by: Ted Willhite

Revised Resolution APPROVED

Item 2: Management Report

Director's Report: Director Cottingham highlighted the agency's efforts to be part of the Governor's Lean transformation. Projects underway address records retention and inventory. She also discussed the meetings the RCO has been having with partners.

Policy and Legislative Update: Policy Director Nona Snell reported that the most recent cutoff was on April 3. All of the bills noted in the memo continue to move forward, except for the bills regarding state

agency acquisitions. Snell summarized and compared the budget proposals from Governor Inslee and the Senate, explaining that the Senate capital budget was not yet available.

Snell noted that a bill was introduced the day before with the Senate budget that would lower the working debt limit, refocus the priority of the capital budget onto K-12 construction, and fund K-12 construction only with bonds. It also would reallocate funds to K-12 construction in supplemental budgets as needed. This could affect the amount of bonds available and changes the calculation for bond capacity.

Member Herman asked what was known or discussed about the budget impacts of the culvert case. Director Cottingham explained to the board that the federal district judge in Washington recently ruled on a case regarding culverts on state lands. The state Department of Transportation now has 17 years to fix their culverts, and the other state agencies have until October 2016. Snell noted that there would be a work session in the House soon. Member Brittell stated that they have an inventory, and they have been working on it as budget allows.

Snell noted that the natural resources agencies together took a six percent cut in the General Fund budget. Director Cottingham noted that the natural resource agencies now account for about one percent of the General Fund.

Grant Management Report: Scott Robinson, Deputy Director, highlighted the work of grant staff since the beginning of February. He discussed the project list on page 5 of the management memo, and noted that staff members have inspected 57 projects since the beginning of the year. He provided an update on the conversion related to construction of the 520 bridge, explaining that the conversion proposal was delayed while the contamination costs of the replacement property were further evaluated.

Member Willhite asked if there was any work being done to increase the number of projects closing on time. Robinson responded that a team is working on the tools needed to increase the percent closing on time. Member Willhite also asked about the bill paying percentage. Robinson noted that a key part of the problem is that staff members often need more information from sponsors. Member Mayer noted that the bill paying would be a good Lean project.

Closed Projects of Note: Kim Sellers presented the Black River Ranch, which was supported with both Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Farmland and Riparian Protection grants. Thurston County was the sponsor. The farmland project involved the purchase of development rights using an agricultural easement. The riparian project included the acquisition of 211 acres, including prairie, riparian areas, bogs, and woodlands. This will be the site of project bluebird, an education effort that will put in 20 to 25 nest boxes. She explained how the site fits into the landscape, noting migration corridors, nearby public uses, and how the adjacent open areas support the farm operations.

Director Cottingham noted that it took time to pull together this project because of challenges with sponsor eligibility. About one hundred people came to the dedication. The farm is very impressive.

General Public Comment

Arvilla Ohlde, Belfair, spoke about the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Colockum Road Abandonment project (#08-1528). She discussed opposition to the project, citing concerns about the ownership of portions of the project site. Ohlde submitted five exhibits and asked that they be attached to the project file.

Member Brittell asked for copies of the materials. Member Mayer asked about the current state of the project. Ohlde responded that the State Auditor said that WDFW can only do work on property they own. They have asked WDFW to abandon the project, and are asking the board to terminate the agreement.

State Agency Partner Reports

Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW): Member Brittell noted that WDFW has been very active on the policy front. Senate Bill 5054 would have placed additional review on acquisition. They have had more than a dozen different bills addressing wolves; several are still active. There are a number of discussions and strategies about payment in lieu of taxes (PILT). On the budget front, they are looking at about a 6 percent cut in the Senate budget; they are hopeful that is the low water mark. He also discussed personnel changes at WDFW.

WDFW is very active in the Yakima Integrated Plan, and are anxious to see how it fares in the budget. They are in discussions with Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to share roles on conservation land. The project is very dynamic and the discussions are focused on how to get it done, not whether to get it done.

Department of Natural Resources: Member Herman introduced himself to the board. He reported that DNR is very interested in the culvert case; they have a capital budget request to help them achieve compliance. They have partnered with WDFW on a recreation plan just north of Ellensburg; they may also develop one in for Lake Whatcom.

