

Wildlife Diversity Advisory Council

April 23, 2016

Olympia

WDAC Members: Thomas Linde, Denis DeSilvis, Tom Campbell, Joe Scordino, Fred Koontz, Dave Werntz, Joe Gaydos, Chuck Lennox

WDFW Staff Members: Penny Becker, Cynthia Wilkerson, Hannah Anderson, Mike Kuttel, Jr., Matthew Trendera

Welcome and Introductions: Tom Linde welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made all around. There are some new WDFW staff members, including Hannah and Mike. It was also mentioned that the Woodland Park Zoo will have a new CEO and President, Dr. Alejandro Grajal, beginning May 16.

Old Business: Meeting minutes from the previous meeting were approved. The agenda was reviewed and a brief update on White-Nose Syndrome in Washington was added. A brief item on I-1401 was also added.

Farm Bill Conservation Programs with Private Landowners Presentation: Mike gave a presentation on WDFW farm bill conservation programs with private landowners. He introduced himself formally and gave a brief outline of his background and current position.

Mike went over the Farm Bill Conservation Programs, including working lands, easements, partnerships, and the Conservation Reserve Program. Each category has different voluntary programs under it that are incentive-based to encourage landowners.

Question: Does WDFW monitor those programs?

Answer: NRCS has two partners in the programs that help communicate with landowners. WDFW gets an annual report and works in partnership with NRCS to develop priorities, technical standards, and other aspects.

Question: And these are voluntary?

Answer: Signing the contract is voluntary, but once the contract is signed it is binding.

The focus of the rest of the presentation was on the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Mike presented the different aspects the CRP. The general CRP is limited and competitive. Continuous CRP depends on eligible areas and runs a continuous signup. Washington has 1.2 million acres enrolled as of Oct. 1, 2015 (seventh in the nation).

The program comes in all different styles depending on the area, but the producer is committing to not harvesting a crop on that land for the extent of the 10-15 year contract.

Question: Does CRP include public access?

Answer: It does not. They have that option, but they maintain private property rights.

A number of factors are involved, including type of soil, plant life, and location.

There is a \$50,000 cap for landowners on incentives. With General CRP, it takes longer to hit that cap, but under the SAFE program, it is much easier to hit it due to all the incentives included.

Continuous CRP involves several programs, including SAFE, CP33, CREP, and the CRP Grasslands Program (where grazing is allowed). Producers can sign up any time. The cost share is higher for implementation and management, rental rates are higher, and native plant species are required.

The higher cost share comes from the federal government and not the landowner. For continuous, the federal government pays 90%. Under CREP, the federal government pays 90% and the state pays 10%.

Mike gave an overview of the SAFE program. The purpose of SAFE, a partnership between FSA and state Fish & Wildlife agencies, is to establish, improve, or create higher quality wildlife habitat through CRP.

Washington has five SAFE programs implemented, including sage and sharp-tailed grouse, ferruginous hawk, shrub-steppe, Palouse Prairie, and Columbia Basin.

Question: Who chose the habitats? Was it state or federal?

Answer: WDFW develops requests through the FSA. However, care needs to be taken, because once something is requested, we need to be sure we can follow through. One issue that can arise is the monitoring aspect. We have a lot of data showing that the SAFE program for grouse has been essential for their survival, for example, but little other data to show the program's effectiveness.

Question: Do you have any idea why the enrolled acres are so small compared to the acres allocated in a couple of the SAFE programs?

Answer: From what's been heard on the ground, the \$50,000 cap plays a role in the ferruginous hawk SAFE, while in the Palouse Prairie SAFE, that ground is some of the best farm land in the state, making producers hesitant to sign up.

Mike then gave an overview of the field borders for upland bird habitat. This is available in all of the eastern counties where they have cropland. There can be a 30-120 foot buffer of perennial vegetation around an actively farmed field.

Mike presented an example of one specific CP33 project in Benton County. Bunch grasses are establishing, and forbs will be planted this fall. Forbs are planted on 15% of the acreage with the hope that they will spread as the project continues. Biologists have received pesticide training and certifications, so they are up to speed on everything involved and are out with producers to help.

Comment: In regards to the whole spatial connection aspect for the 2018 Farm Bill, if multiple farmers are putting incentive on each other, that may help for the 2018 decision.

Question: Is there support from Congressional representatives in the eastern counties?

Answer: The support is there politically and on the ground because the farmers want these programs.

Question: Is there a way to retire the lands as producers retire?

