



Long Range Business Plan (LRBP) Board Report

8/3/20

Staff & Board Planning Team Progress:

- Organizational Health & Conservation Scope Planning Teams have further refined their evolving success criteria, questions and who shall answer which questions and in what order (see attached).
 - Initial answers/recommendations provided by various groups, including the DEI Committee, leadership team and tech staff, that have been asked questions by these LRBP teams are provided for reference (see attached).
- Conservation Scope Planning Team and Technical Staff have worked to finalize a document that outlines conservation threats that it recommends prioritizing in the next LRBP with acknowledgement to all of those named in our information gathering phase (see attached).
- Upcoming scheduled planning team meetings (contact Logalbo for zoom invite information on any – all staff and/or board interested are welcome to join):
 - Organizational Health, August 20th from 10 am – 11:30 am
 - Financial Sustainability, September 10th from 10 am – 11 am
 - Conservation Scope, October 8th from 9 am – 11 am

Conservation Scope Advisory Committee (CSAC) Formation Progress:

- Reached out to review partner stipend and compensation policies and practices for advisory committee members
 - Received information from Metro and City of Portland staff to form WMSWCD Stipend and Compensation Guidelines
 - Met with Metro staff on the same to gain further insight
- Reaching out 1:1 to hopeful CSAC members to assess interest and schedule their first meeting

Community Engagement Liaison services (CELs) Workplan Progress :

- Met with Ping Khaw to discuss contract budget and next steps in overall CELs workplan.
- Drafting CELs engagement plan through the fall

Upcoming Board Discussion & Decision:

- Board Meetings (September – October):
 - Continued updates on staff, planning team, CELs and CSAC recommendations will be given and continued discussion on WMSWCD's mission, vision and goals.
 - Affirm or modify LRBP principles and values.
- Board Retreats (October 7th & 9th, To Be Held Remotely Over Zoom):
 - October 7th Retreat (from 6-8 pm): Affirm or Modify Mission & Vision
 - October 9th Retreat (from 3-5 pm): Affirm or Modify Goals

CONSERVATION SCOPE QUESTION ANSWERS

1. Mission affirmation or modification?

“To conserve and protect soil & water for people, wildlife and the environment”

- a. Should we broaden our mission by either adding to or replacing “Soil & Water” with “Natural Resources”? Is the term “Natural Resources” too jargoned and extractive of a term, how else might we describe this?
 - i. Tech Staff Recommendation: Yes, broaden to include other natural resources.
 1. Consider something similar to NRCS’ “SWAPA” (Soil, Water, Air, Plants & Animals). This still, however, doesn’t consider all that we aim to benefit.
 2. Consider Jim’s verbiage (Clean Water, Healthy Soil and Diverse Habitats), but note that our work has this *as a goal* and extends to areas that don’t currently have this achieved. Perhaps this is good language for the vision?
 3. Consider including Resilient Lands, Landscapes or Functional Habitats
 - ii. Board Discussion: Yes, broaden to include other natural resources.
 1. Mix of opinions regarding just broadly calling out natural resources & being succinct vs explicitly stating those resources we focus on including soil & water.
- b. Should we include equity and inclusion in our mission? If yes, how?
 - i. DEI Committee Recommendation: Yes, but use a word other than “equity.”
 - ii. Communications Recommendation: Yes
 - iii. Conservation Scope Team Recommendation: Yes, but consider more descriptive language – perhaps calling out that we work with ALL people or ALL residents conveys this?
 - iv. Board: Mixed opinions
- c. Are we missing an opportunity to explain how we get our work done? Should we explicitly call out how we work with others on their land?
 - i. Conservation Scope Team Recommendation: Yes, educating, engaging and facilitating land stewardship is critical to call out in regards to why we exist. We don’t, alone, do the conservation and protection work as an organization.
 - ii. Conservation Scope Team Language/Ideas To Consider:
 1. Partnering with all residents to steward the land.
 2. Partnering with all people for resilient lands (or landscapes).
 3. Facilitating resilient places (for all people, wildlife and the environment).
 4. Other words to consider for those we work with (aside from residents or people): caretakers, stewards or inhabitants.
 5. Words to consider regarding how we work with people to enable conservation work: supporting, aiding
 - iii. Conservation Scope Team on adding water and/or air to land in our mission:
 1. Although we do much to support water quality as well as air our focus is still working on the land to benefit those resources is done on the land (i.e. land movement, planting trees, removing a culvert, etc)

Last Update: 8/6/2020

LRBP Conservation Scope Questions Answers for August Board Meeting

2. Let's try to avoid words that are already in our name in our mission – its like using the word in a definition of that same word.
 - d. Does our reasoning or beneficiaries extend beyond “people, wildlife and the environment?”
 - e. Can we state this more plainly?
 - f. Is this too broad or too vague?
 - g. Are we missing a key component?
 - h. Shall we modify or affirm our mission?
 - i. Tech Staff: Modify, see above.

