

Stakeholder and Public Involvement Strategies

Hydraulic Project Approval and Wildlife Areas Habitat Conservation Plans

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife ■ December 2006

Stakeholder and Public Involvement Strategies

Hydraulic Project Approval and Wildlife Areas Habitat Conservation Plans

Prepared for:

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 43200
Olympia, WA 98504-1091
Contact: Jane Banyard

Prepared by:



Jones & Stokes

711 Capitol Way, Suite 504
Olympia, WA 98501
Contact: Melinda Posner
360/357-4400

Kaleen Cottingham

P.O. Box 12914
Olympia, WA 98508-2914
kaleen.cottingham@comcast.net
360/867-0100

December 2006

This document should be cited as:

Jones & Stokes. 2006. Stakeholder and Public Involvement Strategies. Hydraulic Project Approval and Wildlife Areas Habitat Conservation Plans. December. (J&S 06255.06.) Olympia, WA. Prepared for Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Continued Refinement of Strategies	1
Tribal Involvement	2
HCP Development Phases	2
Early Outreach Combined for Both HCPs	3
Report Organization	3
Hydraulic Project Approval HCP	3
Phase I: Scoping and Initial Outreach.....	5
Objective: Awareness, Education and Early Input	5
Timeline	5
Strategy 1: Develop Key Messages.....	5
Strategy 2: Develop Internal Communication Plan	6
Strategy 3: Develop Stakeholder/Interested Parties Database.....	7
Strategy 4: Develop and Distribute Project Communication Materials.....	8
Strategy 5: Develop Content for Project Web Site	10
Strategy 6: Conduct Media Relations.....	10
Strategy 7: Hold Public Meetings.....	11
Strategy 8: Design Advisory Committee/Stakeholder Involvement Process.....	12
Phase II: HCP Development Phase.....	14
Objective: Interested Parties Engagement and Involvement	14
Strategy 1: Interim Outreach.....	15
Strategy 2: Refine Key Messages.....	15
Strategy 3: Refine/Revise Project Communication Materials.....	15
Strategy 4: Implement Advisory Committee/Stakeholder Involvement Process	16
Strategy 5: Hold Public Meetings.....	16
Wildlife Areas HCP	16
Phase I: Scoping and Initial Outreach.....	18
Objective: Awareness, Education and Early Input	18
Timeline	18

Strategy 1: Develop Key Messages 19

Strategy 2: Develop Internal Communication Plan 20

Strategy 3: Develop Stakeholder/Interested Parties Database 21

Strategy 4: Develop and Distribute Project Communication Materials 22

Strategy 5: Develop Content for Project Web Site 23

Strategy 6: Conduct Media Relations 24

Strategy 7: Hold Public Meetings 25

Strategy 8: Design Advisory Committee/Stakeholder Involvement Process 26

Phase II: HCP Development Phase 28

Objective: Interested Parties Engagement and Involvement 28

Strategy 1: Interim Outreach 28

Strategy 2: Refine Key Messages 29

Strategy 3: Refine/Revise Project Communication Materials 29

Strategy 4: Implement Advisory Committee/Stakeholder Involvement Process 29

Strategy 5: Hold Public Meetings 30

Acronyms

WDFW	Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
HCPs	Habitat Conservation Plans
HPA	Hydraulic Project Approval
NEPA	National Environmental Protection Act
SEPA	State Environmental Policy Act
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
HPA HCP	Hydraulic Project Approval Habitat Conservation Plan
Wildlife Areas HCP	Wildlife Areas Habitat Conservation Plan
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions
CAGs	Citizen Advisory Groups

Introduction

The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) contracted with consultants Jones & Stokes and Kaleen Cottingham to conduct an external needs assessment of stakeholders and tribal staff to evaluate the challenges, issues, lessons learned, and successful strategies for stakeholder and public involvement for two Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs). WDFW is in the initial stages of developing two HCPs: one for the Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) regulatory program and one for activities on state-owned Wildlife Areas.

Jones & Stokes and Kaleen Cottingham completed the draft needs assessment in June 2006, which includes key findings from interviews with several groups including state and local elected officials, tribes, environmental groups, regulators and other agencies, the regulated community, checkerboard/adjacent landowners, the Fish and Wildlife Commission, and WDFW advisory councils. The needs assessment is included in Appendix A.

The needs assessment provides valuable information as to how stakeholders, tribes and other interested parties view WDFW's programs and HCPs in general. The assessment also focuses on whether and how each group would like to be involved in the two HCPs, lessons that have been learned from other HCP experiences, and key elements for a successful outreach program.

The needs assessment focused on several specific outreach questions including:

- Issues, concerns and interests of various stakeholder groups and tribal staff;
- Level of desired participation from those interviewed;
- Best methods for reaching and engaging interested parties;
- Successful outreach efforts for past HCPs and other statewide projects and programs;
- Importance of and methods for reaching the general public; and
- Specific outreach methods for the HPA program vs. Wildlife Areas.

This information—combined with the Department's goals of: 1) conducting a transparent and proactive outreach process; and 2) involving the groups who will be impacted by HCP development—informs the development of these strategies.

Continued Refinement of Strategies

The Department is engaging in a four-to-six-year planning process and intends to initiate the formal stakeholder and public outreach process in 2007. At the same time, the Department is continuing its technical work to develop the two HCPs. This includes developing an accurate inventory of habitats and species, assessing the impacts of various activities on endangered, threatened and sensitive species, and identifying the types of activities that may be addressed in

each of the HCPs. As the technical work continues and the outreach process is initiated, these public involvement strategies will be refined and revised as appropriate. These strategies should be viewed as dynamic and evolving, and will continue to be reviewed, evaluated and revised as necessary to ensure compliance with the Department's overall outreach goals.

Tribal Involvement

WDFW is currently in the process of evaluating the Department's approach to tribal relations, as well as those of other agencies, particularly those with HCP development experience. Based on these assessments and tribal input, WDFW will develop tribal involvement strategies for both the HPA and Wildlife Areas HCPs. These strategies will engage the tribes at a government-to-government level and will occur in tandem with the public and stakeholder outreach strategies described in this document. In cases where this document makes reference to outreach to interested parties, it is assumed that the tribes are included in the overall audience.

HCP Development Phases

WDFW has recently initiated the HCP development process, which includes a technical assessment for each HCP. While each was initiated at the same time, the two HCPs are very different projects. Each HCP will result in different potential effects on interested parties, and each will move forward at a different rate. Key project milestones and progress of the technical assessment for each HCP will suggest appropriate timeframes and next steps. The scope and progress of each HCP will dictate the sequential steps outlined below.

- **Initial Outreach:** general introduction and potential approach to the HCP development process, share information, answer questions, and ask for early input.
- **Technical Assessment Results:** when assessment results are completed, share results, answer questions, obtain input.
- **Technical/Policy Subcommittee Review:** review of technical documents and development of a draft HCP proposal for the HPA program and Wildlife Areas.
- **HCP Decision Making:** WDFW decides on the scope of species and activities to include in the HPA and Wildlife Areas HCPs.
- **NEPA/SEPA Scoping:** scoping of potential issues to be addressed in the environmental analysis of the HCP proposal as required under the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) and State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).
- **Draft HCP/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS):** WDFW and federal Services (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries) present and evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the draft HCP. This includes a formal public comment opportunity.

- **Response to Comments:** WDFW and federal Services respond to public comments on the draft EIS.
- **Final HCP/Final EIS:** issuance of the final EIS, Federal issuance of incidental take permits, Record of Decision.

Early Outreach Combined for Both HCPs

As WDFW develops the HCPs, it is the Department's intent to inform and actively engage the general public, stakeholders, and tribal and other government agencies for input and assistance to help define the issues to be addressed in the HCPs. Due to the largely educational focus of the initial outreach efforts, it is recommended that outreach for both HCPs be combined at this early stage in the process. It is expected that as the scope of each HCP is further defined, future outreach activities will follow independent courses.

Report Organization

The report is organized into two main sections: Hydraulic Project Approval Habitat Conservation Plan (HPA HCP) and Wildlife Areas Habitat Conservation Plan (Wildlife Areas HCP). Each section includes overall goals and objectives for public involvement, as well as the key audiences to reach. Each section is broken down into two phases. The initial outreach phase addresses specific strategies to initiate the stakeholder and public involvement process in the short term--through mid-2007. The second phase is more general and addresses strategies to reach and involve interested parties through the entire HCP development and approval process, which is expected to take from four to six years to complete.

Hydraulic Project Approval HCP

The purpose of the HPA HCP public involvement strategy is to establish a framework for engaging the public, stakeholders, and tribal and other government agencies in a manner that will solicit feedback and assistance in the Department's development of an HCP for the HPA program.

WDFW is in the initial phases of HCP development and is currently evaluating the risk of potential adverse impacts to federal Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed and other sensitive species; the level of support for HCP development; and the time, staffing and funds required to successfully develop an HCP.

WDFW is assessing the risk of potential adverse impacts to federal ESA-listed and other sensitive species through a series of contractor-developed "white papers" about each potential HPA

activity. The end product will identify which activities have the highest likelihood of producing negative impacts on listed or sensitive fish species and aquatic invertebrates or their habitats.

The following are the goals and objectives of the HPA HCP stakeholder and public involvement program.

Goal

Conduct a transparent and proactive stakeholder and public involvement process for the HPA HCP.

Objectives

- Develop awareness and understanding about the HPA HCP.
- Solicit input about the HPA HCP including key issues of interest, stakeholder concerns, and preferred methods for participation.
- Involve stakeholders and other interested parties in the development of the HPA HCP.
- Engage affected interested parties in a process that recognizes the interests of each group, is easily accessible, and makes forward progress.
- Using a variety of communication materials and methods, create opportunities for productive one-way and two-way communication.
- Position WDFW for success in designing and initiating a proactive, transparent planning process that involves interested parties and affected groups.

Audiences

- Regulated community (includes organizations and individuals whose activities are regulated by WDFW's HPA program)
- State and local elected officials
- Environmental groups
- Tribes
- Department of Fish and Wildlife staff
- Fish and Wildlife Commission
- Regulators and other federal, state, and local government agencies
- Federal Services
- Local and regional media
- General public

Phase I: Scoping and Initial Outreach

Objective: Awareness, Education and Early Input

The key objective of Phase I is to provide information to the public and interested parties about the development of the HPA HCP. This phase will be characterized by the development of key messages, development and dissemination of project materials, and soliciting initial reactions to key issues of interest, WDFW's HCP approach, and preferred methods of participation.

Interviewees in the needs assessment recommended different approaches for the outreach program for the HPA HCP and the Wildlife Areas. They noted that those most impacted by the HPA program are members of the regulated community, environmental groups, and other industry organizations—groups that are well organized and generally well informed about the HPA program. They have been involved in past efforts to consider program revisions, are very interested in participating in any future program revisions (including a potential HCP), and belong to larger umbrella organizations—many of which are located in the Olympia and broader Puget Sound region—that can represent the views of many members. This suggests a more intensive involvement effort with well-organized stakeholder groups, as well as outreach to the general public and less impacted stakeholders.

Timeline

The Phase I timeline is expected to begin in Fall 2006 and continue through mid-2007.

Strategy 1: Develop Key Messages

Purpose

Key messages are an essential component of any outreach plan, ensuring that: 1) the project sponsor communicates clearly and consistently about the project to all potential stakeholders and audiences; and 2) difficult project issues and/or questions are discussed and addressed in a consistent manner by the project team. Key messages form the foundation for all communication materials that are developed and distributed for the project.

Key messages will be used to clearly and consistently communicate the rationale for HCP development, define roles and responsibilities for Department staff and others who are communicating about the HCP process, and outline a process for responding to emerging issues so the Department can respond quickly and effectively to internal and external inquiries. Key messages should also address key questions, many of which were identified in the needs assessment including:

- Why is the Department pursuing an HCP?
- What are the costs and benefits of an HCP?
- What is the scope and timeline of the HCP?

- What are the potential effects of an HCP to interested parties?
- How or will the HCP be used as a conservation tool vs. a permit to “take” species?
- What are the specific scientific issues that need to be addressed and how will the “best science” be determined?
- Will the HCP result in rule changes?
- How will the HCP affect environmental protection measures currently in place?
- Who will be the key contact person for the HCP?

Tactics

Key messages will be developed through an iterative process of identifying the anticipated questions and concerns of interested groups and clearly articulating WDFW’s disposition and response to these questions. Questions generated through interviews with interested parties provide a starting point for key messages development. The Department will also seek input from area biologists about input they have received from the regulated community that should be addressed through key messages. This is an internal task to be completed before any outreach is conducted.

Products/Outcomes

The end product is a set of statements, often with one or more supporting statements, that define the scope of the project and the Department’s process for moving forward. Once developed, these statements will be communicated to all project team members and Department staff (as outlined in the internal communication plan discussed in Strategy 2), and will be used appropriately in project communication material such as fact sheets, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), project Web site, news releases, and other communication materials.

Strategy 2: Develop Internal Communication Plan

Purpose

A proactive internal communication plan will position the Department for success in consistently communicating with internal staff, enhancing trust and confidence in agency management, and ensuring the agency speaks with “one voice” when staff communicate with external audiences about the HCP.

The internal communication plan should include the key messages developed in Strategy 1. The plan should define clear roles and responsibilities for Department staff including the role of each regional office, communication methods for each of the Department’s internal audiences, the process for quickly and effectively responding to internal and external inquiries, and the internal decision-making process. Communication needs and involvement in the HCP project will vary for different types of staff members. Some will be closely involved in strategy development and decision-making; others will be less involved but need to communicate project key messages in

interactions with stakeholders; and others may be uninvolved but need to stay informed about the project.

Generally, it is expected that internal communication about the HCP process will parallel the external outreach effort and Department staff members will be made aware of project progress as new milestones are reached and new information is developed, including input and inquiries from the public, results of technical analyses and changes to the planned approach.

Tactics

Development of the plan will take into account the current communication structure of the Department, and will include the following internal communication opportunities:

- Fish and Wildlife Commission meetings
- Department management meetings
- Agency staff meetings
- Email updates
- WDFW Intranet website

Products/Outcomes

The product of this strategy is a straightforward communications plan that will guide the interactions of agency staff through the HCP development process.

Strategy 3: Develop Stakeholder/Interested Parties Database

Purpose

A database is a key tool for the distribution of project information to stakeholder contacts. The database should include a broad range of stakeholders and interested parties including elected officials, tribes, environmental groups, community organizations, members of the regulated community, industry associations, Fish and Wildlife Commission, and the media. The database also is an effective tool to research and store information about other outreach avenues that can be leveraged to disseminate project information. For example, it may include other organizations' newsletters, deadlines for the submittal of information, and key contacts that can assist with dissemination of HCP messages. The database will also include key distribution points for HCP materials including HPA permit holder correspondence, public agency counters, and other areas.

For the HPA HCP, the database will be focused on those groups who may be interested and/or impacted by the development of an HCP – many of whom participated in past efforts to review and/or revise the HPA program. This includes members of the regulated community; developers; environmental groups; local, state, and federal government agencies; tribes; and industry associations.

Tactics

Using the needs assessment contact list as a base and working with existing WDFW mailing lists, a comprehensive stakeholder database will be developed for the HPA HCP. This will include contact information for each stakeholder including name, address, affiliation, phone, fax, and email address. Methods and outlets for the dissemination of HCP materials will be identified. For cost-effective and efficient dissemination of information, an “email group” of stakeholders will also be developed for the electronic distribution of information. The database will be updated after each outreach effort.

Products/Outcomes

The final product will be an expanded and updated stakeholder database for the HPA HCP for both direct mail and electronic distribution of materials. It is expected that one database will hold the contact information for both the HPA and Wildlife Areas HCPs. Each will be able to be accessed, updated and used independently as well as combined together for outreach to all stakeholders and interested parties, if necessary. Periodic updates will be made throughout the HCP development process.

Strategy 4: Develop and Distribute Project Communication Materials

Purpose

Project communication materials can take many forms – brochures, fact sheets, flyers, etc. – and are essential for ongoing communication to interested parties. Using project key messages, consistent formats, fonts and colors, project materials can be developed and distributed at public meetings, on the project Web site, at public counters, and at other locations where the public and other groups convene. They provide an ongoing chronicle of project progress and can be utilized at different points in the process to share information about upcoming events, results of technical studies and decision-making points. They can be designed to focus primarily on one-way communication, which is more likely in Phase I, and encourage more interactive dialogue in Phase II. Questions uncovered during the needs assessment will guide the development of the communication materials as well as new questions that are generated throughout the outreach process.

Tactics

Project materials will include a consistent graphical look and layout that can be used on all subsequent HCP communication materials. This “branding” effort will address logo placement, project title(s), color, layout, etc. A series of templates will be developed for consistent use throughout the project including:

- Project fact sheets
- Project FAQs
- Project newsletter

- Project graphic board
- Postcard/meeting announcement
- Project comment cards

Project fact sheets provide a versatile format that can be used throughout the project—they can be used as a self-mailer and/or handouts. They can be focused on a broad scope of issues and general background information or specifically written and designed to communicate about a particular issue or idea. Topics to consider for project fact sheets include:

- Introduction of WDFW’s interest in pursuing the HPA and Wildlife Areas HCPs
- WDFW’s approach and timeline for developing both HCPs
- Overview of the HPA Program and Hydraulic Code
- Potential HCP activities and technical issues
- HPA HCP technical assessment approach
- Purpose, benefits, and cost of an HCP
- Decision-making process
- Announcements of upcoming public meetings
- Project contact information

Designed consistently with other project communication materials, the FAQs will address many of the topics covered in the fact sheets but will be formatted in a question and answer format. A newsletter will provide updates on the HCP status and any emerging technical details associated with the HCP. Project boards will be used for graphic displays at public meetings. A project postcard will also be developed if found to be useful for distributing meeting reminder notices to interested parties. A standardized project comment card will be developed for capturing written comments at face-to-face interactions and through the project Web site.

Products/Outcomes

It is expected that the first set of materials (fact sheet, FAQs, newsletter, etc.) will be developed prior to the first outreach meetings and be clearly written and professionally designed to communicate general and background information to a wide variety of audiences. The second set of materials will be developed after some technical work has been completed on the HCP—as an overview of results of the technical analysis and HPA activities that may be addressed in the HCP. Depending on the progress of HCP development, Phase I may also include a third fact sheet—sharing interim progress and information about when the public and other interested parties can expect to be contacted in the future.

Project materials will be distributed in the following manner:

- Posted on WDFW HPA HCP-specific Web page.

- Distributed manually at outreach meetings.
- Distributed to electronic and direct mail database contacts including stakeholder organization newsletters and WDFW publications such as *LandLine* and *Fish Planner*.
- Distributed at other public information dissemination locations including agency offices, public counters, etc.

Strategy 5: Develop Content for Project Web Site

Purpose

The needs assessment confirmed the need for a project Web site as an important tool in keeping stakeholders and other interested parties informed about the HCP effort. A project Web site can be used to document history and progress of the HCP, provide updates and reminders about public meetings and other outreach events, record comments, poll stakeholder groups, and provide links to other related information. To be most effective, the project Web site must be updated and maintained on a regular basis. In addition, and as noted by several interviewees in the needs assessment, the Web site should be well organized, uncluttered, and easily navigable.

Tactics

WDFW develops and manages the Department Web site. WDFW will create a separate Web page(s) for the HPA HCP. Information that is developed for the project communication materials in Strategy 4 will be re-formatted as necessary for the Web and updated as necessary to reflect new information and project progress.

