



STATE OF WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE  
1111 Washington Street SE  
PO Box 40917  
Olympia, WA 98504-0917

November 3, 2005

TO: IAC Members & Designees  
FROM: Laura Johnson, Director *Laura*  
SUBJECT: Director's Report, October 2005

**November Agenda Overview:** The meeting will start 8:30 am Tuesday the 15<sup>th</sup>. We aim to adjourn not later than 6:30 p.m.

The morning's business session will focus on policy discussions for the new parts of the WWRP program. In the afternoon, you will be asked to review and approve grants in three programs – Boating Facilities, Firearms & Archery Ranges, and all four sub-sections of the NOVA program. And, not least, you'll have a workshop and discussion session concerning possible name change for "IAC".

Other Staff Work, October:

In addition to preparing the policy and grants matters you will handle in the November meeting session, your staff were also engaged in:

**SRFB work:** SRFB met in late October, primarily to discuss its current grant process. By the September filing deadline, SRFB had received over 270 applications seeking about \$41 million in salmon recovery grants. With only about \$26 million in available funds, the competition is tight. An extensive review process is now underway, with decisions slated for early January 2006.

**Supplemental Budget:** We submitted technology-related supplemental budget request items. These items were not funded in the regular biennial request, but we are hopeful that there will be funds now available to address our need to upgrade PRISM's software, and to enhance the Natural Resources Data Portal.

**Legislative Matters:** The Legislative Study committee on Outdoor Recreation, led by Rep. Hans Dunshee, met in mid-October. We provided some discussion options in response to the need for 'quantitative' targets for outdoor recreation investments. The

concepts were well received. I'm attaching the materials for your information and for possible future discussion.

**ORV Sports Park:** Was reopened in October, under the name "Straddleline ORV Park". We are working with Grays Harbor County in preparation for the next phase of the grant. (See Tab # 3).

**POG:** The "Priorities of Government" process is again in motion. This fall, there will be preliminary scoping sessions in anticipation of a more extended effort in mid-2006, when the next biennial budget is prepared. We are participating on Team 9, Natural Resources, and Team 10, Cultural and Recreational Resources.

**LWCF Update:** The fiscal 2006 grants you approved in September are likely to be victims of federal budget rescissions. The Administration appears to be seizing the chance offered by the "Katrina cuts" process to de-fund the entire appropriation. We will be alerting the sponsors.

**Staff News:** IAC's new parents – Susan Zemek (Maddie, June), Leslie Ryan-Connelly (Devin, April), and Darrell Jennings (Erin, Sept.) are all well, if a bit sleepy.

Scott Chapman is now serving as our PRISM coordinator, after 15 excellent years as a recreation grants manager. Marc Duboiski, currently a grants manager for the SRFB, has moved over to the recreation side. We're delighted to encourage these professionals' career moves, and equally delighted to retain their talents at the IAC.

In mid-September, we hired Amie Fowler as our new Office Assistant. She joins the support staff team of Kathleen Barkis (the voice of the agency at the reception station), together with long-time team members Heather Balcomb and Patty Dickason.

**Other events & happenings:** Other items of note since your September meeting:

- With part-time assistance from Margaret Piephoff, we're working to update all personnel records and policies, to ensure we're current with the state's new civil service rules. It will be helpful to have all this paperwork in better order.
- Dedication ceremonies marked the opening of IAC-assisted facilities at Pierce County's Sprinker Skate Park, at Kennewick's riverfront trail facility, and at the "Ron Craig Docks" on the Willapa River in the City of South Bend.
- Many thanks to the IAC staff, together with several Board members, who participated the Governor's "Healthiest State" challenge in October. We scored 3895.5 points – a very respectable (and healthy) result!

I look forward to seeing IAC members in November. If you have questions, please contact me at 360-902-3003.

**[Handout prepared for 10/13/05 session of Legislative Study Committee on Outdoor Recreation, 'SCOR'.]**

**Key decision to be made:**

What does the Legislature want to do with standards?

1. Establish state mandated standards state and local agencies must use?

Or

2. Encourage standards by linking standards to state funding support, recognizing that many communities have already set standards?

Or

3. Use standards in lieu of targets or goals as a tool with which to develop the state's capital budget?

Or

4. Some combination of the above.

With the understanding that participation changes at least every 10 years, IAC staff recommends any standard, whether mandated or encouraged, be revisited and revised every 5 years. Planning is almost always 3 to 5 years behind public behavior.

With any choice, what basis do we have for standards? IAC has roughed out four major options.

## 1. Acres/miles/facilities per thousand

By type, depending on public priorities

Acres of open space (ecological or aesthetic function)

Active park spaces (burning calories) – e.g., ball fields

Trails by use (e.g., walking, bicycling)

“Passive” park spaces (not burning calories) – e.g. picnic tables

How to determine: focus groups, surveys of experts, measure and average (weighted or not) current inventory

Advantages: clear and measurable

Disadvantages: artificial, does not keep up with trends, uneven application to difference size communities. Some communities have already set standards. Is not scalable to a state level unless all jurisdictions use the same standard.

Example: we could decide we need ½ mile of urban walking/bicycle trail for every 1,000 people in the state. We would need 6 million divided by 1000 times .5 or 3,000 miles of trail. We estimate there might be 900 urban miles right now, so we need 2,100 miles at a cost of up to \$100,000 per mile or \$210 million.

