

Oregon Environmental Literacy Task Force

Monday, April 4th, 2011– 1:00pm to 4:00pm
Department of Forestry - State Forester's Office
2600 State St., Salem, Oregon 97310

1:08: Welcome from Traci Price & Introductions

Present:

Traci Price, Task Force Chair
Molly Jones, Environmental Education Association of Oregon
Lori Stole, Sustainable Oregon Schools Initiative
Greg Smith, Lewis and Clark College
Susan Sahnaw, Oregon Natural Resources Education Program
Nancee Hunter, Oregon Sea Grant at Hatfield Marine Science Center
Bora Simmons, National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education
Rachael Goetzelman, Oregon Coast Aquarium
Jim Quiring, Tillamook Forest Center & Department of Forestry
Brent Searle, Department of Agriculture
Stephanie Wagner, Friends of Tryon Creek State Park & PSU Center for Science Education

On the phone:

John Sheehan, Metro
Aaron Morehouse, Columbia Gorge Ecology Institute
Susan Cross, Jefferson Nature Center
Sarah Bodor, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Sam Chan, Oregon State University Extension & Oregon Sea Grant
Carolyn Devine, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
Lara Christensen, Gray Family Fund of Oregon Community Foundation

Working Group Updates-*Infrastructure Exploration*

Traci shared the following update on Infrastructure Exploration.

- The purpose of conducting the exploration was to determine the organizational entity that would house the coordination for implementing the environmental literacy plan.
- The committee created evaluation criteria (funding, staffing structure, reputation, etc) for 7 different types of entities: Governor's Office, non-profit organization, Oregon State Agency, quasi state agency (soil water conservation districts, watershed council), universities (higher ed), Oregon Association of Educational Service Districts, Oregon Department of Education.
- The committee scored entities and determined that the best near term fit was the Governor's Office.
- The reasons for this decision: increase outreach for the plan and gain strength for the plan from the state.
- This near term solution would provide more time to thoroughly evaluate the remaining 6 entities to determine a long-term coordinator for the plan.
- Oregon State University, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board and The Oregon Community Foundation have all expressed some interest in playing more of a

leadership roll for the plan and were included as “contingency” options for near term coordination.

Update on No Child Left Inside

Discussion: *Participants will hear from Sarah Bodor regarding the status of No Child Left Inside legislation and the reauthorization of the Elementary & Secondary Education Act and discuss implications for Oregon efforts*

Sarah Bodor, coordinator of the National No Child Left Inside (NCLI) Coalition and Chesapeake Bay Foundation provided the following update:

- NCLI is intended to be included in provisions for the reauthorization of the Elementary & Secondary Education Act.
- The NCLI Coalition has been following fiscal expectations for 2011 - 2012 to determine funding strategies for NCLI.
- Representative Sarbanes & Senator Reed are planning to reintroduce NCLI bills in Congressional chambers this month.
- The emphasis is on securing republican co-sponsorship in the senate and house.
- Sarah urged Oregonians to contact Congressman Walden in Oregon to encourage him to sponsor NCLI.
- *Brent:* Is the hesitancy in sponsoring related to budgetary concerns or the perception of legislation itself?
- *Sarah:* NCLI has received bipartisan support in the past.
- When the NCLI team is asked “Are you going to maintain the requested 100 million dollar budget for NCLI?” the answer is yes.
- This challenges new members of congress who are unfamiliar with NCLI which is compounded by some ideological opposition to the legislation.
- Some representatives are opposed to the Department of Education and federal legislation affecting schools.
- The hurdle right now is the budgetary climate. This stand alone bill has a large price tag. Currently there is an aversion to money for new legislation.
- Sarbanes is willing to negotiate the budget with republicans prior to the re-introduction of NCLI.
- NCLI may be introduced with the current budget request.
- Funding for a “Well Rounded Education” may be able to support the goals of NCLI.
- The outlook is very positive.
- The Senate House, Education, Labor, and Pension Committee (HELP) is asking stakeholders to submit comments on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).
- Congressman Harkin anticipates having a draft of the ESEA completed by Easter, more likely in May.
- Representatives need to hear from states with locally relevant information, what’s happening in my state. State efforts have made federal effort move the way it has.
- *Brent:* Are the differences in perspectives of environmental literacy from east to west coast. Walden’s district there’s a wolf issue. Livestock ravages and agriculture and forestry lawsuits. Nomenclature of this gives western rep some pause.
- *Sarah:* There are nuances of messaging, personally so many ways to talk about the issue, including types of education. We can tend to take everything but the kitchen sink. The legislation doesn’t define environmental literacy, the groups begin with an environmental literacy plan (ELP). Figuring out environmental literacy can take a long time to work through. Guidelines, outlined what is in the plan will be different

for each state. It's less about content and more about opportunities and investigating issues from all sides. We can articulate from many angles the impact of environmental education programs. We all need to be singing from same song sheet.

