

Recycling Development Center Advisory Board Meeting December 9, 2020



The Washington Recycling Development Center (Center) Advisory Board met online on December 9, 2020, interested parties attended and offered comments. The web meeting was hosted by Department of Ecology staff.

Advisory Board members:

Corinne Drennan, Pacific NW National Laboratory
Karl Englund, Washington State University
Deb Geiger, Spokane County Solid Waste
Margo Gillaspay, Skagit County Public Works
Nina Goodrich, Sustainable Packaging Coalition
Sego Jackson, Seattle Public Utilities

Allen Langdon, Return-it
Mike Range, Waste Management
Derek Ruckman, Recology
Tim Shestek, American Chemistry Council
Jay Simmons, North Pacific Paper Company
Heather Trim, Zero Waste Washington

Not able to attend: Scott Morgan, Evergreen State College and Kyla Fisher, AMERIPEN

Meeting Agenda:

- Center updates: Board, Ecology, and Commerce
- Data subcommittee update
- Paper study presentations
- Discussion of paper markets

Meeting goals:

- Update the board on Ecology and Commerce work.
- Review paper data and market information.
- Discuss paper markets and next steps.

Materials for this meeting are available on the [Advisory Board website¹](#) and hyperlinked in this document (**note:** hyperlinks are provided at the end of this document with full URLs).

Updates: Board, Ecology, Commerce

Board members shared a few links during the update discussion:

- Nina Goodrich, [Sustainable Packaging Coalition²](#) is offering their [Winter Series Virtual Events³](#).
- Tim Shestek, American Chemistry Council, shared the [Polypropylene Recycling Coalition's⁴](#) third round of [material recovery facility grants⁵](#) is open until March of 2021.

Ecology: Kara Steward

- Continuing to work with business interested in opportunities in Washington. Wrapping up board member conversations, next we will reach out to recycling operations. Ecology subscribed to the [WISERTrade⁶](#) export data, more from Dan Weston's presentation. Looking into grant opportunities for local governments and public institutions to support Center work.

Commerce: Brian Young

- Still not able to hire our Center market expert. Research services will continue to support Center work until legislative session starts. Continue to work with business interested in opportunities in Washington.

Data and Outreach Subcommittee: Derek Ruckman ([slides⁷](#) # 9-16)

- Subcommittee draft [data matrix⁸](#) for advisory board review.
- [Brunel University⁹](#) study referenced in the slides.
- California [recyclability matrix¹⁰](#) mentioned during the presentation.
- Oregon [legislative concept 578¹¹](#) – mentioned during the presentation.

Paper Presentations

Dan Weston, Ecology: Ecology paper data ([slides¹²](#) # 20-34)

- Data gaps identified in the presentation include: data Ecology holds confidential, local government survey of what is collected, end use market data, limited source data (where the paper comes from: county or city of origin, commercial sources), commercial paper direct to end users, brokered materials, and lack of data in other sectors such as retail, schools, or manufacturing.

Jay Simmons, NORPAC: pulp and paper industry (no slides)

- Pulp and paper industry is impacted by supply and demand. Some paper markets are trending up (cardboard and paper bags), others are trending down (newsprint and books). Some paper mill have contracted relationships with large sources of paper (for example, large retailers generating cardboard) that never go through a material recover facility (and data is not reported to Ecology).

Andy Smith and Emily Coleman, King County: King County paper study ([slides¹³](#) # 39-51)

- King County has a Zero Waste of Resources by 2030 goal referenced in King County Code ([KCC 10.14.020¹⁴](#)), the [Strategic Climate Action Plan¹⁵](#), and [2019 Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan¹⁶](#).
- In 2019, paper comprised more than 18% of what was disposed at Cedar Hills Landfill. This represents a significant wasted resource that could be prevented upstream, or recovered and transformed into a new product, such as compost.
- The [Puget Sound's Paper Trail report¹⁷](#) is available on King County's website.

Paper discussion - thoughts on what the Center should focus on:

- **Data:** data gaps; metrics on contamination; price of recycled vs virgin; contamination.
- **Analysis:** do a life cycle analysis; look at commercial sources (residential is such a small portion); look into the paper materials that are less desirable (mixed paper) for other uses.
- **Education:** educate policy makers; bring light to the issues (like cost to improve paper bale doesn't result in significant return on the capital investment).
- **Policy:** what are smart policies for end markets (like EPR or recycled content mandate); evaluate source separated to get cleaner materials.
- **Paper 'one pager':** include the 'data', paper industry, trends/impacts, and end markets.

Attendee comments in the Chat Box (some comments were shared during the meeting). Ecology response to comments is provided below in *italic font*.

