

SUMMARY
MONTANA WETLAND COUNCIL MEETING
Wednesday January 30th, 2013
DEQ Directors Conference Room
1520 East 6th Avenue, Helena MT

9:30 am. Welcome, Round-Robin Introductions, and Participant Updates.

Lynda Saul, DEQ Wetland Program Coordinator/Wetland Council Chair.

Lynda welcomed participants (see attached sign in sheet) and introduced the meeting as a participatory strategic planning meeting open to all. Meeting objectives include:

- 1) Share progress and accomplishment of Montana wetland conservation over the past 5 years and identify ways to build upon and leverage this success,
- 2) Explore opportunities, directions and activities for the Wetland Council's 5-year Strategic Framework update, and
- 3) Engage Council participants in planning for the Council's future.

The [agenda](#) and [background material](#) were sent out a week before the meeting to the Council listserv along with a short worksheet to help jump start participants thinking. Lynda introduced Pam Mavrolas, strategic planning consultant with over 30 years of experience in strategic planning, facilitation, and organizational development. Pam worked with the Wetland Council five years ago to develop the 2008-2012 Strategic Framework and facilitated the remainder of the Council meeting. This meeting represents Step 4 in the planning process.

Wetland and Riparian Strategic Framework Update Planning Process steps:

- Step 1. Secure EPA grant and work with a strategic planner
- Step 2. Wetland Council Working Group Assessment conference calls – 2 hours each 6-10 participants (Dec 7-14)
- Step 3. Online Survey to all/statewide wetland/riparian interests (Jan 3-15)
- Step 4. Wetland Council meeting – participatory strategic planning (Jan 30)
- Step 5. Write draft and review with leadership (Feb-March)
- Step 6. Review draft Strategic Framework 2013-2017 update (Mar 12-30)
- Step 7. Finalize and print (complete by May 30 Wetland and Watershed Award Ceremony)

Current Strategic Framework and State Wetland Goal

Meeting participants were reminded of the overall state goal as identified in the Council's current strategic framework "*Priceless Resources: A Strategic Framework for Wetland and Riparian Area Conservation and Restoration in Montana 2008-2012*"

<http://www.deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/Wetlands/PDFs/StrategicPlan08-12.pdf>. Montana's overarching wetland goal is: No overall net loss of the state's remaining wetland resource base (as of 1989) and an overall increase in the quality and quantity of wetlands in Montana.

Accomplishments

To seed participants thinking, Lynda gave a brief presentation of [collective accomplishments](#) over the past 5 years of Council participant's accomplishments emphasizing what difference our work has made for wetlands and riparian areas in Montana and what opportunities that provides or leverage for future success. This material was drawn from Step 2 of the planning process. Participants grouped together in groups of 3 to 5 and discussed two questions:

1) What enabled our past success – what conditions, resources, forces, or opportunities helped our progress – internal or external, and 2) How do we best take advantage or leverage the accomplishment and successes we have had? Groups shared their responses to these questions with the full Council and highlights were recorded on flip charts.

Online Survey and Working Group Assessment Conference Calls

Next, Lynda gave a short presentation regarding the [on-line survey highlights](#) (Step 3). With a focus on what are folks telling us that the Council needs to pay attention to? The on-line survey was open for about 2 weeks and distributed to numerous listservs. 209 individuals took the survey and [full on-line survey results](#) have been available on the Wetland Council website and were printed for use during the meeting review. Questions and clarifications about the survey ensued including a brief comparison to a similar 2007 on-line survey for planning of the 2008-2012 Strategic Framework.

Each Working Group Leader reported on the 1 or 2 things that stood-out from their 2-hour Wetland Council Working Group Assessment conference calls conversation (Step 2). The focus was on what was really significant from the conversations for collective future planning.

Strategic Questions

[Seven strategic questions](#) were distributed in the meeting background material for participants to review. During the Council meeting, participants split up into 7 groups to each address one of the strategic questions along with written guidelines for small group discussion process. Groups had about 90 minutes to work together and then report out to all Council meeting participants. Questions for clarification were addressed, feedback discussed, and friendly amendments written on sticky notes and posted on the flip chart pages.

Closing

Material generated from this participatory Wetland Council strategic planning meeting along with input from Working Group assessment conference calls, the on-line survey, and additional input will be used to draft a five year update of the Wetland and Riparian Strategic Framework. Lynda went over next steps in the planning process including an expected timeline of late March for review of the draft Strategic Framework update document. She will distribute that draft to those involved in the assessment conference calls and the participatory Council meetings and others who have volunteered to review the draft. She asked meeting participants to identify and list others who were not present at the meeting that should be engaged in the Strategic Planning process. Lynda will make an effort to contact those organizations and individuals for additional input. Lynda and Pam both thanked the participants for their interest and active engagement in the Council's wetland and riparian strategic planning process and adjourned the Council meeting.

Montana Wetland Council

January 30, 2013

Sign In Sheet

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