- *Greg*: At the federal level, are alternatives discussed for NCLI?
- *Sarah*: Representatives from federal agencies who provide environmental education look at all gaps make recommendations. We don't have control, but we hope to achieve the goals of NCLI should the ESEA not go through. Programs rarely coordinated with each other, folks try to push idea to coordinate on national level.
- *Sarah*: Thank you for all your work in Oregon. Feel free to send emails with questions.
- *Brent*: If we meet with Walden emphasize the NCLI nomenclature and minimize use of the term environmental education.
- *Lori*: Proposed a subtitle of sustainable future, the eastside is more comfortable with sustainability education than environmental education. They have come to accept this term.
- *Stephanie*: There are ideas on how we can avoid conflicts. Trudi Volk all stakeholders come up with solutions systematically.
- *Lori*: I have used the term education for environmental literacy.
- *Jim*: We are close to this certain language, so we can handle reshaping terms we use.
- *Bora*: In every community/state you have to use terms how it makes the most sense. In Congress we have supporters you wouldn't think we would have. They are very supportive, but it depends on language we use. If you can't use environmental education, use conservation education, nature resource education or stewardship education. Best if we can get across what the root thing is, the root notion of what we are trying to do.
- *Traci*: Having the conversations with folks is important.

Working Group Updates-Governor Committee

- John Falk, Jon Yoder, and Traci Price met with Nancy Golden, Governor Kitzhaber's Education Advisor and Superintendent for Springfield School District.
- Traci said Nancy commented that she had been listening to Richard Louv's book on tape.
- The committee was in agreement that the nature of the meeting was positive.
- The committee emphasized the need for authority to move work forward either through an executive order to establish a standing council or by having the Governor's Office accept housing the near-term coordination of the environmental literacy plan. Since the task force is no longer recognized the group is challenged with no official entity with authority for implementation.
- Right now the Governor's Office is focused on the Governor's education initiatives during this legislative session. Nancy suggested getting back with her after June 30th to talk more strategies.
- Lori met with Nancy Golden shortly after about Sustainable Oregon Schools Initiative. Lori got a similar email on weekend saying Nancy can't do anything until this session is over. Administration needs to focus on Kitzhaber's education agenda.
- *Brent*: Had Nancy heard or seen the ELP prior to your meeting?
- *Traci*: I don't recall the plan seeming totally new/foreign to Nancy. Not sure if she had heard of it prior to meeting. Traci will look in to getting in contact with Nancy after June 30th.

- Lori thought it was uncertain how long Nancy would remain in her position. At least this response means there is some continuity with it.
- Traci will still share with Nancy our potential draft executive order and Kansas' and Maryland's existing executive orders.
- *Jim*: Keep shaping our message and be ready at short notice if we get that opportunity. We are still positive, just on hold.
- *Stephanie*: I am meeting with transportation advisor soon and will take opportunities like this to make people aware of what we are doing and making a broad effort to keep the word out there. It would be good if Kitzhaber had ELP come up in conversation from multiple people.
- *Greg*: Has the task force looked through legislators and identified who might be interested and shared info with them?
- *Traci*: So far Representative Buckley has been most informed as well as Representative Gelser. Most all sponsors from our bill would be supporters, such as Cannon. How can we enhance plan and communication with legislators? ELP was submitted to house education committee and we testified before house education committee. Received a positive reaction. Circle back task force Governor Committee set up call to follow up on that work.
- *Stephanie*: If doesn't follow through, have Plan B option ready. If the plan to house in Governor's Office doesn't go properly should the task go back to the Governor Committee, the infrastructure committee or the task force as a whole?
- OSU contact John Falk is very involved. Susan has been involved but it doesn't have to be one person. Supervisor of extension, Susan's supervisor could organize at OSU.
- Maybe we should coordinate a meeting with OSU, OWEB and OCF to strategize a Plan B.
- *Lara*: Is there a plan a.5? Implementation funding was for the first 6 months of the year. OCF is not as nimble as a non-profit. Meeting OSU, OWEB and OCF see partnerships established. Budget, state agencies put in in-kind match funding. Strengthen your case for Plan B. It's not just June 30th that we need to get through there's July, August and September. Need to stay ready. So many of you have put time/money in good to share with people for future funding.
- *Carolyn*: If you don't show that this looks more like start up without connections.
- *Sam*: What kind for networking are you doing with larger influential industries in education, high tech, Intel and Oregon Business Council. Businesses are aware of essentialness of high quality students.
- *Traci*: The Oregon Business Association was one of the first groups to join the No Oregon Child Left Inside Coalition (NOCLI) and have been kept in the loop. Want to get Meyer, Collins, folks to the table. Talk about what we are doing and what's next. OCF could help coordinate.
- *Lara*: High tech industry suggestions. Contacts?
- *Traci*: Bill Becker at Portland State University is working on a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) initiative with Hillsboro & Beaverton School Districts and a variety of partners including Intel and Vernier. This model of STEM could serve as a statewide model. There is a strong place for non formal education and environmental literacy in this model.
- OSU is also opening a STEM center. John Falk will be the director and involved with studying how students learn science with the Parkrose School District in Portland.
- OSU and PSU are talking.
- *Susan*: Other states have tapped into industry. Intel crosses state lines.

