

Snoqualmie Watershed Forum
MEETING SUMMARY
January 21, 2015
7:00-9:00 pm
Carnation City Hall, Carnation, WA

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jason Walker	City of Duvall Councilmember, Chair
Bryan Holloway	City of Snoqualmie Councilmember
Lee Grumman	City of Carnation Councilmember, Vice Chair
Cindy Spiry	Snoqualmie Tribe, alternate
Becky Chaney	Citizen Representative
Jenn McKeown	Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, Non-profit Representative

MEETING PROCEEDINGS

I. Updates and Announcements

- Jason Walker, Forum Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed members as well as invited guests.
- Polly Freeman provided an update on the schedule of the 2015 Photo Poster Contest. The contest will try to capture the unique nature of the watershed and will be distributed as part of our public outreach work. The contest will kick off at the end of March and a winner will be selected in July. Polly asked Forum members to send her any contacts or organizations that can help promote the contest.
- Perry Falcone provided an update on the Fish Farm Flood Advisory Committee. The Committee held a very productive all-day workshop on December 21 and a meeting on January 12 which moved the group closer to a list of shared priorities. The committee will convene for two additional meetings on February 23 and March 25 to wrap up the yearlong effort that will culminate in a report outlining solutions and recommendations balancing lower Snoqualmie River flood hazard reduction, protection of farms and habitat restoration.
- The Governor's proposed 2015-2017 capital budget included \$25M for the Floodplains by Design program and \$50M for the Puget Sound Restoration and Acquisition (PSAR) fund. These program amounts were lower than what was approved in the previous biennial capital budget. In the 2013-2015 biennial budget Floodplains by Design received \$44M and PSAR received \$80M. The City of Snoqualmie's Snoqualmie Riverfront Project, the only WRIA 7 project on either project list, would need at least \$50M in the Floodplains by Design in order to receive funding. The Forum plans to provide letters of support for these funding sources.
- On January 5-6, the Snoqualmie Valley experienced a major flood event, with impacts to all the neighborhoods along the Tolt and the Snoqualmie Rivers from North Bend to Duvall. Both rivers experienced their highest flows since 2009, closing roads, impacting neighborhoods, and causing some damage to County levees. King County estimates the flood on the Tolt River was approximately a 40

year event. Bob Seana, local farmer, asked when the county plans to begin the study of the Lower Snoqualmie River and affects from the Snoqualmie 205 project. The county plans to begin that study later in 2015.

- King County hosted a stakeholder workshop and a public meeting related to the Tolt River Corridor Study. The study aims to document existing conditions and develop an action plan for reducing flood risk hazards and improving salmon habitat along the lower six miles of the Tolt River. The study was predominately funded by the King County Flood District with additional staff and funding support from the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum. The stakeholder meeting included approximately 30 participants representing the City of Carnation, state and local agencies, large landowners, tribes, and non-profits. The public meeting was attended by more than 100 residents. The public expressed various concerns regarding the recent and past floods while providing input regarding the county's future flood hazard efforts on the Tolt River. Lee Grumman added that the meeting brought out a lot of residents frustrated with the flooding and the county's buyout program but the meeting was good step to build trust with the community.
- The Forum approved the November 19th meeting summary without changes.
- Perry Falcone provided the Forum with two draft letters of support for the PSAR and Floodplains by Design state capital budget requests. These letters would support critical funding sources for watershed projects including the City of Snoqualmie Riverfront Project. Jason Walker suggested providing more local stories that describe the unique salmon populations and flooding events in the Snoqualmie Watershed. Jason plans to bring the topic to the next Snoqualmie Valley Governments Association (SVGA) meeting.

DECISION: The Forum approved sending these letters to state legislators. Perry will work with the Chair and Vice Chair to finalize the language and submit these letters.

II. Snoqualmie Strategy Presentations

Jenn McKeown, Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, and Chris LaPointe, Stewardship Partners, provided a presentation of the Snoqualmie Strategy. The strategy is a community-based effort aimed at improving multiple watershed objectives. The main goals include building capacity, increasing collaboration, measuring success, and greater regional awareness of our watershed. The most recent community meeting focused on topics such as resilient farms, local food and infrastructure for recreation. The strategy partners have produced a Snoqualmie Snapshot and are currently working on a Good Neighbor Handbook and sustainable tourism branding effort. The next strategy meeting is March 31st 6-9 pm in Carnation.