Member Willhite asked who built the roads involved in the culvert case, and why the state agencies would be responsible for repairing them. Member Fairleigh explained that this includes roads that go into parks, trails with culverts, logging roads, and others that fall outside highways. Member Herman responded that the understanding of what is an appropriate crossing structure has changed. The tribes have sued to make the state comply with standards; each landowner has a regulatory obligation to fix the culverts. Member Brittell noted that they assess culvert liability before they acquire property.

State Parks: Member Fairleigh reported on the State Parks operating budget, noting that there was significant variation among the budgets proposed by Governor Gregoire, Governor Inslee, and the Senate. He reported on the number of culvert blockages that they have, and the cost of fixing them in response to the recent court decisions. The commission has approved the Transformation Strategy, which recognizes that they are now primarily a fee-for-service agency. They continue negotiations for management of Fort Worden. Fort Worden is currently subsidized at a rate of about \$1 million per biennium, so they are trying to reduce the cost and improve service to the public.

Member Willhite asked if there was any consideration to revisiting the decision to go to fee-for-service. Member Fairleigh said that the budget decision was a policy decision, and that while there are discussions about a dedicated fund, it doesn't appear that they are reconsidering. They need to focus on getting to a sustainable State Parks system.

Board Business: Briefings & Discussion

Item 3. Recognizing Legacy Projects

Marguerite Austin, RCO Grant Section Manager, presented the proposal as described in the staff memo. She explained that staff recommended a physical award to be presented at the project site or other location, along with an online "Hall of Fame" to increase outreach. The two themes that staff would like the board to consider are "Visionary" and "Lasting Legacy". She then explained the selection process and asked for board discussion and direction on the criteria that staff would use.

Board members made the following requests for general clarifications in the proposal:

- Use language that recognizes statewide recreation, not just local communities (Fairleigh)
- Clarify that phases of projects are not excluded from recognition if the entire project is not complete (Mayer)
- State more clearly that habitat projects are eligible under both categories (Chapman)

Board members asked staff to consider the following additional criteria for the awards:

- Recognize the journey or challenges involved in putting the project together (Mayer)
- Overcoming challenges at the site or in putting the project together (Chapman and Bloomfield)
- Do not include popularity, but consider why certain areas are popular and ensure that the criteria reflect the reasons that some parks are more popular than others (Chapman)

Member Herman suggested that there be a mechanism for the public or stakeholder groups to nominate projects that they like. Chair Chapman, Member Bloomfield, Member Willhite, and Member Mayer concurred. Member Bloomfield suggested that staff consider using an outside group that is governed by staff. Member Mayer suggested that staff consider the nomination process used by the Washington Recreation and Parks Association, which also uses a fee to minimize the administrative burden. Member Spanel said that the process needs to be designed to limit excessive self-nominations.

With regard to the awards, Member Willhite suggested that recipients be involved in drafting the award so that they can help tell the story and recognize everyone who contributed. He asked that the Web presence should be linked to other similar web sites. Member Fairleigh suggested that the award signs use Quick Response (QR) codes. Member Willhite concurred. Member Mayer would like to see a physical award at the site. Chair Chapman wants to ensure that the award is presented in person as well online.

With regard to the number and frequency of awards, Chair Chapman stated that the proposal to have no more than four per biennium was appropriate. He would prefer an annual award, and suggested that the decision could be biennial and the awarding could be annual. Member Spanel said that in her opinion, once per biennium makes it more special.

The board asked for a final proposal in June.

Item 4. 2013 Policy Background: Stormwater Management and Related Facilities on Board-Funded Sites

Leslie Ryan-Connelly, RCO Compliance Specialist, presented the information as described in the staff memo. She noted that the intent was to help the board understand the issue and determine whether (a) current board is policy clear enough or (b) programmatic guidance on stormwater facilities is needed. She stated

that there are no outstanding requests that place time constraints on the board's decision. She reviewed the examples from the memo in greater detail, sharing more maps and photos.

Member Spanel asked if the first two examples would have had the same result under the allowable uses policy. Ryan-Connelly responded that the result would have been the same because they were clear conversions. Member Mayer asked if the result in Newcastle would have been the same, absent the fence. Ryan-Connelly responded that it was possible that it would have been subject to the allowable uses policy.

