

Wildlife Diversity Advisory Council

Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, Sept 14, 2021; [9:00 AM – 11:30 PM](#)

Review Materials: June 2021 Minutes (*Action Item*)

[WAC 220-610-110](#)

TIME	SUBJECT	TOPIC LEAD/SPEAKER
8:45	Virtual room open – informal discussions	
9:00	Welcome and Review Agenda	Wildermuth
9:05	Council Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision: review and approval of June minutes • Meeting planning/scheduling, • Nominations and Decision: Council Vice-chair • WDAC membership, recruitment 	Wildermuth
9:25	WDFW Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovering America's Wildlife Act • State Legislature – supplemental session • Ecosystem Services Division update • Diversity Division update 	Anderson/O'Brien
9:50	Subcommittee Report-outs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Species of Conservation Concern • Wildlife Area Planning • Urban Outreach, dissolved 	Whittaker/DeSilvis/Lehmkuhl
10:10	Break	
10:20	Species classification rules. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed process and structure for WDAC review and generating recommendations. • Discuss one element of the rules – 5yr periodic review 	Wildermuth/Cotten
11:20	Identify next steps, agenda items	Wildermuth/Anderson
11:30	Adjourn	

2021 Committee Assignments

Members	Species of Conservation Concern	Wildlife Area Planning	Urban Outreach
Trina Bayard			
Shawn Cleveland	***		
Whitney DalBalcon			<u>***</u>
Denis DeSilvis	***	Co-Chair (W)	<u>***</u>
Jeff Kozma		***	
Robb Krehbiel			Chair
Anne Kroeker		***	<u>***</u>
Nancy Lee	***		
John Lehmkuhl		Co-Chair (E)	
Edward Lisowski		***	
Doug Pineo		***	
David Ross			
Anne Van Sweringen	***		
Dave Wertz	***		
Kevin White	***	***	
Kara Whittaker	Chair		
Todd Wildermuth	***		
Staff Support	T. Cotten/ W. Connally	J. Gorrell	T. Cotten

MINUTES

Attendees: Hannah Anderson, Wendy Connally, Mary Huff, Denis DeSilvis, Tom Obrien, Ed Lisowski, John Lehmkuhl, Todd Wildermuth, Dave Wertz, Nancy Lee, Anne Van Sweringen, Shawn Cleveland, Trina Bayard, Jeff Kozma, Kara Whittaker.

Not able to attend: Whitney DelBalcon, Kevin White. Not present: Doug Pineo

9:00	Welcome and Review Agenda	Wildermuth
9:05	<p>Council Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision: review and approval of June minutes Minutes were motioned and approved from prior meeting. • Meeting planning/scheduling, Overwhelming in favor of weekday meetings and online meetings if the state mandates it. • Nominations and Decision: Council Vice-chair Anne Van Sweringen was nominated as vice chair by Anne Kroeker. Anne Van Sweringen was voted in as vice chair. • WDAC membership, recruitment Wait until spring or do it now? Wait until spring was determined. 	Wildermuth
9:25	<p>WDFW Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovering America's Wildlife Act Bill has been introduced in both the House and Senate. Senate bill has some well received funding source switches identified which would include environmental cleanup fees. It will not be imbedded in the infrastructure bill, will be stand alone. Still a lot of anticipation and excitement. Plants are now a potential component, if plants are included creates opportunity for additional dollars. New requirements to spend a certain amount of dollars on ESA species recovery. WA is standing to receive around 20 mil in federal dollars annually. WDFW has begun some internal coordination on if funded how would we spend it. The current ask is to generate cosponsors at this time; however, WA law makers are not influential targets currently. • State Legislature – supplemental session Looking for increased funding for wildfire response and post fire restoration, increased support for cultural resources review capacity (we are currently understaffed to meet state guidelines), solar issues are pending, and we are exploring options to support that work as well. <p>House Bill 1099 (GMA/Climate Change) would have added climate change as a required planning goal under GMA, but it did not pass. However, because jurisdictions in central Puget Sound (Snohomish, King, Kitsap, and Pierce counties</p>	Anderson/O'Brien

and their cities/towns) will begin working on their next round of GMA updates on/around summer 2022, the Legislature funded a proviso for Commerce to work with WDFW and a handful of other state agencies to begin developing model guidance for local jurisdictions, in anticipation of a similar bill returning next year. The proviso focuses on two areas (1) Greenhouse gas emissions reductions (WDFW not included in that group) and (2) climate resiliency, which is to include areas of safe passage for species migration and promote co-benefits that include ecosystem services and salmon recovery (WDFW included in that group.) WDFW is receiving funding for our participation in the proviso which result in two new project positions in Habitat Program: an Environmental Planner 5 and a Research Scientist 1.

