

To: Whatcom County Council

Date: November 21, 2017

*Kathleen Sabel, Nov 21, 2017*

From: Kathleen Sabel, Whatcom County Registered Voter

Subject: Select Comments on Whatcom County Council 7 pm Regular Meeting Agenda

Below are comments on the following Whatcom County Council Regular Meeting Agenda Item:

Ordinance amending Whatcom County Code 2.118 reactivating the Whatcom County Wildlife Advisory Committee (WCWAC) (AB2017-318).

- A) The July 2017 Report was to have met the requirement of the current 2.118. One reason for reactivating the WCWAC is to provide more targeted recommendations with a cost benefit analysis. As this was requested in the 2015 establishment of the Committee, and the current report does not meet that requirement, why reestablish it?
- B) If the Council reactivates the WCWAC, the following changes to the 2.118 are requested:
  - a. In the "Whereas section" County Council is funding .25 FTE in Planning and Development Services Department. What is the classification, e.g., what skills are required and for how many years?
  - b. 2.118.030 (C) i. – Establish specific timelines for updates rather than the proposed "periodic updates"
  - c. 2.118.030 (C) ii. – Technical questions are to be directed to this Advisory Committee. What is the reason County or State Staff cannot be utilized? What is the confirmation method to verify these are qualified "Technical Staff"?
  - d. 2.118.40 – Where is the list of Agencies or groups that are desired/requested to participate in this Committee, if any?
  - e. 2.118.050 (A) – What are the requirements of the other 4 members not listed in 2.118.050 (B) which lists requirements for seven?
  - f. 2.118.050 (B) – What is the definition of "technical expertise in wildlife and habitat management"? It is not clear why tribal representative is listed under this category.
  - g. 2.118.050 (C) – Are all 11 members voting members? Are all 11 members appointed by the County Council? This is not clear.
  - h. 2.118.050 (C) – This states member terms are for four years. Does reactivation mean the current member terms end four years from the 2015 appointment date, or will all members be newly appointed now with a new four year appointment?
  - i. 2.118.060 – There should be a termination of this Committee rather than to continue indefinitely as the goal is to integrate the recommendations into standard processes and procedures.
  - j. 2.118.70 (B) – The committee should establish a meeting schedule and not only meet as needed in order to allow public participation. It will be difficult for the public to be aware of meetings if they are randomly scheduled.
  - k. 2.118.080 (B) – This is a technical Committee and as such should have the expertise to perform without Whatcom County Planning and Development Services and Public Works Departments.

AB 2017-318

FILE UNDER AB 2017-318

DATE RECEIVED: 11.21.2017

SUBMITTED BY: Kathleen Sabel

COUNCIL MEETING

\_\_\_\_\_ COMMITTEE

EXHIBIT: B

**WHATCOM COUNTY**  
Planning & Development Services  
5280 Northwest Drive  
Bellingham, WA 98226-9097  
360-778-5900, TTY 800-833-6384  
360-778-5901 Fax



**J.E. "Sam" Ryan**  
Director

**RECEIVED**

OCT 23 2017

**JACK LOUWS**  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Memorandum

TO: Honorable County Councilmembers  
Honorable Executive Louws

THROUGH: Mark Personius, Assistant Director, Whatcom County PDS *mp*

FROM: Chris Elder, Planner *CE*

DATE: 10/23/2017

SUBJECT: REACTIVATION OF THE WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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The Whatcom County Wildlife Advisory Committee presented the 2017 Ecosystem Report to the Natural Resources Committee of the Council on Sept. 12, 2017. One of the recommendations within the 2017 Ecosystem Report was to *extend the duration of the Wildlife Advisory Committee*. During discussion at the Natural Resource Committee, councilmembers expressed their interest to reactivate the Wildlife Advisory Committee and have committee members, as one of their first tasks, reassess the full list of recommendations identified in the Ecosystem Report and come back to Council with a more strategic or targeted list including any specific financial requests associated with that list.

Respectfully, members of the Wildlife Advisory Committee request County Council reactivate the Wildlife Advisory Committee, so that the committee may continue working on wildlife related issues and opportunities in Whatcom County.

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**AMENDING WHATCOM COUNTY CODE 2.118, REACTIVATING THE WHATCOM COUNTY WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**WHEREAS**, the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires Whatcom County to engage in comprehensive land use planning; and

**WHEREAS**, the GMA indicates that Whatcom County's comprehensive land use planning efforts should foster land use patterns and develop a local vision of rural character that will be compatible with the use of the land by wildlife and for fish and wildlife habitat; and

**WHEREAS**, goal nine (9) of the GMA, in Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 36.70A.020, is to retain open space, enhance recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks and recreation facilities; and

**WHEREAS**, in RCW 36.70A.160, the GMA directs local governments to identify open space corridors within and between urban growth areas useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails and connections between critical areas; and

**WHEREAS**, habitat conservation areas must be identified, designated and protected through the use of best available science, according to RCW 36.70A.172; and

**WHEREAS**, goal eleven (11) of the GMA is to encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts; and

**WHEREAS**, Whatcom County citizens have expressed to the County Council their desire for the County to incorporate wildlife management and conservation planning for fish and wildlife habitat into the Whatcom County land use planning process; and

**WHEREAS**, the Whatcom County Council would benefit from the advice and recommendations of those with background and technical expertise, including but not limited to, in wildlife management, conservation science, and wildlife biology, when making land use policy decisions, and

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**WHEREAS**, the County Council acknowledges the community has finite resources requiring good fiscal and environmental stewardship, and the community would benefit from achievable wildlife management recommendations, and;

**WHEREAS**, the County Council recognizes people are part of the landscape and within a watershed diverse uses interact and depend on limited resources, requiring balanced wildlife management recommendations which provide visible community and ecological services, and;

**WHEREAS**, the County Council authorizes Planning and Development Services Department to fund a .25 FTE to staff the wildlife advisory committee.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED** by the Whatcom County Council that Whatcom County Code 2.118, creating the Whatcom County Wildlife Advisory Committee, is hereby established as outlined in Exhibit A of this ordinance.

