

12.16.09 Meeting Summary
1747 Cleanwater Lane, AGO Tumwater building, Olympia

FOREST PRACTICES BOARD POLICY WORKING GROUP
WASHINGTON STATE NORTHERN SPOTTED OWL

Members Present

Ken Berg	USFW
Shawn Cantrell	Seattle Audubon
Mark Doumit	WFPA
Kevin Godbout	Weyerhaeuser
Chris Lipton	Longview Timber
Robert Meier	Rayonier
Vic Musselman	WFFA
Miguel Perez-Gibson	Washington Audubon
Tom Robinson	WSAC
Paula Swedeen	Seattle Audubon
Chuck Turley	DNR
David Whipple	WDFW
Kara Whittaker	WFLC

Also Present

Lois Schwennesen	Schwennesen & Assoc.
Cindy Mitchell	WFPA
Martha Wehling	Attorney General's Office
Maryka Paquette	Schwennesen & Assoc.

Work Plan and Member Updates

Martha Wehling reminded the Group that after December 31st the Group will cease functioning as an official entity. She does not recommend members pursue official Policy Working Group action past that time.

Shawn Cantrell proposed that Kara Whittaker replace Don Halabisky for the remainder of the Group's work. All members agreed by consensus. Kara has been a staff scientist for the Washington Forest Law Center and has her Ph.D. from the University of Washington.

Bob Meier reported on the immediate progress seen from the Riparian Open Space Program expansion on the Olympic Peninsula: 1800 more acres on the Hoh River have been conserved because of the program, and the Olympic National Park has announced a plan to expand into 15,700+ acres. He noted this demonstrates the value and opportunities of partnership.

Shawn Cantrell reported that the judge's decision on the Federal Recovery Plan lawsuit has been delayed another month and is now expected in late January.

Final Report Content and Schedule for Completion

Miguel Perez-Gibson recommended that a preamble be included in the report stating that this is a living document representing the best work of this Group to date and its contents should serve as a starting point or baseline for continued work in WA State. Informal conversations will be continuing among former members of the Group and others over time, which will likely cause an evolution or change in the details of implementation.

Non-consensus recommendations, and responses to non-consensus recommendations, will be included in the report. All meeting summaries will be provided to the Forest Practices Board for their web site. Caucus revisions of non-consensus recommendations are to be delivered to Lois by noon on or before December 23. She then will distribute the final non-consensus

recommendations and a draft of the report. Caucuses may deliver responses to non-consensus recommendations to Lois though noon December 29 to be added to the report. There will be no further back and forth regarding caucus responses.

Lois Schwennesen asked that caucuses link their recommendations to specific points of the consensus document, emphasizing that the additive nature of their recommendations to approaches agreed upon.

A conference call will take place 9-11am on December 30* to review the draft final report to the Forest Practices Board (Board). The purpose will be to approve the facilitator's summary and review and confirm the non-consensus items and responses. New issues and topics will not be considered. The Group will present their results to the Board at its meeting on February 10. Chuck Turley will find out what is expected by the Board and inform the Group on the 30th.

Technical and Scientific Underpinning

The government caucus presented revisions to the consensus document to add language around barred owl management and scientific analysis requested of USFWS. Ken Berg noted it would be beneficial for either the Group or the Board to write a letter with these suggestions directly to USFWS. He also clarified the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is focused on removal experiments, and that geography of these experiments is scoped out by the presence of populations of both barred and northern spotted owls.

Shawn Cantrell moved for a caucus break to consider the conservation caucus's response to this addition. Due to the limited time remaining for caucuses to work with their constituents, the caucus is not able to reach a swift consensus over the additional language, which should not be interpreted as lack of support. There may be additional recommendations by the conservation caucus. The Group agreed that due to the timeline, a proposed additional language to the November consensus recommendation will be presented as non-consensus recommendations.

With regard to the technical/scientific underpinning of a conservation banking program, Kevin Godbout recognized the need for a technical process to create a mechanism by which to make decisions, but the details of this process are not worked through to a level of detail the forest products caucus can stand behind at this time. The caucus will support the conservation bank as an option, subject to working out details of the technical side of implementation.

Conservation Banking and Land Exchanges

The Group worked on consensus language around conservation banking and land exchanges. As details and options related to the concepts are complex and controversial, members drafted language collaboratively to maintain support by all parties to be included in the final report as follows: "The Group believes conservation banks including a land exchange mechanism may offer tools to assist with implementing the Group's recommendations. It is an approach that may warrant establishing a process to consider these tools in greater detail."

Members discussed following through with this concept informally, after disbanding as the Board's Policy Working Group, but continuing to assist USFWS as the Non-Federal Landowners Working Group for Washington. As individuals, there is interest in a coming together for a whiteboard exercise to consider a regional banking approach with a greater breadth of species to benefit. Ken Berg offered to host a discussion in February.

**The December 30 conference call was subsequently rescheduled to January 6.*

Habitat Enhancement Zones

Tom Robinson briefed the Group on a possible middle-ground approach to identify land for habitat enhancement, based on earlier discussions. He presented possible parameters, potential rules to limit further regulation, and stakeholder involvement in the process. The Group discussed the approach and concluded that the concepts could not be refined sufficiently during this last meeting to obtain support of the forest products and conservation caucuses; this proposal is one of the options that could be picked up and refined by others in the future.

Transition

A number of Group members noted their willingness to continue to work together on an informal basis after the Group disbands December 31. There is individual interest in supporting the recommendations of the Group next year. Topics include working further on details, responding to needs of the Board, monitoring progress, and keeping the Board engaged in these issues.

Individuals may also, after the Group disbands, collaborate on a joint press release to be issued around the time of the Board's February meeting.

All Group member records must be submitted to Patricia Anderson or Martha Wehling by Jan 31.

Meeting Adjourned