Answer: Easements are really the one option we have. The agricultural land easement program is one thing those producers can use in that situation. Sometimes the shorter term contracts can be an open door to work further down the road. Building relationships on the ground is a huge part of that.

Status of Work Plan and Priorities: Fred gave an overview of the species of concern subcommittee, which had the first quarter meeting. The main focus was on the Columbia white-tailed deer. The committee examined the "Periodic Status Review for Columbian White-tailed Deer," and agrees with the report's recommendation that Columbian White-tailed Deer, *Odocoileus virginianus leucurus* (CWTD), be retained as an endangered species in Washington. We also assessed the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's proposal to reclassify CWTD's ESA listing from endangered to threatened with a rule under section 4(d) of the ESA to enhance conservation of the species through range expansion and management flexibility. WDAC supports the Service's down listing of CWTD, especially considering the significant benefits the proposed 4(d) rule would bring to WDFW's efforts to recover CWTD in Washington. A letter stating this conclusion was sent to Director Unsworth and a copy will be sent soon to the Wildlife Commission. It was suggested that some members of WDAC try to be at the Commission meeting in June. Killer whale and streaked horned lark will be featured at the June meeting, while Taylor's checkerspot butterflies and Columbia white-tailed deer will be featured at the August meeting. Fred said the committee also approved the staff's recommendation to maintain endangered status for Killer whales and Streaked horned larks, and that a letter stating this conclusion will soon be sent to Director Unsworth and the Wildlife Commission. Penny said there was a lot of productive discussion within the Department, and it was very helpful to hear from WDAC before the public comment period began.

The discussion turned to the subject of Commission meetings. It can be a huge benefit for WDAC members to attend Commission meetings, just to get a general sense of how the whole agency works. Members can also make contacts and develop relationships they wouldn't otherwise be able to develop. The November and December meetings in particular will be a

very important meeting to be at because of several potential recommendations for species listing changes.

New Subcommittees: It was discussed that it may be a good idea to develop other subcommittees. What would make sense to be a committee? What issues matter the most to WDAC and where would they like to focus? No consensus yet reached.

State Wildlife Action Plan Highlights and Tools: Penny presented the highlights from the State Wildlife Action Plan. Each state must have a State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) that includes eight required elements to be eligible for the State Wildlife Grants Program.

WDFW spent a significant amount of time on the revision, including a full review of the species and habitats in the state. There are 268 species of greatest conservation need, which is an increase mostly coming from invertebrates. WDFW also identified the threats and conservation actions needed for both species and habitats.

There were also several public comment periods throughout the process.

The SWAP is meant to inform WDFW strategic plans, work plans, and priorities. Linking the species of greatest conservation need with the habitats of greatest conservation need is going to be a huge benefit for WDFW as plans move forward.

Species fact sheets are about two pages each and give a brief, focused overview of each species in the state, including federal and state status, habitat overviews, and basic biology and life history. The fact sheets also give descriptions of stressors for each species, action needed, level of investment, and lead organization (usually both WDFW and partners).

Major habitats and ecological systems are mapped throughout the state as well, with ecosystems of concern highlighted. All 268 SGCN have been associated with these ecological systems, either closely or generally. Mapping habitats and ecological systems allowed WDFW to identify ecological systems associated with SGCN in the state.

Because of this information, WDFW was able to develop range and habitat distribution maps for 78 SGCN throughout the state, including identifying potential range.

Climate change was also addressed in the SWAP. The goal was to integrate climate change into the species assessments and assess the vulnerability of all SGCN. Knowing the exposure and sensitivity for each species allowed WDFW to find the vulnerability for those species. WDFW was also able to find the vulnerability for each ecological system.

Penny gave two examples. Based on the assessments, lynx are at high vulnerability and peregrine falcons are at low vulnerability. The SWAP includes charts that outline the vulnerability levels for each species, weighing exposure, sensitivity, and confidence levels.

Species with high vulnerability and confidence levels are included on WDFW's preliminary climate watch list.

Most public comments wanted to add more species to the SGCN list, especially pollinators.

USFWS has approved Washington's SWAP document. The webpage has the final SWAP available in the coming weeks, and the implementation is underway.

Comment: The hook for public outreach should focus on a climate change overlay and the focus on species and habitat.

Comment: It may be beneficial to have a different message in different regions, focusing on species and habitat localized to those areas. People may care even more if it's right in their backyard.

Question: How familiar are staff members with using the SWAP as a tool?