**ADOPTED** this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2017.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL  
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dana Brown-Davis, Clerk of the Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
Barry Buchanan, Council Chair

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

WHATCOM COUNTY EXECUTIVE  
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

\_\_\_\_\_  
Civil Deputy Prosecutor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jack Louws, County Executive

( ) Approved      ( ) Denied

Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

# EXHIBIT A

## Chapter 2.118 WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### Sections:

- 2.118.010 Established
- 2.118.020 Purpose
- 2.118.030 Function
- 2.118.040 Qualifications
- 2.118.050 Membership
- ~~2.118.060 Term of Office~~
- 2.118.070 Organization – Meetings
- 2.118.080 Committee Staffing

#### 2.118.010 Established.

The Wildlife Advisory Committee is hereby established.

#### 2.118.020 Purpose.

The committee will advise the Whatcom County Planning and Development Services Department staff and the Whatcom County Council on the value of wildlife and habitat management issues as they relate to the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan, with the goal of integrating wildlife management and protection into the community planning process.

#### 2.118.030 Function.

- A. The committee will provide recommendations on integrating wildlife management and protection issues relative to fulfilling goal nine (9) of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA): to retain open space, enhance recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks and recreation facilities. The full committee shall provide a recommendation on the need for an ongoing wildlife advisory committee.
- B. Each committee recommendation will consist of
  - i. Identified issue or constraint
  - ii. Discussion of ecological process, function or species addressed
  - iii. Range of solutions considered
  - iv. Preferred solution
  - v. Cost of implementation. A cost benefit analysis is required when an existing industry recognized method is available; at a minimum a discussion of project costs and positive or adverse impacts where community and ecological uses intersect.
  - vi. Cited and reviewed references

1 C. The Technical Advisory sub-committee, as defined in Section  
2 2.118.050(B), will:

- 3  
4 i. ~~Prior to the end of 2015, develop the~~Continue to provide periodic  
5 updates to the Ecosystem Report that includes initial inventory,  
6 characterization, and assessment, which includes an analysis of  
7 risk, of existing ecosystem conditions (Existing Condition Report),  
8 and to make management recommendations using best available  
9 science that will provide appropriate habitat conditions for local  
10 species, with an emphasis on biodiversity and healthy ecosystem  
11 processes and functions. This may include recommendations  
12 regarding wildlife corridors, landscape ecological planning, wildlife  
13 management, avoiding human/wildlife conflict.  
14  
15 ii. ~~Continue to provide periodic updates to the Existing Condition~~  
16 ~~Report or to~~A address technical questions from the Whatcom  
17 County Council, Whatcom County staff, or the Wildlife  
18 Management Committee.  
19

20 **2.118.040 Qualifications.**

21 To qualify for County Council appointment to fill any vacancy on a board,  
22 committee, or commission, a person shall be a qualified registered voter  
23 and be a member or employee of the agency or group he or she is  
24 appointed to represent.  
25

26 **2.118.050 Membership.**

- 27  
28 A. The committee shall consist of 11 members.  
29  
30 B. Seven of the 11 members will have technical expertise in wildlife  
31 and habitat management or current or past professional experience  
32 such as, but not limited to, at least one of the following: wetlands  
33 manager, wildlife biologist, population biologist, natural resources  
34 manager, watershed scientist, conservation specialist, forestry  
35 protection, and tribal representative.  
36

37 C. The County Council will appoint the voting committee members.  
38 Member terms will be four years.  
39

40 DE. The committee members shall serve without compensation.  
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42 ~~2.118.060 Term of Office.~~

43  
44 ~~The committee shall serve until July 31, 2016.~~  
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46 **2.118.070 Organization – Meetings.**

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48 A. Meetings of the committee shall be open and accessible to the  
49 public and shall be subject to the Open Public Meetings Act.  
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- B. ~~The committee shall determine its own meeting schedule, but shall meet at least bimonthly~~meet as needed to address wildlife related planning needs.
- C. The committee shall be responsible for taking complete and accurate written records.
- D. Whatcom County staff shall be responsible for assuring the meetings are audio recorded.
- E. Written and audio recordings of meetings, resolutions, findings, and recommendations shall be kept, and such records shall be public.
- F. The committee shall comply with Whatcom County Code 2.03 – Boards and Commissions.
- G. The committee shall adopt its own rules and procedures for the conduct of business.
- H. The committee shall elect a chairperson from among its members who shall preside at its meetings.

**2.118.080 Committee Staffing.**

- A. The Whatcom County Planning and Development Services Department and Whatcom County Public Works Department shall provide geographic information system (GIS) data and other information to the committee as requested.
- B. The Whatcom County Planning and Development Services Department and the Whatcom County Public Works Department shall provide technical assistance and assist with meeting coordination.