

Meeting Date: December 2011  
Title: Director and Agency Management Report  
Prepared By: Kaleen Cottingham, Director



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**Proposed Action: Briefing**

To minimize duplication, some items that might normally be included in the director's report have been deleted here and included in other memos throughout the notebook (such as the policy director's report, legislative update, and the grant manager's report).

### Salmon Section Update

Salmon Section staff has been busy compiling the grant round funding report, which was released November 21. There were 167 projects submitted for the 2011 grant round. In December, the board will be asked to approve the 2011 grants and to update Manual 18. More information is in items 6 and 7.

### New Staff

- **Keith Dublanica** has joined the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office as the new science coordinator. Keith comes most recently from the Mason County Conservation District where he was a habitat biologist and environmental specialist, working on numerous projects including the Skokomish estuary restoration. Before that, Keith was with the Skokomish Tribe for 14 years; seven as the director of natural resources.

### IT Priority Projects

Information Technology (IT) staff continue to be very busy with a wide array of projects. Staff recently completed the annual portfolio's investment plan, security plan, and disaster recovery plan. Now, they are completing the Office of Financial Management's total cost of IT ownership study with assistance from IT, finance, and administrative staff. Staff also has built an FTP site that will make sharing large documents for public disclosure easier for the public and staff. Staff has also upgraded most of the agency's computers from XP to Windows 7. Scott Chapman has kicked off development of the PRISM online series of Web applications including sponsor, compliance, and billing workbenches. Section managers have scheduled the next two years of PRISM development to minimize impacts on staff. Several new developers are on board with Rudeen & Associates for that effort. In addition, Scott is working at the Department of Ecology a

few hours each week to develop a pilot program so the agency can test using PRISM for its grants.

## Budget Impacts on RCO

We are only a few days away from a special legislative session (due to start November 28) on the state budget. Sharp declines in state revenue will require lawmakers to cut \$2 billion from the budget adopted earlier this year. The Governor has released a proposed supplemental budget just this week. RCO was classed as a "small agency" and assigned a 5 percent general fund cut with the specifics chosen from lists of cut options we submitted earlier this year.

Of course, we also have significant interest in the capital budget. On that front, the latest information is that the decline in state revenue has reduced the safety margin left when the budget was passed earlier this year, but that it has not deteriorated to the point where major cuts are needed. That could change in the coming months and all granting agencies are being advised to ensure that projects are under contract and moving promptly.

More information is in item 1C.

## Recreation and Conservation Grant Streamlining

With staff reductions this past summer and requests from grant applicants for a simpler system, RCO has been looking at ways to streamline the application and review process for recreation and conservation grants. Executive management has approved staff working groups to proceed on six different fronts, which includes potential changes to project review, application workshops, written evaluations, internal processes, external tools, and advisory committees.

Upcoming activities include an application workshop Webinar, online tools such as a short video on how to enter an application in PRISM, and a communications plan to make sure all applicants know the deadlines and understand the importance of submitting a complete application!

## Board Updates

**Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB):** The RCFB met November 14 and 15. It discussed meeting practices, approved a ranked list of Land and Water Conservation Fund projects, and toured the Center for Urban Waters (offices for the Puget Sound Partnership) to learn about the green building techniques that are in place. RCFB also talked about the Partnership's priorities and initiatives with Martha Kongsgaard, chair of the Partnership's Leadership Council. RCFB closed day one with a tour that includes Kandle Park and Snake Lake Nature Center. On day two, the RCFB awarded grants in the Recreational Trails Program, approved several proposals to streamline the grant process, including written evaluations and changes to criteria. The board ended the day by thanking member Steven Drew for his service; his second terms ends on December 31, 2011.

In September, the RCFB adopted a new policy on encouraging increased sustainability in grant-funded projects. While sustainability has long been a consideration, the new policy makes it more explicit by having sponsors provide more details on sustainable project elements in order to qualify for full evaluation points. The specifics of the changes and the public support for them [can be found here](#). The new policy affects the Land and Water Conservation Fund, Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program's local parks and state parks categories only at this time. We will implement the changes for this grant cycle, evaluate the results, and see if changes or expansion are warranted before the next cycle.

**Washington Invasive Species Council:** Staff met with several regional enhancement fisheries groups in Puget Sound to discuss invasive species concerns and training the regional fisheries enhancement groups on invasive species prevention protocols. Staff also presented the results of the regional "Don't Move Firewood" outreach campaign at the Continental Dialogue on Non-Native Forest Insects and Diseases; prepared and presented at the state weed meeting in Yakima on the council's invasive species prevention work.

**Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group:** The Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group held a quarterly meeting to finalize the "Biennial State Land Acquisition Monitoring Report." The report compares state agency acquisition project proposals with their current results. It will be published on the lands group web site in November. The lands group also developed recommendations to the Legislature on whether the group should continue past its sunset date of July 31, 2012. The RCFB will submit final recommendations on whether the lands group should continue to the appropriate legislative committees by January 1, 2012.