

PUGET SOUND PARTNERSHIP

State of Washington

July 23, 2007

TO: Leadership Council Members

FROM: Ron Shultz, Acting Executive Director

RE: Status on Establishing the Ecosystem Coordination Board

The statute creating the Puget Sound Partnership also created a 27-member Ecosystem Coordination Board. This Board is to assist the Leadership Council in various aspects of its work, and is to be convened by October 1, 2007. This memo describes the Council's role in appointments to the Board and proposes a nomination solicitation process.

Recommendation: I recommend that the Executive Director work with the Council Chair to incorporate your collective comments and input into this proposed process, then issue the request for nominations under a cover letter from the Chair. Responses would be due back on September 5 so that the Council may make the final appointments at the September meeting.

Council Appointments

The Leadership Council must appoint 14 of the 27 members of the Board. These 14 include:

One representative from each Action Area (possible seven total). The council shall solicit nominations from, at a minimum, counties, cities, and watershed groups;

Two members representing general business interests, one of whom shall represent in-state general small business interests;

Two members representing environmental interests;

One representative each from counties, cities, and port districts, from nominations submitted by statewide associations representing such local governments.

The remaining members are selected as follows:

Three representatives of tribal governments located in Puget Sound, invited by the governor to participate as members of the board;

Three representatives of state agencies with environmental management responsibilities in Puget Sound, representing the interests of all state agencies, one of whom shall be the commissioner of public lands or his or her designee; and

Three representatives of federal agencies with environmental management responsibilities in Puget Sound, representing the interests of all federal agencies and invited by the governor to participate as members of the board.

Legislative participants. The president of the senate shall appoint two senators, one from each major caucus, as legislative liaisons to the board. The speaker of the house of

representatives shall appoint two representatives, one from each major caucus, as legislative liaisons to the board.

Recommended Nomination Criteria and Selection Process

Based on the representational responsibilities of most board members, Partnership staff recommend the following nominating and appointment processes and criteria. The statute describes different processes for appointing various members of the board; variations in nomination and appointment processes are discussed below

Nominations. The statute specifies nomination processes for the following:

- Action Area representatives – nominations solicited by the Leadership Council from, at a minimum, counties, cities, and watershed groups.
- Counties, cities, and port districts representatives – nominated by statewide associations representing such local governments.

Other board appointments have no statutory requirement for a nomination process, which suggests that the Leadership Council has some leeway in the approach it might use to identify candidates for many board positions.

Partnership staff recommend that the Leadership Council pursue and encourage open solicitation of nominations for all board positions appointed by the Council or invited by the Governor. In this approach, individuals would be invited to submit their own nomination or be nominated by someone else to represent Action Areas, business interests, environmental interests, or local governments. Potential representatives of local governments would nominate themselves or be nominated by others for consideration by the relevant associations, where full lists of candidates might be evaluated to identify a shorter list of nominees that each association would forward to the Council. Expressions of interest to represent tribal governments and federal agencies would be made directly to the Governor's office.

As an alternative, the Council could solicit Action Area nominees only from counties, cities, and watershed groups; encourage local government associations to develop nominees with minimal solicitation of their membership; and conduct and encourage no public solicitation of nominees or potential invitees for other representatives (e.g., business interests, environmental interests, tribal governments). Staff do not recommend this approach because we fear that advantages of expediency would be offset by the risk of overlooking viable candidates for membership on the board and the harm done by lack of openness and transparency in the process of convening the board.

Criteria for evaluating nominations and guiding decisions about appointments or invitations.

Decisions about nominations, appointments, and invitations to participate on the Ecosystem Coordination Board should consider the criteria discussed below. Nominating materials

should include information to allow evaluation of nominees against these criteria. The Leadership Council should agree to criteria that it will follow in evaluating nominees and making appointments. In addition, the Leadership Council should recommend that other entities (e.g., local government associations, state agency caucus, federal agency caucus, the Governor's office) consider these criteria in developing lists of nominees and in making appointments and invitations.

Board members represent other interests and stakeholders. Partnership staff recommend that all board members, including representatives of tribal governments, represent other parties, caucuses of like interests, etc. through their participation in the board. This means that successful candidates for board membership will have:

- demonstrated capacity (i.e., available time, appropriate networks) to represent an existing caucus and/or convene or participate in meetings of newly developed caucuses, and
- endorsement from others in the geographic area, interest group, or cohort they are a candidate for representing on the board.

As an alternative to a blanket application of these criteria, the Leadership Council might decide that some positions on the board are representational while others do not need to be. For instance, representatives of tribal government might not be asked to represent other tribal governments.

Board members share core values and are skilled group participants. Partnership staff recommend that successful candidates for board appointments will have:

- experience in and commitment to interest-based negotiation and collaborative problem-solving,
- commitment to community-based action, and
- exceptional communication skills.

As an alternative or addition to these characteristics, the Leadership Council might identify other desired characteristics of board members: e.g., commitment to diversity, decisive, innovative.

Board members have experience and expertise relevant to the goals and objectives of the Puget Sound Partnership. Partnership staff recommend that successful candidates for appointment to the board will have experience and expertise in science, management, policy development, law, and/or advocacy related to one of more of the following:

- relationships among human health, quality of life, and ecosystem services,
- Puget Sound native species, food webs, and biodiversity,
- Puget Sound-relevant habitats and habitat-forming processes,
- stream and groundwater hydrology and water supplies,
- water quality and sediment quality,
- education and public involvement, or
- public-private administration.

As an alternative, the Leadership Council might suggest that some number of board members should have experience and expertise in these topical areas while other members would offer expertise in a greater diversity of perspectives of possible relevance to the Partnership: e.g., K-12 education, art, social services, research and development, marketing.

Appointments and invitations to the board. Appointments to the board are made by the Leadership Council, state agencies, president of the Washington State Senate, and speaker of the Washington State House of Representatives. The governor issues invitations to representatives of tribal governments and representatives of federal agencies. The Commissioner of Public Lands or his/her designee is appointed to the board by statute. Partnership staff recommended the following processes for appointment, invitation, or designations:

- Council appointments – the Leadership Council should review and evaluate nominees for representatives of Action Areas, business interests, environmental interests, counties, cities, and port districts against the criteria listed above. The council would use the results of these evaluations along with consideration of the board’s overall geographic, gender, age, ethnic, and racial balance to decide on appointments.
- State agency representatives – the statute is silent on who appoints two of the state agency representatives to the board. Partnership staff suggest that the state caucus consider the above criteria in selecting its representatives to the board. (As an alternative, the Leadership Council could suggest that the Governor’s office or the Council evaluate nominees provided by the state caucus against the above criteria and appoint members based on these evaluations.)
- Legislative liaisons – the president of the senate and speaker of the house should evaluate candidates against the above criteria and appoint members to serve as legislative liaisons to the board.
- Governor’s invitations -- the Governor’s Office should issue formal invitations to tribal government and federal agency representatives based on an evaluation of candidates against the above criteria.
- Commissioner of Public Lands should notify the Leadership Council of his/her intent to participate on the board or designate someone else to participate in his/her place.