Lisa Crosby, Port Townsend:

- Why is destination of sorted materials (commodity) not shared? Is there a law protecting this information? **Response:** *Ecology has authority to require reporting on “solid waste” (it’s in the rule – WAC 173-350) – when the paper becomes a bale it is a commodity, no longer a solid waste, Ecology cannot require reporting on the destination (end market) of the material.*
- Basel convention now requires environmentally responsible recycling of plastics, so how can this be ascertained if destination of materials not available? **Response:** *Basel convention requirements are not managed at the state level, that information is shared nation to nation.*
- Are haulers willing to go back to source separated collection in order to reduce contamination? The assumption here is that contamination due to comingled collection leads to disposal of some of this collected mixed paper. Source separation as a way to reduce contamination. We still have source separation in our town: 3 bin trucks. **Response:** *Switching from one bin to multiple bin residential collection is decided at the local (city or county) level.*

Preston Horne-Brine, Fluvion Enterprises:

- Exported pulp is in large sheets 4' x 4" and 3/4" thick that are stacked on pallets. The pulp is 90% dry in this form. Each of these pallets are heavy and stackable in export containers. **Response:** *Thank you for this information.*

Michelle Ross:

- Creating a standards, for materials accepted, measurements of materials and tracking the materials, seems to be a hinging point, how and who can we help to facilitate said standard? ECY can be the standard-maker. That is what is needed most, it seems. The system needs a standard, resource communicator and education provider. Center can do that! Is that too much? **Response:** *that is a good suggestion, thank you.*
- What are the chances that private business could drive recycling and material recovery? For example clean recyclable drop off locations franchise, refill stations and container reuse deposits, food-truck style refill-trucks... a true culture shift to refill, materials could be anticipated and clean. How can we make it a push to participate and help these new companies expand? **Response:** *that is a good suggestion for refillables, there are current efforts looking into refillable/reusables.*

Meeting to-do items

- Next board meeting is on February 10, 2021. Materials will be posted and shared by email message. Paper will be revisited. Plastic may be on the agenda.
- Develop a Paper one-pager for the next board meeting.
- Post notes from this meeting on the [Advisory Board website¹⁸](#).

For more information:

- Contact the Center staff by [email¹⁹](#).
- Visit the Center [Advisory Board website²⁰](#).

List of Attendees

Interested Parties

Henry Allen, Spokane Valley
Kristin Ashley
Travis Casey, Chelan County
Dave Claugus, Pioneer Recycling
Emily Coleman, King County
Lisa Crosby, Port Townsend
Jeff Epstein, Carton Council
Lisa Graham, Regenerated Textiles
Preston Horne-Brine, Fluvion Enterprises
Brad Lovaas, Washington Refuse and Recycling Association
Eli Owens, Clallam County
Preston Peck, Tacoma
Michelle Ross
Bruce Stein, Anchor Packaging
April Sheeley, Chelan
Andy Smith, KingCounty
Emily Terrill, Cascadia
Rod Whittaker, Washington Refuse and Recycling Association
Wendy Weiker, Republic Services
Steven Wulf, Sunshine Disposal

Department of Ecology

Kara Steward
Tina Schaefer
Katherine Walton
Alli Kingfisher
Dan Weston
David Pater
Gretchen Newman
Heather Church
Irina Makarow
Janine Bogar
Julie Robertson
Laurie Davies
Peter Guttchen
Shannon Jones
Steven Gimpel

Commerce

Brian Young Commerce
Tammi Vellinga Commerce

Utilities and Transportation Commission

Ann LaRue UTC
Kyle Murphy UTC

¹ www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias__1962/37596/recycling_development_center_advisory_board.aspx

² <https://sustainablepackaging.org/>

³ <https://dashboard.sustainablepackaging.org/events/5fb2ba81d3dbf353daf5fc27>

⁴ <https://recyclingpartnership.org/polypropylene-coalition/>

⁵ <https://recyclingpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/The-Recycling-Partnerships-Polypropylene-MRF-Grant-RFP.pdf>

⁶ <http://www.wisetrade.org/home/portal/index.jsp>

⁷ https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1962/Documents/rdcab/2020%2012Slides.pdf

⁸ https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1962/Documents/rdcab/DRAFTDesiredOutcomeMetrics.xlsx

⁹ https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1962/Documents/rdcab/Brunel%20Univ%20study.pdf

¹⁰ https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1962/Documents/rdcab/CA%20Recyclability%20Screening%20-%20Sept%2011%20Draft.xlsx

¹¹ <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/recycling/Pages/Modernizing-Oregons-Recycling-System.aspx>

¹² https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1962/Documents/rdcab/2020%2012Slides.pdf

¹³ https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1962/Documents/rdcab/2020%2012Slides.pdf

¹⁴ https://kingcounty.gov/council/legislation/kc_code/13_Title_10.aspx

¹⁵ <https://kingcounty.gov/services/environment/climate/actions-strategies/strategic-climate-action-plan.aspx>

¹⁶ <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/dnrp/solid-waste/about/planning/comp-plan.aspx>

¹⁷ <https://kingcounty.gov/~media/depts/dnrp/solid-waste/linkup/documents/paper-market-assesment-2020.ashx?la=en>

¹⁸ https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias__1962/37596/recycling_development_center_advisory_board.aspx

¹⁹ <mailto:recdevcenter@ecy.wa.gov>

²⁰ https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias__1962/37596/recycling_development_center_advisory_board.aspx