- *Stephanie*: National standards for science learning are modeled in Oregon standards and strong on inquiry. The ELP aligning with STEM is a good avenue to connect with tech industry and school districts.

Working Group Updates-Standards Alignment

Bora Simmons provided the following update on committee work:

- The committee's work has been spent on initial cross walks, alignment of environmental literacy strands with standards.
- Comfortable with science, so we started there.
- The goal is to align the environmental literacy strands with all K-8 and high school academic standards.
- Started on health standards and Oregon Skill Sets.
- Invitation to share drafts with people interested. Contact classroom teachers to get feedback, or even a larger group.
- *Brent*: Add Tami Kerr to list (Traci will send Bora Tami's contact info).
- Committee members involved so far: Stephanie, Lori, Traci, John Yoder, Lara, Annie Kilby (Klamath Bird Observatory), Norie (Oregon Forestry Resources Institute), Sherri Graham (Siskiyou Field Institute), Tiffany Austin (grad student at PSU), Tim Tabor (Waters foundation).
- In ELP the second strand is systems thinking. Social analysis skills and how to help teachers implement this.
- *Lori*: Conference with big systems thinking piece. Institute on systems thinking June 4th in Portland. Talking with ODE about essential skills piece.
- *Bora*: Opportunity with social studies standards in the midst of being revised. Some committee members and task force members submitted comments encouraging the social science standards committee to review the environmental literacy plan and consider its inclusion.
- *Lori*: systems thinking can be incorporated into any grade level. Diana Fisher works with High School and math. Lori connected her to ELP. Strong help on systems piece in plan. Lots of schools are doing this kind of work good demonstration of what ELP could look like.
- *Traci*: Capturing case studies can help.
- *Bora*: The alignment work will be finalized this summer. Include material on systems & literacy material in ways to show how it can be integrated without being overwhelming. Going grade by grade? Or subject by subject? Get feedback from people using it and then finalize in meeting this summer.
- *Brent*: Heavy on text for classroom learning how will this help get kids out of the classroom?
- *Bora*: This is the difference between standards and implementation. Standards for classroom teachers is content/process rather than how you go about handling it. Standards hint towards implementation in them. Want to get kids involved in inquiry & investigations. Systems is the "what". Implementation is the "how" piece. Pieces marry together. Great to have case studies. We need this piece to show how ELP connects to education.
- *Brent*: Preface the alignment document with this kind of explanation.
- Make sure this piece lives in classrooms with real teachers and kids.
- *Greg*: Inquiry beyond books and internet. How they learned themselves, not easy to move to field. Saw a film with lessons from the real world. Bob Gliner, filmmaker <http://www.docmakeronline.com/>. Example of 4th graders at Sunnyside Elementary, surveyed people on Hawthorne blvd. Asked why people were bike riding. Data was

analyzed and taken to Portland City Council. It was an inquiry activity with a broader purpose.

- *Traci*: Bill Becker at PSU commented that the most valuable role of nonformal educators is the context applied learning opportunity. The how is what we can really support.
- *Traci*: Asked Bora for a formal request for help on standards review to send through the Environmental Education Association of Oregon's (EEAO) listserve.

Working Group Updates-Regional Forums

Traci: Idea of regional forums is evolving over time. Using them to get info out about the ELP and update on what's been happening. Follow up with folks to get forums scheduled. Right now I am looking for existing meetings. Get feedback in regions, hear challenges. What resources people need to make happen. Valuable to get knowledge for resource needs.

Susan: If you see an opportunity let Traci know.

Traci presented in Ashland, in February at NOCLI 101 meeting. There will likely be a forum in Portland Metro, central Oregon, the coast, Eugene, Hood River/Gorge, Eastern Oregon.

