

South Puget Sound Prairie Landscape Working Group

Group Overview
History
Perspective



Patrick Dunn – South Sound Director
Center for Natural Lands Management

The **SPSPLWG is an informal group** striving to promote and improve the management and planning of conservation actions on the prairies and associated habitats ... This group includes **members, ..., who will work together** to share expertise, develop resources, and effectively plan and implement future conservation activities. ... The overriding goal for the working group is to improve the natural resources of South Puget Sound prairies.

The group will normally work **based upon consensus** or near consensus. However, the informal structure of the group **does not preclude the cooperation of members on 'renegade' ideas** or actions that the entire group does not agree on. ...

The working group is not merely a 'board room' group, the working group **strives to make significant improvements on the ground** in our prairies and oak woodlands.

Working Group Statement

- Bring together prairie conservationists to share information, discuss priorities and generate synergies.

Working Group Purpose

Comparison of Then – 1994 and Now - 2012

- Participants
- Protected Areas
- Rare Species
- Site Management
- Prescribed Fire
- Native Plant and Seed Production

Historic Perspective

Then

- More words in the title than participants.
- We could all fit in one van with space to spare.

Now

- Certainly there wouldn't be room to spare in the van – probably need a roof rack too.
- Working groups in BC, North Sound, Willamette Valley, and for candidate species. Linked through Cascadia Prairie Oak Partnership

Participants

Then

- Mima Mounds, Rocky Prairie and Bald Hills NAPs.
- Scatter Creek Wildlife Area.
- Glacial Heritage Preserve.

Now

- West Rocky Wildlife Area.
- Mima Mounds NAP expansion.
- Tenalquot Prairie Preserve, Cavness Ranch.
- Wolf Haven.

Protected Sites

Then

- More wild populations – decreases in Taylor's checkerspot, mardon skipper, Mazama pocket gopher, streaked horned lark.

Now

- New populations of golden paintbrush.
- Translocated gophers.
- Propagate and translocate Taylor's.
- Egg-swapping of larks.
- Translocated bluebirds to San Juan's and BC.
- Preparing to re-establish nuthatch.

Protected Sites

Then

- Scatter Creek – a staff member living there, truck and \$250.
- Glacial Heritage – “Why would TNC want to work in that broom patch?”

Now

- Scatter Creek – WDFW has restorationist, assistant, crew and support.
- Glacial Heritage – After \$300,000 + in grant funding, management work load is declining and rare species are being (re)introduced.

Site Management

Then

- Mima Mounds – One fire cost > \$75,000.
- Ft. Lewis – Only burned in February.

Now

- South Sound – More prescribed fires per year than anywhere in NW. Costs \$75,000 per year.
- JBLM – Has dedicated seasonal prescribed fire supervisor. Burns mainly in summer/fall.

Prescribed Fire

Then

- We had a few pots in the back of Eric Delvin's house (2003), otherwise contract growing of 'Idaho' fescue.

Now

- 500,000 plugs sown each year at 3 dedicated facilities. Thirty major species produced.
- 500 + lbs. of seed produced, and expanding.

Native Plant and Seed Production

The working group is here to help shape conservation and save these extraordinary habitats and species.

Here are some areas for consideration:

- State and potential Federal-listings.
- Private lands management and mitigation.
- Expanded science-partnerships.
- Communications and engaged public.

Future Prairie Conservation