

Appendix D

Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach

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Appendix D

Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach

D.0 Introduction and Overview

The development process of the original Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS) included significant outreach to the public and WDFW's stakeholders, all of which is detailed in the 2005 plan, available on the SWAP [website](http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/cwcs/) – <http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/cwcs/>. The following chapter summarizes our approach to engage stakeholders in the review and revision of the CWCS and the development of the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) Revision. In general, we aimed for a strategic and leveraged approach to engaging external partners. One of the guiding principles adopted early in the SWAP Revision process encouraged us to “be efficient – conduct the SWAP revision in a manner that matches the available resources for planning and implementation.” With limited resources available for this revision, we focused on how to get the best value from stakeholder and public outreach efforts. An Outreach Plan, located near the end of this appendix, was developed to guide our efforts, and specific components of that plan are discussed in the next section.

Our overall approach was to provide several opportunities for feedback from our stakeholders and conservation partners throughout the SWAP Revision process, recognizing that input early in the process would be more effective at shaping the scope and content. We worked with the Wildlife Diversity Advisory Council (WDAC), a standing committee convened by WDFW and representing a range of interests as our primary stakeholder committee. During this period, the WDAC consisted of 18 members from across the state. We provided periodic updates to WDAC on the process for the SWAP Update and worked with a subcommittee early in the process for feedback on our content and focus areas, including feedback on the SGCN list and approach to identifying habitats of concern. Each member of the WDAC was encouraged to reach out to the people and organizations they interact with outside of WDFW to provide input during the revision.

Using the tools described below, we cast a wide net beyond the WDAC to identify and invite other individuals and organizations who might be interested in being involved in the development process, and then focused in on working with those who indicated interest. We made use of the WDFW website, email announcements, in person workshops, webinars and presentations, and briefings to small groups to announce the SWAP Update project and invite comments during the development process.

D.1 Development and Implementation of an Outreach Plan

We worked with members of the WDFW Cross Program Advisory Team¹ to develop an Outreach Plan which addressed both outreach to interested parties external to WDFW and also in-reach, activities to engage the expertise of staff within the agency. The Outreach Plan was then reviewed by members of the Wildlife Diversity Advisory Council, and after discussion, the plan was adopted (see References Section for the goals and objectives of the plan).

¹ The Cross Program Advisory Team included managers from across the agency and met monthly beginning in July 2013 to provide guidance and input on the development of the State Wildlife Action Plan Update.

A few of the key activities outlined in the plan are discussed below.

D.1.1 Use of the WDFW website for outreach

In early 2014, we updated the WDFW website to announce that the 2005 CWCS was being reviewed and revised as a State Wildlife Action Plan Update. We provided basic information about the update process and timeline and encouraged interested parties to contact the SWAP Coordinator for more information and to be on a list for future updates.

March 2015: SGCN list and supporting information

In early March we published our draft SGCN list on the website and provided information about the list, the criteria used, differences from 2005 and the implications of being included on the SGCN list. We also published fact sheets for each of the SGCN, including information on conservation status, conservation concern, distribution, population trends, habitat needs, key stressors and actions. Any visitor to the website was encouraged to review and submit comments on these documents, or the list itself.

July 2015: Full draft (content review only)

The full draft SWAP was posted on the website in late July for a general public review period. This draft was intended for content review only.

D.1.2 Developing an interested persons list

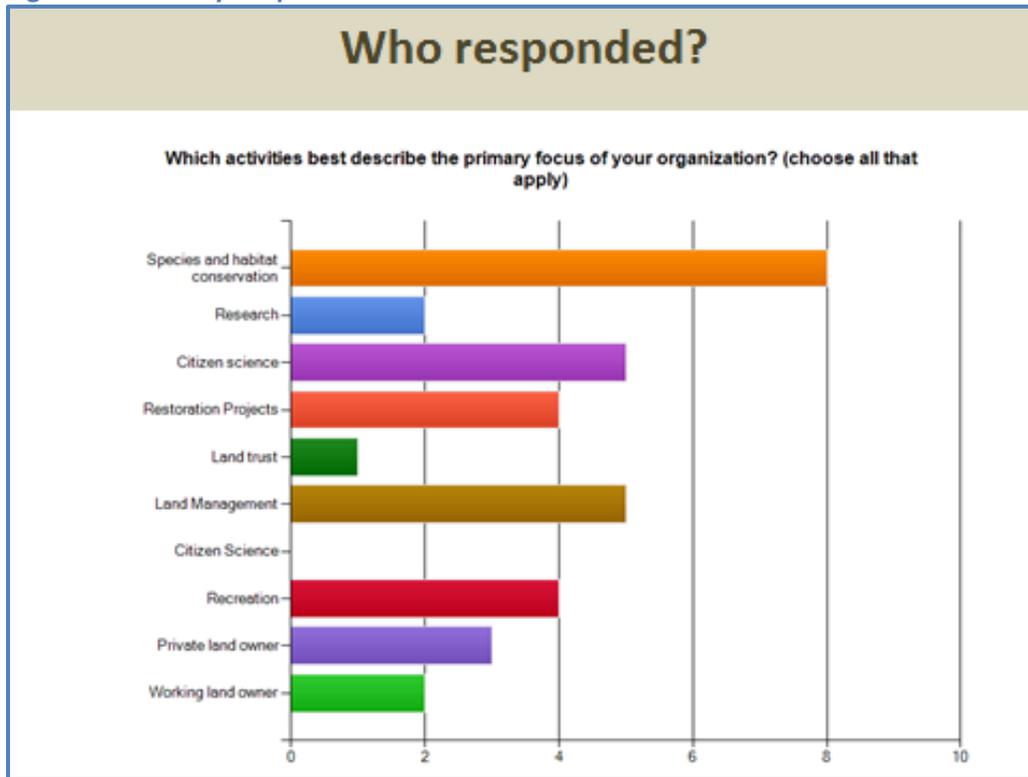
Early in the process we reviewed existing lists from within WDFW to identify individuals, tribes and organizations potentially interested in conservation issues or having specialized expertise or knowledge to contribute. An introductory email was sent to approximately 250 individuals and organizations, announcing the SWAP Update and our goal of developing a list of people interested in being involved in or kept informed of the process for updating the plan. We provided a brief overview of the purpose and intent of the SWAP Revision.

