

Checkerboard Partnership Monthly Meeting (4/26/2022)

Attendees: Gary Berndt, Larry Leach, Mitch Long, Jim Becker, Liz Thomas, Vic Monahan, Katie Pofahl, Cathy Cook, Tom Krippaehne, Nicky Pasi, Patty O'Hearn, Tonya Morrey, Melissa Speeg, Jay McGowen, Marthy Wyckoff, Justin Allegro, Vince Pruis, Jane Kiker, Pam Hawk, Nancy Lillquist, Kathy Young, Peter Dykstra, Judy Hallisey

Updates

- TNC's Government Relations and Philanthropy Team Update
 - Team will be working on scoping private funding opportunities
 - Scoping includes: purpose and uses of funds, structure and governance, total money needed, available private sources, feasibility
- LWCF and Forest Legacy Funding
 - Kittitas Working Forest/Cabin Creek Area: awarded \$5.7 million of Forest Legacy funding to go to DNR
 - This amount is our full request
 - Ranked 11 in nation
 - Will go to county trust land status
 - Taneum: phase 1 received \$6.5 million of Land and Water Conservation Fund
 - ranked 2 nationally
 - Our total request was \$14.5 million, so the current funding will be put towards "Phase 1"
 - "Phase 2" (\$8 million needed, a little under 8,000 acres) not fully funded, possibility to get funding through congressional earmark process
 - Look out for letter of support for Phase 2
 - Will be submitted in FY24 LWCF
 - funding official by end of the year
 - Both areas must be appraised first
- Letter/E-mail of Support for DNR Trailhead
 - Ryan Shriner with DNR asked for support for funding request of recreation project in Teanaway Community Forest
 - Thank you Patty for writing support letter
- Question
 - Should we all be on the same letter? Please let us know if we should be sending them out ourselves
 - Default is to have everyone's name on letter after giving everyone a chance to review
 - Public service reps will not be automatically included and must get proper approval first
 - Will work on drafting policies for outreach with letters, create a process/menu of ways to respond

Community Forest Discussion

- DNR Meeting/KCT Board Discussion

- Mitch met with Angus Brodie, deputy director
- DNR needs:
 - support to own + fund community forest
 - how do we get funding thru DNR operations budget instead of asking for funding yearly
 - Ensure we continue to find partnership with county and state level representatives
- Received a letter from DNR stating their interest in working with KTC and developing a partnership
- State agency needs to be partnered with community group to receive RCO funding
- Decision made to move forward with signing RCO agreement
- KCT will make a response letter
- Will be discussing what partnership will look like
- Community Forest Government Relations Strategy – Justin Allegro with TNC
 - Thankful for letters of support, great tools for advocacy
 - Assessment of conditions required to receive public funding
 - Current goal: develop a roadmap/strategy for govt relations
 - Experience in legislature to give direct funding for O&M, not easiest
 - Building off timeline, must find dollar/acre amount of community forest
 - Submit thru board of natural resources for next legislative session, request this funding be included in the budget
 - Need \$3.4-3.5 million for next biennium
 - Identify legislative targets who are on operating budget committees and start performing education and advocacy with them
 - Get out in the field this summer with legislatures and perform bipartisan advocacy, why this fits into larger narrative that they care about
 - Work in this legislative district is important, but important to go outside district as well
 - Stakeholder component, list of supportive groups, share that it's a priority for them too
 - DNR must prioritize this during next legislative session
 - Short-term need: O&M campaign
- Overview and Discussion
 - When TCF established there was a loan from the school trust and that it will be repaid. Good opportunity for legislatures to pick into the landscape and see how things are going
 - Will come up with talking points and fact sheets about this to build into campaign for next legislative session
 - Questions/comments:
 - Local funding
 - County has conditions for moving forward: water issues and YBIP, addressing development needs, economic impact, pay in lieu of taxes. Needs advocacy. Build into campaign
 - Martha: a little bit red herring in the community, discussion of loans not needed
 - Larry: At point where TCF won't go away. Legislature aware of loan, challenge more with legislature than community. Matter of reminding them how huge of bipartisan support there was and the successes that have come.
 - Peter: YBIP and lands sub-committee is involved in TCF and O&M conversation since the beginning. Working on funding request for a

decade and not making needed progress. Don't try to reinvent the wheel. We haven't found strategy to get across to legislature. Enhance what we have done to deliberately answer question