Member Fairleigh asked if improving a low quality wetland on a previously funded site would be a conversion, if the improvement was done for stormwater mitigation. Ryan-Connelly responded that the city of Kent made such a proposal a few years ago. At the time, the board considered it a conversion and asked in part, for an alternatives analysis. Since then, they have incorporated the question of "what alternatives has the sponsored considered?" into the allowable uses policy.

Member Bloomfield asked if there was still a prohibition about using RCO funded projects for mitigation. Director Cottingham responded that there was a pilot project for mitigation banking in the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP), but it was found to be incompatible with IRS regulations and was subsequently removed as an eligible type of project.

Member Mayer noted the tour would include above and below ground facilities, and that the board should give that careful consideration in their discussions.

Chair Chapman stated that part of the discussion needs to be the design that was being proposed; those are the nuances they expect staff to resolve under the allowable uses policy.

Director Cottingham stated that we are asking the board to determine if it is comfortable with how staff is implementing existing policy, or if they need programmatic guidance similar to what they did for grazing in 2012.

Following Item 4, the board recessed for lunch and then concluded the day with a tour of Yauger Park, Woodland Creek Community Park, and a site at St. Martin's University. Member Fairleigh was unable to participate in the tour. Further discussion of Item 4 is included in the notes for April 5, 2013.

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Summary Minutes

Date: April 5, 2013

Place: Natural Resources Building, Room 172, Olympia, WA, 98501

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board members present:

Bill Chapman, Chair	Mercer Island	Jed Herman	Designee, Department of Natural Resources
Betsy Bloomfield	Yakima	Larry Fairleigh	Designee, State Parks
Pete Mayer	Snohomish		
Harriet Spanel	Bellingham		
Ted Willhite	Twisp		

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Call to Order

Chair Bill Chapman called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Board Business: Briefings & Discussion

Item 4. Stormwater Management and Related Facilities, Continued Discussion

Chair Chapman reminded the board that the question is whether the board is comfortable with how staff is implementing policy as described on page 2 of the staff memo.

Leslie Ryan-Connelly reviewed the conversion criteria, noting that the tour showed the types of sites that would fall into the "gray area" where a subjective analysis would be needed. She posed the following discussion questions:

- Does the conversion criteria need to be clarified for stormwater and other similar facilities?
- Does the allowable uses policy need to be clarified for stormwater and other similar facilities?
- Should we further define when stormwater and other similar facilities may be allowed?
- Is the board comfortable with how RCO is applying policies when there are multiple funding sources at a site?
- Should we continue to apply the current policies on a case by case basis?

Member Willhite noted that there would be more pressure for these types of requests as development increased, and expressed concern that parks would be viewed as the easiest solution. Continuing to review projects on a case-by-case basis may not work. He would like to see more of a programmatic approach and criteria.

Member Spanel stated that the number of vault caps, their height above ground, and potential as a tripping hazard at the Woodland Creek site was significant. She also thought that it was interesting that the city stated that they could not grow based on water use. She believes that it is important that parks not be used to allow cities to grow more than they otherwise could.

Member Herman asked if it was implicit in the policy that the proposed use be aligned with the existing ecology of the site. Ryan-Connelly said it was not part of the allowable uses policy, but that the review would consider how the stormwater proposal would fit the original grant proposal which may or may not include the ecology of the site. Member Herman suggested that it was easy to talk about the habitat aesthetics of a pond, but if the original site did not convey water movement, then the proposal would be creating something artificial, and that fact should be an important part of the determination. Member Bloomfield concurred, and stated that it should be a threshold level question.

Chair Chapman suggested that board members do not disagree about what constitutes a conversion (property interests being conveyed, termination of recreation use). The members are suggesting different ways that the board may view incompatibility. He proposed that staff create a page that list examples of incompatibilities.

Member Mayer noted that the goal of programmatic guidelines within the allowable uses policy was to develop greater clarity, and that he was leaning toward having more programmatic guidance for this topic. He stated that he is struggling with the approach at Woodland Creek Park because of its depth, which could preclude some recreational uses in the future. Also, if public works are using parks for these purposes, it raises the question of whether they should contribute to operations and maintenance costs or be required to provide some mitigation for using park land.

