



Wildlife Advisory Committee

Friday, July 10, 2020
9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

LOCATION

**Zoom Meeting
(Online Meeting Only)**

Whatcom County PDS is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Wildlife Advisory Committee
Time: Jul 10, 2020 09:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/555770174?pwd=VVZwMG50Y3BMWEJOdjhQeGliMHUxdz09>

Meeting ID: 555 770 174
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Meeting ID: 555 770 174
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AGENDA

1. Welcome, public comments, announcements & agenda review
2. Determination of a quorum and review of meeting minutes (June 2020)
3. Transition of Chair
4. Species of Local Importance –
 - a. Review task assignments
 - i. Amphibians – Stephan
 - ii. Bats – Greg
 - iii. Large Mammals – Robert
 - iv. Small Mammals – Chris
 - v. Fish and other freshwater aquatics – Joel
 - vi. Invertebrates - Shannon and Vikki
 - vii. Marine Mammals - Greg
 - viii. Raptors -?
 - ix. Waterfowl, Waterbirds, Gallinaceous birds - ?
 - x. Passerines and other smaller birds (hummingbirds, etc.) - ?
 - xi. Marine Aquatics - ?
 - xii. Plants - ?
5. U of W student presentation of Habitat Corridor Mapping Project
6. PDR program mapping – Becky Snijder van Wissenkerke
7. Whatcom County Ecosystem Conservation Plan or Program –
 - a. Develop working group for plan review
8. New Business/Old Business
9. Adjourn (5 minutes)

Staff contact at Whatcom Planning and Development Services

Amy Dearborn, (360) 778-5909, adearbor@co.whatcom.wa.us

Attachments (provided with this email and/or provided at the meeting)

- Draft meeting minutes (June 12, 2020)
- Revised Draft 2020 Work Plan

Wildlife Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary

Friday, July 10, 2020

Start time: 9:00 A.M.

Whatcom County Planning and Development Services

Northwest Annex Portable Conference Room

5280 Northwest Drive

Bellingham, WA



QUORUM	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Members Present		Public Present
Frank Bob	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Analiese Burns
Greg Green	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Alex Jeffers
Robert Waddell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ana Ledgerwood
Joel Ingram		Jeremiah Johnny
Vikki Jackson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Chris Elder
Chris Kazimer		Barry Wenger
Stephen Nyman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dave Wallin
Shannon Crossen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Trevor Delgado		Staff Present
		Amy Dearborn
		Erin Page
		Kelly Chamberlain
		Becky Snijder van Wissenkerke

Chair Greg Green called the meeting to order at approximately 9:06 am.

1. Greg opened the meeting to public comments
 - a. Barry Wenger noted the Rose Foundation is receiving funds from the CDC to support Orca research with Friends of the San Juans, he asks if anyone knows of any Orca researchers to pass along their contact information so they may be included
 - b. Greg announced he will be stepping down as chair sometime this summer but hopes to remain on the committee
2. Review Past Meeting Minutes
 - a. Greg moved to approve meeting minutes from February and March, seconded by Vikki.
3. UW Certificate Program Guest
 - a. Ana Ledgerwood discussed her UW Certificate Program research into Wildlife Crossing sites, sponsored by Chris Elder and WSDOT
 - b. The research team compiled collision and carcass removal data to identify potential crossing sites and is hoping to share their presentation/report with the Committee
 - i. Amy invited them to present at the next Committee meeting in July
 - c. Analiese noted she was invited to a Wildlife Camera installation in Bellingham and is interested in the potential interactions of this research with City of Bellingham