Products/Outcomes

The end product will be an HPA HCP-specific Web page or pages that are focused specifically on the HPA HCP. WDFW's home page will provide a brief introduction and link to the HCP Web page, and the HCP Web page will include pages necessary to communicate about the HCP project. This will initially include an introduction and approach for the HCP itself, background information about the HPA program, whom to contact for more information, and a brief summary about the anticipated public involvement steps. Over time, the Web site will become more developed with updates and conclusions from the concurrent technical studies, opportunities to review materials and submit online comments, and potential "forums" to dialogue with other interested parties about the progress of the HCP.

Strategy 6: Conduct Media Relations

Purpose

Publicizing information in the media is an effective way to reach the general public at large. Use of local and regional print media is likely to be the most effective for the overall HCP effort; however, local radio stations and government access television are additional ways that the media can help disseminate information about the HCP. For those members of the public not otherwise

engaged in HCP activities, the media might be the only place they hear about HCP activities. For those who will be contacted directly – through direct mail or email distribution of project materials – the media serves as a reminder of previously distributed materials.

Media relations involves the development and general distribution of news releases, creation of guest “op-ed” columns for select publications as appropriate, and development of internal talking points for use by WDFW staff in speaking to the news media. It includes internal discussion and preparation – so that the Department is timely and responsive to media inquiries and maximizes opportunities to communicate accurate and timely information about the HCP.

Tactics

To inform the general public of the initial outreach meetings described below, WDFW will develop news releases announcing public comment opportunities, and dates, times and locations of public meetings. As HCP development continues, guest columns or articles for select publications may be developed to explain the process in more depth.

In addition, talking points based on HCP development key messages will be distributed to WDFW staff associated with the project, to ensure clear and consistent verbal statements are made to news media representatives.

All media relations work will be closely coordinated with the WDFW Public Affairs Director, including identification of key media outlets and reporter contacts, content and timing of news release(s), and distribution. WDFW Public Affairs will write and distribute any news releases, talking points, or guest columns.

Products/Outcomes

Media relations products will likely include the following:

- News release(s) announcing upcoming public meetings
- Talking points based on key messages, and prepared by WDFW Public Affairs staff, to be used in interviews with the news media
- Guest columns, as needed, in select publications

Strategy 7: Hold Public Meetings

Purpose

Public meetings provide the opportunity to share information, solicit input, and interact face-to-face with stakeholders and interested parties. They provide an opportunity for members of the public to engage more deeply by interacting directly with project team members, for project team members to understand first-hand issues and concerns of stakeholders, and for community members to hear the questions and comments of their neighbors and other concerned citizens in their community. Meetings should be held at convenient locations and times for those who are

expected to participate and can be designed in a variety of formats depending on the project purpose and desired outcomes of each meeting.

Input from those who participated in the needs assessment interviews identified the need for strong, neutral facilitation at public meetings and the need for a variety of opportunities for interested parties to engage in discussions about the HCP development process. In addition, needs assessment interviewees confirmed the need for public meetings or other outreach activities in areas where HCP impacts were expected. It was commonly felt that a statewide HCP would require outreach to groups and individuals throughout the state unless the technical assessment or scope of the HCP suggested a more narrow focus.

Tactics

The meeting format and agenda will be discussed in advance at strategy meetings with project team members. At these meetings, roles and responsibilities of project team members, the need for and development of graphic materials and handouts, anticipated questions and responses, and logistics such as facility arrangements, refreshments, meeting setup/teardown, audiovisual equipment, sign-in sheet, name tags, directional signage, comment cards, and other meeting supplies will be addressed.

The project communication materials developed in Strategy 4 will be used at all public meetings. In addition, it may be useful to develop a generalized questionnaire for distribution at public meetings and other venues to obtain written responses to a standard set of questions about the HPA HCP.

Products/Outcomes

If the HCP approach is to be statewide, a minimum of six public meetings are recommended for the HCP, to be geographically dispersed throughout the state. Each meeting will be conducted in a similar format, which is expected to include an informational presentation by WDFW about both HCPs, facilitated question and answer session, and possible breakout sessions for both the Wildlife Areas and HPA HCPs. As noted earlier, at this early stage of both HCPs, it is expected that the public meetings will be held to share information and obtain input about both HCPs. At future outreach steps, both HCPs may utilize public meetings as an outreach tool, but these are likely to be on different timelines and not conducted jointly. A summary of all outreach meetings will be developed and made available on the HCP project Web site.

Strategy 8: Design Advisory Committee/Stakeholder Involvement Process

Purpose

Based on input from the needs assessment and WDFW staff, participation of impacted stakeholder groups and other interested parties is essential to the development of a successful HCP. Many of those interviewed were involved in past HPA program discussions and are very interested in any future efforts associated with an HPA HCP. Many interviewees felt that the

development of an HPA HCP will be controversial, with some groups directly opposed to the interests of other groups. The purpose of the stakeholder involvement process will be to engage those groups that are most affected by the HPA program and to involve them in the development of the HCP.

WDFW is considering the organization of an advisory group or groups that would guide different elements of the HCP development process. A dedicated advisory group(s) or oversight committee(s) would address the policy and technical components of the HCP and work closely with WDFW to develop a well-supported final document. The format, frequency and focus of the advisory committee structure will be fleshed out during the Phase I outreach period through initial outreach response and the results and progress of the technical assessments. However, key process elements, many of which were noted in the needs assessment, include:

- A structure that is inclusive of impacted stakeholder groups
- Well-organized and productive meetings with clear agenda, purpose and desired outcomes
- Strong, neutral facilitation

Tactics

The first step in this process will be to share information at the public meetings and other outreach venues with interested parties and obtain their reactions to WDFW's purpose, approach, and timeline. Input from these groups, from the needs assessment, and from the continued development of the Department's internal approach to the HPA HCP will help define the appropriate stakeholder involvement process.

One option to consider in strategizing the appropriate structure of the advisory/subcommittee structure could be a large initial forum of all stakeholder groups. This could be held over one or two days and be organized to address all potential HPA issues. The forum would be organized to provide two-way communication with the large group and provide intensive small group working time to address specific HPA issues. A rotating format will allow many stakeholders to weigh in on many HPA activities, with progress being compiled and reported on either at mid-meeting milestones or at the end of the forum. Conclusions would be summarized and presented to WDFW and would inform the proposed structure of the advisory group.

Other elements to consider for inclusion in the development of the advisory committee structure are:

- One large policy advisory committee that is engaged and involved in every major step of the process.
- A smaller oversight group that engages periodically through the process to review the work of smaller technical subcommittees and ultimately makes recommendations to WDFW. The technical subcommittees would focus on specific HPA activity types or groups of activity types and would be charged with working through the technical issues to ensure adequate protection of fish life. With an overall meeting structure and timeline, the smaller technical

subcommittee meetings can make parallel progress, identify subcommittee leads or “reporters” who provide information to the oversight group and report back to the subcommittee group.

- For member participation, WDFW will determine the total number of participants for each committee and then solicit for nominations for each stakeholder and at-large position(s). When there are multiple groups with similar interests, the groups would decide on a single representative to keep the committees at workable numbers. One option is to establish the advisory committee first and seek their advice to help define the structure and participants of the technical subcommittees.
- Development of “guiding principles” that include clearly established roles and responsibilities of all advisory committee members, project team members, etc. as well as ground rules, meeting dates, locations, how and when decisions will be made, and how to resolve conflict.
- Meetings may be held in rotating locations throughout the state and/or be based primarily in Olympia with alternating meetings in eastern Washington. These may include representation from all stakeholder groups or just those that are most impacted by the selected activities.

Products/Outcome

The product for this task will be the development of a Stakeholder Involvement Process Design document which identifies the structure of the process; potential participants; process purpose, roles and responsibilities and guiding principles; and meeting schedule and timeline that corresponds to the Department’s internal approach for developing an HCP.

Phase II: HCP Development Phase

The strategies described in this section are preliminary and are subject to change as development of the HCP progresses.

Objective: Interested Parties Engagement and Involvement

The key objective of Phase II is to engage interested parties in the development of the HCP and to discuss and reach agreement on key HCP issues that will guide the Department’s development and adoption of an HPA HCP. Strategies and tactics in this phase will be focused on developing and distributing updated project materials, hosting venues for the productive exchange of information with stakeholders and other interested parties, keeping the general public informed of project progress, and working more intensely with key interested parties who will be most impacted by the HCP. The timeline for Phase II is much longer – expected to take between four and six years to move through the HCP development and adoption process.

Strategy 1: Interim Outreach

As mentioned previously, the outreach process will be moving forward simultaneously with WDFW's efforts to shape and "scope" the HCP itself. The Department is currently managing the development of several scientific analyses about different HPA activities to assess the risk of potential adverse impacts on listed and sensitive aquatic species.

The Phase I outreach is expected to be complete in mid-2007. At that time, the specific HPA activities that are to be considered in the HCP may or may not be defined. If defined, the Department will likely be ready to move forward with any revisions to key messages and project communication materials (as discussed below), and begin the implementation of the stakeholder involvement process. However, it is likely that additional scientific analysis and refining of the HCP baseline (through the identification and analysis of HPA activities) will continue beyond mid-2007. In this case, there may be a need to connect with the various publics and audiences in the interim – to provide an update on technical progress and the next steps for interested group engagement in the process. Appropriate outreach efforts will be based on progress and timing of the Department's internal activities but could involve development and distribution of additional fact sheets, newsletters, hosting of public meetings, media relations, or other outreach tactics.

Strategy 2: Refine Key Messages

Similar to Strategy 1 above, the need for and breadth of this step will be based on the progress and timing of the HCP technical assessment elements. It is expected that at this step, the Department will identify the specific HPA activities to be covered in the HCP as well as the potential species impacts that these activities may generate. At this time, it may be helpful to refine, revise, and/or create additional key messages to address these issues. A similar process to that in Phase I will be used to refine key messages for the HPA HCP.

Strategy 3: Refine/Revise Project Communication Materials

Once key messages have been updated, project communication materials can be revised to reflect updated information. It is expected at this point that the stakeholder and public involvement process will continue on two tracks – one will include updates and outreach with the general public through the media and potentially another series of public meetings. The other will be intensive working sessions with some form of advisory group and/or technical subcommittees. For the more general outreach, fact sheets, updated FAQs, and other public meeting materials will be appropriate. For the more intensive working sessions, the development of agendas, technical "briefing documents" or other tools to assist in review, discussion and decision-making of the advisory and technical groups may be necessary. It is expected that the following may be necessary at this point in the process:

- Updated Web site information
- Updated database
- Updated fact sheets

- Updated FAQs
- Advisory committee meeting agendas, discussion guides and briefing documents

Strategy 4: Implement Advisory Committee/Stakeholder Involvement Process

The stakeholder involvement process will be defined in Phase I but may include a policy advisory group of a broad range of stakeholder representatives to discuss policy issues associated with development of an HPA HCP. Representation on the policy group will depend on the ultimate focus of the HCP and the progress and results of the technical assessments. Because of the great number of interested parties, it will be difficult to involve every one; however, it is expected (and was supported generally by responses in the needs assessment interviews) that some policy group members will represent multiple interests including interests from the environmental community, regulated community, industry associations, elected officials, and other groups. The needs assessment stakeholders should be used as a starting point for involving stakeholders on the policy advisory group.

A smaller oversight group may be convened periodically through the process to review the work of smaller technical subcommittees and make recommendations to WDFW. The technical subcommittees would focus on specific HPA activity types or groups of activity types and would be charged with working through the technical issues to ensure adequate protection of fish life.

Strategy 5: Hold Public Meetings

It is expected that additional public meetings will be held through the development of the HPA HCP. At a minimum, these would include public meetings geographically dispersed throughout the state for formal NEPA/SEPA scoping and when a draft HCP and EIS is ready for public review and comment. However, depending on the technical assessment results, the structure and format of the advisory group/stakeholder involvement, and community interest expressed in Phase I, there may be additional opportunities to share information with the general public through public meetings, open houses and other public information venues. The location, frequency and purpose of these meetings will be determined once the full scope of the HCP is identified.

Wildlife Areas HCP

The purpose of the Wildlife Areas public involvement strategy is to establish a framework for engaging the public, stakeholders and tribal and other government agencies in a manner that will solicit feedback and assistance in the Department's development of a Wildlife Areas HCP.

WDFW is in the initial phases of HCP development and is currently evaluating the potential for recreational and management activities on Wildlife Areas to have adverse impacts on federal

ESA-listed and other sensitive species; the level of support for HCP development; and the time, staffing and funds required to successfully develop an HCP.

In addition, WDFW has initiated a two-to-three year assessment for all Wildlife Areas that will include inventories of species, lands, and land management activities. The end product of this assessment will be the identification of potential risk, conservation benefits/opportunities and a proposal for an HCP that is compatible with species recovery and conservation needs, and public use of each Wildlife Area.

The following are the goals and objectives of the Wildlife Areas HCP stakeholder and public involvement program.

Goal

Conduct a transparent and proactive stakeholder and public involvement process for the Wildlife Areas HCP.

Objectives

- Develop awareness and understanding about the Wildlife Areas HCP.
- Solicit input about the Wildlife Areas HCP including key issues of interest, stakeholder concerns, and preferred methods for participation.
- Engage affected interested parties in a process that recognizes the interests of each group, is easily accessible, and makes forward progress.
- Build ownership of the HCP at the local level.
- Using a variety of communication materials and methods, create opportunities for productive one-way and two-way communication.
- Position WDFW for success in designing and initiating a proactive, transparent planning process that involves interested parties and affected groups.

Audiences

- General public
- Environmental groups
- Tribes
- Recreation and wildlife enthusiasts
- Wildlife Area Citizen Advisory Groups (CAGs)
- Conservation planning organizations and other interested stakeholders
- State and local elected officials
- Federal Services
- WDFW Advisory Councils

- Department of Fish and Wildlife staff
- Fish and Wildlife Commission
- Local and regional media
- Other state and federal agencies as appropriate (e.g., Washington Department of Natural Resources)
- Adjacent land owners

Phase I: Scoping and Initial Outreach

Objective: Awareness, Education and Early Input

The key objective of Phase I is to provide information to the public and interested parties about the development of the Wildlife Areas HCP. This phase will be characterized by the development of key messages, development and dissemination of project materials, and soliciting initial reactions to key issues of interest, WDFW's HCP approach, and preferred methods of participation.

The Wildlife Areas HCP will be of interest to many of the same stakeholder organizations as the HPA HCP, including those in the environmental community, industry organizations such as the Farm Bureau, irrigation districts, etc. However, as noted in the needs assessment, the Wildlife Areas HCP will also be of interest to a more "decentralized" group of stakeholder including individual property owners, recreation enthusiasts (hunting, fishing, camping, hiking and equestrian interests), small and large farming operations and other groups – many of whom may not belong to a broader stakeholder group and are not as knowledgeable about WDFW activities. While many of the same strategies that are recommended for the HPA HCP will be appropriate, to reach these audiences will require a broader and more locally based outreach process.

Timeline

Concurrent with the development of the stakeholder, tribes and public involvement strategies, the Wildlife Areas HCP Project Manager is coordinating informally with WDFW Wildlife Area managers, Wildlife Area CAGs and WDFW Wildlife Area biologists to introduce the HCP approach, obtain initial feedback and discuss preferred methods for sharing and soliciting information from stakeholders and other interested parties. Input obtained through this initial outreach will continue and will refine and shape the strategies outlined below.

The Phase I timeline is expected to begin in Fall 2006 and continue through mid-2007.

Strategy 1: Develop Key Messages

Purpose

Key messages are an essential component of any outreach plan, ensuring that: 1) the project sponsor communicates clearly and consistently about the project to all potential stakeholders and audiences; and 2) difficult project issues and/or questions are discussed and addressed in a consistent manner by the project team. Key messages form the foundation for all communication materials that are developed and distributed for the project.

Key messages will be used to clearly and consistently communicate the rationale for HCP development, define roles and responsibilities for Department staff and others who are communicating about the HCP process, and outline a process for responding to emerging issues so the Department can respond quickly and effectively to internal and external inquiries. Key messages should also address key questions, many of which were identified in the needs assessment including:

- Why is the Department pursuing an HCP?
- What are the costs and benefits of an HCP?
- What is the scope and timeframe of the HCP?
- What are the potential effects of an HCP to interested parties?
- How or will the HCP be used as a conservation tool vs. a permit to “take” species?
- What are the specific scientific issues that need to be addressed and how will the “best science” be determined?
- How will the HCP affect environmental protection measures currently in place?
- Who will be the key contact person for the HCP?

Tactics

Key messages will be developed through an iterative process of identifying the anticipated questions and concerns of interested groups and clearly articulating the Department’s disposition and response to these questions. Questions generated through interviews with interested parties provide a starting point for key messages development. The Department will also seek input from area biologists and Wildlife Area managers about input they have received from external groups that should be addressed through key messages. This is an internal task to be completed before any outreach is conducted.

Products/Outcomes

The end product is a set of statements, often with one or more supporting statements, that define the scope of the project and the Department’s process for moving forward. Once developed, these statements will be communicated to all project team members and to Department staff (as outlined in the internal communication plan discussed in Strategy 2), and will be used

appropriately in project communication material such as fact sheets, FAQs, project Web site, news releases, and other communication materials.

Strategy 2: Develop Internal Communication Plan

Purpose

A proactive internal communication plan will position the Department for success in consistently communicating with internal staff, enhancing trust and confidence in agency management, and ensuring the agency speaks with “one voice” when staff communicate with external audiences about the HCP.

The internal communication plan should include the key messages developed in Strategy 1. The plan should define clear roles and responsibilities for Department staff including the role of each regional office, communication methods for each of the Department’s internal audiences, the process for quickly and effectively responding to internal and external inquiries, and the internal decision-making process. Communication needs and involvement in the HCP project will vary for different types of staff members. Some will be closely involved in strategy development and decision-making; others will be less involved but need to communicate project key messages in interactions with stakeholders; and others may be uninvolved but need to stay informed about the project.

Generally, it is expected that internal communication about the HCP process will parallel the external outreach effort and Department staff members will be made aware of project progress as new milestones are reached and new information is developed, including input and inquiries from the public, results of technical analyses and changes to the planned approach.

Tactics

Development of the plan will take into account the current communication structure of the Department, and will include the following internal communication opportunities:

- Fish and Wildlife Commission meetings
- Wildlife Areas managers communications
- Department management meetings
- Agency staff meetings (e.g., district team meetings)
- Email updates
- WDFW Intranet website

Products/Outcomes

The product of this strategy is a straightforward communications plan that will guide the interactions of agency staff through the HCP development process.

Strategy 3: Develop Stakeholder/Interested Parties Database

Purpose

A database is a key tool for the distribution of project information to stakeholder contacts. The database should include a broad range of stakeholders and interested parties including elected officials, tribes, environmental groups, community organizations, industry associations, WDFW advisory councils, Fish and Wildlife Commission, and the media. The database also is an effective tool to research and store information about other outreach avenues that can be leveraged to disseminate project information. For example, it may include other organizations' newsletters, deadlines for the submittal of information, and key contacts that can assist with dissemination of HCP messages.

Many of the same contacts identified in the HPA HCP database will be included: environmental groups; local, state and federal government agencies; tribes; industry associations; elected officials, etc. However, especially important for the Wildlife Areas HCP will be the inclusion of less organized groups of stakeholders including those that hunt, fish, hike, and otherwise recreate on or near state Wildlife Areas. It will include smaller and more local organizations, such as granges, irrigation districts, and conservation districts. It will also identify venues for the distribution of materials, such as retail sporting and recreational goods outlets, trailheads, licensing offices, and other public information outlets.