If the state were to require or encourage this kind of standard, we could expect to hear this kind of statement: “We only meet \_\_\_\_% of our community’s needs for parks right now. If we can get this grant, we can meet \_\_\_\_% of our needs.”

## 2. Service area or travel distance (physical, temporal)

Area to be served by distance in miles or fraction of miles or travel time by vehicle, foot, bicycle

How to determine: focus groups or other surveys, GIS applications

Advantages: clear, easy to explain, measurable

Disadvantages: potentially expensive to implement (GIS capability needed, including hardware, software, staff, expertise). Some communities have already set standards.

Is not scalable to a state level unless all jurisdictions use the same standard.

Example: take a city of any size and plot the location of the recreation sites and facilities. Draw a polygon (representing distance or estimated travel time) around each site, taking account of barriers such as major highways, rivers, etc. Look for areas in the city that are not within a polygon. Decide what kind of recreation sites and facilities are needed to fill the gaps.

If the state were to require grant applicants to use this kind of standard, we could hear this kind of statement: "If we get this grant, every kid in our community will be **only \_\_\_ minutes from a park** instead of \_\_\_ minutes."

### 3. Level of service

Level of physical development (e.g., outhouses versus flush toilets)

Quality of the facility (e.g., league play versus tournament use)

Amenities offered (pools, open spaces, trails, etc)

Availability, potentially pre-determined percent of demand that will be met -- users will be required to make reservations or get on waiting lists and the like (not unusual today).

How to determine: survey providers and public

Advantages: once determined is clear and measurable

Disadvantages: potentially expensive to determine (surveys, etc), may not be widely supported, need different levels of service for different size communities as well as different sites/facilities. Some communities have already set standards. May not be scalable statewide for all facility types.

Example: trails. The State could decide its level of service is to connect cities and towns in a manner equivalent to the state highway system – we could need roughly a number of trail miles equal to the number of state highway miles (5,400). The cost of acquiring right-of-way and subsequent development could be \$100,000 per mile, or \$540 million. Compare to the cost of the Tacoma narrows bridge \$771.9 million.

Example: athletic facilities. We could decide the level of service for ball fields is weekend local youth play, sort of the athletic equivalent of basic education K-12. Another level of service is regional tournament play, perhaps the equivalent of community college or university education. The cost per unit to provide basic play would be considerably lower than the cost per unit of tournament play, though the total number of basic play fields could be considerably higher. Further, providing facilities for basic play would serve far more kids than facilities for tournament play.

If the state were to use this kind of standard, we could expect the following possible statement: “Our community focus is on a local level of service for youth up to age 17. We only meet \_\_\_% of our local youth’s needs for ball fields right now. If we can get this grant, we can meet \_\_\_% of our needs.” OR – “To maintain and enhance or quality of life, our citizens have told us that they want to see XX number of parks. Currently, we are only meeting X percent of that demand.”

#### 4. Participation (demand) based

Determine current participation (e.g., "demand") as a baseline for sites and facilities needed in the future, based on projected demographics

How to determine: surveys of public participation (what, where, when, how often, etc)

Advantages: understandable, may be scaled statewide by using a suitable sample size.

Disadvantages: good data is hard to find; can be expensive to determine; can overlook or under emphasize low participation activities; can be controversial. Some communities have already set standards.

Example: new ball fields. We know approximately how many ball players there are (roughly 1.3 million statewide). We have to assume there is sufficient inventory to support that level of play. We can project participation based on a number of factors, which IAC has done, and estimate 6% growth by 2013. 6% of 1.3 million people are an additional 78,000 players, all ages, lots of sports, on "teams" of maybe 20 per side, or 3900 teams that can play 1,950 games at one time. If we figure a late game and an early game, we are looking at 975 fields statewide to host the 1,950 additional games.

An additional 6% of the roughly estimated inventory would be 975 fields, statewide. If we spent a modest \$50,000 per field, we are talking about \$48,750,000 over ten years, or \$4,875,000 a year.

*Clark County issued a report in spring of 1998 in which it identified a current inventory of 156 adult/youth baseball fields, and a current need for 42 more baseball fields. It estimates its year 2017 need will be 137 fields above current levels – Clark County alone!*

If the state were to use this kind of standard, we could expect the following possible statement: "Our community addresses current demand 90% of the time. We estimate future demand to grow at 2% a year. If we can get this grant, we can **continue to meet 90% of the demand for the next 10 years.**"

**Factors to consider when making the decision:**

1. Constituent demand
2. Citizen input
3. Available data
4. Available resources
5. Priorities of government (POG)
6. Ability/willingness of local entities to respond

**Possible next steps:**

In this order:

1. Prioritize recreation facilities by type. What is the state most interested in supporting? IAC suggests looking at those that meet multiple Priorities of Government (e.g., recreation, health, and where possible transportation).
2. Establish a level of service for these facilities – e.g., how well will what level of activity be served. For example, local fields or tournament fields, community connector trails or local park trails.
3. Establish a standard or goal, e.g., the number of acres per thousand, the number of active sites/facilities per thousand, for state agencies. Encourage local agencies to set standards, for example as a criteria for state grant-in-aid or other budget support.
4. Estimate the approximate cost of meeting estimated future demand for these priority facilities.