AGENCY RESPONSE

Appendix 2

- Department of Ecology
- Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Department of Natural Resources
- Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
- Office of Financial Management

STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY
P.O. Box 47600 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7600
(360) 407-6000 • TDD Only (Hearing Impaired) (360) 407-6006

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SEP 10 1998
JLARC

September 3, 1998

Ron Perry, Acting Legislative Auditor
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee
PO Box 40910
Olympia, WA 98501-2323

Dear Mr. Perry:

Attached is a summary of the Department of Ecology's formal response to the final sunset review report of the Washington Conservation Corps as presented by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee.

We enjoyed working with the staff from the JLARC.

Sincerely,

Tom

Tom Fitzsimmons
Director
Department of Ecology

Enclosure

cc: Rob Spath, Department of Ecology
Gordon White, Department of Ecology

Department of Ecology

RECOMMENDATION	AGENCY POSITION	COMMENTS
Number1	Concur	The Department of Ecology agrees that the legislature should continue this valuable program and furthermore generally agrees with program modifications listed in recommendations 1 through 5.
Number 2	Concur	Ecology agrees that cost effective performance measures should be developed and consistently used by all WCC agencies.
Number 3	Concur	Ecology agrees with this recommendation and would appreciate the opportunity to make a recommendation to the legislature on what types of work the WCC should concentrate on as well as where it should focus its hiring and training program. Ecology also recognizes the important role the WCC program will play in the recovery of salmon populations.
Number 4	Concur	
Number 5	Concur	Ecology's data management system has been significantly improved over the last few years and will be able to incorporate the tracking of success measures that are identified in recommendation number 2.

State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Mailing Address: 600 Capitol Way N • Olympia, WA 98501-1091 • (360) 902-2200, TDD (360) 902-2207
Main Office Location: Natural Resources Building • 1111 Washington Street SE • Olympia, WA

September 9, 1998

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Mr. Ron Perry, Acting Legislative Auditor
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee
Post Office Box 40910
Olympia, Washington 98501-2323

Dear Mr. Perry:

Thank you for your letter dated August 25, 1998, requesting a formal response by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to changes made by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) in the preliminary report of the Sunset Review of the Washington Conservation Corps (WCC).

Enclosed are WDFW comments using the format that you requested. Please contact Steve Sherlock, Habitat and Lands Division Manager, at (360) 586-2762 if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Larry Peck
Deputy Director

LP:SS:kam

Enclosure

Recommendation #	WDFW Position	Comments
Recommendation #1 *"The legislature should continue the Washington Conservation Corps with modifications indicated in recommendations 2 through 5 of this report."*	Concur with comments	WDFW fully concurs that the state legislature should continue the WCC. This program has provided over a thousand young people an excellent work and training experience over the past fifteen years, while providing WDFW with countless hours of labor intensive project completions on Department lands and facilities. This is significant work that provides public enjoyment and opportunities that would not be available without the help of WCC corps members. WDFW either concur's or partially concur's with Recommendations 2 through 5, however, the agency believes that implementing some of the recommendations would result in a fiscal impact to the program.
Recommendation #2 *"Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources, and State Parks should establish a cost-effective Conservation Corps, consistent with the requirements of the Budget and Accounting Act (Chapter 43.88 RCW)."*	Partially Concur	WDFW concurs that the program should implement a cost effective performance measurement system. However, WDFW feels that there would be a direct fiscal impact to provide administrative time to implement such a system by June 30, 1999.
Recommendation #3 *"Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources, and State Parks should conduct an assessment of need for the Washington Conservation Corps and make a recommendation to the legislature before the 1999 Legislative Session whether the program resources should be targeted in the future."*	Partially Concur	WDFW agrees that an assessment of need for the program should be conducted by participating WCC agencies in a consistent manner. We would welcome the opportunity to brief legislators and make a recommendation to them on the types, locations of work projects and training that the program should focus on within WDFW. This process would update the current legislation to meet the true demands of today.
Recommendation #4 *"Based on the outcome of recommendation 3, the legislature should consider whether to dedicate any portion of the general fund appropriation for the WCC for targeted areas or populations. If such targeting is desired, agencies should establish a process to track those expenditures in order to demonstrate compliance with legislative intent."*	Partially Concur	WDFW concurs that if the legislature continues to dedicate appropriations toward targeted areas or populations that a tracking system needs to be maintained. WDFW currently has a system in place that tracks expenditures in distressed areas by county. However, this system is extremely time consuming to implement. WDFW values the opportunity to reevaluate whether such targeting of distressed areas truly meets the demands of today.
Recommendation #5 *"Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources, and State Parks should establish a reliable database (similar to Ecology's) that will allow Washington Conservation Corps program information to be used for effective management decision-making."*	Concur	

Jennifer M. Belcher
Commissioner of Public Lands

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JLARC

September 8, 1998

Ron Perry, Acting Legislative Auditor
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee
P.O. Box 40910
Olympia, WA 98504-0910

Dear Mr. Perry:

I've enclosed the Department of Natural Resources' formal response to the preliminary report of the Sunset Review of the Washington Conservation Corps. Sheryl Wimberly will represent the department during the October 6 meeting of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee, and she'll be available to make additional comments. Sheryl can be reached at 902-1056.