Tactics

Using the needs assessment contact list as a base and working with existing WDFW mailing lists, a comprehensive stakeholder database will be developed for the Wildlife Areas HCP. This will include contact information for each stakeholder including name, address, affiliation, phone, fax, and email address. An effort will be undertaken to identify stakeholders and interested parties that are more difficult to reach and creative outlets for the dissemination of HCP materials. For cost-effective and efficient dissemination of information, an "email group" of stakeholders will also be developed for the electronic distribution of information. The database will be updated after each outreach effort.

Products/Outcomes

The final product will be an expanded and updated stakeholder database for the Wildlife Areas HCP for both direct mail and electronic distribution of materials. It is expected that one database will hold the contact information for both the HPA and Wildlife Areas HCPs. Each will be able to be accessed, updated and used independently as well as combined together for outreach to all stakeholders and interested parties, if necessary. Periodic updates will be made throughout the HCP development process.

Strategy 4: Develop and Distribute Project Communication Materials

Purpose

Project communication materials can take many forms—brochures, fact sheets, flyers, etc.—and are essential for ongoing communication to interested parties. Using project key messages, consistent formats, fonts and colors, project materials can be developed and distributed at public meetings, on the project Web site, at public counters, and at other locations where hunting, fishing, camping, hiking and other outdoor activities are promoted. They provide an ongoing chronicle of project progress and can be utilized at different points in the process to share information about upcoming events, results of technical studies and decision-making points. They can be designed to focus primarily on one-way communication, which is more likely in Phase I, and encourage more interactive dialogue in Phase II. Questions uncovered during the needs assessment will guide the development of the communication materials as well as new questions that are generated throughout the outreach process.

Tactics

Project materials will include a consistent graphical look and layout that can be used on all subsequent HCP communication materials. This “branding” effort will address logo placement, project title(s), color, layout, etc. A series of templates will be developed for consistent use throughout the project including:

- Project fact sheets
- Project FAQs
- Project newsletter
- Project graphic board
- Postcard/meeting announcement
- Project comment cards

Project fact sheets provide a versatile format that can be used throughout the project—they can be used as a self-mailer and/or handouts. They can be focused on a broad scope of issues and general background information or specifically written and designed to communicate about a particular issue or idea. Topics to consider for project fact sheets include:

- Introduction of WDFW’s interest in pursuing the HPA and Wildlife Areas HCPs
- WDFW’s approach and timeline for developing both HCPs
- Potential HCP activities and technical issues
- Wildlife Areas HCP technical assessment approach
- Purpose, benefits, and cost of an HCP
- Decision-making process

- Announcements of upcoming public meetings
- Project contact information

Designed consistently with other project communication materials, the FAQs will address many of the topics covered in the fact sheets but will be formatted in a question and answer format. A newsletter will provide updates on the HCP status and any emerging technical details associated with the HCP. Project boards will be used for graphic displays at public meetings. A project postcard will also be developed if found to be useful for distributing meeting reminder notices to interested parties. A standardized project comment card will be developed for capturing written comments at face-to-face interactions and through the project Web site.

Products/Outcomes

It is expected that the first set of materials (fact sheets, FAQs, newsletter, etc.) will be developed prior to the first outreach meetings and be clearly written and professionally designed to communicate general and background information to a wide variety of audiences. The second set of materials will be developed after some technical work has been completed on the HCP—as an overview of results of the technical analysis and Wildlife Area activities that may be addressed in the HCP. Depending on the progress of HCP development, Phase I may also include a third fact sheet—sharing interim progress and information about when the public and other interested parties can expect to be contacted in the future.

Project communication materials will be distributed in the following manner:

- Posted on WDFW Wildlife Areas HCP-specific Web page.
- Distributed manually at outreach meetings.
- Distributed to electronic and direct mail database contacts including stakeholder organization newsletters, retail outlets, fishing and hunting licenses counters, and WDFW publications such as *LandLine*.
- Distributed at trailheads, outdoor retail stores, recreational groups' newsletters.
- Distributed at other public information dissemination locations including agency offices, public counters, etc.

Strategy 5: Develop Content for Project Web Site

Purpose

The needs assessment confirmed the need for a project Web site as an important tool in keeping stakeholders and other interested parties informed about the HCP effort. A project Web site can be used to document history and progress of the HCP, provide updates and reminders about public meetings and other outreach events, record comments, poll stakeholder groups, and provide links to other related information. To be most effective, the project Web site must be

updated and maintained on a regular basis. In addition, and as noted by several interviewees in the needs assessment, the Web site should be well organized, uncluttered, and easily navigable.

Tactics

WDFW develops and manages the Department Web site. WDFW will create a separate Web page(s) for the Wildlife Areas HCP and may adapt the graphical look and style developed for the project materials outlined in Strategy 4. Information that is developed for the project communication materials in Strategy 4 will be re-formatted as necessary for the Web and updated as necessary to reflect new information and project progress.

Products/Outcomes

The end product will be a Wildlife Areas HCP-specific Web page or pages that are focused specifically on the Wildlife Areas HCP. WDFW's home page will provide a brief introduction and link to the HCP Web page, and the HCP Web page will include pages necessary to communicate about the HCP project. This will initially include an introduction and approach for the HCP itself, background information about the Wildlife Areas, whom to contact for more information, and a brief summary about the anticipated public involvement steps. Over time, the Web site will become more developed with updates and conclusions from the concurrent technical studies, opportunities to review materials and submit online comments, and potential "forums" to dialogue with other interested parties about the progress of the HCP.

Strategy 6: Conduct Media Relations

Purpose

Publicizing information in the media is an effective way to reach the general public at large. Use of local and regional print media is likely to be the most effective for the overall HCP effort; however, local radio stations and government access television are additional ways that the media can help disseminate information about the HCP. For those members of the public not otherwise engaged in HCP activities, the media might be the only place they hear about HCP activities. For those who will be contacted directly – through direct mail or email distribution of project materials – the media serves as a reminder of previously distributed materials.

Media relations involve the development and general distribution of news releases, creation of guest "op-ed" columns for select publications as appropriate and development of internal talking points for use by WDFW staff in speaking to the news media. It includes internal discussion and preparation – so that the Department is timely and responsive to media inquiries and maximizes opportunities to communicate accurate and timely information about the HCP.

Tactics

To inform the general public of the initial outreach meetings described below, WDFW will develop news releases announcing public comment opportunities, and dates, times and locations

of public meetings. As HCP development continues, guest columns or articles for select publications may be developed to explain the process in more depth.

In addition, talking points based on HCP development key messages will be distributed to WDFW staff associated with the project, to ensure clear and consistent verbal statements are made to news media representatives.

All media relations work will be closely coordinated with the WDFW Public Affairs Director, including identification of key media outlets and reporter contacts, content and timing of news release(s), and distribution. WDFW Public Affairs will write and distribute any news releases, talking points or guest columns.

Products/Outcomes

Media relations products will likely include the following:

- News release(s) announcing upcoming public meetings
- Talking points based on key messages, and prepared by WDFW Public Affairs staff, to be used in interviews with the news media
- Guest columns, as needed, in select publications

Strategy 7: Hold Public Meetings

Purpose

Public meetings provide the opportunity to share information, solicit input, and interact face-to-face with stakeholders and interested parties. They provide an opportunity for members of the public to engage more deeply by interacting directly with project team members, for project team members to understand first-hand issues and concerns of stakeholders, and for community members to hear the questions and comments of their neighbors and other concerned citizens in their community. Meetings should be held at convenient locations and times for those who are expected to participate and can be designed in a variety of formats depending on the project purpose and desired outcomes of each meeting.

Input from those who participated in the needs assessment interviews identified the need for strong, neutral facilitation at public meetings and the need for a variety of opportunities for interested parties to engage in discussions about the HCP development process. In addition, needs assessment interviewees confirmed the need for public meetings or other outreach activities in areas where HCP impacts were expected. It was commonly felt that a statewide HCP would require outreach to groups and individuals throughout the state unless the technical assessment or scope of the HCP suggested a more narrow focus.

Tactics

The meeting format and agenda will be discussed in advance at strategy meetings with project team members. At these meetings, roles and responsibilities of project team members, the need

for and development of graphic materials and handouts, anticipated questions and responses, and logistics such as facility arrangements, refreshments, meeting setup/teardown, audiovisual equipment, sign-in sheet, name tags, directional signage, comment cards, and other meeting supplies, will be addressed.

For the Wildlife Areas HCP, it is recommended that public meetings be held in locales where potential HCP issues have been identified. To reach as many people as possible, it may be useful to host public meetings at other organization venues such as Wildlife Areas Citizen Advisory Group meetings, local government meetings, or other meetings that include audiences that may be impacted by the Wildlife Areas HCP. These opportunities will be researched while developing the stakeholder/interested parties database in Strategy 3.

The project communication materials developed in Strategy 4 will be used at all public meetings. In addition, it may be useful to develop a generalized questionnaire for distribution at public meetings and other venues to obtain written responses to a standard set of questions about the Wildlife Areas HCP.

Products/Outcomes

If the HCP approach is to be statewide, a minimum of six public meetings are recommended for the HCP, geographically dispersed throughout the state. Each meeting will be conducted in a similar format, which is expected to include an informational presentation by WDFW about both HCPs, facilitated question and answer session, and possible breakout sessions for both the Wildlife Areas and HPA HCPs. As noted earlier, at this early stage of both HCPs, it is expected that the public meetings will be held to share information and obtain input about both HCPs. At future outreach steps, both HCPs may utilize public meetings as an outreach tool, but these are likely to be on different timelines and not conducted jointly. A summary of all outreach meetings will be developed and made available on the HCP project Web site.

Strategy 8: Design Advisory Committee/Stakeholder Involvement Process

Purpose

Based on input from the needs assessment and WDFW staff, participation of impacted stakeholder groups and other interested parties is essential to the development of a successful HCP. It was noted in the needs assessment interviews that, depending on the proposed activities, the development of a Wildlife Areas HCP will likely be controversial, with some groups directly opposed to the interests of other groups. The purpose of the stakeholder involvement process will be to engage those groups that are most affected by the Wildlife Areas HCP and involve them in the development of the HCP.

The format, frequency and focus of an advisory committee structure will be fleshed out during the Phase I outreach period through initial outreach response and the results and progress of the

technical assessments. However, key process elements, many of which were noted in the needs assessment, include:

- A structure that is inclusive of impacted stakeholder groups
- Well-organized and productive meetings with clear agenda, purpose and desired outcomes
- Strong, neutral facilitation

Tactics

The first step in this process will be to share information at the public meetings and other outreach venues with interested parties and obtain their reactions to WDFW's purpose, approach, and timeline. Input from these groups, from the needs assessment, and from the continued development of the Department's internal approach to the Wildlife Areas HCP will help define the appropriate stakeholder involvement process.

To attain statewide level review, one option would be to use WDFW's Wildlife Program Citizen Advisory Councils (Upland Game, Wildlife Diversity, Land Management, Game Management, Waterfowl Management). These advisory councils have statewide stakeholder representation that could potentially advise on issues for the Wildlife Areas HCP. An alternative would be the organization of an HCP-dedicated advisory group(s) that would guide different elements of the HCP development process.

At a more local Wildlife Area specific level, outreach could be accomplished through use of the CAGs. Currently, each Wildlife Area has a CAG that offers an existing framework for the local dissemination of information and to provide feedback on WDFW activities. Outreach to the CAGs can be coordinated closely with the Wildlife Area managers and Wildlife Area biologists.

Whether the existing advisory councils or CAGs are used, or an HCP specific committee is established, there is likely the need for one group to address the policy aspects of the HCP and another group to address the technical aspects.

Other elements to consider for inclusion in the development of the advisory committee structure are:

- One large policy advisory committee that is engaged and involved in every major step of the process.
- A smaller oversight group that engages periodically through the process to review the work of smaller technical subcommittees and ultimately makes recommendations to WDFW.
- For member participation, WDFW will determine the total number of participants for each committee and then solicit for nominations for each stakeholder and at-large position(s). When there are multiple groups with similar interests, the groups would decide on a single representative to keep the committees at workable numbers. One option is to establish the advisory committee first and seek their advice to help define the structure and participants of the technical subcommittees.

- Development of “guiding principles” that include clearly established roles and responsibilities of all advisory committee members, project team members, etc., as well as ground rules, meeting dates, locations, how and when decisions will be made, and how to resolve conflicts.
- Meetings may be held in rotating locations throughout the state and/or be based primarily in locales where HCP issues are most concentrated.

Products/Outcome

The product for this task will be the development of a Stakeholder Involvement Process Design document which identifies the structure of the process; potential participants; process purpose, roles and responsibilities and guiding principles; and meeting schedule and timeline that corresponds to the Department’s internal approach for developing an HCP.

Phase II: HCP Development Phase

The strategies described in this section are preliminary and are subject to change as development of the HCP progresses.

Objective: Interested Parties Engagement and Involvement

The key objective of Phase II is to engage interested parties in the development of the HCP and to discuss and reach agreement on key HCP issues that will guide the Department’s development and adoption of a Wildlife Areas HCP. Strategies and tactics in this phase will be focused on developing and distributing updated project materials, hosting venues for the productive exchange of information with stakeholders and other interested parties, keeping the general public informed of project progress, and working more intensely with key interested parties who will be most impacted by the HCP. The timeline for Phase II is much longer – expected to take between four and six years to move through the HCP development and adoption process.

Strategy 1: Interim Outreach

As mentioned previously, the outreach process will be moving forward simultaneously with WDFW’s efforts to shape and “scope” the HCP itself. In initiating these efforts, the Wildlife Areas Project Manager is meeting and coordinating with Wildlife Area managers, CAGs, and the WDFW advisory councils to discuss the upcoming HCP process and obtain input and reactions. This informal outreach is expected to continue through the spring of 2007 and will continue to shape the outreach strategies for the Wildlife Areas HCP.

The Phase I outreach is expected to be complete in mid-2007. At that time, the specific activities that are to be considered in the HCP may or may not be defined. If defined, the Department will likely be ready to move forward with any revisions to key messages and project communication materials (as discussed below), and begin the implementation of the stakeholder involvement process. However, it is likely that additional scientific analysis and refining of the HCP scope

will continue beyond mid-2007. In this case, there may be a need to connect with the various publics and audiences in the interim – to provide an update on technical progress and the next steps for interested group engagement in the process. Appropriate outreach efforts will be based on progress and timing of the Department’s internal activities but could involve development and distribution of additional fact sheets, newsletters, hosting of public meetings, media relations, or other outreach tactics.

Strategy 2: Refine Key Messages

Similar to Strategy 1 above, the need for and breadth of this step will be based on the progress and timing of the HCP technical assessment elements. It is expected that at this step, the Department will identify the specific activities to be covered in the HCP as well as the potential species impacts these activities may generate. At this time, it may be helpful to refine, revise and/or create additional key messages to address these issues. A similar process to that in Phase I will be used to refine key messages for the Wildlife Areas HCP.

Strategy 3: Refine/Revise Project Communication Materials

Once key messages have been updated, project communication materials can be revised to reflect updated information. It is expected at this point that the stakeholder and public involvement process will continue on two tracks – one will include updates and outreach with the general public through the media and potentially another series of public meetings. The other will be intensive working sessions with some form of advisory group. For the more general outreach, fact sheets, updated FAQs, and other public meeting materials will be appropriate. For the more intensive working sessions, the development of agendas, technical “briefing documents” or other tools to assist in review, discussion and decision-making of the advisory group may be necessary. It is expected that the following may be necessary at this point in the process:

- Updated Web site information
- Updated database
- Updated fact sheets
- Updated FAQ
- Advisory committee meeting agendas, discussion guides, and briefing documents

Strategy 4: Implement Advisory Committee/Stakeholder Involvement Process

The stakeholder involvement process will be defined in Phase I but may include a policy advisory group of a broad range of stakeholder representatives to discuss policy issues associated with development of a Wildlife Areas HCP. Representation on the policy group will depend on the ultimate focus of the HCP and the progress and results of the technical assessments. Because of the great number of interested parties, it will be difficult to involve every one; however, it is expected (and was supported generally by responses in the needs assessment interviews) that

some policy group members will represent multiple interests including interests from the environmental community, regulated community, industry associations, elected officials, and other groups. The needs assessment stakeholders should be used as a starting point for involving stakeholders on the policy advisory group.

A smaller oversight group may be convened periodically through the process to review the work of smaller technical subcommittees and make recommendations to WDFW. The technical subcommittees would focus on specific Wildlife Area activity types or groups of activity types and would be charged with working through any associated technical issues.

Strategy 5: Hold Public Meetings

It is expected that additional public meetings will need to be held through the development of the Wildlife Areas HCP. At a minimum, these would include public meetings geographically dispersed throughout the state for formal NEPA/SEPA scoping and when a draft HCP and EIS is ready for public review and comment. However, depending on the technical assessment results, the structure and format of the advisory group/stakeholder involvement, and community interest expressed in Phase I, there may be additional opportunities to share information with the general public through public meetings, open houses and other public information venues. The location, frequency and purpose of these meetings will be determined once the full scope of the HCP is identified.

Appendix

Needs Assessment: Interview Summary

Needs Assessment: Interview Summary

HCP Public Involvement Strategy ■ Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife ■ August 2006

Needs Assessment: Interview Summary

HCP Public Involvement Strategy

Prepared for:

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 43200
Olympia, WA 98504-1091
Contact: Jane Banyard

Prepared by:



Jones & Stokes

711 S. Capitol Way, Suite 504
Olympia, WA 98501
Contact: Melinda Posner
360/357-4400

Kaleen Cottingham

P.O. Box 12914
Olympia, WA 98508-2914
kaleen.cottingham@comcast.net
(360) 867-0100

August 2006

This document should be cited as:

Jones & Stokes. 2006. Needs Assessment: Interview Summary. HCP Public Involvement Strategy. August.
(J&S 06255.06.) Olympia, WA. Prepared for Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Interview Format	1
Report Organization	2
Key Findings	3
General	3
HCP-Specific Comments	4
Summary of Responses	6
Elected Officials	8
Tribes	13
Environmental Groups	19
Regulators and Other Agencies	28
Regulated Community	36
Checkerboard/Adjacent Landowners	44
Fish and Wildlife Commission and WDFW Advisory Councils.....	48
Appendix	55
List of Interviews	55
Interview Questionnaire	57
Additional Contacts Suggested by Interviewees.....	60

List of Acronyms

DNR	Washington Department of Natural Resources
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
ESA	Endangered Species Act
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
HPA	Hydraulic Project Approval
JARPA	Joint Aquatic Resources Permit Application
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NWIFC	Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
SRFB	Salmon Recovery Funding Board
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
WAC	Washington Administrative Code
WDFW	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Introduction

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is exploring the feasibility of developing Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) for two of the agency's management responsibilities. Habitat Conservation Plans are tools specifically authorized under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) to describe, among other things, the anticipated effects of private, state or local landowners' and land managers' proposed actions on any federally listed species, and how the effects of the action will be avoided, minimized or mitigated.

Under consideration are two HCPs, one that would address management activities conducted on state-owned and managed Wildlife Areas, and the other that would address activities authorized under WDFW's Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) authority. As a preliminary step to assist in the planning and evaluation process, WDFW conducted a needs assessment to provide input for the development of public involvement strategies. The results of this assessment will determine who wants to or should be involved in future processes, a preliminary list of issues needing to be addressed, and methods required to develop long-term public involvement strategies.

The assessment consisted of interviews with various groups that may have an interest in the WDFW HCP development process, including elected officials, tribal staff, environmental groups, federal and state agencies, business interest groups, municipal associations, checkerboard and adjacent landowners, the Fish and Wildlife Commission, and WDFW Advisory Councils. These groups were identified for interviews because of their work in developing previous HCPs, because they are a user of state wildlife lands or interested in habitat protection, or because they are members of the regulated community.

