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2 **Washington Community Forestry Council Meeting**  
3 **February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022**  
4 **Conference Call- Zoom**  
5

6 **Members Attending:** Ben Thompson, Semra Riddle, Cindy Deffe, Juli Hartwig, Kirstin Lints, David Miller,  
7 Dave Bayard, Kathleen Wolf,

8 **Members Absent:** Gary Stamper, Angel Spell, John Bornsworth, Jessi Bloom, Margaret Brost, Ian Gray

9 **Guests:** Jess Lloyd, Andy Tate, Jeremy Porter, Terra Rentz, Jess Stone, Tim Kohlhauff, Lynn Suksdorf,  
10 Garth Davis

11 **Meeting Convened:** 10:37 a.m.

12 **Welcome:** Call to order. Roll was taken. Chair welcomed members and guests. Review and approved  
13 agenda and last meetings minutes.

14 **Minutes Approved:** Motion to approve agenda. Cindy moved and Kirsten seconded motion. Unanimous  
15 approval. Motion to approve minutes from Nov. 2nd, 2021. Cindy moved and Juli seconded motion.  
16 Unanimous approval.

17 **Q&A for program update:**

18 Ben spoke about the Arbor Day Foundation Partners in Community Forestry Conference in November.

19 Bill 1216, 2.8 million. Bill 1168 wildfire, fuels reduction. KWEA Builds off success of these two bills.  
20 Initiative internal to DNR to prevent forest land degradation, planting. Bills 1895 5693(?) Debated by  
21 both houses. Ben believes this to be both public and private lands. All hands, all lands. We recognize  
22 there is inequal distribution of tree canopies, and to provide a tree canopy analyses for everyone, and to  
23 provide resources for communities to strategies improving this.

24 **Briefing on Keep Washington Evergreen Act (HB 1895, SB 5633):**

25 Discussed past bills 1216 and 1168 for service forestry and wildfire fighting and the current bill in the  
26 house is 1895 which building on the success of the previous bills that passed. 1895 (Keep Washington  
27 Evergreen) could apply to both public and private lands. The bill recognized the inequitable distribution  
28 of tree canopy cover in urban communities across the state and would require the program to conduct  
29 tree canopy analyses for all communities across the state. Terra informed the council that the bill did  
30 not make it through this session, but this is common for new initiatives that are introduced in a short  
31 legislative session. The bill was not rejected, but did not move forward in either house, and no  
32 movement to amend at this time.

1 The council discussed the role of DNR in advancing environmental justice and equitable distribution of  
2 tree canopy. The council discussed that it would not be as simple as planting more trees in low canopy  
3 areas and emphasized the importance of capacity building for ongoing tree stewardship, building trust  
4 between local organizations and relationship building,

5 The council discussed training opportunities for the upcoming legislative session and that the  
6 relationship building process could help build a network to help advocate for the legislation when it is  
7 introduced again.

#### 8 **Briefing on Federal legislation and budgeting**

9 Terra talked about federal updates, keeping in mind that they are still evolving. The federal cycle is on a  
10 1 year rotation from October through September of the following year. In the resolution there were  
11 some adjustments to increase the funding for the state private lands and urban forestry programs. They  
12 are still trying to figure out how the increase in funding will be spread across the different programs.

13 The second opportunity is that the big infrastructure bill passed. There were two large components of  
14 the bill that effect our scope of work. Impact of fire, community fuels reduction, and wildfire resilience –  
15 the money is targeted at western states because of fire impacts. Large initiatives by secretary of  
16 agriculture that is trying to target specific areas, across state boundaries, to reduce wildfire risk. The  
17 other part of the bill is an increase in discretionary funding for state and private forestry, a few million  
18 more dollars. The Forest Service is working with various leadership teams and each state can determine  
19 how they want the funding to be distributed. Because they will be getting such a large increase in  
20 funding for wildfire, they can utilize the additional funding for other opportunities – tree and seedling  
21 infrastructure, forest stewardship, forest health, and urban and community forestry. Are there needs  
22 that aren't going to be met by 1216 that the UCF program should prioritize? That information can be  
23 used to request additional funding and the council can provide feedback on the direction the UCF  
24 program can go with new investment.

25 Kathy asked – How might the council help DNR figure out investment priorities? A focus group or a  
26 council special committee? Ben suggested they can start this conversation today when they discuss the  
27 2022 work plan.

28 Kathy mentioned that there are very powerful forces that want to get wildfire funding – like utility  
29 companies that want to rebuild the same type of infrastructure. Terra mentioned that WA state is  
30 uniquely set up to strategically allocate funding because they have already invested in strategic planning  
31 efforts and know where to prioritize new funding. She also mentioned the State Forester's unique  
32 position.

