Habitat Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

6/29/21

Attendees: Katie Buckley, Billy Olesen, Alison Halpern, Ed Lisowski, Tim Stapleton, Michael O'Loughlin, Taylor Cotten, Erin Sullivan, Paul Hosticka, Tim Hiatt, Alex Harwell, Jeff Dreier, Mary Fee

The plan was to go over the habitat recommendations in order of their appearance in SB 5253. Recommendations 1.10 and 1.11 did not make it into the bill. Bill and recommendations are combined in the Google Doc here: 
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1djvseMlkEjsB1iA48PIWYGZpT6eWG137s1f2VzLBoA/edit?usp=sharing

1.6 Western Bumble Bee needs to get on the Priority Species List. It is currently a candidate species for state and federal listing. For state listing we are just waiting for WDFW’s director’s signature. Taylor will check if additional funding is needed.

1.9 Noxious Weeds – We asked Mary if she knows the status of this one. She will check and get back to us. We need to continue to pursue this. Billy mentioned that at the local level they really like the seed packets. Mary and Katie will meet to discuss the future of seed packets.

1.7 Katie needs to contact DOR (or at least figure out who to contact at DOR) and get this ball rolling. No additional funding is needed for this.

1.2 Now state law. Conservation commission received modest amount for guideline development. CDs are working on it. Alison will loop Taylor and Katie to any meetings on this. Tim will send list of good forage plants to Alison, Taylor and Katie. WDFW’s current pollinator specialist is retiring and new person is starting.

1.3 Riparian recommendations – WDFW got funding and it is considered a work in progress. Taylor also gave an update on 5.5 since he will not be able to make the research meeting. (It also got funding and is a work in progress.)

1.8 Now a law. When the grant program is up and running then we’re good to go. (The program still needs funding.)

1.1 Now in statute. The Conservation Commission just received funding to get the grant program organized, but not for actual grant money. It will need money in the future, and could be put into the supplemental budget. Alison is going to work on an estimate for what funding may be needed.

1.5 WSDOT did not get additional funding (they also did not ask for any). They are also currently in a severe budget crunch. The pollinator habitat program is still ongoing though, and they do that work with current funding. Ray and Julia Hartwig will be looped in to see if additional funding is something we should be asking for.

Other stuff

Any new recommendations and challenges can and should be brought up to the task force.
Billy – there could be dedicated funding at the county level similar to how they do it for noxious weed boards (but money would go to the conservation districts or something.) He also recommended that Katie get in touch with Dana with the Kitsap Noxious Weed Board.

Mary – will be picking up native seeds tomorrow (6/30). It will be 1400 lbs of seed in 25 lb bags (contact her if you know of projects that could use that much.)

Katie will look into the CD laws for funding (seem to be fee based as they provide a service). Noxious Weed Boards are a special assessment as they have enforcement actions. Will also look into how mosquito districts are funded. Counties could then set the level of funding for what they want to accomplish.