The groups selected for interviews were chosen to broadly represent the diverse interests potentially affected by these HCPs. The total number of interviews was limited by the available budget. WDFW recognizes that there are many others with interest in these projects that were not contacted as part of this needs assessment, and that this assessment is not a complete representation of all stakeholder and tribal perspectives. WDFW will be conducting a much broader outreach program as the public involvement strategies for both of these HCPs are implemented.

Interview Format

A standard interview questionnaire was developed for use in conducting interviews for the assessment process (see Appendix). Interviews were conducted between April 18 and June 10, 2006. Based on an agreed-upon list, Jones & Stokes and

Kaleen Cottingham conducted interviews with individuals or small groups from the various stakeholder groups and tribes. In total, 45 interviews were conducted. The results of these interviews will be used to help craft strategies for tribal and public involvement in the development of the HPA and Wildlife Areas HCPs.

Report Organization

This interview summary is organized into two main sections:

- Key Findings
- Summary of Responses

The interview responses are organized by topic, generally based on the interview questionnaire. Comments have been organized to identify key themes and responses of those interviewed. No comments are directly attributed to specific individuals.

Key Findings

General

The following represent key findings from all stakeholder and tribal interviews:

Both HCPs present significant challenges for WDFW.

- WDFW will need to address questions about why HCPs are necessary, clearly outlining the goals and the benefits.
- Dedicated funding and staffing, from development of the HCPs through monitoring and implementation, will be necessary.
- Strong, effective leadership and an “institutional commitment” are necessary to see the process through to the end.
- WDFW will need a high level manager for each HCP who can manage the process and work effectively with external stakeholders, elected officials, and federal agencies.
- A good scientific team and effective policy oversight will be required for successful completion of the HCP development process.

There is a lot to be learned from past HCP processes.

- Despite success of other HCPs, the challenges to complete them are significant.
- HCPs are costly in terms of both time and money.
- There are good HCP examples that should be considered.
- Successful HCPs have a clear vision about their policy and technical objectives. WDFW needs to clearly define the objective(s) for each HCP.

A transparent outreach process is essential for both HCPs.

- Each HCP may require a different outreach approach and include different stakeholder groups.
- Most respondents believe that reaching all the stakeholder groups will ensure the “general public” is represented.
- WDFW should develop and implement a separate process for tribal involvement.

WDFW faces a continuing challenge of balancing economics with resource conservation and recovery.

- Both HCPs have potential economic impacts for stakeholders.
- Tribal staff and environmental groups are clearly interested in raising standards for resource protection.
- Other stakeholders such as landowners and local governments are not supportive of measures that they anticipate could have negative economic impacts.

A statewide, programmatic approach may be too big a challenge for either HCP.

- WDFW should consider a narrower focus (e.g., geographic, limited list of activities) to increase chances for success.

HCP-Specific Comments

The following represent key findings specific to each HCP:

Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) HCP

- Several interviewees believe that political tension over regulations will complicate development of an HPA HCP.
- Past efforts to revamp the HPA program have fallen short. WDFW will need to be very clear about what has changed and how this effort is different.
- WDFW will need to show clear and tangible benefits to stakeholders for the HPA HCP.
- The process of developing an HCP for the HPA program will require sound scientific analysis and political resolve.
- The HPA HCP effort will be controversial. WDFW will need to demonstrate that it is committed to the outcome.
- There are opposing views on both extremes about what an HPA HCP should accomplish. Environmental groups and tribal staff are not interested in an HPA HCP unless the “bar is raised” on resource protection. Conversely, the regulated community is not interested in an HPA HCP unless the “bar is lowered.”
- Several interviewees commented that revisions to the HPA rules are probably necessary to get an HCP.
- The need for a negotiated process will depend on the magnitude of the changes that might be needed to the HPA rules.

- As compared to other HCPs, such as the Forest Practices HCP, the HPA program involves more diverse interests and presents more opportunities for disagreement.
- Some stakeholders are concerned that an HPA HCP could lock in standards and decrease flexibility, making it difficult to adaptively manage resources.
- Some feel that a measure of success for the HCP will be whether it eliminates the need for consultation with the federal Services.
- Forest practices HPA regulations that were considered in the Forest Practices HCP should be exempt.
- There must be compelling reasons for environmental groups and tribal staff to commit to a long, multi-stakeholder, facilitated process for an HPA HCP.

Wildlife Areas HCP

- It was speculated that a statewide, programmatic HCP for Wildlife Areas will be a longer process (than the HPA HCP) because the lands are more diverse and more spread out.
- Others speculated that the Wildlife Areas HCP may be easier to develop if WDFW narrows the scope, either geographically or by limiting the considered activities.
- There are lots of questions about what a Wildlife Areas HCP would cover. Would this include wildlife lands under agreement with DNR and others? Can WDFW lands be rolled into DNR's HCP? What about those lands with timber rights reserved? One interviewee commented that he sees the advantage of an HCP for Wildlife Areas since WDFW is acquiring land (via exchanges, etc.).
- The Wildlife Areas HCP will need to address conflicts between users or between species preferences. For example, WDFW needs to address conflicts that occur between grazing and other uses; conflicts between enhancements for duck hunters and enhancements for salmon; and conflicts between managing for deer and impacts to private lands.
- Key concerns for stakeholders about a Wildlife Areas HCP include expansion of state-owned lands; limiting public access and use (e.g., hunting); and economic impacts by limiting revenue either directly (tax) or indirectly (use).
- WDFW must recognize tribal hunting and gathering rights.
- The Wildlife Areas HCP may require more locally-based public and stakeholder involvement efforts than the HPA HCP.

Table 1. Stakeholder and Tribal Interview Key Findings

Key Finding Comment	Interview Group						
	Elected Officials	Tribes	Environmenta I Groups	Regulators and Other Agencies	Regulated Community	Checkerboard /Adjacent Landowners	Fish and Wildlife Commission/WDF W Advisory Councils
WDFW will need to address questions about why HCPs are necessary, clearly outlining the goals and the benefits.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dedicated funding and staffing, from development of the HCPs through monitoring and implementation, will be necessary.	X			X	X		
Strong, effective leadership and an “institutional commitment” are necessary to see the process through to the end.	X			X	X		
WDFW will need a high level manager for each HCP who can manage the process and work effectively with external stakeholders, elected officials, and federal agencies.	X			X	X		
A good scientific team and effective policy oversight will be required for successful completion of the HCP development process.			X	X	X	X	
Challenges to complete an HCP are significant.			X	X	X	X	X
HCPs are costly in terms of both time and money.	X		X	X	X	X	X
Other successful HCPs should be looked to as models.			X	X	X	X	
Successful HCPs have a clear vision about their policy and technical objectives. WDFW needs to clearly define the objective(s) for each HCP.	X		X	X	X		X
Each HCP may require a different outreach approach and include different stakeholder groups.	X		X	X	X	X	X

Key Finding Comment	Interview Group						
	Elected Officials	Tribes	Environmental Groups	Regulators and Other Agencies	Regulated Community	Checkerboard /Adjacent Landowners	Fish and Wildlife Commission/WDFW Advisory Councils
Most respondents believe that reaching all the stakeholder groups will ensure the "general public" is represented.	X		X	X	X	X	
WDFW should develop and implement a separate process for tribal involvement.		X					
Both HCPs have potential economic impacts for stakeholders.	X				X	X	
Tribes and environmental groups are clearly interested in raising standards for resource protection.		X	X				
Other stakeholders such as landowners and local governments are not supportive of measures that they anticipate could have negative economic impacts.	X				X	X	
WDFW should consider a narrower focus (e.g., geographic, limited list of activities) to increase chances for success.	X		X	X	X	X	X

Note: An "X" does not mean that every interviewee in each category made or agreed with the key finding as stated.

Summary of Responses

Following is a summary of the more detailed responses to the interview questions, organized by the categories of groups that were interviewed for this assessment.

Elected Officials

Relationship to WDFW HPAs and Wildlife Areas

The elected officials interviewed had the following comments regarding their relationship to WDFW HPAs and Wildlife Areas:

- One state legislator is very familiar with the ESA and HCPs, while other legislators and county commissioners had a more general familiarity.
- One legislator commented that the legislature and WDFW have had an ongoing dialogue about the HPA process. These discussions culminated last year (during the 2005 session) with significant revisions to the statute. The public and even WDFW staff could not understand some of the old statute. He has had ongoing discussions with the Department about an HCP for HPAs.
- Another state legislator commented that WDFW's efforts to protect fish have not been sensitive to people, particularly farmers who are affected by the HPA program for any activities conducted in the river delta. This legislator also felt that a department that makes regulations should not also enforce those regulations.
- All of the county commissioners commented that their county's public works and planning/community development services departments have activities that are regulated by HPAs. County staff will get complaints from citizens about development projects and illegal dumping in streams. County environmental staff deals with salmon recovery and developing projects for the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB). Several of the interviewed county commissioners are involved in salmon recovery efforts or efforts to change the ESA regulations.
- A county commissioner commented that he would be concerned regarding any land use decisions in the Wildlife Areas. Another county commissioner commented that WDFW does not do a very good job of managing the lands they own; the County has been trying to eradicate noxious weeds, but the WDFW lands tend to be overgrown with weeds.

Experience with HCPs

The elected officials made the following comments regarding their experience with HCPs:

- One of the state legislators interviewed was a prime sponsor of the Forest and Fish law and has reviewed a number of private HCPs, including Plum Creek's HCP. He indicated that the Forest and Fish Report was developed through a good process; salmon protection has not resulted in the economic disaster that came from spotted owl protection. This same legislator opposed the DNR HCP; he felt that it would allow fewer lawsuits but it is a stretch to allow DNR to lock in the management criteria for timberlands for 70 years.

Issues, Concerns and Outcomes (both HCPs)

The elected officials made the following comments regarding issues, concerns, and outcomes related to development of both HCPs:

- Why is WDFW interested in going forward with the HCPs? The Department should clearly outline the end goals and the benefits. Are the HCPs feasible? Is it worth the price? Hard feelings may result. If the development process falls apart, political ill-will toward the Department could result. Is development of these HCPs a job for federal agencies?
- One legislator stated that the Legislature makes policy. WDFW cannot revise the HPA statute by drafting an HCP. Changing HPA standards will require final legislative approval, not just adoption by WDFW; otherwise, the Legislature will intervene. Another legislator commented that he would like the outcome of an HCP to be WDFW standing up against the federal agencies, rather than being partnered with them. He would like to see an analysis of recovery plans that have adopted HCPs. How successful have these HCPs been in eliminating the need for consultation?
- Local biologists broadly vary in their interpretation of HPA requirements in issuing permits. A legislator wrote a bill three or four years ago that would have eliminated permit requirements for smaller activities, such as pile driving, culvert replacement for drainage ditches, etc., but would have retained a robust permit program for larger scale activities.
- The Department needs to be more user-friendly. There is a lot of frustration with WDFW activities. The permitting process should be predictable, consistent, and easily understood by the average landowner without the need for hiring an expensive consultant. The permitting process should be streamlined without sacrificing protection of the resources. "Permit conditioning can get totally out of whack, if a biologist doesn't like the project." The legislator estimated that

this happens about 75 percent of the time for small landowners. The small landowners feel “bullied” by the permitting process.

- County commissioners noted that their public works and planning departments are affected by the permitting process. Any possible mechanisms to combine permitting processes (JARPA, etc.) should be explored.
- WDFW should be less involved in land management. The Department needs to be sensitive to the human environment and private property rights. They lean too far toward the tribal management preferences. Most people want to be good stewards of the land. WDFW should work together with farmers, not against them.
- A county commissioner commented that he would like to see consideration of the importance of grazing and farming, including the economic benefits and the environmental benefits of good management. Another county commissioner commented that his county struggles to maintain access to and through public lands. WDFW should make sure that access is not further hindered by any HCP efforts related to Wildlife Areas.
- WDFW should consider the economic impacts of their activities, especially the impacts on hunting and fishing, grazing and farming, and access to publicly owned lands.
- Most permittees will not want to give WDFW more authority due to a current lack of trust. An HCP might not result in more authority for WDFW, but it will be the perception. A county commissioner commented, “Make sure that any involvement is voluntary; no more mandates.” The HCPs should aim to streamline permitting processes.
- WDFW should not infringe on local land use planning through these HCPs; this is a function of local city and county governments. The counties want to be informed of any decisions or plans affecting public or private lands.

Suggestions for WDFW’s Success

Elected officials had the following suggestions for WDFW success in development of the HCPs:

- Keep the process relatively short (1½ - 2 years).
- Don’t shortcut the Administrative Procedures Act.
- Offer a collaborative approach.
- Look for opportunities for agencies to work together toward common interests.
- Make sure that the plan is not created to fit a specific agenda.

- Do a better job of public relations and informing the public of Department activities.
- Inform citizens of its upcoming projects.
- Make sure the process is transparent; use news releases, newspaper articles, etc.
- Don't spring any information on an uninformed public.
- Hold public hearings where appropriate (not always in Seattle)
- Maintain honest and open communication; don't just ask for public feedback and move on.
- Don't let the process get "hijacked by radical environmentalists."
- Get federal mitigation credit for Wildlife Areas.
- Dedicate the appropriate staff to this process. If WDFW doesn't have the staff, they should contract out.
- Spend more time training Department staff to provide user-friendly service.
- Offer on-the-ground technical assistance, instead of just focusing on regulating activities and enforcement.
- Create internships and training programs for entry-level staff.

Desired Level of Participation

The elected officials had the following comments regarding their desired level of participation in the HCP development process:

- One legislator felt that he will not be involved in the HCP process because WDFW will do its job appropriately, and another legislator commented that she will stay informed of the Department's progress on the HCPs.
- One county commissioner commented that he would need more information on the specific goals of the HCPs. These HCPs seem to him something that the federal Services should be doing, not WDFW. Staff from the county's public works and community development services departments should be informed, as well as keeping the county commissioners informed.
- Other county commissioners want to stay informed and see how the HCPs progress. They will comment when appropriate.

Stakeholder Communication

The elected officials had the following comments regarding stakeholder communication during development of the HCPs:

- The elected officials suggested that WDFW seek input from stakeholders that represent the general public's interests. The Department should not take the easy route by only holding public hearings; the process needs to have consensus among stakeholders. Stakeholder representatives need time to educate and involve their organizations and have them weigh in.
- One legislator served on the Transportation Permit Streamlining Committee, where multiple agencies and interest groups were all at the same table and came to agreement. Sometimes a successful outcome requires sitting down with those that disagree in order to come to agreement on a mutually acceptable solution.
- Good ways to reach out to stakeholder groups include e-mail, Web sites, newspapers, mailers, and public forums.

Public Involvement

The elected officials had the following comments related to public involvement:

- Several of the elected officials felt that the same public involvement strategy could work for both HCPs as long as the Department is willing to show that they can listen to criticism. WDFW needs to listen to people and their concerns.
- Interviewees felt that the HPA strategy should be aimed more at government agencies, developers, and consultants, while the Wildlife Areas HCP would be more interesting to rural agriculture and recreational interest groups. There are different ways to contact these two constituencies.
- Most of the elected officials felt that it was important to keep all of the stakeholder groups involved. Several of the legislators and county commissioners felt that it is not important to reach out to general citizens; the policy nature of the subject is too esoteric and "they will yawn." Stakeholder groups provide the ability to reach the general public.
- Another legislator felt it is very important to reach the general public. It is difficult to get farmers to attend meetings; WDFW needs to be sensitive to their schedules and have meetings when people can attend (i.e., in the evening). They also need to go into communities for meetings, not hold them in urban areas.
- The county commissioners noted that their counties hold public hearings for any important matters that require public input.
- Regarding a public Web site for the HCP process, one interviewee suggested that it would be a good communication mechanism for stakeholders and their constituents, but WDFW will need to be careful that the Web site doesn't generate misinformation. The Web site needs to be easily accessible to all stakeholders.

- Information on the HCP development process could be publicized on local government Web sites, in local newspapers, and on local radio stations. The county commissioners offered to put a link to WDFW's Web site on their county's Web site. One county commissioner noted that he always has time for speaking engagements on various subjects.

Tribes

During the interview process, some tribal staff (from tribes affiliated with the NW Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC)) indicated that they were not ready to be interviewed at this time. Staff from other tribes did consent to be interviewed, and comments from all tribal staff that provided input are summarized below.

During discussions with several members of the NWIFC's Environmental Policy Committee, participants mentioned that the topic of developing an HCP had been discussed at a recent policy-level meeting with WDFW. It was their understanding that WDFW would begin these tribal discussions on a government-to-government basis. This was primarily related to the HPA program.

In general, the tribal staff indicated a need to better understand the WDFW's HCP proposal before providing statements or positions. They do not want to be divided on their response to this effort. They would need funding to participate.

They want to know why WDFW was considering doing an HCP, and what the implications are of doing an HCP. They want to know the answers to these questions before they are willing to participate. WDFW needs to engage the tribes throughout the decision-making process.

Relationship to WDFW HPAs and Wildlife Areas

The tribal staff had the following comments related to WDFW HPAs and Wildlife Areas:

- The tribal staffs have had early discussions with their biologists about the problems with the HPA program (and problems generally with HCPs). These problems have been raised with WDFW.
- They indicated that using the HCP process to protect or maintain the HPA program in its current framework would not be viewed as positive. The HPA program needs substantial work (both on scientific issues and tribal involvement processes).
- WDFW does not currently have a process for tribal involvement in the HPA program. There is no notice given to tribes about pending HPA approvals and no opportunity to weigh in before approval is given. According to the tribal staff,

the current process for issuing HPAs does not provide a meaningful opportunity for tribal participation.

- WDFW needs to improve its overall relationship with the tribes. There is no systematic commitment to tribal involvement (on sharing permits or on including tribal review). Some of the tribal staff commented that WDFW doesn't give notice to the tribes when they issue an HPA on a reservation. Some questioned whether the Department has jurisdiction on reservations.
- On the Wildlife Areas HCP, the tribal staff indicated that their hunting and gathering rights are a huge issue for them. Again, as with the HPA HCP, the tribes would need funding to participate.
- Some of the current problems and potential conflicts in the wildlife management have to do with inconsistencies between Wildlife Area management and game management. The tribal staff indicated some interest in creating a new general wildlife management plan with tribal involvement. This is a broader issue than just managing the resources on state lands.
- One tribal representative commented that their working relationship with WDFW on recovery planning has been pretty good. However, the plans have focused too much on state land and not enough on private lands. The geographic scope has been too narrow.

Experience with HCPs

The tribal staff had the following comments related to their experience with HCPs:

- Tribal staff indicated that they have not had good experiences with HCPs. The negotiating process results in tribal participants being out-numbered in multi-party negotiations, or being viewed as just another interest group. Even in single-party HCPs, they have had to resort to litigation just to be able to have the appropriate conversations.
- In HCP negotiations, tribal staffs have been told that their issues were too difficult to address. Even when deals have been reached, there seems to have been backsliding by the ultimate decision-makers on issues of importance to the tribes, especially once agreed-upon deals are sent to the Legislature for necessary statutory changes or funding.
- Several tribal representatives have been involved with other HCPs, mostly those dealing with DNR programs. Many are currently involved with the implementation of the DNR HCPs. The earlier HCPs did not go far enough to satisfy tribal interests. None of the HCPs are recovery-based. Tribal involvement could have been improved in all of these HCP efforts.
- Other tribal representatives were very wary of and opposed to HCPs, believing that HCPs are more politically motivated than scientifically based. The length of

an HCP creates a huge risk for the resources. They do not believe any of the HCPs will be implemented as planned. The agencies that approve HCPs have incredible political pressure imposed on them to complete the HCP. That pressure often is used to threaten tribes. An example of this political pressure occurred with the Forest Practices agreement. After negotiations were completed, the Legislature exempted small landowners (a change that impacted 35 percent of the salmon-bearing streams). These legislative changes were not approved by the parties to the agreement and created animosity about the process.

