

**Snoqualmie Watershed Forum**  
**MEETING SUMMARY**  
**July 16, 2014**  
**7:00-9:00 pm**  
**Fall City Fire Station, Fall City, WA**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Bryan Holloway	City of Snoqualmie Councilmember, Vice Chair
Becky Nixon	City of Duvall Councilmember, City of Duvall - alternate
Kathy Lambert	King County Councilmember
Lee Grumman	City of Carnation Councilmember
Becky Chaney	Citizen Representative
Cindy Spiry	Snoqualmie Tribe, Alternate
Micah Wait	Wild Fish Conservancy, Non-profit Representative
Kent Reno	Citizen Representative
Matt Gray	Citizen Representative

**ANNUAL PROJECT TOUR: 5:00-7:00 PM**

Prior to the meeting, the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum hosted its annual project tour. The tour highlighted some of the opportunities and challenges associated with habitat restoration projects in agricultural areas.

The tour featured the Upper Carlson Floodplain Reconnection project, which is currently under construction along the Mainstem Snoqualmie River near Fall City. The tour's second stop was Tall Chief Farm, site of the former Tall Chief Golf Course. King County recently acquired the property to return the land to active agriculture and preclude proposed residential development.

For more information about the tour, please contact Perry Falcone, project coordinator.

**MEETING PROCEEDINGS**

**I. Introductions**

- Bryan Holloway, Forum Vice-Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed members as well as invited guests.
- The Forum approved the May 21<sup>st</sup> meeting summary with clarifications added to item IV regarding the Forum budget, the size of the proposed grant and the associated source of cost-savings. Clarification requested by Forum member Becky Chaney.

**Forum Updates and Announcements**

*Mountains to Sound Greenway's Proposed National Heritage Area (NHA)* – At the May meeting the letter of support was tabled for further discussion and currently still stands that the Forum needs to discuss this matter further. Bryan Holloway explained that the City of Snoqualmie has some questions and concerns regarding the NHA designation and did not currently have any resolution on the issue. The Forum decided that no action will be taken until all Forum members are comfortable with writing a letter of support or an alternative solution is found.

**2015 Conservation Futures Funding** – Terry Lavender, Chair of the Conservation Futures Citizen committee, presented the 2015 grant recommendations including over \$2.6M for projects in the Snoqualmie and South Fork Skykomish Watersheds. The recommendation includes the City of Duvall – Duvall Village Open Space project (match to the Forum’s 2014 CWM grant), City of Snoqualmie Riverfront Reach project, King County’s South Fork Skykomish Corridor Conservation project, King County’s Tolt River Natural Area acquisition and other important projects. King County Council will make the final CFT project allocation decision this fall.

Councilmember Lambert had a question regarding the money for purchasing development rights from existing dairies in the County via the transfer of development rights program versus just placing the 10 listed dairies in the Farmland Preservation Program and extinguishing the development rights through that mechanism. Terry Lavender explained how TDR provides additional benefits and flexibility (compared to FPP) by compensating the willing farm owner for extinguishing future development potential, while also bringing more money into the program through the sale of rights to developers, which will then be used to protect additional farmland in the county.

**Floodplains by Design 2015-2017 Funding** - In May 2014, Ecology solicited preliminary proposals of Floodplains by Design projects in order to develop a budget proposal for the 2015-17 state biennium capital budget. Two Snoqualmie Watershed proposals were invited to submit final applications, including City of Snoqualmie’s Riverfront project and King County’s Frew Levee Setback Design project. It is anticipated there will be at least \$50M available statewide in 2015 for these projects. For more information:

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/floods/floodplainsByDesign.html>

**King County Buffer Letter to Puget Sound Partnership** - Puget Sound Partnership asked for input on a Leadership Council resolution regarding federal riparian buffer grant requirements. This is the same issue our Forum commented on to the Department of Ecology in December 2013 and the Snohomish Forum commented on in May 2014. King County submitted a comment letter on June 24 to the Puget Sound Partnership on the same topic. King County listed various challenges with minimum buffer requirements and encouraged flexible guidelines rather than one size fits all requirements.

The PSP Leadership Council responded positively to the comments and suggestions. The final adopted resolution language recognized the Action Agenda’s support of viable agriculture and encourage tribal leaders and agriculture community leaders to “work together to develop mutually agreeable solutions.” Exactly how this resolution will be used by the PSP has not yet been determined.

## **II. Snoqualmie Fish, Farm, Flood (FFF) Update**

Janne Kaje, Snoqualmie Watershed Coordinator, presented an update on the FFF effort occurring in the basin. He reminded the Forum about the history of this effort coming out of King County Comprehensive Plan policy R-650 (Nov. 2012) that calls for the development of watershed-scale strategies to achieve “win, win, win scenarios for farms, flood risk reduction and fish habitat restoration”.

