

WHATCOM COUNTY WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Date: January 26,2024

Location: Zoom and Northwest Annex Conference Room @ Whatcom County Planning and Development Services office at 5280 Northwest Dr, Bellingham, WA 98226

Start Time: 9:33 a.m.

Quorum: Yes X No _____

Members Present		Public Present
Anne Johnson	Y	Sophia Rice (Lummi)
Barry Wenger	Y	Emily Wirtz (Lummi)
Cris Gonzalez	N	
Erin Deinzer	Y	
Jennifer Plombon	Y	Staff Present
Karen Hardesty	N	Priscilla Drewry
Stephen Nyman	Y	Cliff Strong
Susan Kane-Ronning	Y	
Vikki Jackson	Y	
Kristi Park	Y	
Vacant		

I. Announcements, roll call and agenda.

Roll call was taken and a quorum was present. There were no proposed changes to the agenda.

Stephen announced that Cris Gonzalez resigned as an appointed member. She did not have time to continue due to work schedule conflicts.

Susan asked if we would still have a quorum if she were to leave the meeting.

Stephen started the meeting by apologizing for the process he took with addressing the letters. He stated that he should have spoken with Susan Kane-Ronning first. He realized it was insensitive and that was not at all his intent. Stephen stated that he will do better in his role as chair.

III. Open Public Comments and Committee Member Comments

There were no public comments.

IV. Discussion, deliberation, and decision-making

a) Chapter 10 Work Session

The Wildlife Advisory Committee discussed, reviewed, and brainstormed Chapter 10 policies for recommendation to the consultant for the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update.

Barry stated that the committee should use already vetted definitions as much as possible in updating Chapter 10 of the Comprehensive Plan. Barry also urged that the committee replace all soft language with mandatory language such as “shall” and “must”. Cliff Strong agreed.

Cliff said that many of terms are defined in County Code. He is in charge of updating the definition section. He also noted that many terms are outdated and need review.

Priscilla noted that our end product will be a memo to the consultants. Priscilla placed a working document draft memo on the screen.

Cliff stated that the review will split the goals and policies and supporting maps section from the explanatory text. Barry commented that an introduction providing an overall summary would be helpful.

Barry suggested that we add the term “fungi” along with “Plants” and “Animals”. The committee members appeared to be in general agreement.

Priscilla noted that she will take note of the memo recommendations made by the committee today to add to the working document of the draft memo and type them out at the end of the meeting.

Barry would like the memo to recommend that the Comprehensive Plan classify all streams and/or riparian areas as “wildlife corridors”. The group discussed his statement and potential problems with doing this. Priscilla noted that the County Council has a list of priorities and possibly that list should be referenced in the memo.

Cliff Strong strongly suggested thinking about things that are not in the Comprehensive Plan that need to be addressed.

Stephen and Priscilla asked for further comments by the end of the day on February 5th for our next committee meeting on February 9th (9:30 - 11:00 a.m).

b) Up listing the Wolverine Letter, Canada Lynx Recover Plan Letter

The committee next discussed the letters drafted by Susan Kane-Ronning regarding the federal proposals pertaining to Canada lynx and wolverine. Stephen stated that he believed the WAC should not be drafting and submitting letters on issues as a committee, except to the County Council. The WAC should be making recommendations to the County Council as tasked. The WAC can move things in front of County Council if the timeline allows and it is up to the County Council to decide if it wants to submit a letter. Members can otherwise sign these two letters individually (but not on behalf of the committee). Barry agreed. Barry commented that he will still list his committee membership by his signature as well as other relevant background

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experience. Susan stated that her letters are as comprehensive as they can be given limited time constraints. She asked that those members wanting to sign on as individuals email her by Sunday, January 28th.

VI. **Future Agenda Topics**

- Memo to Consultant

VII. **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:59 am.