Sincerely,

JENNIFER M. BELCHER
Commissioner of Public Lands

JMB:cwp

(98A-0323)

Department of Natural Resources
Olympia, Washington 98504-7000
(360) 902-1000

Department of Natural Resources
Comments on the Preliminary Report for the
Washington Conservation Corps Sunset Review
September 8, 1998

RECOMMENDATION	AGENCY POSITION	COMMENTS
Recommendation 1 ***"The legislature should continue the Washington Conservation Corps with modifications indicated in recommendations 2 through 5 of this report."***	Concur.	The Department of Natural Resources agrees that the legislature should continue this valuable program. The DNR concurs with Recommendations 2 through 5, but believes that implementing some of the recommendations would result in a fiscal impact to the program.
Recommendation 2 ***"Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources, and State Parks should establish a cost-effective performance measurement system for the Washington Conservation Corps, consistent with the requirements of the Budget and Accounting Act (Chapter 43.88 RCW).***	Partially concur.	The DNR agrees that a performance measurement system should be established. However, there will be a fiscal impact to develop and implement such a system by June 30, 1999, since this task was not budgeted for in our 1997-99 budget. Interim steps are being taken that include the development of more general performance measures for the 1999-01 budget period.

Recommendation 3 ***"Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources and State Parks should conduct an assessment of need for the Washington Conservation Corps and make a recommendation to the legislature before the 1999 Legislative Session whether the program resources should be targeted in the future."***	Partially concur.	The DNR agrees that an assessment of need for the program should be conducted by participating agencies in a uniform manner. We would appreciate the opportunity to make a recommendation to the 1999 Legislature on the types/locations of work projects and training that the program should focus on within DNR.
Recommendation 4 ***"Based on the outcome of recommendation 3, the legislature should consider whether to dedicate any portion of the general fund appropriation for the Washington Conservation Corps for targeted areas or populations. If such targeting is desired, agencies should establish a process to track those expenditures in order to demonstrate compliance with legislative intent."***	Partially concur.	The DNR agrees that if the legislature dedicates appropriations towards targeted areas or populations, a tracking system should be established to demonstrate compliance with legislative intent. Fiscal impacts will occur to develop and implement a tracking system.
Recommendation 5 ***"Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources, and State Parks should establish a reliable database (similar to Ecology's) that will allow Washington Conservation Corps program information to be used for effective management decision-making."***	Concur.	

(98A-0323.att)

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STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
7150 Cleanwater Lane • P.O. Box 42650 • Olympia, Washington 98504-2650 • (360) 902-8500
FAX (360) 753-1594 • Internet Address: http://www.parks.wa.gov
TDD (Telecommunications Device for the Deaf): (360) 664-3133

September 6, 1998

Ron Perry
Acting Legislative Auditor
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee
506 16th Avenue SE
Olympia, Washington 98501-2323

Dear Mr. Perry:

In response to your letter of August 25, 1998, we have reviewed the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee preliminary sunset review report for the Washington Conservation Corps (WCC).

In general, we have concurred with your findings. Our response and comments on each of the review's five recommendations are listed below. The numbered recommendations are those contained in the revised draft preliminary report of August 24, 1998.

> *Recommendation 1: "The legislature should continue the Washington Conservation Corps with modifications listed in recommendations 2 through 5 of this report."*

Agency response: Partially concur.

Comments: The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission supports continuation of the WCC program. The WCC program has been a success for the agency and corps members. The agency has been able to complete trails, landscape grounds and finish minor maintenance projects. Corps members have gained by developing work ethics and learning basic skills.

In our 1999-2001 budget preparation, State Parks has proposed expansion of the WCC to provide workforce entry skills to Washington State residents who have been out of the workforce for at least six months or who have earnings below the national poverty level.

While the prior emphasis of WCC brought young people between 18 and 25 into conservation

work that will transfer to some trades, the next iteration of the program will recognize that stiff competition for jobs requires candidates to show a successful work record, be familiar with computers, and have an understanding of a specific trade. We believe that the removal of the age barrier will enable seniors living on small pensions to reenter the work market. The expansion of the job assignments will enable us to offer both field, office and shop experiences. The enrollment period with a two-year maximum will enable many of the enrollees to move from unskilled to fully qualified for entry level positions. Enrollees will be trained by skilled trade employees in equipment and building trades, landscaping and environmental crafts or assigned to offices where they will learn customer service, computer skills and financial reconciliation. The goal is to give graduating corps members more advanced and marketable skills while giving the agency an opportunity to begin work on the backlog of program needs.

> *Recommendation 2: "Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources, and State Parks should establish a cost-effective performance measurement system for the Washington Conservation Corps, consistent with the requirements of the Budget and Accounting Act (Chapter 43.88 RCW)."*

Agency response: Concur.

Comments: We believe that the WCC Coordinating Council comprised of program managers from each of the included agencies could accomplish a uniform and consistent performance measurement system similar to the examples described in Appendix 4.