#### 33 **5 Minute Break for council**

#### 34 **Council Elections**

35 Nominations for Chair Semra Riddle - David moved for chair, Juli seconded the motion: Votes tallied:  
36 Cindy, Juli, Kirsten, Dave Miller, Semra, Dave B., Ben, Kathy. 8

37 Nominations for Chair John Bornsworth - No votes tallied.

1 Nominations for Vice Chair John Bornsworth – Dave B moved for vice chair, Cindy seconded the motion:  
2 Votes tallied: Kirsten, Dave Miller, Cindy, Dave B., Ben, Semra, Kathleen, Juli. 8

3 Nominations for Vice Chair Margaret Brost - No votes tallied.

#### 4 **Amendments to Articles of Association**

5 Ben provided background on amending the articles of association, providing information to support  
6 amending the articles at a future meeting in 2022. Ben noted that the rules were written in the context  
7 of the meetings being in person and proposed an amendment that they can be amended at any  
8 scheduled meeting with a 2/3 majority vote, which would allow the council to update the articles at any  
9 of the annual meetings and don't have to follow strictly to the calendar.

10 Semra called for change to articles to be allowed at any scheduled meeting. 6 l's. No nays or  
11 objections. Dave Bayard moved amendment to the proposed changes, and David Miller seconded.  
12 Unanimous vote in support of changes. Amendment approved. Going forward changes to the articles  
13 will provide 2/3 vote of seated council members and changes can be proposed during any of the  
14 scheduled meetings.

#### 15 **Break for council (lunch)**

#### 16 **Work Session – 2022 Work Plan**

17 Started by revisiting 2021 work plan; equity, Articles of Association, review career pathways, interagency  
18 agreements, public engagement and networking, ECA opportunities.

19 Ben spoke about how the equity subcommittee has been instrumental for reviewing language for new  
20 grant proposals. Yakima and Longview are areas of most need of equity projects. Equity grants are  
21 reaching their intended goals this year will be telling how well the program is achieving this.

#### 22 **2022 Work Plan (Draft)**

- 23 ● **Equity:**
  - 24 ○ Equity Guiding Principles
  - 25 ○ Equity Subcommittee
    - 26 ▪ Strengthen approach to Equity through intentional actions
      - 27 ● Land Acknowledgement
      - 28 ● Equity Moment
      - 29 ● Maintain and improve advisory role/dialogue to Commissioner
        - 30 ○ expand equity across DNR with UCF an example
        - 31 ○ Invite Commissioner to future meeting (June 1st)
    - 32 ○ Encourage more coordinated effort around equity throughout DNR - currently engaging  
33 consultant
      - 34 ▪ Council Letter? Support this first step, promote equity at the forefront - suggest  
35 guiding principles, etc. UCF can lead. What is the equity “North Star” or goal?  
36 Why is addressing equity important to DNR?
    - 37 ○ Equity Grant feedback and support
      - 38 ▪ Reporting to Council
  - 39 ● **Articles of Association review: (UCF staff first pass)**

- 1                   ▪ Cont. discussion on membership structure
- 2                   ▪ Equity Subcommittee review
- 3     ● **Career Pathways:**
- 4         ○ Support DNR Career Pathways position
- 5     ● **Public Engagement and Networking:**
- 6         ○ Advocacy/education/demystify of varied roles, programs, scope of work within DNR and
- 7             Urban Forestry
- 8             ▪ Outreach and education materials on how all the various areas of DNR/UCF
- 9             come together as a whole
- 10         ○ Hot topics:
- 11             ▪ Climate
- 12             ▪ Mental Health
- 13             ▪ Barriers analysis to having large beneficial trees (utilities, transportation, etc.)
- 14                 ● DNR Wildfire and Utilities Task Force opportunity (Terra Rentz)
- 15     ● **Legislative Advocacy Task Force?**
- 16         ○ Foundation for next Leg Session
- 17         ○ One sheets for advocacy on specific Bills
- 18         ○ Monitor important State and Federal Bills
- 19     ● **Infrastructure Bill Funding Impacts/Potential**
- 20         ○ Provide recommendations on use for Urban and Community Forestry Program to
- 21             influence funding decisions
- 22         ○ Conflict on space for utilities and trees, etc.
- 23     ● **Strategic Growth Opportunities for future funding**
- 24         ○ Redistribution in Federal and State funding
- 25         ○ Keep Washington Evergreen Bill 2023 opportunities

26 Looking Forward

- 27     ● **Evergreen Communities Designation Application/Reapplication process improvement**
- 28         ○ Interest in making more meaningful process
- 29         ○ Designation may not be ready for action until Dec 2023
- 30             ▪ Possible pilot Dec 2022...
- 31         ○ Consistent with Tree City timeline
- 32         ○ Develop content and criteria for the designation.

34 Discussion about the work plan continued. Kathy highlighted the importance of thinking about the  
 35 audience when working towards Career pathways work. How do we best support existing groups and  
 36 organizations that are already involved in this work? Council may need to do some soul searching on  
 37 who we can connect with and doing some pre-planning for who they can connect with moving forward.  
 38 The need for communications – outreach and education materials on how all areas of DNR/UCF come  
 39 together, the development of a hand out that reveals the extent of what UCF is.

