

**Skagit County Conservation Futures Advisory Committee (CFAC)
Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2009**

Members in Attendance:

Scott DeGraw
Dave Hedlin
Mike Hulbert
Carolyn Kelly
Keith Wiggers
Andrea Xaver

Members Not in Attendance:

Alan Merritt

Others in Attendance:

Kendra Smith
Zoe Parsons, FLP

Call Meeting to Order: The meeting was called to order at 12:05 pm by Chair Carolyn Kelly.

Agenda

The Conservation Futures Advisory Committee (CFAC) reviewed and approved the agenda.

Committee Member Updates/Miscellaneous

Andrea Xaver raised the Wetland Mitigation Bank discussion believing it is outrageous to touch wetlands or farmland. It was mentioned that there is one loophole in the process in that Ecology can decide if a proposal has outstanding merit. There are two workshops and two hearings scheduled for Wednesday, April 15.

Carolyn Kelly announced Kendra Smith is losing her staff assistant and that Cora Amburn-Lijek with the Skagit Conservation District will help in the interim. Dave Hedlin once again requested a letter be drafted articulating to the Commissioners the importance of the Farmland Legacy Program and its need to be fully staffed. Keith Wiggers asked whether or not a meeting should be requested with the Commissioners since there are applications to protect more than 1,000 acres in just the first quarter of 2009 with two easements closing and eleven pending. Carolyn will draft a letter and get it to the Commissioners by Thursday, April 16.

Financials

The county was unable to provide March financials due to budget revisions so they will be reviewed in May. Kendra Smith pointed out there are no substantial changes, however she is reviewing all expenses in order to make budget cuts. She is recommending eliminating advertising and reducing the allotment for office supplies. It was mentioned one cost-saving measure could be moving the office to space within Planning. The Committee stated they wanted the office to stay in its current location so the FLP is not disrupted when so many applications and grants are in process. They felt the small savings are overshadowed by the disruption to the program.

Minutes

The March minutes were reviewed. Mike Hulbert moved to approve them; Scott seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved.

Executive Session

Because eleven owners have conservation easement applications pending, the majority of the April meeting was spent reviewing the applications and possible funding sources.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:02 pm.

MARCH ACTION ITEMS:

1. Andrea to bring zoning maps to April meeting to use in USDA flood plain funding discussion.
2. Carolyn to explore options for using USDA money for flood plain acquisitions.
3. CFAC members will forward to Zoe Parsons contacts who might donate their time to help develop signage and other marketing materials such as bumper stickers, new logo, etc.
4. CFAC members to identify La Conner properties appropriate for a sign recognizing Bob Helton.
5. Dave Hedlin to contact Mr. Helton to see if he is open to having his recognition at the Experiment Station.
6. Kendra Smith will invite Planning to the April CFAC meeting to discuss language for easement amendments, especially regarding impervious surfaces.
7. Kendra to draft fee schedule for amendments to easements.

8. Zoe to ask the WADOT for Route 9 traffic flow volumes.
9. Zoe to report on SPF contract funds remaining for working on marketing ideas.
10. Dave Hedlin, John Roozen, and Kendra Smith to meet regarding the Peterson property.

APRIL ACTION ITEM:

1. Carolyn to draft a letter to the County Commissioners stressing the importance of conservation easements to the economics of the county and the need for more staffing to manage the properties waiting for funding.