

01.22.2015

Regional Open Space Strategy

Executive Committee Meeting Summary

CENTRAL PUGET SOUND
REGIONAL OPEN SPACE STRATEGY
ROSS



Steve Whitney from the Bullitt Foundation facilitated this Executive Committee Meeting. Ron Sims (chair) was called to attend a Health Benefits Exchange Board meeting, a board, which he also chairs. Over thirty people joined this meeting in-person or remotely over the phone.

Regional Scale:

ROSS Communications Update

The ROSS project has been ramping up in all areas. Our work came out of the shadows, thanks to the work completed by the Communications Team over the past year, in collaboration with Resource Media and the National Park Service. When the Executive Committee last met in June 2014, a new website design was introduced by our consultants at Resource Media. This website houses all ROSS reports and publications, highlights the people and partners involved in this work, and is updated on a bi-weekly basis through the blog we started last year. The Executive Committee welcomed this new resource and is pleased to have a credible place to refer their colleagues and potential partners for more information on the ROSS and several WOSS projects.

The ROSS website can be found here: <http://www.openspacepugetsound.org>

For details on communications activities, contact Cat Silva (catsilva@uw.edu), Brendan McLaughlin (brendan@resource-media.org), and Gregory Heller (gregory@resource-media.org).

ROSS Team + Leadership Update

The ROSS team is currently in transition and we are welcoming new staff in 2015. Ginger Daniel worked on the ROSS Preliminary Comprehensive Strategy in 2012 and oversees the ROSS' open space services approach, regional task forces and communications work. She remains on contract through the end of March. In preparation for her departure, the ROSS welcomed Cat Silva to the team in mid-January. She will be taking on many of Ginger's responsibilities focused on regional initiatives, communications, as well as administration and organizational support.

Jeff Raker has led the ROSS team for the past three years, fostering this collaborative regional effort and acting as the glue between the diverse and disparate efforts of the ROSS. Jeff is expecting his first child at the beginning of March and attending to parenting duties during that month. He will continue to provide guidance on specific components of the project through June 2015 and remain as an adviser to the project going forward. Jeff expressed his deep gratitude for the opportunity to guide this work through the development of the Preliminary

Comprehensive Strategy, the Puyallup-White Watershed Strategy, initiating the Green-Duwamish Watershed Strategy, fostering efforts to craft a new communication platform on openspacepugetsound.org, and supporting ongoing effort to improve how we evaluate and recognize the essential services provided by our open space system. Jeff's position remains open until the best person to assume the senior leadership for this complex, regional project is secured. The Executive Committee is encouraged to recommend any potential candidates to fill this position.

In concert with these transitions, the ROSS team is growing to accommodate the ramping up of two Watershed Open Space Strategies. The new partnership between the ROSS and King County supports the hiring of a new lead planner and associate planner to facilitate the Green-Duwamish Watershed Strategy. The ROSS has interviewed candidates and has formally offered these positions to two individuals. An upcoming launch of a Snohomish Watershed Strategy allowed us to bring in Janet Lee as our new Associate Planner working in support of Abby Hook in WRIA 7. Janet A formal announcement will be made on the ROSS website to introduce our new team and highlight the great work completed by Jeff and Ginger over the past several years.

For more information on the leadership, staffing structure, and hiring, contact Jeffrey Raker (jraker@uw.edu) or Nancy Rottle (nrottle@uw.edu).

Ecosystem Services Committee + GIS Portal Prototype Update

For the past year, the Ecosystems Services + Regional Prioritization Committee has worked with expert consultants to develop a framework for evaluating the natural services and benefits linked to our regional open space system. This committee has relied on the work of the ROSS Regional Challenge Task Forces which are charged with producing White Papers and Action Strategies addressing five topical issues—Climate Change, Biodiversity, Human Health, Social Equity, and Economic Development. Working with Earth Economics and the Trust for Public Land, progress has been made toward establishing a platform and informational network for discussing the value of our open space network. Using the quantitative data discovered by the ongoing research of each Task Force, a GIS Portal Prototype now exists to accommodate the visualization and partial quantification of the value of regional and local open space services.