WDFW also submitted a land use supplemental decision package based loosely on our fiscal note for House Bill 1117 (Salmon Recovery/Net Ecological Gain) in the 2021 session which also did not pass, to hire approximately seven new staff positions to further expand work in GMA (primarily assisting local jurisdictions with updating comprehensive plans and critical areas ordinances) to better integrate salmon recovery goals, with a focus on the central Puget Sound counties first for the same reason mentioned above re: HB 1099 proviso.

Trina: Audubon is tracking the Gov. is supposed to have salmon as a top priority this session. Also, a sustainable farm and field program, an incentive program to encourage farmers to sequester carbon in the soil and more regenerative farming practices, didn't pass previously. Also tracking solar siting but trying to guide it towards places less impactful on the environment and towards more urban areas.

Tom: Bills were introduced in both the 2020 and 2021 Legislative Sessions that proposed shifting the standard under GMA (and potentially other laws as well, such as SMA) related to critical areas protection from "no net loss" to "net ecological gain." None of those bills passed but the conversation about changing the standard continues in multiple settings.

Todd: can we bring the data to a finer practical point? Outside of our Hydraulic Code authority, WDFW has no regulatory control over habitat outside of property that we own. We focus on the Priority Habitats and Species (PHS)

Section on informing local governments and their requirements to designate and protect critical areas by providing information about where agency-designated priority species and priority habitats are (through PHS on the Web) and what landowners/land managers should do if those species/habitats are present (through PHS Management Recommendations.) GMA requires that local jurisdictions consider PHS and other sources of Best Available Science when updating Comprehensive Plans and Critical Areas Ordinances, but there is a lot of discretion at the local level. This has resulted in a wide range of implementation and use of PHS recommendations across the state. (e.g., Some critical area ordinances adopt PHS wholesale, others only protect “only ESA-listed species”.) Still, the more and better information we can provide through PHS, the better; and we are working towards not just more comprehensive and current known presence/absence spatial data (e.g., Ferruginous hawk nest sites), but moving towards identifying things like the Ferruginous hawk’s likely full range in the state and providing some indicator of habitat quality so they local ordinances can better attend to that information. Further, having data layers and management recommendations are important, but so is having staff that can speak to planners in their language (and are consistently available) to help influence and engage more, and more effectively, with those local jurisdictions is also important: Hence the land use supplemental decision package.

- Ecosystem Services Division update:
PHS preparing a lunchtime seminar on Monday Sep. 27th. They are gearing up to prioritize direction for PHS work in the future. Also staffing up with a full suite of section managers. Here is a link to that webinar recording: https://youtu.be/qOJESvEbf_U
- Diversity Division update
Shrub Steppe proviso, we are deep in the work. Last session we were awarded support to respond to wildfire with restoration actions and develop a long-term fire response strategy. Have convened two large multi faced advisory groups with a suite of stakeholders, to have a conversation around implementing near term actions. We have also had a group exploring the long-term strategy. Have a communications team to provide messaging around what we are doing. We are hiring a coordinator who will sit in the east side to focus on implementation. Those meetings will be public.

John L.: is the list of participants public?

Hannah: it will be, Audubon, CNW, Yakima tribe, training center, conservation districts, BLM, BPA, county