Answer: There was a detailed overview of the document and how it works. Keeping communication open and informing staff members of the tools available to them is top priority. We are continuing to advertise as we move forward, working with multiple programs within WDFW.

Question: Is there a way to make the SWAP the primary reference document in the state now?

Answer: It's important to remember that PHS and SGCN are different tools. PHS is more targeted towards species and habitats where there is a more focused, regulatory need, while SGCN is a more general proactive conservation approach (how do we keep common species common, etc.). The SWAP tools feed into the PHS, so we have a big to-do item to use this information to update the PHS and other areas.

Comment: I kind of see this as a major tool for local governments, especially the climate change information, and it needs to be used in the regulatory arena. This is the best available science.

Answer: While it will certainly be used to inform those decisions, the SWAP itself is not the final rule.

Question: Will there be an executive summary that will come out?

Answer: On the SWAP webpage, there is a brief description of the main components.

Question: Are there other lenses of prioritization besides climate?

Answer: Yes. One of the things laid out in that chapter is the method used to prioritize. There isn't one tool that can be used for everything. However, starting points are laid out. It isn't clean, but it gives an overview on the different aspects that lead to prioritization.

Question: Is there any indication of how much it would cost to implement everything involved with the SWAP?

Answer: That is exactly what the Blue Ribbon Panel has assessed. For WDFW, it would be 25.9 million annually, which would only cover 75% of the implementation.

Question: How did they come up with that estimate?

Answer: Not sure on the methodology, but there was an analysis where they went through each state's SWAP.

Question: Is there any plan to update this as you go?

Answer: When the ten year period comes around, USFWS will update criteria needed within the SWAP. If we plan now, we may be wasting work if criteria changes. One thing we can do is make it more spatially enabled in the meantime.

Question: With the idea of partners, is there a plan to look to partners for funding/action assistance?

Answer: If there is one place where we need significant improvement on coordination that would be one of them. We do very well in a number of areas, but it adds up to a small bit of 268 SGCN. It can be challenging funding and communication wise to bring everything into alignment. We can definitely improve in getting everyone rowing the same direction.

Comment: It may be good to say "here are some groups we will be working with" in the outreach aspect.

Question: Can you add SGCN as you go?

Answer: We can add to it, but it will have to go back for review through USFWS. That makes that species eligible for state wildlife grants. We would also be looking at our candidate list for state listing.

Comment: One thing to consider as well is that helping SGCNs also helps the common species. That effort raises the quality of life in Washington. Talking about the outcomes of the work and how they will have a broader impact is strengthening the why.

Personnel Updates: Tom announced that Fred will now serve as vice chair on the committee based upon a vote that was done electronically.

Penny went over changes at WDFW. Nate Pamplin has moved to a new position within the agency in the Licensing Division. Bob Everitt will be acting in the role starting May 1.

Another change is that Kevin Kalasz, Conservation Assessment Section Manager, has moved to a different position within Diversity for two months.

The last change is that a new MA has been hired in the Diversity Division and she will be a huge help as Diversity moves forward.

Sage Grouse CCAA: Cynthia gave an update on the Sage Grouse CCAA. It gives assurances to non-federal landowners that if a species should become listed, as long as they are following this voluntary agreement to benefit the species, no additional actions will need to be taken.

There has been a reduced level of motivation as a result of the listing decision in September. There is also a whole suite of litigation happening from all sides. There is an environment of uncertainty in regards to the conservation actions for sage grouse.

WDFW wants to use the CCAA as a way to recognize the good work being done by landowners and producers. However, there are still some challenges in place, including a lack of trust and specifically some confusion around what is allowed around a lek and what conservation actions are being asked for in the CCAA.

Question: How does the CCAA program fit in with Mike's private lands work?

Answer: We are looking to integrate the CCAA into those incentive programs. For example, is there a way a landowner can be bumped up to be first in line for a CRP if they work with a CCAA? The voluntary stewardship program didn't get funding until 2015, but it is a county-level way to measure the ability to keep agriculture on the landscape, but also meet ordinance needs. Protecting fish and wildlife is a part of that. The Farm Bureau and WDFW are heavily invested in the program.

Question: Non-listing of the sage grouse was based on the cooperation between the states, correct?

Answer: It relied upon federal lands management plans more than cooperation between the states, but did also call out CCAs in other states.

Question: Washington was the only state not involved with the BLM resource management plans for grouse. If Washington wasn't in that cooperative, is there any concern that Washington's population of sage grouse is considered outside and can then be listed again?

Answer: The likelihood of Washington being listed separately is the same as overturning the decision on sage grouse range wide.