Lee Grumman sees promise in connecting business to Snoqualmie Falls and connecting cities better to tourism in the Valley. Cindy Spiry stressed that it is important to be clear about the vision of the strategy so participants understand the ultimate goals. Jenn responded that there is very good model in Oregon in the McKenzie River Watershed. Perry added that the strategy's work on tourism, agriculture and recreation could complement the Forum's work on salmon and watershed conservation.

III. 2015 Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) Grant Program

Beth leDoux presented the 2015 CWM grant process. In 2015 there will be a pre-application required of applicants that will help streamline the process and provide grant reviewers an early opportunity to comment on projects. The 2015 grant schedule and funding principles are similar to previous years and do

not involve changes. The Project Review Committee will provide the Forum a recommended project list in May for final decision.

Cindy Spiry commented that the Tribe did not have a contract in place for their 2014 CWM grant. She added that it would be helpful to have a predictable timeline for CWM approval from the Flood District and grant contracting with King County so applicants can secure matching funds and meet planting windows. Beth acknowledged that contracting has been slow for King County and it was a great time to get feedback on the process since there will be a new grant administrator starting this year.

DECISION: The Forum approved the 2015 CWM grant schedule and funding principles.

IV. Summary of Proposed Interlocal Agreement (ILA) Changes

Perry provided an overview of ILA renewal process and proposed language changes. Forum staff will conduct Forum member briefings in February then bring a new draft ILA to the March Forum meeting. In April staff will brief jurisdiction councils on the Forum and the new ILA. A final ILA will be ready for approval and signature as early as June. Perry described various proposed changes to the ILA:

- Several new “Whereas” statements will be added to capture the history and progress of the Forum.
- Reference to multiple benefit projects and solutions will be added to the purposes section to capture the ongoing work to improve habitat, reduce flood hazard, improve agriculture, etc...
- Public outreach continues to be an important work program item but the level of effort is not described in the ILA and may need to be discussed by the Forum.
- The grant source will be changed from King Conservation District to the Flood District’s Cooperative Watershed Management program consistent with the change that occurred in 2012.
- The ILA term will be 10 years rather than the previous five year terms.
- The cost share will be recalculated every third year unless there are substantial annexations that occur that affect cost share amounts.
- Language that describes tribal membership will be changed to reflect the current Snoqualmie Tribe membership.

Perry encouraged Forum members to provide input and asked how often Forum staff should meet with jurisdiction councils.

- Cindy Spiry responded that every three years works well to keep new councilmembers up to speed.
- Bryan Holloway suggested every two or three years would work well for the City of Snoqualmie.
- Jason Walker felt that a 10 year ILA would be a good model of efficiency and he added that the SVGA would be a venue where we could brief multiple jurisdictions at once.
- Jason pointed out that annexations might not be the right trigger for the Forum cost share in the ILA, since some annexations don’t bring large population increases into the Valley. He suggested a minimum check-in every three years, regardless of annexations.
- Lee thought the Forum should pursue several important outreach efforts the Forum. She suggested it would be useful to provide an annual news release listing of funded projects. She suggested creating a list of all the organizations in the Valley with links to activities. She suggested getting more articles in the Snoqualmie Valley Record and Valley View.

Perry explained to the Forum that staff will create a strikethrough/underline version of the ILA for the March Forum meeting. The Forum will walk through the specific language changes at that meeting.

V. Public Comment

Bob Seana, local farmer, asked about residential development upstream in the City of Snoqualmie and wanted to know how it affects salmon habitat. Bob was concerned that the increased impervious surface would affect salmon and flooding downstream.

Jason responded that the Forum does not typically review development practices of individual jurisdictions and that is left to each jurisdiction's public process. Bryan added the City of Snoqualmie includes current development practices including rain gardens and stormwater retention. The Growth Management Act drives growth in cities but also protects sensitive areas. This discussion may be a better fit for the SVGA rather than the Forum.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be March 18 (7:00 – 9:00 pm) at the Snoqualmie Tribal Administration Building.