- The tribal staff would like to engage in pre-HCP discussions, especially in relation to the assessment of the HPA program. WDFW needs to carefully review the tribes' critique of the hydraulic code (*John J. Hollowed & Larry Wasserman, A Critique of the State's Hydraulic Code, RCW 75.20 (Working Draft). June 1999, Rev. Jan. 1, 2000*). What caused the effort several years ago to get an HCP for the HPA program to fall apart? Is there anything different today that would indicate a different outcome is possible?
- Why does WDFW need to do an HCP on a regulatory program whose sole purpose is to protect fish? If the HPA law is inadequate to protect fish, fix it. If it is adequate, but not fully implemented, then WDFW should find funding to fully implement it. Is WDFW willing to ask for more tools and funding to raise the bar?
- WDFW needs to take the time to do this right, if it decides to go down the HCP road. The key to HCP success is the adaptive management program. Funding is key to a successful adaptive management program. WDFW will need to fully budget for adaptive management. If no new money will be on the table, what will the Department be willing to give up to fund a strong adaptive management program? Without stable, consistent, adequate funding, adaptive management will fail. Is building an HCP on something with a potentially weak foundation worth the effort?
- One tribal representative involved with private HCPs thought that the process worked pretty well, although the tribe would have preferred more funding to support their involvement. Some of the challenges for the tribe during the HCP development process were:
 - Compartmentalization of the different governments and the failure of agencies to coordinate/work together.
 - Agencies did not have the political will to ask for fair mitigation.

Issues, Concerns and Outcomes (both HCPs)

The tribal staff had the following comments regarding issues, concerns, and outcomes related to potential development of both of the WDFW HCPs:

- Many tribes were involved in the earlier effort to reform the HPA program. They described the process as “horrible.” They do not like group collaborative processes. The parties at the table were primarily lobbyists without real technical information. It is very important for the tribes not to be treated as just another group in the process. They will not get involved with that kind of process again.
- The tribal staff would like to work to set up a better HPA process by working jointly with WDFW. They do not want to do this in a stakeholder process, rather in a government-to-government process. They don’t want to negotiate with the regulated community. They also don’t want to do this as part of an HCP.
- Before the tribal staff recommend whether the tribes participate in either HCP process, they indicated a need for them to know:
 - Whether the HCP is a good approach;
 - Whether the approach builds in respect for tribal issues; and
 - Whether the process helps achieve tribal goals. Is there an opportunity to improve the HPA program to meet tribal needs?
- Is funding available for tribal participation and involvement?
- One of the concerns with HCPs is the political pressure and threats the tribes get (threats of reduced federal funding) to moderate their opinions. This makes them reluctant to agree to participate in the first place.
- They believe WDFW has to be willing to say (to the stakeholders and policy makers) that the status quo is unacceptable. There needs to be an honest assessment of the current system.
- The tribal staffs were mystified why WDFW is considering an HCP, given the current HPA system. They indicated that the HPA system needs to be improved before evaluating whether to do an HCP.
- The tribal staff recommended that the first step to any proposed process be an independent, science-based environmental audit of the HPA program. It should evaluate the implementation of the program, enforcement by WDFW, effectiveness of monitoring, success rate of mitigation, thoroughness of funding, staffing adequacy, etc. Is the law protecting the resources? Is it working? Is it effective? What needs to change to make it work, be more effective, and better protect the resources? Should WDFW decide to pursue an HCP, it cannot be viewed as an opportunity to weaken the law.
- One tribal representative commented that doing an HCP might be a good way to improve the HPA program. Are there any incentives that can be built into the system to minimize animosity towards the regulatory programs? An HCP might also shield the HPA program in the future from efforts to weaken it. Doing an HCP might help leverage changes to the HPA program, but that might be a risky

approach. The tribal representative does not believe there is political support to improve the HPA, especially among the regulated community. This would require years of advance work to independently review the HPA program and conduct an independent science review.

- The guiding principle for an effort like an HCP (or efforts to improve the HPA program) should be: “Let the truth take you where it takes you.” These policy decisions need to be strongly science based. They need to be structured to allow change over time, as new science and knowledge evolves.
- Can the HPA program be improved without getting an HCP? What is the goal of getting an HCP? Is it to get ESA protection or to protect the resources?
- The HPA program needs to have a cumulative effects analysis done (especially on shoreline hardening). Perhaps this could be done collaboratively with the counties and cities. An environmental threshold (e.g., a percentage of hardened shoreline) should be set; any requests after reaching that threshold should be denied. Mitigation associated with permits must be effective. One tribal staff indicated that off-site mitigation (or contributions to a centralized fund for effective mitigation) may be acceptable in certain situations.
- Tribal staff commented that the funding from the USFWS (Section 6 funds) should also be available to support tribal participation in all aspects of evaluating whether to proceed with an HCP.
- On the Wildlife Areas, WDFW must recognize tribal hunting and gathering rights. Many tribes have negotiated hunting and gathering agreements with other landowners, but not with WDFW. For issues with the Wildlife Areas, WDFW needs to talk to the NWIFC’s Wildlife Committee. How will WDFW deal with the conflicts between species management, users, and restoration (e.g., hunters vs. fish)? Who will select the priority? Is one more important than the other?
- One tribal representative expressed concern about a statewide HCP. To be effective, an HCP would need to be site-specific or at a much smaller geographic scope. A statewide HCP would be a huge job, thereby minimizing the chances of success.

Suggestions for WDFW’s Success

The tribal staff had the following suggestions for WDFW success in development of the HCPs:

- WDFW needs to improve its overall relationship with the tribes. Several tribes have positive relationships with other agencies (DNR and Ecology were identified as examples). WDFW needs to better understand how to work with the tribes and it needs to be more consistent in dealing with tribes.

- WDFW should deal with external stakeholders and then work jointly with the tribes to negotiate or find the solution.
- WDFW needs to engage the tribes at the policy level to assess the current HPA program with joint technical review and make any necessary recommendations to improve the program.
- WDFW also needs to work with USFWS to get funding for tribal participation.
- WDFW needs to be more transparent in its policy development and program implementation.
- WDFW should not approach the development of an HCP lightly. The process will need strong commitments and follow-through.
- Current resource protections should not be minimized or lowered; advance work should evaluate the current HPA program, with a plan to make those necessary improvements. It may be possible to use the HCP process to make the HPA process stronger.
- Work to bring consistency between WDFW requirements and the requirements of other regulatory agencies. Show the linkages and coordination between other state and federal regulations.
- WDFW will need strong staff to complete an HCP. The Department might have to go outside to get the right people.

Communication

The tribal staff had the following comments related to communication:

- WDFW needs to improve both its general stakeholder relationships, as well as its tribal relationships. One tribal representative commented that some WDFW staff do not show appropriate respect to tribal biologists and other staff.
- WDFW does not have a good track record of listening to the tribes. The Department often appears either indifferent or hostile to tribal interests.
- The tribal role in the development of HCPs needs to be more carefully developed and needs to be developed with tribal discussions. WDFW needs to shift its involvement approach to allow the tribes to come to the table. The Department should be more open and transparent in how programs or plans are developed and implemented.
- Tribal staff would need assurance that the process would fully involve them and that their input would have a meaningful effect on the end product. Tribal staff would need to believe that their expertise is respected.
- WDFW should try to be more localized. Tribal involvement works best when travel to the other side of the state is not necessary. One tribal representative

commented that WDFW's outreach efforts for the recovery planning process have been primarily through email notices to review documents. The tribe would have liked to be more involved to assist in the planning.

Public Involvement

The tribal staff had the following comments regarding public involvement:

- WDFW needs to move away from the traditional public involvement approaches. Before involving the public, WDFW must engage in dialogue with tribes. WDFW should only move forward with strong tribal involvement and support.
- Once the appropriate dialogue occurs between WDFW and the tribes, and some outcomes/recommendations are developed, the challenge for WDFW will be how to involve the public.
- A stakeholder policy group could be convened to review (not negotiate) the outcome/recommendations from the WDFW-tribal group. The final decision should be made by the WDFW Director.

Environmental Groups

Relationship to WDFW HPAs and Wildlife Areas

The environmental groups had the following comments regarding WDFW HPAs and Wildlife Areas:

- Representatives of environmental groups interviewed had either a high level of understanding or a general understanding of the ESA and HCPs. Several of those interviewed had heard rumors or had previous discussions with WDFW about WDFW's consideration of pursuing HCPs. Others had no specific knowledge of WDFW's intentions before being contacted for an interview.
- One interviewee has done extensive work with HPAs and served on a previous HPA task force. Others interviewed were very familiar or generally familiar of the HPA regulations.
- The existing HPA permit process is an archaic approach. HPAs are very complicated. WDFW needs to improve the HPA program before seeking HCP protection. There is a need to define standards, even at a minimum, for improvements to the program.
- WDFW needs to have more staff resources available to do a better job of reviewing and approving HPAs. WDFW staff is overwhelmed. They take risks by not having enough time to review HPAs. The Department often has biologists doing work more appropriate for an engineer.

- The HPAs should be more consistent. WDFW needs more standard protocols and similar prescriptions for similar situations. One interviewee suggested having standardized methodologies (such as how to analyze culverts).
- WDFW needs to do a better job monitoring HPAs that have been issued to determine if the implementation matches the plan or conditions of the HPA.
- One environmental group interviewed does a lot of work on forest practices and HPAs. They see a significant amount of variance from one HPA to the next. There is a lack of foundational information about water bodies. They see a lot of water typing errors. Some of this was fixed in the forest practices arena, but they still see many errors. This is perceived to be a huge problem.
- The environmental groups interviewed are generally less involved with WDFW's Wildlife Areas than with the HPA permit program. In general, these groups are affected by and concerned with issues that affect wildlife conservation. One of the groups interviewed acquires and manages Wildlife Areas as an intermediate owner before they are transferred to WDFW ownership and management.
- For many of the environmental groups, their local chapters throughout the state are involved with area-specific projects and are generally interested in WDFW's management of the Wildlife Areas.

Experience with HCPs

The environmental groups had the following comments related to their experience with HCPs:

- Several of the environmental groups interviewed have been involved with other HCPs, including those for DNR lands, the Forest Practices agreement, Plum Creek, Simpson Timber, and the cities of Seattle and Tacoma. Their involvement has generally been on the policy and science issues associated with these HCPs. One of the environmental groups brought litigation over the Seattle Cedar River HCP, and is now on the oversight committee for implementation of the HCP.
- A comment was made that experiences with HCPs have been mixed for the environmental community. It was felt that HCPs are often not protective enough, and there are significant questions and concerns about HCP implementation. HCPs need to be developed to a recovery standard, as opposed to simply avoid take. Proper implementation requires resources, enforcement, monitoring. How can it be ensured that these things happen to achieve certainty?
- The Green Diamond (Simpson) HCP was a good effort. "The landowner was willing to give up enough to make it work." It has the best riparian protection. Simpson Timber did their homework; they surveyed all 260,000 acres and all of the streams for three years as a first step in developing their HCP. The Port

Blakely HCP process hired PhDs to survey all of the affected streams; no computer modeling was used; the process had a high level of integrity.

- One interviewee was not sure any of these HCPs have been successful; it depends on how success is defined. The HCP might be successful for the landowner, but not necessarily successful for the resources. Some of the HCPs have resulted in slight improvements, but no real substantial improvement in resource protection.
- The best planning is based on science, with scientifically-driven adaptive management. HCPs need a strong scientific base, and a good HCP has a good adaptive management program. This includes all sides agreeing to what “adaptive management” means. Adaptive management cannot be politically limited or fiscally starved.
- A good HCP must also have adequate funding for all aspects of adaptive management. HCPs need a stronger commitment to implementation and more clarity of commitment on adaptive management. HCPs cannot use the promise of adaptive management to cover for poor foundational science. The Forest Practices agreement was good on generating science, but poor on implementation.
- One of the positive aspects of doing an HCP would be to protect a program from a weakening or absent political will. But it will require a lot of heavy lifting to get to that level.
- The environmental groups identified some of the key challenges to generating an HCP, including:
 - HCPs are a large, messy public process. There are so many diverse interests involved.
 - HCPs are not really designed to be done smoothly. A lot of education is needed by both the proponent and the stakeholders.
 - Too much discretion is given to the federal agencies.
 - There is often not enough information about species and ecosystems to be able to make such long-term decisions.
 - Environmental groups need to be close to the negotiations to know what’s going on and to be effective. But this is too time intensive for most environmental groups.
 - Very few HCPs have had adequate stakeholder involvement. Very few HCPs done by timber companies have involved anyone from the environmental community.
 - After an HCP deal is finalized, there is no clear ability to challenge the details.

Issues, Concerns and Outcomes (both HCPs)

The environmental groups interviewed identified the following issues and concerns related to the potential development of both HCPs:

- Several of the groups interviewed would like to see a clear articulation by WDFW leadership of why they are considering doing one or both of these HCPs. Is this project just to get the take protections or will it involve real reform and real improvement? Will fish and wildlife protection be better than before? What's the true risk of take against the state? If WDFW can't clearly state their intentions and goals, then they should not embark on this complicated, lengthy process.
- The HPA HCP will be very political. "WDFW has been beaten up by many sides. This won't be easy. Is WDFW prepared for a fight?" There is a concern that the process will be politicized and lose sight of ESA recovery goals. The HPA is the only regulatory authority of WDFW. There is a lot of pressure to streamline the HPA process for fairness and efficiency. The environmental groups are concerned about undermining existing protections. WDFW should take a long-term perspective. Changes to the HPA program should not be done in the political arena.
- Change is tough for many. WDFW leadership needs to be prepared for this process. They need to give assurances up front that the end product will be implemented. This assurance will be essential for many of the environmental groups to decide whether they want to commit resources to the process. It is felt that the Department does not always recognize the environmental community as a key constituent group. They want to know that their investment in the process is worthwhile. One of the environmental groups commented that given the diversity of stakeholders, they do not think a HCP for the HPA regulatory program is possible.
- There has been a lot of discussion about streamlining the HPA permit process. What would be different about the HPA permitting process if the HCP were developed? Would specific permits be reviewed for individual species or would they be lumped together? This may actually undermine the effectiveness of the HPA regulations. There is a lack of definitive project-by-project standards (e.g., for bulkheads, pilings, docks, intertidal structures, ports/marinas, boat ramps, etc.). WDFW needs to conduct more site visits, do more monitoring, and implement more enforcement actions.
- ESA has made everything very salmon-centric. Actions that are beneficial for salmon are not necessarily consistent with other biodiversity goals. WDFW should make sure that its actions to benefit salmon are not detrimental to other species. The HPA rules on regulated flows to enhance salmon habitat are not sufficient to meet the expectations of an HCP. For example, in many cases,

engineering standards are detrimental to habitat needs. Hopefully the HCP would improve those rules, not sanction the existing rules.

- Representatives of one environmental group commented that they would prefer to see HPAs denied (or prohibited) rather than imposing ineffective mitigation. There are currently too many mitigated permit decisions that result in ineffective mitigation. It seems that WDFW is afraid to say no to permit applicants.
- The process needs good science to support any changes. Does WDFW have good data for this process? Who gathered the data? What is the level of confidence in that data? Is it a good enough foundation to begin an HCP or will the first step be an assessment of the current data?
- How can the Department develop an HCP when recovery plans are not yet finalized for many of the species? How will the proposed HCPs link to recovery plans? “We need informed recovery plans that are both species-based and ecosystem-based before developing more HCPs.”
- The HCPs should not be generic (which could be meaningless); a one-size-fits-all approach does not always work. There is a need for site-by-site analysis; not all species and activities can fit into general categories. Plans should provide a workable solution tailored to the unique situations of individual sites. Large-scale planning loses the nuances.
- How will cumulative impacts be addressed? How will the Department manage risk? Is WDFW willing to commit and fund adaptive management? The environmental groups would be more comfortable with a way to address problems that arise down the road.
- Where will the funding come from? Not just for the HCPs, but for implementation, monitoring, and enforcement for the full duration.
- One interviewee commented that he was not sure if WDFW could develop a statewide plan for the Wildlife Areas HCP. An HCP is a tool to authorize incidental take, not a tool for recovery. Is an HCP appropriate for statewide wildlife lands? There is too much diversity (species, ecosystems) statewide. HCPs, if too narrow, can be a threat to the environment and to biodiversity.
- Issues that need to be addressed should an HCP be developed for the wildlife lands include grazing, pesticide use, control of noxious weeds, easements and access, rehabilitating riparian functions, and hunting. How much land would be covered by the HCP? What would the duration be? What species would be covered? What are they proposing to take? What activities will result in take? What are the specific management protections proposed? How will one HCP be able to deal with all of the potential conflicts?
- There are definitely commonalities that can be included in the HCP process such as ecosystem processes, grazing lands, etc. that need to be addressed, but WDFW

should avoid a one-size-fits-all process that ignores the nuances of site-specific areas. The HCPs should consider the sociological impacts and involve local communities to understand the impacts on local economies and adjacent lands.

- One environmental group commented that they view HCPs as a necessity only when the proponent's primary mission involves habitat-degrading activities. WDFW's mission is to protect fish and wildlife and their habitat, not to conduct habitat-degrading activities.
- Another environmental group representative commented that he would prioritize involvement on any HCPs as a low priority. Money that would be used to develop HCPs could be spent on better managing their wildlife lands, and enforcing the HPAs. He also suggested building better relationships on the management of their lands and spending money on adaptive management efforts.

The environmental groups identified the following desired outcomes for the HCPs:

- Enhanced guidance and rules for integrity of the HPA process. Project-by-project standards geared to species protection.
- Emphasis on site visits, monitoring, and enforcement.
- More biologists on the ground for permit review and enforcement. Existing staff is stretched thin and under-qualified.
- Public access to fish and wildlife lands. Nature tourism is very important to local governments' economic development efforts.
- Get local experts involved.
- Include specific benchmarks to evaluate success and how they are doing. Use an adaptive management model that actually adapts, not just monitors and measures.
- Do a better job evaluating grazing impacts on wildlife lands. Grazing permits should trigger environmental review.

Suggestions for WDFW's Success

The environmental groups had the following suggestions for WDFW success in development of one or both HCPs:

- If the term of an HCP is 50 to 75 years, the HCP must be perfect.
- WDFW needs to be the leader. Stand up to those who might complain. Don't be defensive.
- Push HCP discussions to the highest level of all organizations involved (WDFW, federal agencies, and stakeholders).
- A more narrowly-focused HCP is easier to do and will likely gain more public acceptance.

- Involve a wide variety of stakeholders early on to bring concerns and opinions to the table.
- Bring scientific expertise into the process. Identify key ecological processes and focus on key processes that may be important to many ecological facets.
- Focus on management and control of invasive species. Focus on what is necessary to sustain threatened species, keystone species, and rare species.
- Design the process so it allows all sides to bring science forward. Invite technical critics to the table.
- Share technical information. Hold workshops. Do data modeling.
- Require strong monitoring and enforcement provisions. The details of these provisions must be implemented as proposed.
- Incorporate adaptive management into the HCP.
- If having an HCP will help WDFW get more funding to help manage the Department's lands, it might be worthwhile.
- Consider grouping the Wildlife Areas into smaller HCPs. WDFW might be able to reach consensus with a narrower group of stakeholders.
- Develop a comprehensive grazing policy based on good science.