There is less money for Washington for sage grouse due to Washington not being included in the group of states for sage grouse range.

There was a lot of interest in how Washington sage grouse factor into the federal plan for sage grouse. The issue can be confusing to understand, and it was requested that the fact that there is still this confusion present be noted in the meeting notes.

Fisher CCAA and Listing Decision: Penny gave an overview of the fisher CCAA and the recent listing decision. The fisher decision came out two weeks ago, and it was not listed. WDFW was able to get a CCAA approved and sign people up before the decision.

The reason why USFWS decided not to list the fisher is directly related to the proactive recovery measures implemented by WDFW. The state efforts, including working with a wide range of partners, have been active for more than a decade and greatly contributed to the decision.

Question: Is there any talk of pulling away from the CCAA?

Answer: That is a possibility, because the CCAA is voluntary. However, one reason the decision was made was because of those conservation measures being in place and there is also likely to be litigation on the decision. Therefore, the incentive to stay enrolled remains.

Comment: Fishers are a different dynamic from sage grouse, and there may not be the same concerns present.

Also, what is being asked of the landowners is different for each species. The habitat for fishers is there, with countless acres available and on board, while sage grouse habitat is at risk.

Comment: There is concern about California and Oregon, with their actions not appearing to be as proactive, but Washington is leading the charge and has done a fantastic job.

Comment: The concern is that by being so sweeping, it opens the door for lawsuits. While Washington is very different with the proactive work that's been done, Oregon and California have nothing in place to actually recover the fisher. This could make Washington more vulnerable to a total west side listing.

Effects from Federal Wolverine Court Decision: Dave gave a brief overview of the original wolverine decision and the recent court decision. Wolverines rely on snow pack for reproduction and denning.

USFWS reviewed all elements involved and decided to list the wolverine. However, before the decision was finalized, they changed and said listing was not warranted. The court ruled that USFWS had not justified their decision due to a lot of political influence from states, particularly the Rocky Mountain States.

Comment: Listing is just an inventory and does not say what actions are to be taken after that. It's supposed to be a scientific enterprise. It seemed USFWS made the decision and then asked scientists to fill in the why afterward.

The court decision found this, and there will be effects on the implementation of science in these decisions in the future, and on the factor of snowpack on a number of species.

The current listing status of the wolverine now goes back to USFWS. There was no set time at this stage.

Question: Is there anything now to revisit the status of wolverine in Washington or are you waiting for USFWS?

Answer: We will be doing that independently, as the USFWS work is separate. We do not know enough right now about the wolverine population in Washington, and surveys are set for next winter in the effort to learn more about the species.

Question: Is there a CCAA for wolverines?

Answer: No. The CCAAs are not as helpful with federal land entities. Other programs and coordination will prove more effective.

Periodic Status Reviews: Hannah gave an overview of the periodic status reviews for Washington's listed species. There are four definitions for listing, including Endangered, Threatened, Sensitive, and none of the above.

She went over the process for the PSRs. Each species is assigned a lead, either from HQ Diversity staff members or, in some cases, from the Regions. Drafts of the documents with all contributed information are provided and reviewed by WDFW biologists and external experts.

Right now, Washington has 45 listed species, including 28 Endangered, 9 Threatened, and 8 Sensitive. In January 2016, the Commission adopted all recommendations. The brown pelican was delisted from Endangered to no listing at the April 2016 Commission meeting.

At the June 10, 2016 meeting, it will be recommended to maintain status on killer whale and streaked horned lark.

Question: Should WDAC submit a letter for each species, or only the ones where a decision is up in the air?

In response, there was a more detailed discussion about attendance at the Commission meetings, and public meetings in general. It is incredibly important for these voices in the diversity community to be heard, and for those people to make themselves known. There was also a discussion about the timing of communications from the WDAC to the Department, the Director, and the Commission. A timeline was outlined and will be sent out to members. Exact dates for Commission meetings, as well as locations, will also be communicated.

Hannah continued with the presentation after the discussion. The public comment period for Columbian white-tailed deer and Taylor's checkerspot is going on now. Status will be addressed at the August 5-6 Commission meeting.

November will be a busy month for the Commission meeting. The meeting will be November 4-5. There may be some rule change recommendations anticipated, including delisting bald eagle, uplisting marbled murrelet and Canada lynx, and downlisting white pelican. Peregrine falcon will also be addressed.

Question: Has the Commission ever overruled a listing recommendation from WDFW?

Answer: Not that I'm aware of, but historically I am not sure.