4. PDR Program
 - a. Becky Snijder van Wissenkerke detailed the Purchase of Development Rights Program – an effort to purchase conservation easements in order to protect the lands from development
 - b. The program has historically focused on protecting farm/agricultural land and would like to expand their criteria to include wildlife/ecosystem protections – Becky is requesting recommendations from the Committee on ways to integrate these areas into the program.
 - i. Erin asked if the PDR program is needing a definition of “wildlife corridors” to include in their criteria
5. Revised Work Plan Review
 - a. Greg noted that adding a fourth item to the Species of Local Importance list is a priority for the Committee. (See Revised Draft 2020 Work Plan)
6. Amphibian Recommendations – Stephen Nyman
 - a. Stephen noted that he included the Western Toad, Coastal Tailed Frog, and Northern Rubber Boa in his evaluations
 - i. Western Toad
 1. No outside protections, threatened by movement during vulnerable stages
 - ii. Coastal Tailed Frog
 1. Often threatened by development near streams, sensitive to raised temperatures or loss of buffers/cover
 - iii. Northern Rubber Boa
 1. Not much information available, unusually distributed, may be threatened by loss of hibernation areas
 - b. The Oregon Spotted Frog and Cascades Frog were considered, but not evaluated
 - i. Oregon Spotted Frog is state and federally protected
 - ii. Cascades Frog is not exhibiting state-wide or regional decline
 - c. See document “Recommendations for Amphibians and Reptiles”
 - d. Stephen and Greg discussed the “Recommendations for Amphibians and Reptiles” document as an appropriate template for moving forward with creation of the Species of Local Importance List
 - e. Amy noted that there are multiple categories that are unaddressed that need to be assigned for research:
 - i. Birds, Plants, Marine, Invertebrates
 - ii. Shannon volunteered to be responsible for Invertebrates
7. Ecosystem Conservation Plan
 - a. Greg noted that finalizing the Ecosystem Conservation Plan is part of the 2020 work plan
 - b. Chris discussed existing GIS reports for this plan, noting that the bulk of the remaining work may be organization and a refreshing of the conditions assessments and recommendations
8. Agenda Review
 - a. Dave Wallin brought up work being done by a grad student at WWU regarding review of the Nooksack basin – offered to connect her with the committee in case her research is helpful
 - b. Chris noted that the work plan notes for the Conservation Plan are wide and could be slimmed down to focus the efforts
 - i. Amy agreed and specified that points 1 and 2 on the work plan are the Committee priority
 - ii. Chris suggested small work groups to make progress on research etc. between meetings
 1. Shannon interested in work groups

- c. Analiese mentioned that the work plan section for Habitats of Local Importance does not include many terrestrial habitats
 - i. Shannon asked if there has been a systematic review of the habitats listed, Greg confirmed there has not been
 - ii. Analiese recommended editing the drafted list and avoiding working on list items that are protected at other levels (state or federal)
 - iii. Shannon recommended reference Whatcom County Code as a guide for selecting the list items, she noted that Code does not disqualify list items that are covered by state or federal levels
 - iv. Shannon and Steve discussed if specifying local habitats to specific iterations/locations will limit management recommendations too much for unknown habitats
 - v. Amy noted that County Code specifies that species protected at a state level are to be also regulated at county level
 - 1. Analiese advocated for tailoring species protection locally
- d. **Action Item:** Greg will prepare assignments for Species List work groups/research

Greg moved to adjourn at 10:29, seconded by Shannon

Revised Draft 2020 Work Plan

1. Review Critical Areas Ordinance for the following considerations:
 - a. Submit Species & Habitats of Local Importance List to County Council
 - i. Species
 1. Rubber Boa
 2. Western Toad
 3. Coastal Tailed Frog
 4. ?
 - ii. Habitats
 1. Riparian Corridors
 2. Snags
 3. Large Wetland Complexes
 4. Beaver Ponds
 5. Chuckanut Wildlife Corridor
 6. ?
 - b. Develop terrestrial wildlife habitat management recommendations for biodiversity areas and corridors (ecosystem permeability).
 - c. Re-evaluate types of permitted activities and exemptions within Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas.
2. Develop a Whatcom County Ecosystem Conservation Plan or Program to improve habitat connectivity, protect important remaining habitats, restore degraded or important habitat areas, and develop the programmatic support within Whatcom County government to enact the Plan. This Plan would build upon existing ecosystem reports including development of goals, objectives, strategies for implementation, and action items.
3. Ideas for future County-sponsored science programs and data collection efforts:
 - a. Expand/Develop plan for incorporating terrestrial wildlife crossing structures in new road designs or during culvert replacement and/or road improvements.
 - b. Explore expanding citizen science such as what the Marine Resource Committee currently does, for terrestrial ecosystems.
 - c. Greg Green working on Countywide bat survey in collaboration with WDFW
 - d. Support other science and data collection efforts through university, agency, and other partners
 - e. Develop county-internal science and data collection effort.