Tag Line Discussion Follow-up

Magyar (Communications & Outreach Manager) and Logalbo (Interim Co-District Manager, LRBP Project Manager) have met to discuss whether or not the District should have a tag line in addition to a mission statement and agree that both are merited and desired. Also, it's important to note at a previous board conversation, when we had believed we were reviewing a nice example of a mission statement it was instead a tag line. Here is the referenced tag line and mission statement for corrective follow-up and as examples of how the two might differ in messaging and length:

NRCS Tagline: Helping people help the land.

NRCS Mission: To provide resources to farmers and landowners to aid them with conservation.

EMSWCD Mission: We help people care for their land.

CONSERVATION THREATS WE CONTINUE TO PRIORITIZE

Overarching/Impacting Many Conservation Issues

Climate change (hits many other threats)
Development, infill and urbanization (hits many other threats)
Degraded working farms and forestlands
Declining watershed health and functionality (hits many other threats)
Addressing new invasive species (EDRR)
Inadequate stormwater management (hits many other threats)
Wildfire risks

Education/ Messaging /Outreach/Information Access (*Most Mentioned Barrier and Threat)

Lack of adult education and engagement (conservation issues and what individuals can do about them)
Lack of youth education and engagement (conservation issues and what individuals can do about them)
Lack of trust in government and science

Social sustainability/Social component of conservation

Access (to farmable land, to community gardens, to harvest/forage and for enjoyment of local natural areas/features)
Lack of diversity in the environmental field and our District's staff and leadership (DEI)
Long-term management and follow-through

Water quality

Declining water quality

Wildlife habitat

Continued and expanding wildlife habitat degradation and loss of connectivity
Rare and declining habitats and dependent species

Soil health

Economic viability of working farms and forestlands
Declining soil health

CONSERVATION THREATS WE WILL INCREASE IN PRIORITY

- 1) Lack of conservation education (the need to broaden our reach with an emphasis on connecting with communities that our District hasn't served/reached and expanding general awareness of conservation issues)
- 2) Climate change (the need to more clearly communicate how we already address this issue, and how we will continue to do so in our updated plan, but also a desire to work more proactively on addressing this threat)
- 3) The following historical conservation focal areas:
 - a. Water quality
 - b. Soil health

- c. Habitats (Emphasis on rare and declining habitats and connectivity for plants, wildlife, and people)
- 4) Threats related to relevancy, equity, access, and disparities (focus on geography and communities) must be addressed by better understanding historically underserved communities and then responding to what we learn.
- 5) Development and urbanization (we have an interest in finding creative ways to “get in front” of and mitigate related threats)
- 6) Lack of incentives to motivate conservation action and decreasing partner capacities

NEW CONSERVATION THREATS WE WILL PRIORITIZE

- 1) Disparities in the demographics of the communities we have largely/historically served
- 2) Disparities in environmental justice outcomes
- 3) Decreasing lands to work and people to work the land (i.e. farms/forests and farmers/foresters/ranchers to work the lands)
- 4) Lack of cultural connection with the land and no clear pathway to regain connection

CONSERVATION THREATS TO LOWER IN PRIORITY

- 1) Lack of funding (Recognition of the possibly need to limit funding projects directly with our tax base if we add new focus areas and/or do not add additional, secure funding sources. This does not include or affect partner funding as a strategy for expanding our reach)
- 2) Controlling common invasive species as a stand-alone action (We will continue to do this as part of our more comprehensive restoration projects where we’ll be replacing with diverse native habitat)
- 3) Lack of research – supporting information
- 4) Access to local natural areas/features

CONSERVATION THREATS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

****Might still consider support and/or partnership to help address some of these threats.***

- 1) Declining air quality
- 2) Toxins exposure and legacy (Linton tank farms, railroads/coal, and contaminated garden soil concerns)
- 3) Food insecurity
- 4) Declining water quantity
- 5) Increasing need for more transportation options/capacity (hits many other impacts)
- 6) Herbicide issues / public mistrust of herbicides

OTHER FEEDBACK CAPTURED TO BE ADDRESSED IN *HOW WE ROLL OUT THE PLAN AND/OR FOR INCLUSION IN OTHER PARTS OF THE PLAN*

Lack of awareness of WMSWCD (we are not widely known and strive to increase awareness of our services)

Communications that are overly complex (We strive to use clearer, simpler, less technical language for all public-facing products)

Lack of funding and capacity (for inclusion in Organizational Health section/discussions)

Preamble on Evolving Success Criteria for Effective & Informed Decision Making

Why do we need evolving (continuously developed and adaptive) success criteria?