Tracy Stanton (Committee Chair) provided the Executive Committee with an update on the work being done by the Ecosystems Services + Regional Prioritization Committee, including an outline of the architecture and credibility of data behind the GIS Portal Prototype. Following Tracy's short presentation, Brenda Faber with the Trust for Public Land introduced the online Portal to the Executive Committee through a remote exhibition of the tool's present capabilities and future potential. The joint-presentation was very well received by the Executive Committee. The presentation of the Portal fostered an inspired discussion regarding the potential for this evaluation and prioritization tool.

Accessing the GIS Portal Prototype

For access to the GIS Portal Prototype, go to: <http://tplgis.org/ROSS/>

User Name: open
Password: space

We ask that the credentials for accessing to the GIS Portal Prototype not be distributed to individuals not associated with the ROSS.

Please note this is a test release of the tool. At present, the Portal only includes a partial set of open space services and regional challenges that will be included in the fully-functional portal. We strongly encourage the Executive Committee members to go to our prototype to explore this tool and provide input while it is still nascent in its development.

In addition, it is important to note that the first statewide study on the benefits of outdoor recreation is now available. Earth Economics conducted an ecosystem services valuation for benefits directly related to outdoor recreation. The report is available here:

<http://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/ORTF/EconomicAnalysisOutdoorRec.pdf>

At the next Executive Committee meeting Earth Economics will present on our collective effort to conduct a regional ecosystem services valuation and assess local initiatives recommended as part of the Puyallup-White WOSS.

For more information or recommendations and feedback on the GIS Portal Prototype, as well as the general activities of the Ecosystems Services + Regional Prioritization Committee, contact Tracy Stanton (tstanton@me.com).

Watershed Scale:

Green-Duwamish Watershed Strategy (WRIA 9)

Sarah Ogier (a Senior Policy Analyst with King County Natural Resources and Parks) provided an update to the planning work which recently commenced in the Green-Duwamish Watershed.

Goals and Objectives

The primary goal for the Green-Duwamish Watershed Strategy is to engage the full watershed by creating a vision and strategy that will shape the future of the watershed for decades to come. Presently, King County believes the many vibrant programs that already exist in the watershed are being underutilized, as many members of the watershed community are unaware of these activities. To address this disconnect, the county aims to enhance the success of existing and future activities by engendering strong coordination among projects. Additionally, the WOSS will geographically link existing programs and projects to the desired outcomes for cleaner air, water, and land improvements as well as public health, equity, and a better economy. Pursuant to these outcomes, King County seeks the creation of a concise document that can serve as a reference for those contemplating investment in the watershed.

Project Schedule

The Green-Duwamish work was formally announced during a press event in September 2014 with King County Executive Constantine, Seattle's Major Murray, King County Council Members Larry Philips and Joe McDermott, among others. In concert with this announcement, King County initiated a process with PRR to interview community leaders and stakeholders to ensure the public engagement element of this process is meaningful and successful. In December 2014, King County formally approved first phase of work, enabling the ROSS team to hire new staff to support the next year of work.

Phase I (Listening) began in December 2014 and will continue through June 2015. This initial period will be focused on engaging in background research and stakeholder engagement and outreach. Moreover, the team aims to establish a Watershed Advisory Group during this period. With this work completed, **Phase II** (Strategic Development) will begin in July 2015. During this phase of work, the King County and the ROSS team aims to develop strategy alternatives and a draft of the watershed strategy, leveraging workshops and other engagement with local and regional stakeholders. **Phase III** (Implementation) is scheduled from February to June 2016. This final stage of work is focused on establishing a draft action strategy, finalizing the Watershed Strategy, and advancing projects proposed throughout the planning process.

The Executive Committee expressed excitement to see this promising partnership with King County, and the County is eager scale up their work and involvement with the ROSS.

For more information on the Green-Duwamish Watershed Strategy efforts, contact Sarah Ogier (sarah.ogier@kingcounty.gov).

Snohomish Watershed Strategy (WRIA 7)

Newly hired ROSS staff will be working with Abby Hook (Hydrologist and Conservation Planner at Hook Environmental) to conduct a watershed complementary watershed strategy for the Snohomish watershed (WRIA 7). Initial planning calls for the following schedule.

- Winter 2015: Scoping
- Spring 2015: Convene work groups by 5 ROSS challenges
- Summer 2015: Assemble information across challenges
- Fall 2015: Review results with all participants and suggest actions, governance, and financing

For additional information, review the presentation materials attached along with this summary. We'll be in touch soon to schedule out future engagements in 2015!

Contact Cat Silva (catsilva@uw.edu) if you have any questions/comments.