

Snoqualmie Watershed Forum
MEETING SUMMARY
January 15, 2014
7:00-9:00 pm
Duvall Visitor & Centennial Center, Duvall, WA

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jason Walker	City of Duvall Councilmember, Forum Chair
Bryan Holloway	City of Snoqualmie Councilmember, Vice Chair
Ryan Koldejchuk	City of North Bend, Councilmember
Cindy Spiry	Snoqualmie Tribe, Alternate
Micah Wait	Wild Fish Conservancy, Non-profit Representative
Becky Chaney	Citizen Representative
Matt Gray	Citizen Representative
Jennifer McKeown	Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, Non-profit Representative, Alternate

MEETING PROCEEDINGS

I. Introductions

- Jason Walker called the meeting to order and welcomed members as well as invited guests. Jason introduced Becky Chaney as the new King County Citizen Representative. Becky lives outside of Carnation and writes forest management plans as well as serves on the King County Noxious Weed Board as the District 2 Representative. Jason also conveyed that Councilmember Lee Grumman from the City of Carnation is the new Forum representative who has been the alternate in the past.
- The Forum approved the November 20th meeting summary without changes.

Forum Updates and Announcements

River Restoration Northwest Conference: Janne Kaje, Snoqualmie Watershed Coordinator, relayed to the Forum that he and other partners (including King County and the City of Seattle) have been invited to present the Tolt River acquisition story at the conference in February. Janne is excited about the opportunity to present such a compelling and successful acquisition story.

Stillwater Project Update: Micah Wait gave a quick update on the suspected filling of a wetland on the Remlinger Farm property by contractors, Earth to Earth. The fill in question came from the Stillwater levee removal project. Wheels are turning at the Environmental Protection Agency and Army Corps of Engineers to look into this suspected violation. King County has dropped the charges based on insufficient evidence. Wild Fish Conservancy who implemented the Stillwater project has only paid for the legally dumped material and Earth to Earth did not provide dump tickets for some of the material removed. Earth to Earth then put a lien on the private property owner where the work took place to try and recoup the money they did not receive. Micah will keep the Forum updated on the situation at future meetings.

II. Forum Business

2014 Chair and Vice Chair Selection

Janne Kaje told the Forum that Jason Walker and Bryan Holloway are willing to continue in their current roles but are also very happy to pass the baton to another interested elected official on the Forum. No others were nominated for the positions.

ACTION:

Ryan Koldejchuk made a motion to keep Jason Walker as Forum Chair and Bryan Holloway as Forum Vice-Chair. Jenn McKeown seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Outreach for 2015 Interlocal Agreement Renewal:

Janne discussed that the Forum's Interlocal Agreements (ILAs) will be up at the end of 2015 and Forum staff is planning to meet with the different Forum member jurisdictions. They plan to talk to the staff and councils to start laying the ground work for resigning the ILA at the end of 2015. Janne led a discussion about identifying who should the Forum Staff meet with and what topics to discuss. Before determining who to meet with, Ryan Koldejchuk asked the questions of what is the scope of the presentation, how much time will be necessary for these meetings; what is the direction of the Forum; and what will the next 5 years bring? The Forum agreed that the current ILA needs to be looked at and determine if there are any changes to the direction of the group. It was noted that it is important to bring the presentation to the different member jurisdictions closer to the time of the council vote otherwise it will get buried under other details the cities, county and tribe contend with. Other comments also included presenting where the ILA funding went and highlight any big changes to either the funding, structure or direction of the Forum.

For the City of Snoqualmie it will be important to meet with the Planning Committee, Council, Mayor and City Administrator if the amount needed has changed. Snoqualmie Tribes preference would be to meet with the whole council, if that's possible to pull together.

III. Rasmussen Creek Project Update

Matt Baerwalde of the Snoqualmie Tribe did a presentation on the tribes work on Rasmussen Creek, in particular the stretch that runs through the Cherry Valley Dairy. The project included several benefits including the removal fish passage barriers, installation of a livestock crossing to keep livestock out of the creek, and installation of riparian vegetation as well as instream habitat features. This project complimented the work going on down stream (Waterwheel Creek for instance) and made it possible for fish to get up that much further in the system. The total project cost was approximately \$203,000.

The next effort on this creek will be to address the culvert under Cherry Valley Road as it is a perched culvert that is blocking fish. King County roads is aware of the issue but has not slated it for repair as of yet.