- To define outcomes
- To facilitate decision making
- To ensure diversity, equity and inclusion is embedded as a foundational value

How will we use these criteria?

- To examine and weigh the impact of difficult decision alternatives
- To provide guidance when a conversation or decision is stuck and it's unclear what might be the best path forward

Focal areas & foundational values defined:

To ensure we are all grounded in how we define the three outcome focal areas and foundational values of diversity, equity and inclusion, definitions are provided below:

Conservation Scope: Our organizational mission, vision, and goals that determine what we do, why we do it and how we do it. This will be *affirmed or modified* as we move through the process. Conservation Scope also includes identifying specific initiatives and program areas that achieve our mission, vision and goals as determined through the LRBP update process.

Financial Sustainability: An organizational framework that ensures the long-term ability to successfully fulfill our mission while being a good steward of public funds through:

- a) Readily available financial resources to implement annual work plans
- b) Sufficient reserves to ensure resiliency during economic downturns and the capacity to support capital projects while maintaining our current staffing level

Organizational Health: An organization's ability to function effectively and efficiently, to cope adequately, to change appropriately, and to grow from within.¹

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion:

Diversity encompasses a wide range of qualities and attributes within a person, group, or community. When we celebrate diversity, communities and workplaces become richer, drawing upon the variety of experiences, perspectives, and skills that people can contribute.²

Equity is the concept of treating everyone fairly by acknowledging everyone's unique situation and addressing systemic barriers. The aim of equity is to ensure that everyone has access to equal results and benefits.²

Inclusion: Acknowledging and valuing people's differences so as to enrich or shift social planning, decision making, and quality of life for everyone. In an inclusive society, we all have a sense of belonging, acceptance, and recognition as valued and contributing members of society.²

1. Organizational Health Diagnostic & Development Corporation (Source: <https://www.organizationalhealth.com/publications/OHFinal.pdf>, 3/9/2020)
2. Nonprofit Association of Oregon, Equity & Inclusion Lens Guide, 2019 (Source: <https://nonprofitoregon.org/sites/default/files/NAO-Equity-Lens-Guide-2019.pdf>, 7/10/2020)

Last Update: 8/3/2020

LRBP Evolving Success Criteria, Questions & Question Assignments

Conservation Scope Evolving Success Criteria

Given your examination of the following, how does this decision align with what we aim to accomplish as an organization:

1. Aligns with our affirmed or modified mission
2. Aligns with our affirmed or modified vision
3. Aligns with our affirmed or modified goals
4. Results in long-term impactful conservation outcomes
5. Embeds equity and inclusion as foundational value in all that we are (our organizational makeup) and all that we do (our work)
6. Is responsive to community needs of communities in the District that we have prioritized
7. Allows us to fulfil a unique niche or unmet need with strategic partnerships leveraging our limited resources and expanding our overall reach
8. Effectively addresses identified priority ecosystem or conservation threats

Underlined terms will be further evaluated and refined as we move through the process:

#4: What “long-term impactful conservation outcomes” will we prioritize?

#6: What communities shall we prioritize?

#7: What makes partnerships “strategic” in addition to leveraging resources & expanding reach?

#8: What conservation threats do we wish to address? (**Critical question for the Board*)

Conservation Scope Direction Setting Conversation Questions

The following questions will be posed separately the Board (at the Spring Board Retreat), to technical staff, and an advisory committee to guide our conversation on our conservation scope. Additional internally focused questions will be also be addressed by staff during the direction setting process. Findings from these conversations will be incorporated into our LRBP update through additional vetting of the advisory committee recommendations by technical staff and the Community Engagement Liaisons

1. Mission affirmation or modification?

- a. Should we broaden our mission by either adding to or replacing “Soil & Water” with “Natural Resources”? Is the term “Natural Resources” too jargoned and extractive of a term, how else might we describe this?
- b. Should we include equity and inclusion in our mission? If yes, how?
- c. Are we missing an opportunity to explain how we get our work done? Should we explicitly call out how we work with others on their land?
- d. Does our reasoning or beneficiaries extend beyond “people, wildlife and the environment?”
- e. Can we state this more plainly?
- f. Is this too broad or too vague?
- g. Are we missing a key component?

