
Summary

Meeting dates: February 8-9, 2013, Commission Meeting

Agenda item #7 : Puget Sound Watershed Characterization Project

Presenter(s): George Wilhere, Research Scientist, Habitat Program (lead)
Timothy Quinn, Chief Scientist, Habitat Program

Background summary:

Conversion of native habitats to residential development is one of the greatest threats to Washington's fish and wildlife. This threat can be greatly reduced through smart land use planning by local governments. WDFW provides technical assistance to local governments to help them minimize the potential adverse impacts of future growth.

The Puget Sound Watershed Characterization Project is a set of spatially-explicit assessments that estimate the relative value of places for the conservation of water and habitat resources. It is a coarse-scale decision-support tool that should lead to better decisions in regional, county, and watershed-based land use planning. The Department of Ecology has completed assessments for water flow and water quality. WDFW has completed assessments for terrestrial habitats, freshwater lotic habitats, and marine shoreline habitats. Much of WDFW's work was funded through a grant from USEPA.

In the next stage of the Watershed Characterization Project, Ecology and WDFW are collaborating on a technical assistance team that will help local governments utilize the assessments and guide them through planning processes that more effectively addresses the conservation of multiple resources at multiple spatial scales. WDFW's participation on the technical assistance team is funded over the next year through a new grant from USEPA.

Policy issue(s) you are bringing to the Commission for consideration:

N/A

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

The main utilization of watershed characterization occurs through land use planning conducted by local governments. Local land use planning typically entails an intensive public process involving all major stakeholders and interested citizens.

Action requested:

N/A

Draft motion language:

N/A

Justification for Commission action:

N/A

Communications Plan:

N/A
