



Washington State Conservation Commission Regular Business Meeting  
Bellingham, Washington  
September 18, 2014

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The Washington State Conservation Commission (Commission/WSCC) met in regular session on September 18, 2014, in Bellingham, Washington. Chair Peters called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m.

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**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Jim Peters, Chair  
Clinton O'Keefe, Vice Chair, East Region  
Lynn Brown, Central Region  
Dean Longrie, West Region  
Lynn Bahrych, Member  
Jim Kropf, WSU-Puyallup  
Perry Beale, Dept. of Agriculture  
Todd Welker, Dept. Of Natural Resources  
Kelly Susewind, Department of Ecology (DOE)  
Alan Stromberger, President, WA Association of Conservation Districts (WACD)

**COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT**

Mark Clark, Executive Director  
Ron Shultz, Policy Director  
Ray Ledgerwood, District Operations Manager  
Josh Giuntoli, Office of Farmland Preservation  
Shana Joy, Puget Sound Regional Manager  
Melissa Vander Linden, Finance Staff  
Lori Gonzalez, Administrative Assistant  
Laura Johnson, Communications & Outreach  
Larry Brewer, Southeast Regional Manager

**PARTNERS REPRESENTED AT THIS MEETING**

Roylene Rides-at-the Door, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)  
Tom Eaton, Executive Director, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 10  
Dave Vogel, Executive Director, WACD

**GUESTS ATTENDED**

Joe Heller, Whatcom CD, Larry Davis, Whatcom CD, George Boggs, Whatcom CD, Carolyn Kelly, Skagit CD, Margen Carlson, WDFW, Jeff Davis, WDFW, Steve Landino, NOAA, Wendy Pare, Skagit CD, Joe Holtrop, Clallam CD, Ryan Williams, Snohomish CD, Dr. Nichole Embertson, Whatcom CD, Chris Mertz, Sherre Copeland, NRCS, Chris Herron, Franklin CD, and Rianne Perry, WSDA.

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**Consent Agenda**

Commission members reviewed the Regular Business Meeting minutes from July 17 and the Special Meeting minutes from August 19, 2014. The following motions were made:

**Motion by Commissioner Longrie to approve the July 17, 2014 Regular Business Meeting minutes. Commissioner Bahrych seconded. Motion passed.**

**Motion by Commissioner Brown to approve the August 19, 2014 Special Meeting minutes. Commissioner Longrie Seconded. Motion passed.**

Ron Shultz, Policy Director introduced Shana Joy, SCC's new Puget Sound Regional Manager and Policy Assistant. Shana came from Alaska as the Executive Director and is currently the President of the National Association of State Conservation Agencies (NASCA). This is a good role for Shana as she has close partnerships with other state agencies. Shana also works with the Puget Sound District Caucus and reports to Ron Shultz as well as Ray Ledgerwood, District Operations Manager.

Several presentations were given throughout the day.

### **Priority Habitat Species (PHS) Presentation by Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW)**

DFW, staff, Margen Carlson and Jeff Davis provided a background of the program that first started in 1992 in response to manage growth. PHS program's intended means is to share information on species and habitat. They have a list of species that they consider to be priorities and may be facing some level of risk. The program also provides a lot of technical assistance to local counties for land use planning. Ms. Carlsen mentioned the most current PHS Riparian document was published in 1997. They have received a grant from EPA via Ecology from the National Estuary Funds and DFW did match to fund the work. They are currently in two phases in updating the document. It is a synthesis of the science not a policy recommendation. Dr. Nichole Embertson from Whatcom CD has been a very big help through the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) in assisting with the review of the document by making sure the science and the tone is good when it rolls out to the public. Final document needs to be completed by June 2015. **PowerPoint presentation can be found on the SCC website located at this web address:** <http://scc.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/1-WDFW-Priority-Habitat-Species-Riparian-Update.pdf>

### **The Power of Coordinated Investments for Collective Impact by Steve Landino, NOAA**

Steve Landino of NOAA Fisheries presented information on a concept their agency is exploring called Coordinated Investments. The approach is an effort to see whether and how federal funding in Puget Sound could be implemented in a more coordinated fashion to get better resource results more efficiently. The proposal is still in concept form and being discussed between the primary federal partners, NOAA, EPA, and NRCS. **PowerPoint presentation can be found on the SCC website at this address:** <http://scc.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/2-NOAA-Coordinated-Investment-Strategy.pptx>

### **Office of Farmland Preservation**

Josh Giuntoli, OFP staff handed out a workbook he worked on, in coordination with others called: Planning the Future of Your Farm: A Workbook Supporting Specialty Crop Farm Transfer Decisions. OFP received funding from a Specialty Crop grant through the Department of Agriculture. This booklet is also being transcribed in Spanish. **You can find an electronic version of the workbook on the OFP website at this web address:** <http://ofp.scc.wa.gov/succession-planning/>.

### **OFP Indicator Report Update**

In 2009 the Office of Farmland Preservation Task Force adopted a series of indicators. There are 20 indicators. The Farmland Preservation Indicators Report continues to be populated with updated data. Many data sources used in the last version have not been updated. However, new potential indicators with data are being considered. **PowerPoint presentation can be found at this web address:** <http://scc.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/3-SCC-OFP-Farmland-Indicators-Report.pptx>.