D.1.3 Survey to determine how the SWAP could add value to conservation actions of other organizations

We developed a survey, located near the end of this appendix, to find out generally how the State Wildlife Action Plan could add value to other organizations, and identify specific opportunities to contribute to shared conservation goals or strategies. The survey asked respondents to identify the top priority initiatives or objectives related to habitat or species conservation in a three to five year timeline, so that WDFW could assess how the agency, and specifically the SWAP, could contribute towards those objectives. We also provided a list of options for respondents to indicate how WDFW could assist in furthering shared goals related to species and habitat conservation. Finally, we included an open ended question specifically asking for ideas on how the SWAP itself could add value to their respective conservation efforts.

While the number of those who responded was relatively low (approximately 20), respondents represented a diverse group of interests and organizations, and the results were informative from that perspective. The following figures summarize the diversity of those who responded.

Figure D-1: Survey Respondents



Sample responses to “How the SWAP could add value to your work”

- Promote on the ground actions to conserve habitat, and access to habitat, especially given threat of climate change.
- Incentive for private landowners; facilitate private incentives for species recovery.
- Serve as a road map for private landowners to help them coordinate incentive based habitat plans with appropriate agencies and tribes.
- Be responsive to needs of agricultural community.
- Provide grant opportunities for land protection and public education projects.
- Promote citizen science at every age level (databases and field experts).
- Communicate to the public about species conservation and climate change
- Integrated/collaborative planning.
- Provide predictability about natural resources management issues; identify management actions that could become Army conservation projects.
- Incorporate priorities set by Pacific Coast Joint Venture Scientists.
- Help to set priorities for partners, and inform updates of national bird plans.

While the resources available for the SWAP Update and the focus of our revision did not allow us to address all the comments, the exercise provided good feedback to the agency and emphasized the importance of using a full conservation toolbox when considering appropriate actions to improve status of SGCN or Ecological Systems of Concern (ESOC), including technical assistance, transparent and clear communication, incentives for private landowners, increased education and others. These conservation tools can be as important in some cases as research or survey and monitoring activities.

The feedback from the survey as well as other comments received through the website and at SWAP presentations encouraged us to post information on SGCN early in our review to ensure that to the extent possible, experts had ample opportunity to add any appropriate information. In identifying stressors and actions (in SGCN and ESOC fact sheets), we also identified potential partners and included a full range of conservation tools.

D.1.4 Presentations and briefings to key conservation partners

Throughout the SWAP Revision process, the SWAP Coordinator provided briefings and updates to both small and large groups. The purpose was generally to outline the update process, share products as they were available, and gather feedback. We held briefings with each of the following organizations:

- WDNR Natural Heritage Program staff
- Pacific Coast Joint Ventures quarterly meeting
- USFWS staff from Region 1
- Audubon Washington & Black Hills Audubon
- USFWS Surrogate species program lead - identifying possible synergies
- USFS Region 6 TRACs program (purpose to identify possible synergies)
- Cascadia Partner Forum
- North Pacific Landscape Conservation Cooperative Steering Committee and staff
- Northwest Climate Science Center staff

D.1.5 In-person workshops and webinars

We scheduled three in-person workshops around the state and one webinar, and advertised these on our website and by email to interested persons. We timed the workshops to coincide with the release of the draft SGCN list on our website, and the availability of fact sheets for most of the species. The one to two-page fact sheets describe habitat, conservation status and need, stressors and actions (see Appendix A for updated versions of these fact sheets). The focus of the workshops was to provide an overview of all the elements of the update, but to focus particularly on the availability of the SGCN data on the web and encourage review of these draft products.

D.1.6 Targeted Outreach

After the draft SWAP was released for public review, we targeted outreach to key stakeholders that we wanted to be sure had an opportunity to provide comment. We offered webinars and in-person briefings to introduce the SWAP and tools that might be of interest. We reached out specifically to working landowner associations and tribes during August of 2015 to ensure they were aware of the public review draft of the SWAP and specific content that might be of interest to them. We were in phone contact with tribal representatives and sent announcements to tribal biologists through the Bureau of Indian Affairs as well as our own direct email lists.