The Committee worked very hard over the last 6 months and the bi-weekly meetings included learning the background of each “F”. They worked on identifying the key issues affecting each “F” and identified key issues and measures for success. The committee primarily focused on the issues of riparian buffers, drainage maintenance on agricultural land, flooding and large capital projects. They also worked hard on trying to identify what “viability” looks like both for fish and farms – a very challenging task for farming in particular.

After the summary of the work the FFF committee, Perry Falcone, Forum Project Coordinator, reviewed a subset of emerging FFF solutions with the Forum. Most of the solutions were targeted at the key issues identified – buffers, drainage on agriculture land, flooding and large capital projects. Perry highlighted solutions that had broad watershed management implications for the Forum member jurisdictions and solutions that had direct nexus to the Forum’s work plan and activities. Solutions with direct nexus included grant guidelines for projects the Forum funds, solutions that involve Valley cities, pilot projects that involve multiple benefits and innovative ideas such as harvestable buffers.

Janne then asked the attending FFF committee members to weigh in on the process:

Cindy Spiry – Overall the committee was very productive full of great, willing people.

Micah Wait – He was blown away by the amount of work and information put into the solution templates. He really sees the need to follow through on these.

Lara Thomas – She was glad to be part of such a dynamic committee and she noted that whatever is done needs to have measurable results and that will take money. She recognized that there will be times when some people are happy with some of the solutions and unhappy with others. She also thanked the County staff for the amount of time and effort they put into the FFF effort.

Bryan Holloway – Wants to keep in mind that we need to figure out how to balance all of the benefits for each “F” from the long list of individual actions.

The Forum discussed options such as submitting a comment letter from the Forum on the proposed solutions, likely in the late fall or simply utilizing existing representatives to provide input to the FFF Advisory Committee.

Councilmember Lambert noted that the farmers have given up a lot for the sake of habitat protection. She also mentioned that the stormwater from the development on the hills is coming into the valley, and the lower valley is not generating that issue. She urged the Committee to be aware of what the farmers need and the Forum needs to be proactive in their support of the farmers. Micah Wait noted that many of the solutions proposed indeed address a number of Councilmember Lamberts concerns.

### **III. South Fork Snoqualmie Corridor Plan**

Richelle Rose from King County Rivers and Floodplains Section came to give an update on the South Fork Snoqualmie Corridor Plan. The plan is being developed to address significant flood risks on the SF Snoqualmie River (such as potential flooding of I-5 in an extreme event), while reducing long term costs of flood risk management, and to restore ecological processes. Richelle illustrated a variety of options for reconfiguring flood facilities in the basin to reduce risk. Alternatives are currently being evaluated through further modeling and analysis.

#### **Key findings from the report suggest that:**

- The levees are more stable than originally thought
- There are significant hydraulic deficiencies – the levees are not containing what is expected
- I-90 is at risk of flooding in a 50 year event and it costs \$1 million/minute to close the highway
- Continued sediment accumulation in the corridor will exacerbate existing challenges.

#### **Alternatives Analysis**

- Looking at flooding impacts

- Looking at the geotechnical issues
- Figuring out the capital cost solutions
- There are bookends to the alternatives: ranging from large scale levee setbacks that alleviate much of the flooding issue but displace many existing buildings/properties, to the raising of existing levees (however, it is found that I-90 is still at risk of flooding)

### **Next Steps**

- Complete alternatives analysis
- Involve stakeholders (including the Cities of Snoqualmie and North Bend)
- Discuss near term and long term alternatives
- Implement highest priority actions

Micah Wait asked if a sediment analysis had been done. Richelle confirmed that one had been done, in particular monitoring gravel and determine how long the effects of dredging the corridor would last.

A community member, Bob Seana, argued that a system wide study (which is not on the list of actions) needs to be done. He added that downstream impacts must be analyzed. Richelle responded that the analysis will go as far downstream as the modeled impact; if there is a modeled hydraulic impact at the confluence of the South & Middle Forks, the analysis will continue downstream until there is no longer any measurable influence. Bob does not believe that plan appropriately addressed the total downstream impact. Richelle added that King County is scoping a watershed wide study of the hydrologic effects of the Snoqualmie 205 project beginning this fall.

### **IV. Forum Business**

Janne presented the budget for 2015. There are slight changes and the amount of the budget is \$6-7K higher than 2014. However, there were staff savings in 2013 and 2014 that will cover the shortfall, but it is likely that the 2016 grant request will go up slightly from the 2015 level of \$100,000.

There was a reminder that the ILA renewals will be happening next year.

Cindy Spiry had a question regarding when the ILA cost-share payment needs to be made. Janne said invoices go out sometime in July or August of each year.

Bryan Holloway asked if there were 2016 estimates as some cities are on a biannual budget. Janne said he could produce those.

### **Public Comment**

No public comment.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be September 17 (7-9 pm) at the North Bend Senior Center in North Bend.