Desired Level of Participation

The environmental groups made the following comments regarding their desired level of participation in the HCP development process:

- There is a perception among the environmental groups that WDFW is very secretive, especially compared to the Department of Ecology, which seems to go overboard with committee meetings. The environmental groups did not know anything about the potential HCPs until being contacted for these interviews.
- The environmental community prefers to be involved early in the HCP development process. The environmental community will need specific funding to be directly involved. Is there funding available for participation grants? If funding were available to support their involvement, if the participation was consistent with their goals, and if the process was not too long (or endless), they would be more likely to participate. Participation must not be tied to a "yes" vote or to refrain from future challenges.
- There is a huge disconnect between the regulated community and the environmental community on general issues. In other stakeholder processes, the environmental community has often felt outnumbered by business advocates. This is often related to the environmental groups' lack of funding for staff or other expertise. Being out-gunned is a huge disincentive for the environmental

community to participate in future efforts. Perhaps WDFW could set up an advisory committee, with clear objectives. The environmental community would want to make sure that the process is equitable.

- WDFW will be torn between the needs and desired outcomes of the environmental groups and other users such as recreation and timber interests. It was suggested that the HCP process should involve reasonable people such as community and stakeholder leaders to work together in a thoughtful collaborative process.
- An interviewee commented that the HCP guidelines suggest forming a steering committee. They would support this model. DNR had an HCP steering committee, but made an internal decision about who to select for a representative of the environmental community. He recommended that environmental groups work together to choose a representative.
- Members of one of the environmental groups indicated that they would be interested in participating in the development of both HCPs. Members of another environmental group indicated that they would like to be involved, but they are primarily a volunteer organization with very few professional staff, so they would need early notification and time to review any materials. Any policy decisions would go to their board of directors, which only meets once a month. Other environmental groups indicated that they may want to participate in the process, but it would depend on the timing and the process. Some environmental groups expressed an interest in staying informed of the process, and possibly being involved at the review stage of the HCP process. One environmental group was not willing to indicate whether it would participate in the HCP development process. Members want to see how the process is set up before committing to participate.
- The environmental community would probably collectively discuss its involvement, to minimize duplicative efforts and to be more efficient with staff time and resources.

Stakeholder Communication

The environmental groups had the following comments about stakeholder communication.

- Most of the environmental groups have many ways of distributing information to their members (Web site, electronic and hard copy newsletters, listserv, etc.) Several of the groups commented that they would be willing to work with WDFW to distribute information about the HCP efforts to their members. However, a few of the groups commented that they would want to write articles themselves or coordinate content with WDFW.

- One group commented that their publications and Web site are focused exclusively on their projects, and the decision whether to publish any information related to the HCPs would be decided by their communications staff.
- One environmental group noted that they would be able to provide mailing labels to reach members of their conservation committee (50-60 members). This group meets quarterly. Another group indicated that their leaders (75-150 members) meet twice annually. They would be willing to distribute information to these members in advance of their meetings.
- One environmental group commented that an informational event on the HCPs would be beneficial to educate their own staff on these issues.

Public Involvement

The environmental groups had the following comments regarding public involvement for development of the HCPs:

- Most of the environmental groups agreed that public involvement should happen primarily through the stakeholder groups. “These kinds of processes do not generally get the attention of the general public. The issues are too complicated and too remote from the issues and concerns of the general public.”
- However, several of the environmental groups felt it was also important to involve the general public at some point in the process. WDFW may need to have a general public educational effort to support the political will of the Department. Initial public meetings could be held to explain what they plan to do, and as details emerge later in the process, they could be made available to the public.
- For the HPA program, WDFW should develop a public outreach campaign. Tell the public what the HPA program is and why it matters. Aim this campaign at the stakeholders, elected officials, and applicants. The stakeholders (and the public) need better information on why these regulations are important.
- Success of public involvement will depend on location (especially for the Wildlife Areas HCP). WDFW should develop a process that builds “ownership” by the locals.
- Good public involvement techniques are public meetings and brainstorming sessions, but the best technique has always been standing out on the land with the people.
- One interviewee commented that 90 percent of the population does not care about these issues. WDFW should focus their attention on the vocal minority. Education is helpful for the broader constituencies.

- One environmental group commented that most public involvement processes are not very inspiring. They indicated that DNR used an interesting process in developing its Asset Stewardship Plan in the 1990s.
- There was a suggestion for WDFW to work at the county level (e.g., within local land use planning processes) to reach the general public.
- If WDFW builds a specific Web site for these projects, several of the environmental groups commented that they would be willing to add a link on their Web site.
- Other recommended public involvement techniques include mass media sources such as newspapers and Web sites, TVW, posters, displays, open houses, and newsletters.

Regulators and Other Agencies

Relationship to WDFW HPAs and Wildlife Areas

This group of interviewees is made up of regulating agency staff, municipal government associations, and representatives of other governmental organizations that have developed or are currently developing HCPs. The regulators and other agencies had the following comments related to WDFW HPAs and Wildlife Areas:

- Most of the interviewees were more familiar with the HPA permitting process, but some had comments on the WDFW Wildlife Areas.
- A few of the interviewees were familiar with WDFW's intention of pursuing HCPs for the HPA program and the Wildlife Areas. However, several interviewees were not familiar with WDFW's intention until being contacted for an interview. One interviewee commented about being "stunned" by WDFW's intention, after hearing some WDFW biologists speak poorly of HCPs in the past.

Experience with HCPs

Regulators and other agencies had the following comments about their experience with HCPs:

- Most of the interviewees have a high level of experience and familiarity with ESA and HCPs. Several of the interviewees have been directly or indirectly involved in the development of HCPs.
- The DNR HCPs are very broad. Their lands HCP and Forest Practices HCP are very different. The teams were very similar, but the approaches were different. These processes required 4-5 dedicated staff people, in addition to other staff (50+ with some role; 100+ consulted).

- The DNR Lands HCP stakeholder process involved an external advisory committee. It is necessary to clearly define their role (whether they are a decision-making body, advisory group, or sounding board). A communications plan was developed early on in the process.
- The Forest Practices stakeholder process was very different, and is probably not the best approach for the WDFW HCPs. The Forest Practices HCP was negotiated completely, with the new rules and laws put into effect, before the EIS was initiated. This approach was favorable for the timber industry, which wanted to know exactly what was required of them. This approach makes it hard to adjust details that are discovered during the EIS or public involvement process.
- Outreach and acknowledgement of interest groups is key to success. However, one interviewee commented that tribal concerns/issues were difficult to address. Previous HCP efforts possibly made a mistake by not courting tribal or environmental community input from the beginning of the HCP process.

Issues, Concerns and Outcomes (both HCPs)

The regulators and other agencies made the following comments regarding issues, concerns, and desired outcomes related to the development of both HCPs.

- The objectives of this process are not clear. What is the problem? Why does WDFW want to do an HCP? This is especially unclear with regard to the Wildlife Areas. An HCP is a deluxe insurance policy. Are there any better ways to minimize risk? This effort will cost millions. Is this a good use of taxpayers' money?
- Successful HCP proponents have a clear vision about their objective. WDFW needs a clear vision about these HCPs, and needs to be explicit about its intentions. WDFW needs to improve its policy support. WDFW will be the "owner" of this process and will need to be the strongest advocate (and may end up being the only advocate) for this process. One regulator commented that he is not sure that WDFW can currently articulate a vision for these HCPs. Convincing the skeptics about the value of the HCP will be a big challenge.
- Developing HCPs is lot of work. WDFW will need strong commitment that carries throughout the entire process. Any weakness will cause the Department to trip on the first complaint or hurdle. Does WDFW have the energy and drive to get the job done? Is there a strong commitment to carry this through to completion? Is the Wildlife Commission on board? Has WDFW talked with the executive branch and the Legislature about the consequences?
- One interviewee questioned how WDFW will fund this effort. WDFW needs to show dedicated state funding: "Have they thought through the budgeting needs from start to finish?" Another interviewee asked whether WDFW is doing this because it has money to spend.

- Although WDFW has some grant funding, those monies are not enough to fund the entire process. WDFW will need to show progress toward developing an HCP to continue getting Section 6 funds. WDFW will need more than Section 6 funding to develop and implement these HCPs. If WDFW is not making progress on an HCP, they will be unlikely to get future Section 6 grants.
- There are several legal issues that will need careful attention. WDFW will need to clearly articulate the jurisdictional limitations. What is covered by the HCP and what is not?
- Most of the hurdles will be political, not technical. WDFW needs to have strong policy support for this project.
- WDFW should be prepared for different approaches from involved federal agencies. The inclusion of salmon into the equation raises different questions and broadens the scope to be more ecosystem-based. Sometimes the USFWS looks at more discrete properties, rather than ecosystems.
- There were differing views on which of the WDFW HCP efforts will take longer or be harder to complete. One interviewee believed that the Wildlife Areas HCP will take longer because the lands are more diverse and more spread out. Another interviewee believed that the political tension on the regulatory side will make the HPA HCP harder to develop. “The process of developing the HCP for the HPA program will involve more scientific work, more surprises, and more political lifting.” The HPA effort will be more controversial. The Wildlife Areas HCP will have more opinionated public involvement; however, identifying those with an interest in the lands may be easier.
- The efforts on the HPA HCP have been ongoing for some time. An earlier effort invested a lot of time, but fell by the wayside due to the controversy over the new shoreline guidelines. Attempting this again without a sense of commitment may cause some people to resist being involved in an effort they perceive to not have a chance of success. What caused the earlier effort to implode? What’s different now? How will the Department address perceptions about caving to political pressure? How does WDFW plan to get over the concern that an HCP is simply getting the state to do the federal agencies’ job?
- What are the limitations inherent in the HPA law and how will those limitations be dealt with in the HCP? Current HPA processing is slow. How can WDFW develop HCPs and conduct current business? Will the HPA HCP get Clean Water Act coverage? What about the portion of the HPA program delegated to DNR?
- There are several scientific (and policy issues) that will need serious attention in the HPA HCP, including Puget Sound marine water bulkheading and shoreline armoring; freshwater bank hardening and diking; gravel bar scalping; and

stormwater. One interviewee commented that a change in the HPA rules is probably necessary to get an HCP.

- Would the Wildlife Areas HCP cover the wildlife lands under agreement with DNR and others? Can WDFW lands be rolled into DNR's HCP? What about those lands with timber rights reserved? One interviewee commented that he sees the advantage of an HCP for Wildlife Areas since WDFW is acquiring land (through exchanges, etc.).
- The Wildlife Areas HCP will need to address conflicts between users or between species preferences. For example, WDFW needs to address conflicts that occur between grazing and other uses; conflicts between enhancements for duck hunters and enhancements for salmon; and conflicts between managing for deer and impacts to private lands.
- One regulator commented that the Wildlife Areas HCP may be easier to develop. WDFW will need to be practical by narrowing the scope to be successful and find common ground (such as certain activities on certain lands).
- Interviewees expressed concern about ongoing expansion of any Wildlife Areas and any management actions that could diminish public use (e.g., hunting, access) in those areas. Specific concerns included any actions that affect local revenues, either directly (tax) or indirectly (use), and off-site impacts (access, closing public roads, etc.).

Suggestions for WDFW's Success

The regulators and other agencies made the following suggestions for WDFW success in development of the HCPs:

- Before WDFW makes a decision to pursue the HCPs, they need to carefully evaluate the costs and benefits of developing an HCP, including what the risks are, what they will end up with, and what it will cost over time. "Is this expense worth what you get in return?" Don't start into developing an HCP casually.
- Do a risk assessment of take and third party litigation. If risk is low, don't do the HCP. Consider the risk of cumulative effects. Risks may be more related to gaps in the law.
- WDFW will need institutional commitment across the board (internal and external) for an HCP from start to finish. The Department cannot be ambivalent or uncertain about its commitment. This must start at the top and continue throughout the organization. Department staff must fully understand what this undertaking involves. The federal agencies need to be committed to the process.
- WDFW needs to separate its strategic efforts from its regular work plan. It will need dedicated staff committed to this project for the duration. WDFW should be prepared for three to five years of steady work. Any lapse will cause

backsliding and the process will lose momentum. WDFW needs to communicate with internal staff that this will be a large, long-term effort that will include changing the culture of the Department.

- WDFW needs to understand the HCP process (and the alternative approaches) and be able to design the appropriate approach. There are two distinct phases of developing an HCP: 1) Negotiating the “deal” and 2) compliance with NEPA. The first phase has the technical work, any consensus process, and policy negotiation. The second phase is the EIS phase and final decisions. It is important to do the upfront work carefully.
- Any HCP effort must have high-level policy folks on all sides of the table fully engaged in the process. WDFW will need decision-makers engaged in the whole process. They need to understand the details as well as the big picture.
- Successful HCPs need good communication and decision-making between the proponent and the federal agencies. WDFW needs to make sure everyone understands and agrees on what is on and off the table. When discussing the “tradeoffs,” a joint sorting process should be established between the HCP proponent and the federal agencies. A process should be established with WDFW and federal agencies’ senior managers that know the Department’s vision to discuss what is politically feasible.
- WDFW needs to have a strong lead staff person with strong management skills and the ability to deal with external interests. This person should be a high-level active manager whose goal is to “get the job done.” The Director has to be fully engaged, although he doesn’t have to be the manager of the project. The point person needs to be able to be the lead negotiator. This person needs to be able to make decisions and work closely with both the Director and the Commission, and the federal agencies. WDFW will need to have other staff exclusively dedicated to HCP development.
- Several good management models exist. A good model of negotiation was the structure DNR had for their Lands HCP. A good model for the NEPA/EIS process was the DNR Forest Practices HCP. Other good models include Seattle (Chuck Clark/ Martin Baker); Tacoma (John Kirner); and Mid-Columbia. A bad model is Idaho.
- Hiring a consultant is an option, but this comes with pros and cons. It does not negate the need for commitment of key staff at WDFW. A consultant could probably be used for the Wildlife Areas HCP, but not for the HPA HCP. Carefully select contractors.
- WDFW should contract-out the EIS. Factor in the cost (\$500,000 for the Forest Practices HCP EIS).
- WDFW needs to commit to long-term funding for this process, not just for plan development.

- A potential HPA HCP needs to match up with the provisions of the Forest Practices HCP relating to HPAs. Utilize information that is being developed concurrently.
- WDFW should make sure to cover all listed species, but don't pad the list with extra species. The agencies will still have to consult even if a species is not covered. Leaving a listed species off the covered list just makes it complicated.
- WDFW should take a broad perspective across ecosystems. Otherwise, the focus would be too narrow, and they would not be able to evaluate tradeoffs or broader impacts; they could miss how species move across landscapes. Would a different approach be used for urban vs. rural landscapes? Best Available Science developed in the forest environment does not always apply to urban areas.
- WDFW should let covered activities define the geographic scope. Be clear on which activities are covered and which are not; there has been a lot of uncertainty with ESA. Does the Department have the authority to add more activities without legislative approval? One interviewee commented that an HCP should not expand the number of activities covered by HPAs.
- Studies need to look at a broader perspective and broad impacts. It is easy for scientists to look narrowly. Conduct an assessment of habitat, habitat requirements of species, and a determination if the species are present.

Desired Level of Participation

The regulators and other agencies had the following comments related to their desired level of participation in the WDFW HCP development process:

- Several of the interviewees commented that they are interested in participating in the HCP development process or would like to stay informed. One agency commented that they would be willing to meet with WDFW when a scope for the HCPs has been worked out.
- One organization commented that they would like to participate either directly or through a committee. Their participation would be dependent on the time commitment. They would be willing to commit to one meeting every two months.

Stakeholder Communication

The regulators and other agencies had the following comments regarding stakeholder communication:

- It is important to include the tribes in development of both HCPs.
- Several interviewees recommended setting up a stakeholder steering committee for the HCP development process.

- One interviewee suggested focusing stakeholder communication efforts on those who will potentially stop the process.
- WDFW should communicate early and often with the county commissions, especially in those counties that are impacted by the Wildlife Areas HCP.
- It is important to make decisions throughout the process. Don't hold decisions to the end. Make a decision and move on. Don't re-visit decisions that have already been made.
- Keep pressure consistent. Don't hold only one meeting per month. Long gaps in the process cause participants to lose momentum or backtrack. Hold multi-day meetings. Make time to work through issues.
- WDFW needs to engage all stakeholders in the process and convince them that this is an important thing to do. The Department is going to get beat up during the process, even if it's done right. Staff will need to be open and up-front, not defensive.
- Good facilitation can be very helpful to the process. Good facilitation is goal-oriented facilitation. The facilitator should have a stake in the outcome.
- Bring stakeholders around the table to develop the process together; use a consensus-based process. Ask for all input, develop a good draft, and incorporate comments and reactions.

Public Involvement

The regulators and other agencies had the following comments regarding public involvement for the HCPs:

- Involving the public (as opposed to stakeholders) is always difficult in these kinds of planning exercises. The process required by NEPA is not very good at getting general public involvement, but it is required.
- Do not use a one-size-fits-all approach. Use a variety of outreach tools depending on the target group and depending on the importance of the group (i.e., those with legal power).
- Several interviewees recommended separate public involvement strategies for the two HCPs. The Wildlife Areas are for public use and therefore appeal to the general public, while the HPA program is more applicable to the regulated community.
- Many of the interviewees commented that it is more important to conduct public involvement through stakeholder groups. The general public is important but they don't get engaged. Most of the general public will be represented by the stakeholder groups. Tailor outreach activities to stakeholder groups (e.g., public meetings, one-on-one outreach, etc.). Use formal and informal meetings, field

trips, newsletters, and a Web site to receive comments. Identify different opportunities for the public to get involved.

- The general public will always be under-represented. Some positive methods of public involvement might entail early polling on general policy choices. Once those choices are narrowed as part of the negotiations and EIS process, then the role of the public and stakeholders will be to comment on the choices made.
- Several interviewees recommended getting the public involved early in the process. WDFW can get the public involved or educated through a deliberate media campaign (editorials, stories, etc). One interviewee suggested WDFW visit all of the counties before general public outreach is conducted.
- Conduct public involvement in terms that are relevant for the public. Avoid “bureaucratese” or “legal mumbo jumbo.”
- For the HPA HCP, WDFW needs to decide whether to have a negotiated process. This depends on the magnitude of the changes that might be needed to the HPA rules. WDFW will need to gauge the political reality of getting an HCP and then manage the public outreach process accordingly. One interviewee suggested conducting outreach directly to HPA permit applicants.
- For the Wildlife Areas HCP, WDFW might want to present options or policy choices for the public. Don’t ask the public to brainstorm.
- One interviewee recommended conducting outreach activities for the Wildlife Areas HCP at the Evergreen State Fair and similar events with an outdoor recreation theme.
- Many interviewees agreed that a dedicated Web site would be a useful public involvement tool, especially for those stakeholders that want more information. One interviewee commented that a Web site would be a good tool but WDFW can’t rely on it to reach all potential audiences. The Department needs to do more active outreach. Another interviewee commented that WDFW should focus on connecting directly with stakeholders that are most interested and affected by the process.
- One interviewee who had completed a successful HCP commented that they held three public meetings, held a panel debate in front of public, received public comments at city council meetings, and made documents available in public libraries.

Regulated Community

Relationship to WDFW HPAs and Wildlife Areas

The regulated community category consists of organizations whose activities are regulated by WDFW's HPA permit program and affected by the Department's lands management practices. Interviews were conducted primarily with membership-based associations that represent different aspects of the regulated community, including public ports, agriculture, small forest lands, cattle managers, irrigation districts, small mineral prospectors, and wildlife managers.