2011 Realities

Work item: *Participants reviewed and discussed the 2011 proposed budget and determine expenditure priorities.*

- Sources of implementation funds include an EPA grant for the regional forums and OCF funds.
- Of the \$ from OCF \$25,000 of \$30,000 has been committed to standards alignment and coordinator.
- Remaining \$5,000 is budgeted for teacher professional development and web tool development.
- *John*: The \$2,500 for teacher professional development and web tool is to hire somebody to do those projects?
- *Traci*: Yes - the teacher professional development needs to be further refined from our environmental literacy plan chapter. If we don't contract with someone for that piece it could suffer from a lack of leadership.
- Implication that the literacy plan is a good guideline intended to evolve as a living document.
- *Lara*: When OCF came on board with implementation funds for 2011, the \$2,500 for teacher professional development and the resource directory was intended as seed money. The Gray Family Fund wants to do another summit in 2012 with the potential to focus on teacher professional development. The ELP can work to support this summit. Susan, Stephanie and Greg will help with this.
- *Traci*: For the web tool we are essentially thinking about EEAO's resource directory. It's not perfect but is intended to change as we see needed.
- OFRI putting together a website for the Forestry Conceptual Framework aligned to the standards. Teachers will be able to search by topic and grade level.
- *Traci*: The OCF funds have been going through The Freshwater Trust (TFT). Traci is coordinating contracts through TFT.
- *Lara*: TFT is not taking a cut from this grant. All funds going into ELP. Traci will need a new home if more grant funds come through. OCF won't want to continue to give

- funds to TFT. Decide where OCF can give money. Have to know fiscal agent. Encourage non profit, university will take large cut, unless foundation acct 5%.
- *Lori*: Zero Waste Alliance could house it. Safe Rides to School from ODOT funding. NOCLI not going to be 501 c3. Should go to non profit with strong affiliation to government agency.
 - Traci can use EEAO easily, she is going to write capacity building grant to help EEAO establish a stronger regional network in Oregon for environmental education.
 - *John Sheehan*: We need to get the sequencing right. Some sort of resolution about the governing body of this before fundraising. Any number of organizations have as much standing to solicit funds on behave of NOCLI as any others. Need central entity Governor's Office or other. Unclear, decisions because there is no body to make that decision. Baseline governance strengthened, then spinning out as its own non profit. But non profit could house for near term. Outside advisory committee how organization spends money.
 - *Aaron*: Columbia Gorge Ecology Institute is a possibility. Board doesn't direct organization, project is governed by the committee as outside organization.
 - Who will do the fundraising? Chicken chasing the egg.
 - Develop statewide organization that is a leader in all of this. Is that logical?
 - Implementation funding is through the end of May/beginning of June.
 - *Lara*: OCF will consider another grant later this year. OCF's goal is to get funders to the table. This is a group of very committed folks putting in in-kind time.
 - Consider a fiscal agent or organization to act as an umbrella organization. The fiscal agent is one issue that the infrastructure committee can look into.
 - Would funding go to Governor's Office if implementation is housed there?
 - What's needed now is a solution. Are we waiting to hear from Governor's Office? What do you need until then? We lose Traci in May. EEAO is writing a capacity building but it's not an implementation grant. Get us through the short term some entity for fundraising. Could we create a fund at OCF?
 - *Lara*: I can talk with development team at OCF. We would need a proposal from task force, MOUs and budget. Propose to Gray Family and other departments. If have a meeting with all of these funders we wouldn't want to ask them to be engaged in supporting OCF fund to implement ELP.
 - Create fund at OCF and have advisory committee. Continuation of infrastructure committee.
 - Susan, Stephanie and Aaron past fiscal agreements will be involved.
 - Think about all options and have Plan B conversation. Maybe part of infrastructure committee.
 - What will happen at the end of May? Won't hear about funding for a long time.
 - Collaborative fundraising opportunity. Develop structure of NOCLI and how it moves forward. Need a bridge plan. Sign MOU for year to work together.
 - International sustainability 501c3, doesn't carry baggage. Option but would be admin fee. Set up meeting of people who agreed to help with this soon.

Next Steps

Work item: *Participants will discuss ways to enhance outreach for the environmental literacy plan including regional forums, following the legislation & marketing. Implementation priorities will be reviewed and 2011 meetings scheduled.*

Traci will:

- Send Doodle poll for another meeting in 2-3 months, after legislative session 6/30.
- Send notes from meeting today with attachments.
- Send Doodle for next Infrastructure Exploration and Governor Committee meeting.

4:04pm: Adjourned