Comments and responses to the Public Review Draft

We received 21 comments via email from external reviewers. Most of these comments were advocating that additional species be included as SGCN. A handful of other comments addressed specific issues in the SWAP or recommended clarifications. WDFW prepared edits in the SWAP itself in response to many of the comments and will prepare a full summary of comments and responses to post on the SWAP website.

D.2 References Section

D.2.1 Wildlife Diversity Advisory Council

Wildlife Diversity is a term commonly used to describe wildlife species that are not traditionally managed for harvest. Also known as "nongame", these species make up the majority of wildlife. The Wildlife Diversity Advisory Council (WDAC) was created to advise the Department on both keeping common species common and recovering listed wildlife species. The council also recommends approaches on how to develop and maintain the social, political, and resource support necessary to achieve conservation of wildlife diversity species in Washington.

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Wildlife Diversity Advisory Council (WDAC) is to advise the Department of Fish and Wildlife on matters pertaining to Wildlife Diversity (nongame species and habitat). At the Department's request, WDAC may focus on present or emerging issues as they relate to wildlife diversity.

D.2.2 Goals and Objectives of the SWAP Outreach Plan (adopted in August, 2014)

Goal

The purpose of this plan is to outline a set of meaningful and cost-effective outreach activities regarding WDFW's efforts to revise the SWAP. Our goal is to design and conduct these activities in such a way as to provide sufficient opportunities for interested parties to contribute to the content of the plan and/or provide substantive comments on specific elements before submission to the USFWS in September, 2015.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES (benchmarks)

1. Identify appropriate audience
 - Develop address and contact lists.
2. Develop outreach materials as necessary, to include a web page, fact sheet, PowerPoint presentations, email alerts to interested parties and materials to support interactive workshops.
3. Conduct outreach activities necessary to accomplish goal, to include at least two in person workshops and one webinar during development of the plan, and at least two webinars to introduce the final draft plan.
 - In person one-on-one meetings and calls, and presentations at appropriate events and workshops will be conducted as resources allow.
4. Ensure that the SWAP Revision timeline allows ample time for interested parties to participate in the process.
 - Schedule outreach activities to gather meaningful feedback and input.
 - Provide appropriate time for public review and comment on draft SWAP.

TARGET DELIVERABLES

1. Outreach materials: webpage, one-pager
2. Targeted audience presentations: 2-4
3. Public workshops/webinars : 3-5

D.2.3 Survey Monkey

Used to collect feedback on how the SWAP could add value to conservation work by WDFW conservation partners and others

STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN

The purpose of this survey is to assess how the State Wildlife Action Plan could most effectively contribute to regional conservation needs and align with the priorities of organizations working on behalf of species and habitat conservation in Washington. We will use responses to help shape and prioritize key elements of the Plan. The SWAP is updated every 10 years and designed to be a blueprint to inform conservation planning within WDFW and also the broader conservation community in the State. Click this link (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/cwcs/>) for a one page overview.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to respond to this survey.

1. What is the name of your organization?

2. Your name and your position title?

3. What description best fits your organization?

- What description best fits your organization? Indian Tribe
- Non-governmental organization
- Coalition
- Public-private partnership
- State agency
- Local agency
- Federal agency

Other (please specify)

4. Which activities best describe the primary focus of your organization? (choose all that apply)

- Research

- Citizen science
- Restoration Projects
- Land trust
- Land Management
- Citizen Science
- Recreation
- Private land owner
- Working land owner

Other (please specify)

5. Please describe how the State Wildlife Action Plan could be value added to your organization. What would it need to do to support or enhance the work of your organization in a positive way?



6. Please indicate one to three priority initiatives or objectives of your organization (related to species or habitat conservation) in the next 3-5 year timeframe. Please be brief but specific enough so that we can assess how WDFW and the State Wildlife Action Plan might contribute to those objectives.



7. Please indicate which of the following are ways your organization either works with WDFW currently, or might in the future. Click all that apply.

- Please indicate which of the following are ways your organization either works with WDFW currently, or might in the future. Click all that apply. Share information on priorities for species and habitat conservation
- Use information in the State Wildlife Action Plan to develop joint projects on common priorities
- Collaborate on citizen science projects
- Collaborate on preparing outreach and education materials
- Provide public testimony or other support for State Wildlife Grants Program (e.g., attend the annual Teaming with Wildlife Fly-in Days)
- Contribute to landscape or regional conservation efforts (e.g. the Arid Lands Initiative)
- Provide specific expertise as needed to advance conservation objectives
- Other

8. What is your preferred way to comment or contribute to the development of the SWAP?

Track developments via web and comment when needed

- Periodic email updates
- 2-3 hour workshops to engage with staff and explore SWAP content
- Webinars to introduce elements of the SWAP and address questions
- WDFW presentations at events or meetings of my organizations

Other (please specify)

9. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us?

Thank you for taking our survey!