Member Spanel said that it is important to remember that while we want to retain enough natural areas, we also have to remember to change appropriately.

Member Bloomfield noted that growth will occur. If they do not create a solution that creates a way to retain wetlands in an ecologically sound way, the unintended consequence will be that we will lose land to industrial compounds for stormwater treatment. There could be innovative solutions to support wetlands that have a better aesthetic value.

Chair Chapman noted the challenge is to find the right guidance that avoids (1) giving away too much park land and (2) condemnation actions. He reminded the board that it is their duty to protect the funding and its purpose. He acknowledged that the board wants to accommodate where it makes sense and is aligned with the existing recreation and ecological functions. Chair Chapman suggested that they should ask staff to propose programmatic language.

Director Cottingham suggested that they do this within the allowable uses framework, under the question "Does the facility cause the least possible impact to the grant?" Chair Chapman referenced the conversion at Newcastle, and suggested that having additional guidance could be a way to avoid conversions with better designs. There should be a look at defining impairment and compatibility as they related to stormwater ponds and funded projects.

Director Cottingham summarized that they do not want a comprehensive programmatic like they did for grazing, but a series of questions or ideas. She asked for clarity about whether the threshold is "no impairment" or "some benefit." The board confirmed that there should be a net benefit in exchange for using some portion of the site for stormwater management. Chair Chapman suggested a fact sheet of some kind that would explain the agency's approach.

Member Mayer noted that the telecommunications and grazing programmatic uses could be discontinued. The policy guidelines need to reflect that stormwater proposals have greater permanence.

Member Willhite suggested that they need to look at this from the outside, and help utilities and developers understand the rules from the outset. We do not want to create a situation where they have to guess at what the board may or may not approve.

Item 5. 2013 Policy Background: Farmland Program Review

Nona Snell presented the information as described in the staff memo. Director Cottingham noted that the group would not address or recommend changes to the law. She also noted that one of the challenges is the differences in timing and policies of the Natural Resource Conservation Service grant program. Member Fairleigh asked if there were enough applicants to the program. Cottingham responded that as the program has matured, the number of projects has increased. Scott Robinson stated that at Governor Inslee's budget proposal, the board would be able to fund all but one project. Sponsors also have improved their ability to value conservation easements.

Member Willhite asked about opportunity for public comment. Cottingham responded that there would be comment when the policies start coming to the board, but not during the committee's discussions. Willhite asked how the inconsistency with the federal government is communicated with the public. Cottingham noted that the agency grants waivers and communicates with the federal government as needed to help sponsors. Willhite asked if they have farmers, ranchers, and orchardists from throughout the state; Cottingham reviewed the committee membership. Chair Chapman suggested adding a member from Okanogan County.

Chair Chapman encouraged the committee to think about the difference between eligibility and desirability criteria within the statute. He suggested that even distribution should not be a goal because it is based on the criteria. He thought that the conclusions on page 10 of the white paper were worthwhile.

The board generally wants to maintain the balance of farmland and environmental criteria.

Director Cottingham reminded the board that the 2014 grant round would use the existing grant criteria.

Item 6. State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

Mark Duda and Mike Fraidenburg from Responsive Management presented the highlights of the draft plan and public comment. Duda explained the methodology and report development. Chair Chapman asked if the questions in the survey had been tested for objectivity; Duda responded that they did their best to make the questions as neutral as possible, but for the purpose of analyzing trends, they tried not to make many changes. They received 22 comments from 16 people on the draft report. They received hundreds of photos from Washington residents for inclusion in the report. Duda provided an overview of the planned highlights of each chapter for the final report and reviewed data highlights. He noted that some of the recreation trends (e.g., increases in hunting and fishing) were reflected in national studies and other Washington State studies.

Member Fairleigh noted that six years is not very long for trends when making allocation decisions in a public setting, and asked if these trends bore out over a longer period. Duda responded that they did bear out from 2002 to 2012; forecasting whether it would continue into the future is more difficult.