Below are comments made regarding the regulated community's relationship to WDFW HPAs and Wildlife Areas:

- Most of the organizations interviewed are very familiar with the Endangered Species Act, as many of their activities have been affected by ESA listings or potential listings of various species throughout Washington State. Several of the interviewees commented that they have been working together with WDFW and the other agencies to develop good stewardship practices and management operations that meet the intent of ESA protection. However, several interviewees also commented that the ESA regulations have led to tense relationships with WDFW and the other agencies.
- Some of the interviewees either had experience with HCPs or are becoming more aware of HCPs. Examples mentioned were the Forest & Fish HCP and the Whiskey Dick Wildlife Areas HCP in Kittitas County (in process). One interviewee was not familiar with HCPs; "it's a new set of letters."
- Most of the interviewees were not familiar with WDFW's intention to pursue HCPs for the HPA program and for the Wildlife Areas. One interviewee had known about WDFW's intention to pursue an HCP "for a long time." Another interviewee knew that something was being considered for the HPA program, based on feedback during the last legislative session.
- Many members of the regulated community were very familiar with the HPA permitting process. A wide variety of the interviewees' activities are regulated by the HPA program and are subject to the permitting requirements. There were many negative comments about individual and general experiences with the HPA permitting process. Several interviewees commented that they have had extensive conversations with WDFW and with their members about the HPA program. There were several comments regarding too many instances of WDFW holding up permits because of salmon.
- Several of the interviewees have working relationships with WDFW regarding land management activities in the Department's Wildlife Areas. There were

several comments about WDFW managing lands for multiple purposes and the Department's land acquisition process, especially as it affects agricultural and grazing lands. One interviewee commented that a lot of work is being done locally on habitat restoration, converting agricultural lands to wildlife and recreational lands (both public and private). The agricultural community is commonly perceived as being against projects that are intended for the "common good." The interviewees did not disagree with the need for open space and greenbelts but they would like to see protection done in a way that protects working agriculture.

Experience with HCPs

The regulated community interviewees had the following comments regarding their experience with HCPs:

- It was costly, but the organization got what it wanted.
- The proponent did a pretty good job considering the scope and breadth.
- It was a huge success because stakeholders were involved in the process. There was a lot of collaboration. The right players (leaders) were involved at the right time.
- Having representative groups and authoritative groups involved was the key. Participants were educated about the benefits and convinced that it was worth staying at the table.
- Stakeholders did not necessarily end up with assurances.
- Early HCPs (e.g., Plum Creek) were not public and did not have a public/stakeholder process.
- The Forest & Fish HCP started with negotiation on the Forest Practices Act; the process was conducted behind closed doors. Stakeholder impacts were included, but there was not an attempt to make it a public process. When it turned into an HCP and the EIS was developed, then it turned into a public process.
- The Family Forest HCP failed as a model for other counties. It cost too much time and money. No other counties will take it on now.
- The Cedar River Watershed HCP was a long and laborious process but a positive experience. The agreement between Ecology and the city of Seattle was successful. Having a structured facilitated process was a key in leading the collaborative discussion. HCPs are getting more and more difficult. The Cedar River HCP could not have been done any better than Seattle did considering the complexity of issues.

Issues, Concerns and Outcomes (both HCPs)

The regulated community interviewees had the following comments regarding issues, concerns, and outcomes related to both HCPs:

- Why is WDFW considering this? Why do it at all? What is the motivation? They can't really assess the potential for an HCP without knowing more, and don't fully understand what will be gained. What will the product look like?
- WDFW needs to be clear in the problem statement. What are the benefits? One perception is that this project is about using grant money to re-do the WACs. One interviewee expressed concern that WDFW would be doing this to meet its own interests. The HPA has been a lightning rod, creating a lot of mistrust. The most recent changes in the RCW have made it more clear, but past language was very murky.
- One interviewee commented that ESA liability is not really a threat for the regulated community right now. One interviewee indicated that the federal Services have not done what everyone is fearful about (enforcement). More than one interviewee indicated that they are not nervous of third party litigation. Most of the problems that WDFW thinks the HCP will solve are not really issues. Most, but not all, are addressed through other ESA consultations.
- More than one interviewee commented that they think WDFW will have a hard time getting an HCP done.
- Adequate funding must be ensured. An HCP has an extensive cost (in the millions of dollars) that could be used more productively. How is grant funding going to be used? DNR also has a grant for the State Aquatics Land HCP that would also be statewide. This could create confusion with a WDFW HCP. They will need to be clear/careful.
- How would an HCP address different geographic regions/landscapes of the state? The HCPs need to look at site-specific issues to take a comprehensive view of the various conditions across the state. WDFW needs to consider environmental influences in a comprehensive manner.
- WDFW will need to clarify whether it will be maintaining existing programs or re-negotiating current regulations. The Department will also need to determine whether the federal Services will provide assurances for the existing regulations. If WDFW plans to re-write the regulations, the Department should plan on a very high level of stakeholder involvement, including facilitated negotiation. "Re-negotiating will be a big issue. It could get ugly. Don't expect it to go smoothly."
- If WDFW plans to update the rules, the regulated community will want to know that right away. "Past rule adoption appeared to be a done deal." They attended meetings and provided testimony, but ultimately the decision was made without

stakeholder input. “The perception was that WDFW went through motions but already had their minds made up.”

- One interviewee commented that there is no need for an HCP for the HPA program. However, if WDFW goes forward with an HCP, it should not re-address the HPAs addressed in the Forest Practices HCP.
- What is driving the Wildlife Areas HCP process? What is the ultimate objective? WDFW has money to acquire land, but not enough money to manage those lands. Will the Department be moving toward acquisition of more lands for fish for restoration and mitigation? Acquisition of these lands does not result in the same stewardship as ongoing agriculture does. Wetland mitigation banks are being proposed that would convert agricultural lands. The agricultural sector does not get quid pro quo for these conversions. They are looking at mitigation tools, such as purchase of development rights.
- “WDFW should not buy more land. They can’t manage what they have.” Wildlife is not staying on public land. Deer and elk are migrating onto private lands, and WDFW cannot compensate landowners for impacts to private property. The grazing pilot program has helped the Department build strong relationships with cattlemen. Depending on the results of the first pilot program, additional sites should be pursued.
- If WDFW goes forward with an HCP for the Wildlife Areas, it should ensure the HCP recognizes multiple uses, including grazing. “Lessons learned” can be gained from a grazing pilot program over the next two to three seasons.
- Ensure public access can be accommodated (e.g., for hunting, fishing, etc.).
- How would an HCP for the Wildlife Areas be different from range management plans? A lot of the Wildlife Areas already have plans, so what would an HCP do?
- One interviewee supports the use of funding to inventory WDFW lands. WDFW should create wildlife partnerships that benefit both wildlife and landowners to achieve better results for less money. WDFW needs new ideas for balancing public access with the need to protect endangered species.
- WDFW needs more range biologists. WDFW only has one range technician for the whole state. The Department needs to make funding for more range biologists a priority. WDFW also needs to ensure that they have adequate HPA staff to provide local on-the-ground assistance (and not just more fish biologists).

The regulated community would like to see the following outcomes:

- A transparent process, including a clear definition of the relationships between state and federal agencies.

- No negative impact to the regulated community from whatever changes are necessary.
- Improvements to the HPA permitting process (not just lip service), especially in emergency HPA situations.
- Better management of the Wildlife Areas. WDFW is not necessarily being a good steward (i.e., lack of weed control practices).
- A solid inventory that provides more than numbers. It is important to understand the uses, habitats, and inter-relationships between plants and critters.
- A better focus on rangeland management, including more rangelands managers at WDFW.
- HCPs that are true to their name. Public land is public and should be managed with best management practices.
- Provide more WDFW staff for technical assistance.

Suggestions for WDFW's Success

The regulated community interviewees had the following suggestions for WDFW success in development of one or both HCPs:

- Have integrity. Be honest.
- Define what a successful HCP will look like.
- Be very flexible. Convince key stakeholder groups that WDFW has not already decided on one specific path.
- Communicate with stakeholders early and often. Engage all of the relevant stakeholders in constructive dialogue. The business of working together has changed.
- Conduct widespread public involvement and listen! Responding to public concerns might require re-structuring Department staff.
- Anything that can help fix the HPA process is welcome. The Department claims that mitigation is always required, but the statute does not list mitigation as a requirement.
- Keep regional WDFW staff current on what is going on in Olympia.
- Make sure that all the audiences affected are included. Don't forget there are other landowners in the state.
- If an outcome could be to expand Wildlife Areas, make sure all potentially affected landowners/stakeholders are included in the decision process.
- WDFW should look at how they view livestock grazing and multiple uses. These activities are very often listed negatively in terms of their impacts to the

environment. WDFW needs to find the balance between management of public lands and compensation for private property impacts.

- Provide more range staff for Wildlife Areas.
- Applied science (land management) is critical. Use of all the sciences, not just subjective outcome-based science. Sustainable management is a very important concept in the agricultural industry. It means keeping production agriculture economically viable for future generations, not just doing management in the least environmentally damaging way.

Desired Level of Participation

The regulated community interviewees had the following comments related to their desired level of participation in the HCP development process:

- Several of the interviewees are very interested in participating in the development of both HCPs. One stakeholder group commented that they want to be at every meeting and will make sure a representative is available for whatever is required. Some stakeholders were only interested in one of the two HCPs, but in most cases would like to stay informed of progress on both.
- Members of one of the stakeholder groups indicated that they would need more information to make a decision as to what level of participation they would have. They would not want to spend a lot of time on a preliminary effort that does not have a specific focus or product.
- Some stakeholders were only interested in participating if funding were made available for their participation. If no funding is available, then periodic updates would be appropriate.
- WDFW should keep in mind that these stakeholders are very busy and would not want to waste time in unproductive meetings that don't have tangible benefit. They will make time for a valuable, no-nonsense process. Interviewees commented that they would be willing to commit to bi-monthly or monthly meetings if a lot is happening and they are good, productive meetings.
- The amount of work that needs to be done may require more meetings. One interviewee suggested breaking into small groups to work through individual issues.
- The land management HCP might need to be broken down into individual units to be relevant to different geographies, landscapes, and specific issues of concern. One stakeholder group commented that if the HCP is statewide in process and scope, they would be less enthusiastic about being involved.

Stakeholder Communication

The regulated community had the following comments regarding stakeholder communication:

- A long advisory committee process is probably necessary. To make this process successful, WDFW should identify the needs of the key seven or eight groups and focus on those right away.
- If WDFW is going to talk about regulatory changes, it needs to identify those early on in the process and determine how the agency will work with stakeholders and tribes (i.e., ground rules).
- An advisory committee made up of the “usual suspects” will lead to more process and more arguments.
- Suggestions for effective stakeholder involvement include an open, transparent process; a neutral facilitator; mutual consensus; and documentation to support agreements/decisions.
- WDFW is not very good at identifying from the beginning how the Department needs to communicate with stakeholders. Once a stakeholder group is identified as an interested party, it should be contacted and brought into the process.
- WDFW has to identify tangible benefits for stakeholders to participate.
- Meeting individually with specific stakeholders is an important step, but this could take a long time and could be controversial. A small working group of stakeholder leaders could be identified to work together toward a mutually acceptable solution. This “steering” group must be accepted/respected by the larger group of stakeholders.
- One interviewee suggested WDFW start with a very open, inclusive process (for the first six months), then scale it back after identifying the key issues and compliance tools for different issues (dredging, over water structures, mineral prospectors, tide gates).
- WDFW should not write the first draft. This needs to be the work of a collaborative group. After face-to-face interaction/participation with stakeholders, there should be no “behind-the-scenes changes.”
- One stakeholder commented that a recent initiative was successful mostly because it did not involve the public from the beginning. A small work group was convened to negotiate a collaborative approach between the key stakeholders. It may have gotten more complicated with the public from the beginning.
- Stakeholders communicate with their constituencies primarily through e-mail lists, Web sites, and newsletters in both electronic and hard copy formats.

Members are becoming more technology-savvy; e-mails are the most efficient ways to distribute information from and to multiple sources.

- Most of the stakeholders interviewed indicated they would be willing to distribute updates, meeting summaries, key dates, etc., as well as links to the WDFW Web site. The stakeholder groups also have regular (monthly or bi-annual) gatherings where information on the HCP process could be presented and discussed.

Public Involvement

The regulated community had the following comments regarding public involvement:

- WDFW has to open this process to the public. The Department has no choice – it has to go out for public review.
- WDFW should be able to clearly answer the question “What is an HCP?” for the general public. The Department needs to make sure that the public has the appropriate level of information and understands how an HCP might affect them.
- Most agencies have the appropriate scientific background to do a good job. Public involvement is a whole different story. Public involvement efforts have to be balanced and coordinated. The Department needs to have a desired outcome in mind so that it can be published in a positive light.
- Focus on the people and groups that may be impacted. For the HPA program, focus on regulated communities. For the Wildlife Areas, focus on the public at large.
- The HPA process will be messy. WDFW needs to be 100 percent transparent and needs to listen and respond to comments. Department staff should be aware that they are not going to like what they hear, and demonstrate that they are willing to do something to respond to concerns.
- The HPA is a bureaucratic process that will only appeal to a select audience. WDFW needs to keep the key regulated parties informed of what they are doing. The general public is not going to be interested.
- The general public will be interested in the Wildlife Areas. People will be more receptive to the process if they can see how they will benefit from the outcome. Citizens may have concerns about land management activities, including future acquisitions.
- Stakeholders representing the regulated community can get lots of people out if it affects them negatively.
- When appropriate, WDFW should reach out to the general public. Stakeholder groups do not represent everyone.

- If you have to reach the general public, do a media blitz. Get the word out through newspapers, radio, Web sites, TVW/public access channel, mailing lists, etc. (but these won't reach everyone).
- Information should be posted where the general public will see it (e.g., at hunting license distribution points).
- WDFW policy staff should get perspective from outside of Olympia. Hold town meetings in local communities throughout the state.
- A Web site would be valuable for those stakeholder groups involved, but not necessarily the general public. However, a Web site is not a good substitute for in-person stakeholder meetings. If there is interest, WDFW can point the general public there for information. The public is getting more technology-savvy all the time. Any Web site should have a simple address, and not be buried deep within WDFW's website.
- A listserv would be useful for communicating updated information. Send out CDs to disseminate information. They are cheap and easy to reproduce, and allow interested parties to look at their leisure.
- WDFW needs to remember that the public does not get paid to go to meetings; make meetings convenient and short, otherwise the public will become impatient and lose trust.

Checkerboard/Adjacent Landowners

Relationship to WDFW HPAs and Wildlife Areas

The checkerboard/adjacent landowners interviewed had the following comments regarding their relationship to WDFW HPAs and Wildlife Areas:

- The interviewees are regulated by WDFW through the HPA program, for such activities as timber sales, road building, culvert replacements, stream crossings, and in-channel stream work. One interviewee said HPAs are also required for their export facilities for work along docks and their home-building facility.
- Regarding the Wildlife Areas, interviewees commented that they are affected by WDFW land management activities by access to or through their lands, road cost-share agreements, and activities spilling over to their adjacent lands. One interviewee stated that WDFW management of an elk herd on adjacent lands involves hunting and access rights to and through company lands. There are also interactions on wildlife issues related to their mills and a home-building facility.

Experience with HCPs

The checkerboard/adjacent landowners had the following comments regarding their experience with HCPs:

- Interviewees had familiarity with ESA and HCPs. They have been involved at some level with state and private landowner HCP efforts including their own HCPs. Two of the interviewees' companies have HCPs in other states; one with HCPs in Oregon and in the southeastern U.S., the other has completed five ESA conservation agreements in the Pacific Northwest, Wisconsin, and in the southeast. One interviewee stated that their staff reviews proposed amendments to ESA and speaks frequently to elected officials about Section 10 permits.
- One company stated that HCPs developed in the western U.S. were considered generally not successful because they are so controversial, involve large struggles, and have little consensus on the science. These HCPs have a high probability of failure. In the eastern U.S., however, agencies work more in partnership with landowners, streamlining is better, and there is less of an adversarial relationship. Another interviewee believes that their HCP processes were successful because good science was used at the front end, they had the right number and mix of staff from the applicant and federal agencies, and attention was paid to process details. NEPA and public involvement were as transparent as possible.
- Some of the key challenges to developing HCPs include the extensive amount of public discourse on land management activities; the cost of HCPs (including the potential for high litigation costs); the difficulty with getting consensus; the high standards that private landowners are held to (the same standards as agencies); the huge effort in terms of time and money to prepare documents; difficulty with integrating and negotiating biological and business goals and objectives; and meeting public expectations.
- One interviewee stated there was not a lot of public involvement in the HCP processes they conducted other than routine NEPA requirements, such as standard public meetings. Another interviewee indicated that they did a great deal of public involvement, including conducting media and congressional briefings; conducting approximately 150 public briefings/meetings with interest groups over a two-year period; having technical reports peer reviewed; making technical reports available one year in advance of the HCP (placed in public libraries all over the state); conducting scoping; and providing comment opportunities to interested groups.

Issues, Concerns and Outcomes (both HCPs)

The checkerboard/adjacent landowners had the following comments regarding issues, concerns, and desired outcomes related to development of both HCPs:

- Regarding the HPA HCP, one interviewee questioned whether WDFW needed an HCP, and stated that WDFW needs to evaluate their liability and individual landowners' liability. The liability of the state implementing the ESA should be questioned. Another interviewee expressed the concern that the effects of the HPA HCP could result in additional regulations to landowners.
- With respect to the Wildlife Areas HCP, one interviewee commented that what WDFW does with their lands is its business. Another interviewee was concerned about the effects of the Wildlife Areas HCP on adjacent landowners (i.e., management activities could displace species to adjacent lands; and there could be operational impacts to adjacent lands such as road access issues and spread of exotic species).
- For research and monitoring efforts, it was suggested that WDFW look for opportunities to collaborate. Concerns were expressed for anything that would devalue adjacent landowners' lands or result in increased costs.
- One interviewee commented that it is not wise to pursue an HCP for the HPA program, but if WDFW does decide to, they should examine how the Forest Practices HCP addresses HPAs. Some HPAs for timberlands on non-fish-bearing streams are already covered and should be exempt. The current set of forest practices rules meet forest landowners' obligations. A new HCP should not change existing standards.
- Increasing standards will increase costs to landowners. WDFW needs to very carefully evaluate effects to landowners of any proposed regulatory changes. The checkerboard/adjacent landowners would like to see minimal changes to the regulations by incorporating business concerns and weighing the impact against biological objectives.
- Potential conflicts include a potential decrease in management flexibility/options; the potential to lock in standards or unnecessary permit conditions; increased regulations vs. increasing cost to landowners; and the time and cost to pursue an HCP (estimated to be five years, with large transaction costs and much uncertainty).
- One interviewee suggested having frequent communications with the affected public, incorporating the latest science to evaluate the biological benefits, and doing a cost/benefit analysis. Incorporating an adaptive management component could utilize real science directed at fish passage, instead of using a conservative stream simulation approach.

- Scientific issues that should be addressed in the HPA HCP process include fish passage, watershed dynamics, and road engineering/maintenance costs. Existing research includes Cooperative Monitoring Evaluation and Research (CMER) and fish passage research (e.g., the Battelle study on culverts and fish passage). The interviewees cautioned about the need to examine and agree on scientific objectives and the need for peer review.

Suggestions for WDFW's Success

The checkerboard/adjacent landowners had the following suggestions for WDFW success in development of the HCPs:

- Show clear and tangible benefits to stakeholders for the HPA HCP (e.g., permit streamlining by limiting the number of HPAs required).
- For both HCP processes, WDFW should have a good science/technical team, have effective policy oversight, maintain frequent communications during HCP development, and include frequent stakeholder advice prior to the draft HCP.