Comment: Not that I know of either, but part of that is due to staff members researching and preparing before the recommendation is decided upon.

Question: Anything to address about why woodland caribou PSR got pushed back?

Answer: Workload capacity of staff time.

Hannah went over species that will be addressed in the future and gave an estimate on when those species' status reviews will be completed and brought before the Commission.

Dave brought up that critical habitat has been designated in Washington for caribou. Right now, there are 30 caribou in the lower 48, with Washington sometimes having 12 of them (shared with BC and ID). There was a proposal to designate 300,000 acres of critical habitat, but that changed to a 30,000 acre designation. What is the state thinking about this?

Hannah said WDFW is gathering information before moving forward with any recommendations at this time. There was a discussion on the process involved, and all the details that go into these decisions. Critical habitat is only one piece of the large puzzle. It does not answer all the conservation questions.

Comment: Critical habitat doesn't answer all the questions, but it is an important step and does play a role.

It was decided a further discussion could be had with more details about the process at the next species of concern subcommittee meeting.

I-1401: Fred reported that the Governor's proposed \$500,000 of funding needed to begin enforcement of I-1401 was cut from the budget by the legislature on the last day of the session. Seventy percent of the voters voted "yes" on the initiative, each county passed it, and yet it went unfunded. Fred said it will likely be put up again at the next session's budget.

White Nose Syndrome: Penny gave an update on White nose syndrome in Washington. It was surprising that there was a positive case in a bat here. There is a page on the WDFW website where the public can report sick or dead bats and can report groups of bats. It can be really difficult to detect as the summer months approach. There is a brief window.

Comment: The only rabies cases in Washington have been due to bats, so it's important to be aware of that.

Absolutely. WDFW does not want anyone touching the bats and wants to make sure everyone is informed.

One goal for WDFW is to find out where our bats stay during the winter and where the maternity colonies occur. That is why WDFW has asked the public to report groups of bats. Penny will send more information out to WDAC members.

Question: Are you being funded for this? Is there help?

Answer: A lot of what we've spent time on so far is coordinating with the feds and others involved. We have some very important differences in what is happening in Washington and what is happening on the east coast. Their bats are cave dwelling bats, while, except for Townsend's, Washington's bats are not cave dwelling bats. A lot of the information those other entities can provide is not helpful for us. WDFW will be asking for legislative help next year.

WDFW has also reached out to wildlife rehabilitators and Wildlife Control Operators (WCOs), as well as other partners. We want to show we have a broader interest. White nose syndrome is a big deal and something we take very seriously.

WDFW has gotten messages out to the Washington Trails Association, Audubon, and many other partners. So far eight bats have been reported, and all have tested negative for white nose syndrome.

Comment: If there is something positive, it's that Washington's colonies are smaller, which may reduce the spread of the disease, or at least make it not spread so quickly.

Southwest Washington Adaptive Management: Tom wanted to bring up that there is a group in southwest Washington that has put together something similar to the SWAP document from WDFW. This one includes county governments, and there appears to be a ton of duplication. It seems like a wasted effort.

The larger Lower Columbia study is a focus on priority landscapes up the west coast from northern California. Where WDFW is involved, SWAP is being utilized.

National Blue Ribbon Panel Update: Penny gave an update on the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish & Wildlife Resources. This looks at what is permanent, sustainable funding for non-game wildlife, and where that funding might come from in the future. The turnout was fantastic, with representatives from all walks of life.

The group identified the need, which is that states are struggling to implement SWAP documents and other conservation work due to a lack of funding.

Their recommendation was to give \$1.3 billion to the states so the need can be met. The second recommendation involved wanting to keep Fish and Wildlife agencies relevant. The panel has decided to stay together and work together on how to keep agencies relevant moving into the future. They are currently hiring a campaign manager to push this forward as a long term campaign. This seems like an issue that should succeed in a bipartisan environment. There was a lot of support.

Even if WDFW got a portion of that, it would be a huge game changer.

Question: How is the money distributed amongst the states?

Answer: There is a formula that factors in population totals and many other aspects. It also requires a 25% state match.

Question: Are there things that need to get started now to prepare for next session?

Answer: Yes, and that leads into another topic on our agenda, WDFW's Wild Future Initiative.

Washington Wildlife Leaders Forum Update: November 16 and 17 is when the meeting will be held. Fifty leaders will be invited to discuss how to find a pathway to strengthen the ability of Washington State to manage more broadly for biodiversity protection. Invitations are going out soon; this will be a working meeting. Somewhere between five and 10 out-of-state representatives will be present.