### **USDA/ National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Programs and Census of Agriculture Presentation**

Chris Mertz, Director of USDA/NASS Regional Office. NASS provides timely, accurate, and useful statistics in service to U.S. agriculture. They do a complete count every five years of America's farms and ranches, including the people that operate them. **Mr. Mertz provided a lot of statistical information in his PowerPoint that can be found on the SCC website located at this address:** <http://scc.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/4-USDA-NASS-Program-and-Census-of-Ag.pptx> . Mr. Mertz also noted the full **Census Report can be found online at** [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov) where you will be able to view a full publication, searchable database and several charts and maps.

### **Carlton Complex Fire Update**

Craig Nelson, Okanogan Conservation District Manager was able to provide a brief update via phone on the Carlton Complex fires that started in the Central region of the state in July 2014. He informed the Commissioners that Okanogan has created a Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) Team to go out and assess the damage. He listed the various entities assisting in the effort.

Commissioner Welker said DNR will put in a budget request in the amount upwards of \$20 million to help with forest health and Firewise.

Roylene Rides at the Door, NRCS, said they have people out there doing some damage assessment and will be asking for more funds on the EWP and have asked for additional money for EQIP funds. Also checking to see if they could do cost recovery funds on existing contracts.

### **Results Washington**

Director Clark did a presentation in front of the Governor on September 10<sup>th</sup> to discuss the CREP program. Steve Martin from the Salmon Recovery Board spoke on the program as well as Bob Falkner, a landowner from Pacific County to talk about his successful experience with CREP. Mr. Clark was able to show results in the Tucannon and being able to reduce the temperature by 10 degrees. Governor noted at the end of the presentation: "now is not the time to be humble. You need to get the word out about the success of this program." Next will be Results Washington on BMP agency discussions. Governor's Office has been meeting with individual agencies. Our AAG, Phyllis Barney will be brought into the discussions. District managers, George Boggs and Monte Marti will also be brought into the meeting to have district perspective on how to get work done on the ground.

### **RCPP**

There are nine pre-proposals in the RCPP from Washington State accepted and requested to prepare a full proposal for NRCS consideration. CDs are working on four (Whatcom – WRIA 1 CREP; Palouse – WRIA 34 Programs; Palouse-Rock Lake – No Till; Kittitas and N. Yakima – Irrigation efficiencies and farm easements). WSCC staff is working on one for Puget Sound in coordination with The Nature Conservancy and American Farmland Trust. All proposals are due October 2.

### **Cultural Resource**

Commission discussed the proposed Cultural Resource Policy for BMPs with Commission Cost share only. Consensus seemed to be that the Policy will apply to Operating funded projects as well as Capitol Funded projects. There was an interested in having WSCC recognize and accept Cultural Resource work done by individual Districts as complying with the Executive Order 0505, for those districts with that capacity. For other districts the procedure will be further developed to provide guidance for compliance with 0505.

**Commissioner Brown moved to establish a committee of CC member volunteers to go over the proposed CR policy particularly focused on the funding issue, and approach the definition of ground disturbance, and for the districts to be responsible with the Commission as fall back. Commissioner Stromberger seconded. Motion passed.**

The Commission appointed three commissioners and George Boggs from Whatcom to work with SCC staff, Larry Brewer to discuss and agree on a policy to present at the December Commission meeting.

### **Ag and Water Quality Meetings**

Commissioner Susewind, representative of the Department of Ecology (ECY) updated the Commission on their meetings. They just had their 4<sup>th</sup> meeting September 11<sup>th</sup>. Ag producers selected the agenda and had presentations on topics relating to:

- Farm Smart a no till program implemented in the Palouse. Voluntary program that Ecology worked with the proponents on to make sure those implementing the program would be consistent with resource protection.
- VSP discussion by Evan Sheffels; Jay Gordon talked about MOAs; Ron Shultz discussed ecosystem markets.
- Presentation by Walla Walla CD on the work there.

Next meeting will be Oct 23 in Lacey. No agenda yet but will focus on discussions relating to how ECY works with producers and ECY will present suggested changes in the ECY programs approaches to address concerns. Hope is to have the advisory group support ECY in a path forward. ECY looking to incorporate as appropriate of the Tip

Hudson, WSU work. ECY is considering a guidance document that will be focused on a risk assessment approach rather than a manual with specific management recommendations. Last meeting is in December. Whether these meetings continue beyond December will be dependent on the water quality issues, which means the group will likely continue into the future.

### **Application Risk Management (ARM)**

Dr. Nichole Embertson from Whatcom Conservation District presented on ARM. Whatcom is the second leading dairy area. Yakima is number 1 in cow production. This assessment has to be done all year round. ARM was developed to help farmers through the process of properly assessing, managing, and reducing the risks associated with applying manure to their fields. It is real time for farmers, automatically updated from NOAA. It tells you the runoff risk- soil leaching. The tool only goes out three days to help farmers know when the right time to spread is. Dr. Embertson shared a website they created (WA Dairy Plan): <https://sites.google.com/site/wadairyplan/home> for ARM and Nutrient Management Plan Guidance. The site has a whole section on Application Risk Management and the lists of all the parameters will determine the ability to apply or not apply to the individual fields. **PowerPoint presentation can be found at this web address:** <http://scc.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Application-Risk-Assessment-by-Dr-Nichole-Embertson.pdf>.

### **Commission Operations**

Commission members were presented with proposed locations for 2015.

**Motion by Commissioner Longrie to approve the 2015 meeting locations as presented by staff and check in with CD staff. Seconded by Commissioner Welker. Motion passed.**

### **SCC Mission Statement**

Commissioner Bahrych would like to hear back from other Commission members on the revised mission statement. Once approved by members, SCC staff will send out to districts for comment, and subcommittee will present again to members.

Chair Peters adjourned at 4:24 p.m.