

Conservation Reserve Design Working Group Report

A. Clarification questions

- Through what measures are we proposing to conserve this ecosystem?
- Is the RCW recovery strategy included in this design?
 - By default there was a lot of overlap.
- How are the ecological significance buffers and corridor functions integrated to set the priorities?
 - Conserve habitat first, then look at buffers. Buffers are areas that are already conserved.
- What are the sources of the biological information (databases)?
 - National Heritage Database, RCW Monitoring data
- Is strategy 1.7 envisioned to be a feedback loop?
 - That it is the intent.
- How are strategies 1.1 and 1.3 different? Sound very similar
- Are Upland buffers ranked according to the size of the area to which they are attached?
 - Ranking comes out areas of priority

Initial reaction or feelings for the plan:

- Frustration over lack of written plan to show people.
- “I like it, good approach”
- Like it-comprehensive

Potential problems, obstacles or difficulties with the plan:

- One of the pitfalls-- how is the public going to react to anything we do?
- History of land being taken away.
- “My Land” mentality. Perception that their land/home is vulnerable if their land is on a conservation map.
- Plan is missing explicit methods for determining if the reserve design is working—measures of success (strategy 7)
- Lack of system for ranking parcels, by incorporating all criteria (scoring system)
 - **SCOTT, CAN YOU PROVIDE MORE DETAILS AS TO THE DISCUSSION OF THIS ISSUE?**
- Concern about keeping map updated (current rate of land turnover is high)
- How to make this process better to protect identified lands and resources—better implementation
- How robust is this reserve design? If one part fails (i.e. lose a corridor), does the plan still function?

What like about the plan and vision:

- Using data that already exists may facilitate finishing this design
- Rate of habitat protection would exceed loss
- Process for identifying conservation values is very good
- Glad that people are working to protect what makes the Sandhills unique, potential to make large impact
- Like the multi-party working group concept of tackling this problem
- Like inclusion of buffers and corridors, may make plan far more effective
- High level of inclusion, especially land protection people
- Presents an easy to understand vision for conservation. Easy to put on map and therefore easy to sell, and also easier to measure success—helps future funding efforts
- More inclusion may equal more commitment, commitment of land owners due to involvement

New strategies to consider:

- Buffer areas- do an educational outreach to developed areas (land/home owners).
- **Coordinate a buffer with a habitat type. (Some habitats may require less land than others)**
- **Add a system for ranking parcels, by incorporating all criteria (scoring system)**
- Like to see more of a research component built in, this is an opportunity to learn about sustainable ecosystems – **For example, do we know that our vision of success is actual success**
- Provide more of an opportunity for dialogue between working groups
- How do you manage the identified properties in the plan?

List of indicators that will show we are making progress:

- **Number of acres protected and categories of quality (primary areas) compared to number of acres that drop out because of land use or habitat change**
- **Good buy-in and support of the plan by local governments. For example, include reserve design into local plans (land use, utilities, transportation, etc.)**
- Retaining partnership as a place for dialogue
- Indicator (or critical) species maintaining or increasing their population
- **Ecological indicators that you measure over time**
 - **Measure species richness (need baseline information)**
 - **Presence absence**
 - **Parameters to measure functionality of corridors (movement of species between identified parcels and corridors, and within corridors)**