The goal is to have a broad discussion that results in practical steps that we can take. We want to build on the dialogue between people and different stakeholder groups concerned about Washington's wildlife. We are starting with a small nucleus before moving forward to a broader discussion. Fred sees this effort as a 5-10 year commitment to this dialogue and incremental change

Framing messages and polling the public early will be very important.

WDFW Wild Future Initiative: Penny talked about WDFW's Wild Future Initiative. The object is to open up communication with the public and ask them what they want WDFW to do. Meetings were held in 2015 and those notes were compiled and are available on the website now. Right now, the agency is working toward putting together a list of asks for the next session based on what was heard at these public meetings.

There will be another set of Regional meetings to present action items to the public and receive feedback. There are some loose categories right now. They include the conservation of lands (including PILT), hunting opportunities, fishing opportunities and needs, and non-hunted wildlife (shared throughout agency).

One thing Wildlife Diversity has asked for is a better way to reach out to constituents regionally. There are a whole host of things that are included in the pool. WDFW would like to get WDAC's input.

Question: Is there a subcommittee related to the budget within this group? Do we want that subcommittee to get involved with this issue?

Answer: I wanted to set up a webex to show the presentation to the WDAC ahead of the public meetings.

Question: What amount of money is being asked for from the legislature?

Answer: We are unsure of the total amount right now. The amount for diverse wildlife would help cover a match amount if the federal Blue Ribbon Panel ideas are funded.

Penny will start the process of setting a date for WDAC discussion regarding this issue.

Comment: The timeline seems awful fast. One thing to think about is what went into the rationale for splitting the budget and asking for different amounts in the different areas. Having a unified vision, so everyone sees their “portion” represented fairly, is very important bringing this initiative forward. Can you explain how the different needs were weighed?

Comment: Everything is interconnected, so talking about how lands and diversity positively impact other areas, such as hunting, is a good strategy moving forward.

Comment: Focusing on places may be a better course.

Comment: You need to look at your audience, and hunters are a minority in the state.

Penny said another thing to consider with how WDFW sets up their requests for the legislature is where the money is going to come from. Some is coming from the general fund. Diversity delivers a product, and marketing that product is an area where improvement is needed. The delivery of an experience could be a good way to market that as well. WDFW plays a major part with partners and other entities to deliver that quality of life all Washingtonians enjoy.

Comment: A lot of this seems to be messaging. How did different messaging work in the past? Looking back at the different messages to find out what worked and what didn't is a huge part of this.

Comment: It might be that the only way to get the Department the funding it needs is to reframe the priorities. Unless the framing is changed and the priorities are elevated, it could be a long, tough battle to find that funding.

We are in a changing world where biodiversity plays a huge role. Why you want to save the wildlife is a huge part of the message.

WDAC Membership Status: The discussion of terms and term limits was held last meeting. The current terms go through June 30, and everyone is on the same term. Penny asked that those who said they were not interested in renewing give it another thought before making a final decision.

Comment: It may be beneficial to have an orientation of some kind for new members coming in. This would help new people who are nervous to jump in right away. Penny also said it could be possible to implement phone or video chat.

Comment: WDAC has really grown over the last three years. Getting to that understanding is essential to making this a long term, valuable advisory committee. Having that established culture and the understanding of how the council works is also very important.

Comment: A question for new members could be which subcommittee they want to serve on. Their answer could not be “any.”

Penny said she will put out an advertisement for new members. The object for recruitment will be to get a wide range of voices on the council. The group discussed different organizations they would like to see on the council. Many organizations were mentioned, including Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Mule Deer Foundation, Butterfly community, hiking community, marine wildlife naturalists, an economist or social scientist, someone in public relations, and the US military.

Comment: It may be good to approach these groups and just say we would love to have someone join the council. Do you have anyone you would recommend? Just be very up front about it.

Penny encouraged members to think more about recruitment and email WDFW with further recommendations.

Next Meeting Date and Location: The group discussed a new meeting date. It was also suggested that the group could do a conference call or something similar to hit some major topics.

The week around June 18 was decided on for a conference call, with a doodle poll to be sent out.

The next meeting date was put off for now, but September was decided as the likely target month. There was no set date decided upon.

Tom suggested an orientation for the new members before the September date in an effort to better prepare them for their first meeting.

It was proposed that the schedule might be adjusted to include more, shorter phone calls throughout the year that focused on one or two hot topic issues.

Meeting Adjourned