	<p>commissioners, are represented among others. First kick off meeting was a week and a half ago, and it was very well received. Killer whales: first year implemented the whale watching license program. Completed a couple of emergency rules including protections for pregnant whales and a vulnerable calf. Evaluating how the rules are working. We released 100 northern leopard froglets last month. Fisher cameras have been deployed 40 cameras deployed. We are growing sagebrush with the sustainable prisons project that are ready to go out. Pond turtle recovery anniversary. John: what's the mood in the department around diversity work? Hannah: there's a lot of positive satisfied people. But just way too much to do. Wendy: lots of support and great projects happening right now. Really great stuff happening, but at the same time everyone feels buried. Lots of different communication mechanisms and coordination takes so much more effort. Culturally, lots of things happening at WDFW but very heavy at the people level.</p>	
9:50	<p>Subcommittee Report-outs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Species of Conservation Concern Commission agreed with recommendation and Ferruginous Hawk is now a state endangered species. Species on the horizon for status report or periodic status review include Cascade Red Fox, Brown and White Pelicans, Snowy Plover, Common Loon Wildlife Area Planning Tee'd up to comment on the Columbia wildlife area plan. Looking for comments to John L. tomorrow. Will circulate to the entire WDAC, for any additional comments from the full group. Denis: just received the south Puget sound wildlife area plan last week. Not sure who else other than Ann on that group to review? The only thing missed, is when is it due? Respond to Laurie Vigue and she will know when best to have your comments in. Urban Outreach, dissolved 	Whittaker/DeSilvis/Lehmkuhl
10:10	Break	
10:20	<p>Species classification rules.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed process and structure for WDAC review and generating recommendations. Soft agreement last meeting to wind down the urban outreach Subcommittee but take up an effort to review and provide comment and updates to the listing WAC. Assist the department in a wide-ranging review of the WAC. Would like to focus on how to update. Originally written all out in the 1990s and hasn't been revisited. Somethings are terse others could use elaboration and set up more clearly. 	Wildermuth/Cotten

Taylor provided a presentation with some examples of areas to explore and will provide the presentation to WDAC. End product would be a letter delivered by June 1 next year to the department. Looking to setup a structured review of the WAC and issues and consolidate to a letter which could be as simple as "dept should review this since it was last touched in the 1990s." Another option is also raising a series of issues and point to areas where the updates could be the most beneficial. Can encourage the department to focus on certain areas and move things forward. However, no expectation to rewrite the rule for adoption as written. Something in between. Todd is inviting anyone on to the WAC working group.

Time commitment: will start with Todd carrying the heavy load working WDD staff. Three big areas worth covering according to be covered in three meetings: beginning with Taylor's PowerPoint. Second the state parallel of the federal ESA, and what have we learned from the fed system. Third meeting, looking at the recovery portion and how to edit to make improve on recovery. Initial proposal of three meetings then letter prep.

Interested: Shawn, Dave, Denis, John L, Nancy, Trina, possibly Kara, Jeff K., Ann Van Sweringen would like to join.

- Discussion of one element of the rules – 5yr periodic review. Todd and Taylor gave an overview of the 5-year process and its hurdles. Wendy points out that the Division tries to line up species monitoring and research priorities to coincide with the timeline and needs of the Periodic Status Review.

Trina: Finds the Periodic Status Reviews as helpful resources of information on a species. A scenario could include a set of criteria that go into how often to initiate it for certain species.

Jeff K.: Could this timeline be resolved in the listing process to determine the period for the species being considered? Or a default formula that is updated annually?

Want to ensure other parts like the recovery planning will be included. Todd hopes to dedicate at least one session solely to recovery.

Denis: WDAC mentioned to the Director wanting to take on the recovery issue in earlier communications.

Hannah: a good first step could be for the staff to create some clear "challenge statements" to compliment the power point.

Trina: also exploring listing as a tool in the better function of the bigger picture of what the department is trying to achieve. Dissenting viewpoints is helpful and encouraged, perhaps the WAC and process are necessary and suitable as is?

	<p>Wendy: A similar exercise worth reviewing was her work with the rehab wac, and stakeholders. Took the WAC line by line, challenges and barriers, goals etc. and then parsed them into sections. It took months with a very engaged stake holder group. And having to set expectations of what would be accomplished.</p> <p>Anne Van: should a member of the Habitat program be involved?</p>	
11:20	<p>Identify next steps, agenda items</p> <p>Taylor: will email out the PowerPoint.</p> <p>Hannah: sent out holds for quarterly meetings, details to follow.</p> <p>Todd: will initiate subgroup meetings.</p> <p>Denis: interested in hearing about solar development as an agenda topic in future meetings (also on the commission agenda for this Friday).</p> <p>Dave: agenda topic for future meetings- a new group has formed with the purpose of revisioning WDFW. It's a litigious group of people looking to change who is on the commission. Dave will circulate the article to the rest of the WDAC.</p> <p>WDFW: Still exploring opportunities for covid responsible field trips</p> <p>Trina: interested in an update to the strategic plan</p> <p>Todd is inviting everyone to a party in his new camper van!</p>	Wildermuth/Anderson
11:30	Adjourn	