Duda reviewed the satisfaction data and latent demand, noting that there is no single activity that stands out for latent demand. More people want to do more of what they already do, rather than new activities. He also reviewed key issues such as access, recreation equity, technology, user conflicts, and sustainability. He summarized the report's findings and recommendations. He concluded by summarizing the comments that they received on the draft.

Member Willhite asked if there are other studies placing an economic value on outdoor recreation. Duda responded that it is a common metric and explained the ways it can be quantified. Member Willhite asked that the SCORP include discussion of existing studies of ecosystem values, health benefits of recreation, and implications of fee-for-service based park systems. Duda agreed to incorporate information from these studies as applicable.

Member Mayer echoed Member Willhite's comments and recommended that the public lands inventory be updated. He asked Duda what his recommendations were using the Level of Service (LOS) tool. Duda responded that the biggest challenge with the LOS is that many of the providers do not have the information they need to make the tool work. Some respondents also might have been hesitant to say that they were not doing well. He noted that the LOS satisfaction levels aligned well with the satisfaction data in the user survey.

Member Spanel noted that the North Cascades region included areas east and west of the mountains, and wondered how the regions were drawn. Duda responded that the regions were already established before this plan was developed. It may be something to reconsider for the next SCORP. He noted that the raw data could be cut by county rather than by region.

Board Business: Decisions

Item 7. Boating Infrastructure Grants: Delegation of Authority to the Director for Submitting Tier 2 Projects to the USFWS

Marguerite Austin presented the information as described in the staff memo. She explained that the board was being asked to vote on a resolution that would delegate authority to the director to submit Tier 2 grant proposals to the US Fish and Wildlife Service before the grants are reviewed by the board. The supplemental grant round timeline – with its May 10 deadline for submissions – does not coincide with the board's meeting schedule. Director Cottingham noted that there are between \$6 and \$7 million available, but there may be some set aside for Hurricane Sandy relief.

Resolution 2013-03 moved by: Larry Fairleigh and seconded by: Pete Mayer
Resolution APPROVED

Meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Approved by:


Bill Chapman, Chair *(for Bill Chapman)* *Acting Chair* June 25, 2013
Date

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Revised Resolution 2013-02
April 2013 Consent Calendar

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following April 2013 Consent Calendar items are approved:

A. Time Extension Requests:

- Clallam County Public Works, Project #08-1075D, Spruce Railroad Trail Tunnel Restoration Project
- Kitsap County Parks and Recreation, Project #08-1337D, South Kitsap Regional Park-Phase 1

Resolution moved by: Mayer

Resolution seconded by: Willhite

Adopted/Defeated/Deferred (underline one)

Date: April 4, 2013

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Resolution 2013-03
Boating Infrastructure Grant Program
Delegation of Authority to the Director

WHEREAS, the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) submits grant applications to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program (BIG); and

WHEREAS, the USFWS is offering a supplemental grant round for federal fiscal year 2013; and

WHEREAS, consideration of these grant awards supports the board's strategy to provide funding to protect, preserve, restore, and enhance recreation opportunities statewide; and

WHEREAS, the Boating Programs Advisory Committee reviews these projects to ensure consistency with the objectives of the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program managed by the USFWS; and

WHEREAS, this assessment by the committee promotes the board's objectives to conduct its work with integrity and in an open manner; and

WHEREAS, the projects must meet the program requirements stipulated in Manual #12, *Boating Infrastructure Grant Program: Policies* and rules established in the *Code of Federal Regulations*, thus supporting the board's strategy to fund the best projects as determined by the review and evaluation process; and

WHEREAS, the board has delegated authority to the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) director to submit BIG projects to the USFWS for funding consideration after presentation of the applications to the board at a regular or special meeting to allow opportunity for public comment; and

WHEREAS, the board's meeting schedule to consider the applications conflicts with the deadline for submitting application to the USFWS for the supplemental grant round; and

WHEREAS, delegation of authority supports the board's goal to operate efficiently;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the director is authorized to submit Tier 2 applications to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for evaluation and funding consideration before its next regular meeting, subject to review by the Boating Programs Advisory Committee.

Resolution moved by: Fairleigh

Resolution seconded by: Mayer

Adopted/Defeated/Deferred (underline one)

Date: April 5, 2013