2. Vision affirmation or modification?

- a. Are “economic viability and environmental health” the only beneficiaries we want to envision?
- b. Are “urban and rural residents, farmers, business owners, public schools and the general public” represent who the works with for implementing on-the-ground conservation?
- c. Should we consider adding equity, environmental justice, access and climate change in our vision?
- d. Do you have organizational or community visions (or desired future outcomes) that intersect with what we are proposing?
- e. Do you see your communities and their interests represented in this vision?
- f. What are we missing that we might include and why?
- g. What might you suggest removing and why?

3. Goals affirmation or modification?

- a. Do our current goals align with our affirmed or modified mission & vision? What goals are missing or might be changed to better align these goals?
- b. What results do we want within the next 5 years?
- c. Do you have concerns and/or lack of clarity around our goals?
- d. Are our goals SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, results-based, time bound)?
- e. What community/organizational considerations or impacts might we take into account in achieving these goals?
- f. How should we prioritize our goals?

Groups To Answer Specific Conservation Scope Questions (Board will have final decisions on all items while staff and a Community Advisory Committee will provide its recommendations.

Last Update: 8/3/2020

LRBP Evolving Success Criteria, Questions & Question Assignments

Tech staff will be the primary lead in providing staff recommendations, however broader staff input will be requested and specific staff teams and/or committees will be required for particular items and review of drafts. If the board is listed first below it will be asked to answer a question prior to gaining other input).

1. Staff will generally be posing ideas about this to the Board for approval, but the Advisory Committee will be providing input on clarity, impact and impressions.
 - a. Board & staff
 - b. Board & staff, DEI Committee and Communications guidance needed
 - c. Board & staff
 - d. Board & staff
 - e. Mary & Renee to lead w/ others input including Advisory Committee
 - f. Mary & Renee to lead w/ others input including Advisory Committee
 - g. All
2. See below
 - a. Staff & Board
 - b. Staff & Board
 - c. Tech staff & Community Advisory Committee, board final review. Seek DEI Committee guidance on this.
 - d. Community Advisory Committee & Board
 - e. Community Advisory Committee & Board
 - f. All
 - g. All
3. See below, most goal questions will start with tech staff
 - a. Staff & Board
 - b. Input from all might be helpful here – but starting w/ tech staff and bringing to Community Advisory Committee and board likely makes the best sense
 - c. All
 - d. Staff
 - e. Community Advisory Committee & Board
 - f. Staff, Advisory Committee & Board

Financial Sustainability Evolving Success Criteria

Given your examination of the following, how does this decision effect our long-term ability to successfully fulfill our mission while being a good steward of public funds?

1. Strategic use of funds (Our funds are strategically utilized on priority expenditures that are integral in fulfilling our mission, vision and goals as outlined in our LRBP).
2. Maximizes financial resources (Our funds are heavily leveraged whenever possible to ensure maximum outcomes with our limited financial resources).
3. Ensures financial resiliency (Our budgets are developed and implemented with medium-term and long-term projections and goals to ensure we have ample reserves to ensure financial resiliency)
4. Prepared and responsive to financial threats & opportunities (Financial threats and opportunities are addressed with appropriate spending caps and strategies alongside appropriate growth plans to ensure we are prepared to weather financial threats & take advantage of financial opportunities)

Financial Sustainability Direction Setting Conversation Questions

The following questions will guide our conversation on financial sustainability. Findings from these conversations will be incorporated into our LRBP Update.

1. How will we ensure there are readily available financial resources to implement the LRBP and corresponding work plans?
 - a. What is essential and of utmost value in fulfilling our LRBP, the areas where we spend our money and how will we ensure our resources are used on what we most value?
 - b. How many months of District operational funding are prudent to have on hand?
2. What future financial opportunities and threats should we ensure we are prepared for?
 - a. Increasing personnel costs: Insurance increases, PERS, COLA
 - b. Financial forecasts: 3-5 Year revenue forecasting, tax base growth, compression, economic climate/considerations
 - c. Rent/Lease Up: projected market values, opportunities to address needs
 - d. Fundraising: grants, foundations, bonds, pay-for-service model
3. How will we build sufficient reserves to ensure greater resiliency and flexibility during economic downturns?
 - a. Do you agree with the tactic to match annual expenses to annual income such that we are not depending on carryover savings from the previous year to cover the next year's expenses; allowing these savings to go into reserve accounts?
 - b. How will we ensure un-spent funds at the end of each fiscal year are directed into contingency, rainy day, and unallocated budget categories?
 - c. Do staff need any additional information and support, aside from a revenue forecast before programmatic budgeting occurs, to determine budgets within the aimed cap?
 - d. What additional measures should we take to build our reserves?
4. Should we take on large projects that would require a capital account reserve and what are the tradeoffs in making this level of investment?
5. How will we build the capital savings needed to ensure we have capacity to take on capital projects, if desired?
6. We've identified a need to develop a fixed step system for staff merit increases that provides clear opportunities for advancement and a cap that limits merit increases after staff reach the final step. Cost of living increases would be provided for staff that reach the cap as funds are available. The following questions should be addressed in developing this system:
 - a. What questions and concerns exist around this and how will they be addressed?
 - b. How will caps and steps be determined and structured?
7. How will we embed equity into the financial sustainability framework we build?