Desired Level of Participation

The checkerboard/adjacent landowners had the following comments related to their desired level of participation in the HCP development process:

- One of the interviewees wants the ability to participate as a commenter and have access to interim and/or summary documents for both HCPs. Another interviewee indicated a desire for significant involvement in the HPA HCP, but only wants to be involved in a review capacity for the Wildlife Areas HCP.
- The interviewees have newsletters and/or electronic means of informing their employees of HCP issues. If the information is pertinent, or especially if the HPA HCP is pursued, their constituency would definitely be informed.

Stakeholder Communication

The checkerboard/adjacent landowners had the following comments related to stakeholder communication:

- One of the best ways to reach checkerboard owners and members of this sector of the regulated community is through trade associations (e.g., Association of Washington Business and Washington Forest Protection Association). Another way to reach them is through peer review groups.
- The interviewees recommended WDFW talk to individual stakeholder groups early in the process to solicit ideas and opinions. This approach is more effective and will result in more candid responses. Other recommendations include

conducting frequent briefings of stakeholder groups and distributing preliminary technical and scoping documents, both electronically and in hard copy format.

Public Involvement

The checkerboard/adjacent landowners had the following comments related to public involvement:

- The public involvement strategies for each of the HCPs will generally follow the same process, but WDFW should recognize that there will be different stakeholder groups interested in each of the two HCPs.
- The general public likely does not know what an HPA is. Therefore, the approach should be a stakeholder effort. The HPA HCP will be more broad-based with a lot more diverse interests. WDFW should include anyone who needs a permit (i.e., the regulated community).
- For the Wildlife Areas HCP, it will be very important to reach the general public. Interested groups will be much more local. WDFW should take a more local community-based approach, conducting tours and having on-the-ground discussions. It is not critical to target the general public. If WDFW is good at identifying stakeholder groups, they will address the issues and get appropriate feedback.
- A Web site or portal to WDFW's Web site is a good tool, if 24-hour access is provided, but it should not be the only public information tool. It is a good way to post documents, provide updates, and inform the public of upcoming events. One interviewee suggested designating a presentation team, possibly involving key stakeholders, so issues are presented consistently. Also, it will be important to properly brief WDFW personnel to ensure that a consistent message goes out to the public.

Fish and Wildlife Commission and WDFW Advisory Councils

This group of interviewees includes the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission and two advisory councils to WDFW including the Wildlife Diversity Advisory Council and the Lands Management Advisory Council. One member of the Fish and Wildlife Commission was interviewed in person. The interviews with the advisory councils were conducted in a group setting. The Lands Advisory Council was conducted via conference call and the Wildlife Advisory Council was conducted in person at a regularly scheduled Wildlife Advisory Council meeting.

Relationship to WDFW HPAs and Wildlife Areas

The Fish and Wildlife Commission and WDFW advisory council members had the following comments regarding their relationship to HPAs and the Wildlife Areas:

- The Commission’s primary role is to establish policy and direction for fish and wildlife species and their habitats in Washington and to monitor WDFW’s implementation of the goals, policies and objectives established by the Commission. The Commission also classifies wildlife and establishes the basic rules and regulations governing the time, place, manner, and methods used to harvest or enjoy fish and wildlife.
- The Wildlife Diversity Advisory Council and the Lands Management Advisory Council are two of three citizen advisory groups to the WDFW Wildlife Program. Council members are appointed and represent a range of statewide fish and wildlife interests.
- All three groups have a direct relationship with WDFW and are very interested in the Department’s efforts to develop HCPs for HPAs and Wildlife Areas.
- Many of those interviewed had some knowledge that the Department was thinking about this concept but this was the first time they heard it was going forward.

Experience with HCPs

Commission and advisory council members had the following comments regarding their experience with HCPs:

- Many interview participants have a high level of familiarity and understanding of the ESA and HCPs. Some individuals regularly review and comment on HCPs, some have contributed to the development of HCPs, while others have less direct experience but are still somewhat familiar through their exposure to issues related to ESA and HCPs.
- Commission and advisory council members have experience with several HCPs including the Douglas County HCP, state Forest Practices HCP, DNR Lands HCP, Colorado Prebles Meadow Jumping Mouse HCP, and Plum Creek HCP (in Washington and Idaho).
- The Douglas County HCP was a “giant” HCP, covering the entire county and all agricultural activities. Its success was attributed to these key factors: consistent representation from a diverse set of stakeholder groups, including the USFWS; providing materials in advance; development of trusting relationships to work through difficult issues; and assigned responsibility for each participant to share/solicit input from their respective groups.

- Good science is another key success factor. HCPs need to start with good baseline data. One concern raised is that there is no evidence to confirm that monitoring and adaptive management are successful in other HCPs.
- Consistent communication with the right people was a key to success in other HCPs. The Plum Creek HCP was characterized by one interviewee as having a negative outcome. Some stakeholders were “given lip service” by Plum Creek; the public was not very involved; and the final result was “slipped under their noses.” Since then, the public has become more informed and not very happy with HCP results.
- There have been experiences in other HCPs where political pressure was applied to reach “success,” and this left a “bad taste” and negative perception of the process.

Issues, Concerns and Outcomes (both HCPs)

Commission and advisory council members made the following comments regarding issues, concerns and desired outcomes related to the development of both HCPs.

- Many interviewees questioned the purpose of the HCPs. What is to be gained for the Department? What are the benefits? They indicated that a clear objective and scope was necessary before initiating the process. It was assumed that the motivation for proceeding was development of a management program that will satisfy ESA for the long-term.
- Others questioned whether the objective for the HPA HCP would be a blanket permit. One interviewee wondered if an HCP for the Wildlife Areas is necessary. “It’s a long process, takes lots of energy, lots of money; need to ask if the resources could be spent better.”
- It was also noted that individual biologists are not always objective, are “...too focused on specific areas and lose sight of the big picture,” and that this presents a challenge for this process.
- Several interviewees made specific suggestions for technical considerations in the HCPs. These included the following:
 - For the Wildlife Areas HCP, management practices to evaluate include herbicide use, livestock grazing, forest practices, fire as a management tool, agriculture practices, and housing development impacts on species, especially big game.
 - Concern was expressed that a long-term horizon (50 years) might not be appropriate for these HCPs and could allow “free reign” if conditions change over time. It was noted that successful ecological recovery takes at least a generation (25 years) and perhaps that is an appropriate time horizon.

- Consider going beyond listed species to have greater ecological impact.
- Needs to be scientifically defensible.
- Others noted challenges that WDFW will face in framing the scope of the HCP, especially the Wildlife Areas HCP:
 - WDFW will need to address the differing missions, species, and habitats of the various Wildlife Areas.
 - Developing a multi-species HCP will be very challenging for the Department.
 - Connectivity issues do not relate to jurisdictional boundaries.
 - It will be difficult to design an HCP for shrub-steppe communities.

Suggestions for WDFW's Success

Commission and advisory council members made the following suggestions for WDFW success in development of the HCPs:

- Developing HCPs seems counterintuitive if the agency is dedicated to its mission of sustaining fish and wildlife. “WDFW should be preventing species from becoming endangered.” It was noted that this was something already being considered by the Department and that changes at the policy level should continue to reflect this direction. One interviewee noted that the Department should be the “model,” setting the state standard for well-managed lands, and eliminating the need for an HCP.
- One interviewee recommended WDFW organizational and staffing changes to prioritize and expand the ability of the Department staff to do land management science.
- One interviewee suggested that WDFW make it a priority to interact with academic organizations to participate in the sharing of scientific information. The Washington Rangeland Committee is currently working with Washington State University and is benefiting from current studies.
- WDFW’s overall internal and external communication needs to be improved. The current communication was described as “spotty; leaves a lot to be desired; somewhat one-way.” It was also noted that WDFW “has a fairly large sandbox; they have their rules and don’t always let everyone play. They have their own data...and are not always willing to let other agencies share.” This perception creates challenges in achieving open and honest communication with all interested parties.
- One interviewee urged the Department to not “rush the process.”

- Several interviewees had suggestions about how to narrow or organize the scope for a statewide effort, especially the Wildlife Areas HCP. Suggestions included considering eastern vs. western Washington, urban vs. rural, countywide, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) recovery regions, landscape-level planning, watershed basin planning, and/or areas of overlap where issues can be consolidated/addressed together.

Desired Level of Participation

Commission and advisory council members made the following comments regarding their desired level of participation in development of the WDFW HCPs:

- All interviewees expressed interest in being involved, but noted that their involvement would be consistent with their groups' role and responsibilities in relationship to the operation of the Department. For example, it was not expected that members of the Fish and Wildlife Commission or the advisory councils would be actively involved in development of the HCPs, nor would they necessarily be involved in all stakeholder meetings.
- They do expect to be updated and asked to review and provide input at appropriate times. They anticipate providing this input at multiple points in the process. One interviewee noted that receiving a draft document at the very end of the process and having to respond within a 30-day review period would not be desirable. Another noted that perhaps one "point person" be assigned from the councils to track progress and provide two-way communication.
- A few interviewees indicated that they would need more information about the scope of each HCP to determine the desired level of participation.
- One interviewee noted that if the HCP just pertains to listed species, the level of interest would drop.

Stakeholder Communication

Commission and advisory council members had the following comments regarding stakeholder communication:

- All interviewees recommended involvement of a diverse group of stakeholders. It was noted that this was important to avoid criticism, as well as to make sure all interests were considered and included in the process. It was further noted that stakeholder groups, whether they agree with the outcome or not, should not be surprised by the outcome.
- For the Wildlife Areas HCP, there is need to reach out to a different set of stakeholders (mountain bicyclists, trail riders/equestrians, 4-wheel drivers, hunters, recreationists, mushroomers, rockhounds) that are not necessarily affiliated with other groups. Interviewees suggested creative and innovative

ways to reach these audiences, including outreach through recreational businesses such as REI, notices at trail heads and recreational access points, information through licensing materials, etc. It was also suggested that WDFW review outreach conducted by Washington State Parks to understand how they reach out to recreational users.

- Others noted that involvement means interacting and communicating with stakeholder groups more than once. Each audience may require a different level of communication but it is necessary to keep all groups informed about progress throughout the process, even the general public.
- It was recommended by several interviewees that stakeholder groups should be asked to identify their selected representative. Especially for the Wildlife Areas HCP, local contacts are essential for identifying the appropriate groups that should be involved.
- One interviewee noted that in working through negotiated processes, it is very important to reach agreement and move on rather than revisiting past decisions. It was also mentioned that success with large, facilitated processes is dependent on a manageable working group size (15-20 maximum). Professionally trained facilitators/mediators are recommended. It was noted that the Department does not have skills in this area.

Public Involvement

Commission and advisory council members had the following comments regarding public involvement for the HCPs:

- Interviewees underscored the importance of a consistent, comprehensive public involvement program. Key elements included a multi-pronged program at both the local and statewide level.
- One interviewee suggested a statewide committee that reviews the issues and smaller “focused issue” groups to work out details on specific issues or concerns.
- It was noted “there’s no clean way to do it ... it will be messy. Innovative and new ideas should be encouraged.” It was noted that the process is often the most important piece because it involves “people,” and WDFW should do as much as possible in the way of outreach, communication, and stakeholder involvement.
- More than one interviewee commented that WDFW should consider less time in scoping and identifying all the issues with the involvement of all stakeholders. Many of the key issues are understood (and captured in this process) and the Department might be able to be more efficient with stakeholders’ time by presenting the list of issues and asking them to identify any additional issues that are missing from the preliminary list.

- The general public and the “average hunter/recreationist” will not be experts in this process. While communicating with the general public may be more difficult and take more time, it is still necessary to educate the public and other stakeholders less experienced with HCP and ESA issues.
- One interviewee recommended that public involvement should be focused at the policy level, not on the technical data.
- The U.S. Forest Service was cited by one interviewee as a poor example of going too far with public outreach. It was noted “they can’t leave a room without doing public involvement... and it’s become ineffective. They’ve fallen all over themselves.”
- Most interviewees agreed that a Web site was an essential public involvement tool for the general public. Others expressed concerns about WDFW’s capacity to keep it updated and noted the Department’s GIS on-line mapping capability is totally overwhelmed.
- Respondents expressed a definite need to get out in front early and generally “applauded” the early stakeholder assessment being conducted by the Department.

Appendix

List of Interviews

Elected Officials

- Washington State Senate
- Washington State House of Representatives
- Clallam County Board of Commissioners
- Kittitas County Board of Commissioners
- Okanogan County Board of Commissioners

Tribal Staff

- Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission Environmental Policy Committee
- Colville Confederated Tribes
- Cowlitz Tribe
- Nisqually Tribe
- Skagit River Cooperative (Swinomish and Sauk-Suiattle Tribes)
- Spokane Tribe

Environmental and Public Interest Groups

- Audubon Society
- Conservation Northwest
- League of Women Voters
- The Nature Conservancy of Washington
- People for Puget Sound
- Washington Environmental Council
- Washington Forest Law Center
- Washington Trout

Regulators and Other Agencies

- Association of Washington Cities
- Bonneville Power Administration

- Foster Creek Conservation District
- NOAA Fisheries
- Seattle Public Utilities
- Thompson Smith Consulting
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Washington Governor's Policy Office (and cabinet staff)
- Washington Department of Natural Resources
- Washington Salmon Recovery Board, Council of Regions
- Washington State Association of Counties

Regulated Community

- Inland Northwest Wildlife Council
- Resources Coalition (small mineral prospectors)
- Washington Cattlemen's Association
- Washington Farm Forestry Association
- Washington Forest Protection Association
- Washington Public Ports Association
- Washington State Farm Bureau
- Washington State Water Resources Association
- Western Washington Agriculture Association

Checkerboard/Adjacent Landowners

- Plum Creek Timber Company
- Weyerhaeuser

Fish and Wildlife Commission and WDFW Advisory Councils

- Fish and Wildlife Commission
- Lands Management Advisory Council
- Wildlife Diversity Advisory Council

Interview Questionnaire

WDFW HCP Public Involvement Project

Stakeholder and Tribal Assessment

Final Questionnaire – April 18, 2006

General

1. What is your relationship to WDFW?
2. Which one or more categories do you or your organization fall into:
 - Recreationist
 - Hunter/Fisher
 - Regulated landowner or business
 - Adjacent landowner
 - Tribal
 - Governmental or elected official
 - Other
3. Describe your familiarity with the Endangered Species Act (ESA).
4. Describe your familiarity with Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs).
5. How familiar are you with WDFW's interest in pursuing HCPs for wildlife areas and Hydraulic Project Approvals?

HPA and Wildlife Areas HCP

Note: Answers to these questions will direct the focus towards HPA or Wildlife Areas HCP or both. If the interviewee expresses interest in both, we will prompt them to answer all questions from both the HPA and Wildlife Areas perspective.

6. Is your organization, or the activities conducted by your organization, regulated by WDFW's HPA authority? Explain.
7. Is your organization, or the activities conducted by your organization, affected by WDFW land management activities? Explain.
8. Are you interested in participating in the development of (*either/both*) HCPs and environmental review processes? Or would you need more information to make a decision on your participation?

Experience with HCPs

9. Have you been involved in other HCPs? Describe. (*If yes, proceed with the following questions. If no, proceed to Q. 16*)
10. What HCPs have you been involved with?

11. Would you describe these other processes as successful? If so, what factors contributed to success? If no, why not?
12. What were the key challenges?
13. What groups were most interested and involved in the project?
14. What kind of stakeholder/public involvement effort was conducted? (*What kinds of tools were used? How involved were stakeholders in development of the HCP? How often were stakeholders communicated with?*)
15. Do you have suggestions on how that previous HCP process might have been done differently, especially as it relates to public involvement?

Issues, Concerns and Outcomes (both HCPs)

Note: Interviewers will need to prompt for responses for both HCPs, depending on the answer to Question 8.

16. What issues and concerns should be addressed by the HCP planning process?
17. What are specific outcomes that your agency/organization would like to see? Do you have any specific ideas about how those outcomes can be accomplished by this project?
18. Can you speak to any potential conflicts you see arising between the objectives of this process and the outcomes you would like to see?
19. If yes, how would you approach reconciling these conflicts?
20. If the two projects were to go forward, what suggestions do you have for WDFW's success?
21. Are there specific scientific issues that should be addressed in the HCP(s)? Do you have any suggestions for quality sources of existing research on these topics?
22. What other specific projects or programs in the area/region/state would be relevant to this project?

Stakeholder Communication

23. Have you participated in other WDFW planning or regulatory programs where public involvement was required? If so, how did you participate? Were you satisfied with how the department sought your input or kept you informed? What could they have done differently?
24. What is the best way to reach your constituents/members?
25. What level of participation would you desire?
26. Who from your organization should be involved?
27. Do you have a newsletter, Web site or other vehicle for providing information to your constituency/members?
28. Would you be willing to provide information and updates about WDFW's HCP projects through your communication mechanisms/tools?
29. Does your organization have an annual meeting or other gathering where presentations might be made on the status of the HCP process?

Public Involvement

30. What are your recommendations for a successful public involvement strategy for a process such as this?
31. Would you suggest different involvement strategies for Wildlife Areas vs. HPAs? If so, what would you suggest and why?
32. How important is it to reach the “general” public vs. stakeholder groups that represent specific interests?
33. How effective would a public Web site be in keeping the public informed?
34. Are there public involvement techniques that you would suggest to communicate with the general public throughout the state?

Other

35. Are there others groups/individuals/agencies that we should be interviewing?
36. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

We appreciate the time you have taken to complete this interview

Additional Contacts Suggested by Interviewees

The following additional contacts were suggested during the stakeholder and tribal interviews.

- Rep. Kirk Pearson
- Rep. Joel Kretz
- Rep. Dan Kristiansen
- Rep. Janea Holmquist
- Sen. Mike Carrell
- Kristen LeMieux, Rep. Rick Larsen's office (Everett)
- Ralph Munro, former Secretary of State
- Eli Sterling
- Jill Silver, formerly with the Hoh Tribe
- Joseph Pavel, Skokomish Tribe and NWIFC.
- Bob Kelly, Nooksack Tribe
- Jim Peters, Squaxin Tribe
- Lorraine Loomis, Swinomish Tribe
- Charlie Raines, Sierra Club
- Methow Valley Citizen's Council, Vicky Welch
- Transportation Choices Coalition
- Land trusts: Columbia Land Trust, Inland Northwest Land Trust, Chelan-Douglas Land Trust, Methow Conservancy, and Cascade Land Conservancy
- Environmental Education Association of Washington
- The Biodiversity Council
- Recreational groups (Ducks Unlimited, etc.)
- The regulated community and their consultants that typically apply for HPA permits
- Municipal public works and planning departments
- WSDOT
- PUDs
- NW Marine Trade Association

- Private docks, industrial docks (oil companies, Lone Star Cement, etc)
- Private waterfront landowners
- Privately operated terminals
- North Olympic Peninsula Builder's Association
- Realtors Association
- North Olympic Timber Action Committee
- Okanogan County Farm Bureau, Mike Wilson, President
- Okanogan County Cattlemen's Association, Vic Stokes, President
- Horticultural Association
- North Olympic Salmon Coalition, Paula Mackrow
- U.S. Forest Service, Tonasket Ranger District and Winthrop Ranger District
- Chris Mendoza, Washington Forest Law Center
- Jamie Clark, former head of USFWS under Clinton, now with Defenders of Wildlife
- Three NOAA branch chiefs (Dan Guy, Dale Bambrick, and Matt Longenbaugh).
- Rick Cooper, retired from DNR
- Joan Frey, Klickitat County
- Debbie Young, Seattle PUC
- WA Rangeland Committee, Jim Sizemore
- Family Forest Foundation in Lewis County
- Conservation Districts
- Dairy Federation
- Livestock Association
- Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland
- Skagit County Farmland Legacy program
- Association of Washington Business
- Associated General Contractors
- Dick Pust, KGY Radio
- John Dodge, The Olympian