> *Recommendation 3: "Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources, and State Parks should conduct an assessment of need for the Washington Conservation Corps and make a recommendation to the legislature before the 1999 Legislative Session whether the program resources should be targeted in the future."*

Agency response: Partially concur.

Comments: We interpret this recommendation to address the current statutory requirement that sixty percent of the general funds be available to enrollees and members from distressed areas and for projects in distressed areas. An assessment of need for distressed areas may be useful to the legislature in clarifying their intent and providing clear direction for agency WCC program managers. Care should be exercised to balance statewide needs for meaningful projects and experiences against strictly economic factors.

> *Recommendation 4: "Based on the outcome of recommendation 3, the legislature should consider whether to dedicate any portion of the general fund appropriation for the Washington Conservation Corps for targeted areas or populations. If such targeting is desired, agencies should establish a process to track those expenditures to demonstrate compliance with legislative intent."*

Agency response: Concur.

Comments: We agree that there is uncertainty whether continued targeting of program resources is still necessary. Based on the outcome of recommendation 3, it would be prudent to establish a consistent process for each involved agency to track expenditures in order to demonstrate compliance with legislative intent.

> *Recommendation 5: "Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources, and State Parks should establish a reliable database (similar to Ecology's) that will allow Washington conservation Corps program information to be used for effective management decision-making."*

Agency response: Concur.

Comments: We believe that our decentralized approach to management and tracking of implementation of the WCC program does provide for effective management decision-making. A consistent approach to database management developed by the WCC Coordinating Council would be useful for external analysis and comparison of each agencies program effectiveness.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the report. If have any questions or need additional information, please call Bill Gansberg, Chief, Human and Financial Resources at 360-902-8598.

Sincerely,

Cleve Pinnix

cc: Kathryn J. Smith, Assistant Director
Bill Gansberg, Chief, Human & Financial Resources
Rakesh Mohan

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STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
Insurance Building, PO Box 43113 • Olympia, Washington 98504-3113 • (360) 902-0555

September 15, 1998

Mr. Thomas M. Sykes
Legislative Auditor
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee
Post Office Box 40910
Olympia, Washington 98504-0910

Dear Mr. Sykes: Tom

Thank you for your letter requesting the Office of Financial Management's (OFM) response on the preliminary report of the Sunset Review of the Washington Conservation Corps program by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee. Attached is OFM's response to this review in the format you requested. OFM will rely on this report rather than conducting its own program and fiscal review as allowed under RCW 43.131.050. If you have any questions regarding this response, please contact Jim Cahill at 902-0569.

Sincerely,

Dick Thompson
Director

DT:JC:lh
Enclosure
cc: Candace Espeseth, OFM
Kay Baxstrom, OFM
Jim Cahill, OFM

Office of Financial Management
Comments on the Preliminary Report for the Washington Conservation Corps Sunset Review
September 15, 1998

Recommendation	Agency Position	Comments
Recommendation 1 *The Legislature should continue the Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) with modifications indicated in recommendations 2 through 5 of this report.*	Concur	OFM believes that the WCC continues to play an important role in the conservation, maintenance and enhancement of the state's historic, environmental and recreational resources, while providing important job training experience for young adults.
Recommendation 2 *Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources and State Parks should establish a cost-effective performance measurement system for the WCC, consistent with the requirements of the Budget and Accounting Act (Chapter 43.88 RCW), to assess the effectiveness of the WCC program.*	Partially concur	OFM strongly supports the development of consistent performance measures across all agencies to evaluate the effectiveness of the WCC program. The WCC Coordinating Council provides the appropriate forum for this development. However, depending upon how extensive a system of performance measures is developed, there may be some fiscal impact to the program for the development of these measures.
Recommendation 3 *Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources and State Parks should conduct an assessment of need for the WCC and make a recommendation to the Legislature before the 1999 Legislative Session whether the program resources should be targeted in the future.*	Partially concur	OFM feels that it would be valuable for the participating agencies to develop a recommendation for the Governor and Legislature on the need to target program resources to distressed areas. However, because the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) is recommending that the WCC program continue, it is unclear as to the value of conducting an overall program needs assessment at this time.

Office of Financial Management
Comments on the Preliminary Report for the Washington Conservation Corps Sunset Review
September 15, 1998

Recommendation	Agency Position	Comments
Recommendation 4 *Based on the outcome of recommendation 3, the Legislature should consider whether to dedicate any portion of the General Fund appropriation for the WCC for targeted areas or populations. If such targeting is desired, agencies should establish a process to track those expenditures in order to demonstrate compliance with legislative intent.*	Concur	None
Recommendation 5 *Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources and State Parks should establish a reliable database (similar to Ecology's) that will allow WCC program information to be used for effective management decision-making and program evaluation.*	Concur	OFM agrees that a consistent and reliable database across agencies for WCC program information would be useful for effective management decision-making and program evaluation. However, there will be some costs to agencies for developing this system and tracking program information. The WCC Coordinating Council provides the appropriate forum for the development of this database.