

Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Advisory Committee Charter

Introduction

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) own or manage nearly a million acres of land on 33 designated Wildlife Areas (WLA) across the state. The 2,774 acre Snoqualmie WLA is located in the Snohomish Watershed east and north of the city of Seattle, in Snohomish and King Counties. It is comprised of six units. Three (Stillwater, Cherry Valley and Crescent Lake) are located in the Snoqualmie Valley near the city of Duvall. Three units are located east of the city of Everett and include the Ebey Island, Spencer Island, and the Corson Wildlife Preserve.

Management of the Snoqualmie WLA is directed by a Wildlife Area Management Plan, located on the *agency website at: http://wdfw.wa.gov/lands/wildlife_areas/management_plans/snoqualmie/*. Consistent with agency guidance for communicating with the public and affected stakeholders on WLA management issues, the agency has organized this Wildlife Area Advisory Committee (WAAC).

The Snoqualmie WLA management plan is being revised to reflect current conditions, updated objectives, and to support the Agency's mission: *To preserve, protect and perpetuate fish, wildlife and ecosystems while providing sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities.*

Purpose

The purpose of the WAAC is to provide input through the development of each WLA plan and to provide input about ongoing land management activities that support successful implementation of the WLA plan, consistent with the Agency mandate, mission, objectives and state-wide goals. Public and stakeholder input through the WLA planning process is a critical ingredient in developing practical and implementable plans that have the support of the local community.

Wildlife Area Advisory Committee (WAAC) Membership

WAAC members represent a range of user and stakeholder groups who have interests in activities on the WLA. Represented groups include hunters, wildlife watchers, fish and wildlife conservationists, land and water resource managers, agricultural interests, local governments, tribes and wildlife-related recreationists.

WAAC Role & Responsibilities

The role of the advisory committee is to provide public and stakeholder perspectives on WDFW WLA planning and management activities. Responsibilities include:

- Review information, discuss issues with committee members, provide constructive input on management activities and assist in development of WLA plans and updates
- Serve as spokespersons for respective interest groups, reporting back to agency staff and the committee about the interests and concerns of the larger stakeholder group

- Disseminate the Agency's mission, goals and purpose of land management activities to respective interest groups
- Ask questions to understand the agencies mandate, goals and purpose of land management activities
- Identify an alternate who will serve when and if the primary representative is unable to participate. Continuity is especially important as there will be a limited number of meetings and each meeting will build on the material covered at previous meetings
- Accept input from a variety of user groups on resource issues
- Identify and advise on key issues of concern
- Provide input on how the WAAC could be more efficient and effective
- Act in an advisory capacity, providing input and guidance to agency staff
- WAACs are not decision makers. They are not required to reach consensus or necessarily agree with agency decisions.

WDFW Wildlife Area Planning and Management Team Role & Responsibilities

The WAAC is supported by local, regional, and Senior Management staff from WDFW. The role of WDFW staff is to facilitate effective WAAC input in wildlife area management activities and Plan updates.

Responsibilities include:

- Develop productive agendas, engaging WAAC members in appropriate topics
- Implement effective meeting management practices including establishing ground rules and charters, facilitating meetings, maintaining regular communications with WAAC members, and providing prompt meeting summaries.
- Clearly define and communicate the Agency's mission, rules, regulations and policies
- Engage in discussions, answer questions based on Agency perspectives, and be transparent in decision-making
- Consider and utilize WAAC input to make sound and informed decisions
- Maintain effective WAAC participation through recruitment and rotation of WAAC members on a one to three year cycle
- Provide timely follow-up to questions and concerns raised by WAAC members.
- Ensure that WAAC members are respectful of others opinions and that the WAAC internal dynamic is functional and productive.

WAAC Operating Guidelines

The following guidelines are recommended for productive discussion and forward progress.

- Committee members are expected to attend all WAAC meetings
- In addition to local views, bring a regional perspective to the table
- Outside of WAAC meetings, represent personal views and/or views of respective groups or organizations, not views of entire WAAC, unless agreed to in advance by all WAAC members
- Coordinate the participation of WAAC alternate members when not able to attend meetings
- All members are expected to actively, productively, and respectfully participate
- WAAC members who violate the terms and expectations outlined in this charter will be removed

Meeting Schedule

The advisory committee is expected to meet one to two times per year. The WLA Manager will discuss the meeting schedule with WAAC members to confirm topics and timing.

WAAC Agendas and Meeting Notices

When finalized, and/or updated, the WAAC roster will be posted on the agency website, along with agendas and meeting notes (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/advisory/>)

Public Comment

The purpose of WAAC meetings is primarily for committee discussion. This may be supplemented and enhanced with input from members of the public and other interested parties. WAAC meetings are open to the public and an opportunity for brief public input will be provided at each meeting.

WAAC Decision-Making

The WAAC is not a decision-making body or voting group. Members are expected to “advise” WDFW staff about their views on WLA management activities. Consensus of the WAAC is not required; however, staff will seek to understand consistent as well as divergent views, and consider all WAAC input in making and implementing decisions on the wildlife area.