Last Update: 8/3/2020

LRBP Evolving Success Criteria, Questions & Question Assignments

Organizational Health Evolving Success Criteria

Given your examination of the following, how does this decision affect ability to function effectively, to cope adequately, to change appropriately, and to grow from within:

Primary criteria are overarching, while secondary criteria are more specific.

Primary Criteria (not ordered in a particular way):

1. We engage and account for multiple perspectives (i.e. staff, board, partners, and the communities we serve)
2. Aligns with District guiding principles and values*
3. Transparent decision making and continued shared leadership
4. Equity & Inclusivity is ingrained in our decision making
5. Welcoming, belonging, and safe environment for staff, board, partners, and constituents
6. Effective and efficient workflow that supports District goals
7. Time is devoted to slow down to be more equitable and inclusive
8. Effective communication that incorporates all staff and board needs, and communication lines are clearly documented and shared with all
9. Staff have adequate facilities and resources to perform their jobs and to continue to improve their skills and abilities
10. The District essential functions are maintained

*Guiding principles and values from the previous LRBP are under review and will be edited as we gather more input – the organizational health planning team and tech staff are charged with initial review of these items and are divided by .

Secondary Criteria (nor ordered in a particular way):

1. Staff have methods for realistic goal setting
2. Staff are comfortable with work/life balance
3. Policies and procedures support employee health
4. Staff and Board feel valued and recognized for their work
5. Staff are empowered to engage in preferred focal areas
6. Staff are supported in areas of less strength or expertise
7. Benefits and flexible schedules for permanent employees are maintained

Organizational Health Direction Setting Conversation Questions

The following questions will guide our conversation on organizational health. Findings from these conversations will be incorporated into our LRBP Update.

1. Do we currently adhere to and agree with our organizational values as stated? What's missing and what might be changed to better reflect our values?
2. What methods should be implored to ensure realistic goal setting?
3. What tactics are needed to ensure effective and known lines of communication?
4. How can we encourage and facilitate a comfortable work/life balance amongst our staff?

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LRBP Evolving Success Criteria, Questions & Question Assignments

5. What steps might we take to ensure transparent decision making and continued shared leadership?
6. How can we ingrain equity and inclusivity in our decision making?
7. How should we value and recognize our staff and board?
8. How shall we ensure ample time and slower pace is supported to be more equitable and inclusive?
9. What actions and systems are needed to empower and support staff to engage in preferred focal areas while providing support in areas of less strength or expertise?
10. How will we maintain benefits and flexible schedules?
11. How will we support and encourage professional development and growth opportunities?
12. How do we engage and account for multiple perspectives (i.e. staff, board, partners, and the community)?
13. What are the District's essential functions?

The Org. Health Planning team identified the following teams/groups to answer the questions notated above:

#1: staff and board

#2**: org. health planning team (**ensure this question is answered in same meeting as #4)

#3: org. health planning team

#4**: org. health planning team (**ensure this question is answered in same meeting as #2)

#5: staff and board

#6*: DEI Committee (Leadership w/ invite to Committee members if not able to fit in July meeting) & Advisory Committee- *ensure this question is answered in same meeting as #8 for internal meetings

#7: Org. health team – (list ways we do this to share for board/staff input before or after we meet – depending on what makes the most sense at the time)

#8*: DEI Committee (Leadership if needed, see #6) *ensure this question is answered in the same meeting as #6

#9 & #10: Leadership team

#11: Leadership team & Board

#12: Staff and Board answer this and Advisory Committee get modified version to ask how they do this.

#13: Leadership Team [look at statutory mandate & tax-base commitments]

Please Send Questions and/or Comment to Mary Logalbo: mary@wmswcd.org , 503.238.4775 x103