- Nicky: impact of field visits important, must meet with G5 and YBIP to discuss messaging to avoid stepping on each other's messages. (important to do this w County leadership too)
 - YBIP contact for outreach: Peter Dykstra.
 - Meet before lobbying group does their Eastern WA field trip
- County supported Phase 1, but not entire acquisition.
 - Pull together small group to approach situation
 - Change meeting time so one of the board members can attend (partnership voted in favor)
- Mitch: important to meet with YBIP land committee to open county's perspective, would be good to do an economic impact analysis on YBIP efforts
- Gary: commissioners need to get something out of meetings too, perhaps we meet with them quarterly
- Larry: county struggling to provide services that are required, compounded by rec draw of area, trying to problem solve that issue with help of other interest groups. Must actively listen to county's struggles
- Jim Becker: Commissioner Wachsmith has stated he is now supportive of voting on REET 2. Could advocate to commissioners that they should put REET 2 on agenda and vote for it.
- Peter: what are impacts to other parties and users of the land that commissioners are concerned about? how does community forest solve those problems?

CWU Resource Analysis Opportunity

- Overview of Course and Anticipated Inventory and Analysis
 - 500 level graduate course in Cultural and Environmental Resource Management graduate program at CWU
 - Environmental and cultural resource inventory of proposed community forest
 - Steve Hackenberger: cultural resources, Megan Walsh: environmental management (professors)
 - Looking at past cultural resources
 - Once inventory analysis done, the values will be assessed. Ecosystem values, like carbon sequestration, etc.
 - Looking at values from other studies on similar areas, then apply to this area to understand ecosystem services
 - Similar study done by past committee in same area, anyone have access and can share it?
 - Developing a travel cost survey to see how much people value recreational opportunities in the area
 - Call for help from partnership to distribute survey
 - When will survey start? Developing Wednesday 4/27, then work with CPPC to launch it. Must be passed through Human Subject screening first
 - Study findings will be shared with public
 - Similar project done in Smith Rock, found climbers brought \$20-30 million a year

- Ask if people are willing to pay to help this area? Requires payment mechanism to get honest answers
- Entire economic value or recreational value?
 - Entire economic survey: how much are you willing to pay? Probably pre-select possible answers to get honest responses. Less precise.
 - Public perception could change from survey, i.e. having to pay to access lands
 - Could ask businesses too

Task Force Report Out

- Future Funding
 - Finding match for \$3 million RCO grant, \$800,000 required and a little over half acquired
 - Suncadia community enhancement fund could help with some of rest
 - Buyers in real estate transactions in Suncadia must put some money in this fund
 - Hopefully we can get a 6-digit grant (would be biggest grant they've done)
 - Will come back with a suggestion on amount to apply for after meeting with their board
 - Tom: 2 future topics of discussion:
 - are we taking advantage of transient lodging tax (VRBO)?
 - DNR carbon project approved by state. Why is it only happening on the west side? Can we tap into that in the future/bring project to our neck of the woods?
 - Does not have to be west side, but good for marketing
 - A lot of potential risk of loss in fire prone areas
- Outreach & Engagement
 - Completed presentations to upper county rotary, MTSGT board, WA Farm and Forest meeting
 - Started to pitch article series to local papers, getting out survey results
 - Melissa and Nicky will be on a panel at the NW Community Forest Forum!

Other Discussion

- Next meeting: In-person?
 - Hybrid worked alright
 - Have people closer together so Zoom people can hear better
 - Less people on computers to reserve bandwidth
- Next Steps and Action Items
 - Letter of support to senators for LWCF coming out soon
 - Outreach will draft policies/menu for sending out letters
 - Attach DNR letter to KTC in meeting notes
 - Outreach will start forming ideas on how to address REIT 2
 - Share TCF study
 - Working group for new meeting time that works for commissioners
 - Filling out the Suncadia grant for match