40 Juli suggested some need for prioritization of work goals for 2022.

41 As DNR UCF program changes, UCF can incorporate feedback from the council on how we deliver  
 42 services. Suggested incorporating that discussion into program update each meeting or having a  
 43 designated subcommittee.

1 Kathy highlighted the importance of setting meaningful criteria for Evergreen Communities Designation.  
2 Relates to thoughts on community networking and hot topics, mostly on climate adaptation and  
3 resilience, also public and mental health.

4 Julie brought up the question of land use and increasing demand for land in urban areas and competing  
5 interests with things like utilities and charging stations and the need to be ready to think creatively and  
6 collaborate with different interests and conflict of space for trees.

7 Working with DNR staff on where infrastructure and tree planting meet.

8 Kathy mentioned barriers to having trees in relation to infrastructure, and Seattle has a section of their  
9 management plan around barriers. Semra mentioned tracking tree canopy coverage and ways to  
10 interface with the legislative body. Importance of where communities are at in terms of tree canopy  
11 cover and way to track tree loss and canopy growth.

## 12 **Recruitment for Grant Review and Interview Panels**

13 Ben requested assistance with hiring panels and to review the grants to determine what gets funded.  
14 Council could be particularly valuable in the grant review process. Good opportunity to get a pulse of  
15 where UCF is at across the state and internal processes within the state. Ben requested support of two  
16 council members, one for each grant review panel. Semra and Kathy volunteered to participate in the  
17 grant review process. Kathy suggested having a quick briefing session on goals of the grant and how to  
18 review and score applications. Cindy expressed interest in helping with the interview panels.

## 19 **Adjourn: 2:02 PM**

20 **Next Meeting:** April 12, 2022 at 10:30-2:00pm (virtual meeting).

## 21 **Zoom meeting chat:**

22 10:49:14 From Kathleen Wolf to Everyone:

23 Alliance for Community Trees also holds meeting. US Forest Service usually hosts some stuff.

24 10:52:02 From Kathleen Wolf to Everyone:

25 Do these new bills apply to public or private lands, or both?

26 10:53:25 From Kathleen Wolf to Everyone:

27 I have met DNR folks that work on private lands stewardship, so maybe this boosts that type of  
28 programming?

29 10:55:34 From Kathleen Wolf to Everyone:

30 The nuance of legislative sausage-making! Not moving beyond committee vs being voted down

31 10:58:35 From Terra Rentz (she/her) to Everyone:

32 So true Kathy! It's crazy how much those subtle differences matter for a piece of legislation.

1 11:04:43 From Ben Thompson - WA DNR to Everyone:

2 That is a great idea Terra!

3 11:15:17 From Kathleen Wolf to Everyone:

4 Terra, this is a lot to absorb!! How might the council help you/DNR figure out investment  
5 priorities? Some sort of focus group? A council special committee?

6 11:18:07 From Semra Riddle to Everyone:

7 Great thinking Kathy! I'll make note for our Workplan conversation this afternoon.

8 11:36:28 From Kathleen Wolf to Everyone:

9 Semra, thanks so much for taking on this leadership for another year! So appreciate your calm  
10 leadership, and continued direction in the space of new legislation. And liking your kitty co-worker.

11 11:50:36 From Cindy Deffe to Everyone:

12 Are we eliminating the any regularly scheduled and?

13 13:13:45 From Ben Thompson - WA DNR to Everyone:

14 Oh he is! Luis Prado

15 13:13:56 From Ben Thompson - WA DNR to Everyone:

16 Luis is amazing.

17 13:34:02 From Juli Hartwig WSDOT to Everyone:

18 "Resilience"

19 13:37:16 From Cindy Deffe to Everyone:

20 Would you send the 2022 workplan draft out to the committee after the meeting is over?

21 13:41:29 From Terra Rentz (she/her) to Everyone:

22 DNR is forming a new Wildfire and Utilities Task Force - if this is an area the group is interested  
23 in engaging, we can reach out to the lead of that effort for more information.

24 13:42:00 From Kathleen Wolf to Everyone:

25 Very good comments, Juli! I've been engaging with big tree advocates in Seattle. They are SO  
26 concerned about 1) flagrant removal of large trees (due to utility installation for new and current  
27 development) and 2) replanting that don't provide adequate growth space for big trees, nor selection of  
28 species that reach large stature.

29 13:51:05 From Tim Kohlhauff to Everyone:

30 As a potential new member, I would really benefit from a Legislation 101 briefing

1 13:51:28 From Kathleen Wolf to Everyone:

2 One sheet? What size font? You sound like a student being asked to write a paper :-]

3 13:52:20 From Juli Hartwig WSDOT to Everyone:

4 The more the merrier...remember it's a party!

5