IV. Cooperative Watershed Management Grant

Beth leDoux presented the CWM grant round schedule. There is no major deviation from the 2013 schedule. Important dates include the deadline for applications on March 7th, 2014 with grants being approved by the Forum in May and with King County Council approval sometime in August or September 2014.

Perry Falcone discussed the fact that the Flood Control District gave more money to the grant round this year (approximately \$200,000 more) and that Forum Staff is encouraging larger and bigger projects. Project

priorities for the 2014 grant round have not changed from 2013 and there is still a strong reliance on the salmon plans to guide funding.

Cindy Spiry brought up the concern that King County is taking longer with contracts and that most of the people in the room who were awarded grants did not have contracts yet. Perry will bring this concern to Ken Pritchard, King County grant administrator – it is necessary to know if this is the trend in contracting as to allow people to plan accordingly.

Perry then presented a new funding allocation guidance document to the Forum. The intent of this document is to help the ranking committee understand the allocation of grants in previous years and set guidelines for how much money any one type of project should be getting. The allocation would only be guidance and would in no way be an earmark. It has been difficult in previous years to rank the different types of projects, especially the smaller educational grants compared to large capital projects. These funding guidelines help the ranking committee justify the small selection of projects that are not capital focused. Historically, 68% of the funding has gone to capital projects (which also includes a small number of design), 16% to watershed coordination, 4% to planning, 6% to monitoring, 4% to maintenance, and 2% to education and outreach. With the increase in dollars in 2014 the proposal will be to allocate 70% to capital projects, 15% to watershed coordination and planning, 10% to monitoring and maintenance, and 5% to education and outreach.

Councilmember Koldejchuk noted that the new proposal more than double the education/outreach allocation compared to 2013. It was explained that this is due to the higher funding rates. He also voice concern that there is no dedicated funding to flood projects and that this will become more pressing as flood rates in North Bend will be increased and he would like to see the implementation of flood hazard grants. It was countered that there are other funding sources such as the Flood District for flood projects.

Councilmember Holloway wondered how many dimensions the Forum is going to focus on. The Forum still supports multi-benefit projects that include flood hazard elements but the Forum's primary focus is salmon conservation and watershed health. Perhaps after the Farm, Flood, Fish effort is complete we will have new criteria related to multi-benefit projects.

ACTION:

The Forum approved the grant funding allocation guidelines with the request that the emphasis is still on capital projects with funding of at least 70%. The Forum also approved the 2014 CWM grant timeline and funding priorities.

V. Snoqualmie Fish, Farm, Flood Update

Janne gave an update on the FFF effort happening in the basin. He spoke about how the different interests sometimes overlap and sometimes compete for the same areas within the basin. There are compromises and tradeoffs for all the actions occurring on the landscape.

From a fish perspective he stated that the Snoqualmie at Fall City projects are slated for implementation on agriculture lands. From an ecological stand point, this stretch of river is critical for salmonid spawning and there is a bottleneck in the salmon's life cycle because there aren't enough suitable spawning areas for the returning adults so creating these areas greatly increase the chances of salmon survival.

Farm pads are very desirable to farmers but these affect flood elevations and water surface elevations that can impact other landowners. Certain areas can't have pads because of the effects on water surface

elevation. There are other options available like elevating a barn or using flow through technology but these are more expensive.

Federal grant sources are increasing minimum buffer widths requirements up to 100 feet on streams. Farms with a dense network of waterways will see these large buffers fill in the majority of their agricultural land. The question remains how do you get some ecological benefit without requiring 100 foot buffers that eat up half of the farmable land?

Micah Wait commented that there do seem to be common sense solutions even with three competing interests. The concern is whether the policy solutions will be followed up on by the County.

Cindy Spiry commented that the material in the meetings is being presented very well and that the Committee is still gathering information.

Lara Thomas, City of Duvall, commented on how great the committee is to participate in. She understands that the ‘honeymoon’ will soon be over and that progress and real discussions will have to occur. The group is great and the commitment in the room is impressive.

Janne concluded by saying how the County is tracking this effort and there is a sense of urgency to follow up on the decisions and recommendations that come out of this effort. There may be an opportunity created by the county budget process and the County Executives interest that could provide important resources to this effort in 2014.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be March 19 (7-9 pm) at the Snoqualmie Tribal Offices.