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**Date:** April 7, 2010

**To:** Environmental Quality Commission

**From:** Dick Pedersen, Director

**Subject:** Agenda item S, Informational item: DEQ's sustainability plan  
April 29-30, 2010 EQC meeting

**Purpose of item** Staff will provide the commission with an overview of the Department of Environmental Quality's draft sustainability plan.

**Background** In August 2008, DEQ's Executive Management Team adopted the Natural Step Framework. The Natural Step is a non-profit organization founded in Sweden in 1989. The Natural Step Framework is a widely used approach for helping organizations become more sustainable.

Since adopting the Natural Step Framework, DEQ has provided training to managers, held planning sessions to identify our vision, goals and actions, trained DEQ staff to be internal trainers and developed a comprehensive draft sustainability plan.

**EQC involvement** DEQ will provide periodic updates on planning and progress related to the implementation of the Natural Step Framework. Commissioners will be asked to consider the framework and sustainability principles as part of the 2011 update to DEQ's Strategic Directions.

**Next steps** Staff will train all DEQ employees statewide in the principles of The Natural Step and DEQ's draft sustainability plan through summer 2010. Sustainability team members will solicit feedback at those trainings and amend the draft plan. DEQ expects to finalize the sustainability plan in fall or winter 2010, with annual reviews of the plan to assess progress and identify areas for new or amended action items.

**Attachments** A. Draft sustainability plan

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***Vision: We live in a way that balances our actions with nature's ability to maintain a healthy environment.***

**Year one (2010)**

**Program Work (External):**

- Create the framework for conducting program reviews to evaluate how well existing programs achieve long term sustainability goals and to identify strategies needed to achieve them.  
**Strategies may include:**
  - Legislative changes
  - Rule changes
  - Changes we can make immediately in current programs:
    - Technical assistance
    - Compliance assistance
    - Enforcement assistance
    - Cross program cooperation and coordination
    - Other
  - Partnering with external groups: businesses, public, non-profits, other state agencies, local governments, federal government agencies
    - Leverage and share resources
    - Education
    - Technical assistance
    - Identify and work together to break down barriers
    - Other
- Create a public engagement and communications plan that describes how DEQ will work to achieve our sustainability goals
- Foster a sense of shared public purpose around DEQ's sustainability vision, mission, and priorities

**Operations Work (Internal):**

- Implement train-the-trainer and all-staff training in The Natural Step.
- Foster a sense of shared purpose around DEQ's sustainability goals and create a work culture that enables "sustainability first" thinking by engaging all DEQ staff in the program review process.
- Institute a real-time measurement system to assess baseline water and energy uses at each DEQ office or facility.
- Determine DEQ's waste streams and identify areas for improvement.
- Assure that up to 10 percent of all dollars spent on materials or supply chain items are spent on more sustainable options than current purchasing procedures.
- Assess the scope of information technology infrastructure needs.

**In Two to Five Years (2011-2016)**

**Program Work (External):**

- Conduct program reviews and begin implementing strategies identified by each program that may include:
  - Legislative changes
  - Rule changes
  - Changes that take some time to put into place that may include:
    - Program reorganization
    - Shift to focus on performance standards with more flexibility to achieve them
    - Use of incentives, education,
    - Technical and compliance assistance focused on redesigning upstream processes and recovering/reusing waste
    - Cross program cooperation and coordination
    - Other
  - Partnering with external groups: businesses, public, non-profits, other state agencies, local governments, federal government agencies
    - Leverage and share resources
    - Work at national level to change federal programs so they are oriented around sustainability
    - Leverage and share resources to assist communities meet infrastructure needs effectively and efficiently
    - Education
    - Technical assistance
    - Identify and work together to break down barriers
    - Other
- Continue to engage staff, stakeholders, and the public as described in the communications plan. Revise the plan as necessary.
- Develop an implementation plan based on the results of the information technology assessment and implement up to 25 percent of that plan.

**Operations Work (Internal):**

- Continue to foster a work climate that puts sustainability first
- DEQ achieves a 20 percent reduction in carbon, water use and waste water.
- DEQ achieves a five to 25 percent reduction in waste.
- 25 to 30 percent of all DEQ purchasing dollars spent on materials or supply chain items that are produced sustainably

**In 10 Years (2020)**

**Program Work (External):**

- The recommendations from program evaluations are fully implemented: programs are reorganized, key statutes, rules, policies, and guidance have been rewritten and strategies are being implemented that support the sustainability goals.
- DEQ creates a sustainable citizen program.
- 50 percent of the plan is implemented and additional areas for improvement are identified.

**Operations Work (Internal):**

- DEQ achieves a 50 percent reduction in carbon, water use and waste water.
- DEQ implements reuse projects identified during the two to five-year period.
- DEQ achieves a 50 percent reduction in waste.
- Assure that 60 percent of all dollars spent on materials or supply chain items are spent on more sustainable options than current purchasing procedures.

**In 20 + Years (by 2030 +)**

**Overall Sustainability Goal**

**DEQ's work results in healthy people, healthy plants, healthy animals, healthy habitats, socially and economically healthy communities, sufficient and high quality water, no damage caused by extracted or man-made substances, and a climate not damaged by human actions.**

**Program Area Goals (External):**

- Pollution discharged into Oregon's environment does not exceed nature's ability to assimilate it.
- Oregonians are committed to and practice sustainability.
- Oregon's communities provide infrastructure needs to their citizens and businesses in a sustainable manner.
- DEQ is recognized by staff, community and government partners, and the public as a champion of sustainability.
- Programs are continuously evaluated to seek further opportunities that support the sustainability goals.

**Operations Area Goals (Internal):**

- DEQ maximizes energy and water conservation, and creates zero waste.
- 100 percent of materials purchased and used at DEQ are procured from the most sustainable sources possible.
- DEQ conducts business electronically and integrated across all parts of the agency.
- DEQ is recognized as an employer of choice for its leadership in sustainability.