

ROSS Governance/Finance Committee – DRAFT Charter (5/6/2014)

Task Force Purpose:

The purpose of the Regional Open Space Strategy (ROSS) Governance + Finance Task Force is to explore multi-benefit conservation funding and organizational structures, develop a recommended strategy for regional collaboration (potentially through a collective impact model), formulate an action plan, and initiate steps to execute the formation of a new regional governance structure and/or non-governmental alliance (ROSS Implementation Phase) that can advance on proposals developed through the existing Regional Open Space Strategy for the Central Puget Sound.

Outcome:

- Guide research into governance/finance structures for ROSS implementation phase.
- Formulate recommended collective impact strategy that includes selected governance and finance structures for ROSS implementation phase.
- Submit Action Plan to ROSS Executive Committee on April 1, 2015.
 - Conduct vetting with ROSS partners and associated government agencies.
 - Highlight how to address potential public & decision-maker responses.
 - Support existing ROSS Executive Committee in conducting initial implementation steps for launch of ROSS implementation.

The recommendations from this committee will incorporate findings from previous initiatives (e.g. King County's Watershed Investment Concept Paper, Summary of working group meetings, and draft legislation relating to watershed investment strategies) to ensure this effort builds on expressed needs among local jurisdictions and stakeholders.

Membership: 5-10 Individuals representing a sampling of key stakeholder organizations, jurisdictions at multiple scales, and key legal/regulatory expertise.

Co-Chair 1 – Key regional government entity.

Co-Chair 2 – Target state or federal agency head? Coordinating Non-Profit?

Co-Chair Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the co-chairs is to preside over task force meetings; work with ROSS staff and facilitator to develop meeting agendas; if necessary, appoint other committee members; and serve as spokesperson for the committee.

Task Force Member Roles and Responsibilities

Members are expected to attend designated monthly meetings over a period of six months and guide staff on research and/or recommendations as needed between meetings. Green Futures Lab staff will poll members about meeting locations and dates. Members may participate virtually as needed.

Staff/Administrative Support:

ROSS Staff from Green Futures Research & Design Lab + Other? – PSP, PSRC...

ROSS Governance/Finance Committee – DRAFT Charter (5/6/2014)

Consultant Support:

TBD

Schedule:

- Meets monthly starting September 2014 [Need target date for 1st meeting]
- Each meeting will be scheduled for approximately 2 hours.

Term: We anticipate this to be an 8-month duration, completing its works by March/April of 2015

Workplan:

Phase 1: Research (Meetings 1-2)

Work with staff to explore various governance structure options for ROSS implementation phase:

- Forum to maintain alliance building external to governmental agencies
 - Explore collective impact models
 - Coalition of non-profits (e.g. [Great Communities Collaborative](#) or [Quality Growth Alliance](#))
 - Spinoff from or support organization for existing non-profit (e.g. TPL affiliation)
 - New 501(C)(3) with contributing member structure (e.g. modelled after Intertwine Alliance or Chicago Wilderness - combo of all member dues, private company, corporate council, and federal USFS/USFW \$)
 - Formation of an LLC tied to ROSS that can provide products that generate profit for the alliance building
- Forum to direct State & Local conservation investment
 - Regional Open Space/Green Infrastructure Council /Department(e.g. PSRC division or [Fraser Basin Council](#))
 - Regional Open Space (e.g. tied to a ballot measure)
- Forum to direct Federal conservation investment
 - Regional Open Space Caucus or Coalition (e.g. DOE/RCO/DFW/PSP collaboration)
 - CPS region implementer for multiple federal agencies (e.g. affiliation with PS Federal Caucus or sustained form of [Growing Transit Communities Program](#))
 - Branch of individual federal agency (e.g. ???)

*Subcommittees may be assigned to support specific research components.

Phase 2: Alternatives (Meetings 3-4)

Identify 2-3 alternatives that select among or combine models based on the research in Phase 1. Explore the feasibility of implementation based on incorporation into current governance structures, funding processes, and likely public/stakeholder engagement and response.

Phase 3: Final Recommendations (Meeting 5-6)

Select a preferred model based on recommendations on feasibility from Phase 2.

ROSS Governance/Finance Committee – DRAFT Charter (5/6/2014)

Phase 4: Action Plan (Meeting 7-8)

Establish a step-by-step plan to implement the recommended model and secure agreements/commitments from relevant agencies and organizations.

The formation of this regional governance structure could be implemented in phases. For example, an early phase could establish a “Regional Open Space Policy Council” (similar to the Regional Food Policy Council at PSRC) in order to begin coordination efforts and advance recommendations/advisory guidance regarding how to direct current and/or newly established conservation funds under the authority of multiple agencies. This open space council could be used as a sounding board in establishing a coalition of non-profits or other private entities seeking to direct their own resources. In later phases, this could then expand beyond an advisory capacity to actual project funding decisions as steps are taken to secure a combined project/program funding source and approvals are secured from voters, relevant agencies, and legislative bodies to advance a more comprehensive approach to green infrastructure investment and environmental management for the region.

The Salmon Recovery Council worked with multiple stakeholders to establish draft legislation and a Watershed Investment Concept Paper containing relevant recommendations on approach:

- A regional approach to improved coordination among the many entities working on watershed management.
- A long-term, evidence-based approach that leverages dollars invested and assures the most positive impact on the health of watersheds.
- An approach that emphasizes multiple-benefit projects. Storm water retrofits, floodplain management, water quality monitoring, and habitat protection and restoration require a cooperative watershed approach.
- Adequate and reliable funding and regional technical support to assure timely implementation of multiple-benefit projects that will improve the health of our watersheds. One specific need is for a funding mechanism that would authorize local governments to raise funds to implement multiple-benefit projects.
- A governance structure that would allow local governments to 1) cooperate on a regional basis to set priorities for multiple-benefit projects to improve watershed health and 2) raise the funds to implement the projects.

A Summary of Working Group Stakeholder Meetings:

- Emphasize comprehensive solutions within watersheds and ecosystems. Coordinate activities within watersheds. Invest in multiple benefit projects and programs identified as priorities within watersheds – habitat/salmon recovery; floodplain restoration/flood protection; water quality; water supply.
- With tweaking, many existing governance structures and authorities established through statute and interagency cost sharing agreements could help achieve the outcomes of multiple benefits, streamlining of resources and permits, and leveraging fund sources.
- With modified governance structures, Flood Control District funding structure resonated as an existing fund source.
- Take a bottoms-up approach to identify most important regional investments; empower local voice to identify regional priorities and determining how money is spent
- Engage land owners and seek public support.

ROSS Governance/Finance Committee – DRAFT Charter (5/6/2014)

Key Shared Interests + Opportunities Related to Funding:

- Secure sustainable funding levels to implement existing plans and project priorities
- Provide funding for watershed-based coordination and collaboration/operating capacity
- Break down funding silos that inhibit collaboration and communication; Broaden and increase flexibility of existing fund sources
- Coordinate timing of grant cycles; Bonus points for integration and multiple benefits