

Snoqualmie Watershed Forum
MEETING SUMMARY
November 20, 2013
Meeting 6:30-9:00 pm
City Hall, North Bend, WA

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jason Walker	City of Duvall Councilmember, Forum Chair
Bryan Holloway	City of Snoqualmie Councilmember, Vice Chair
Lee Grumman	City of Carnation Councilmember, Alternate
Ross Loudenback	City of North Bend, Councilmember, Alternate
Cindy Spiry	Snoqualmie Tribe, Alternate
Bill Knutsen	Kin Conservation District
Matt Gray	Citizen Representative
Kent Renno	Citizen Representative
Jennifer McKeown	Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, Non-profit Representative, Alternate

MEETING PROCEEDINGS

Introductions and Minutes

- Jason Walker called the meeting to order and welcomed members as well as invited guests. He asked citizens that were applying for the citizen seat to introduce themselves. Kelly Heintz and Becky Chaney provided the Forum with their background and interest in the position. The third applicant, Joanne Menard, was unable to attend.
- The Forum approved the Sept 18th meeting summary without changes.

Forum Updates and Announcements

Meeting with the Town of Skykomish: Jason Walker, Forum Chair, and Perry Falcone, Forum staff, met with the Town of Skykomish elected officials and planning commissioners on November 14. The purpose of the meeting was to provide the town an overview of the Forum and the South Fork Skykomish Restoration Assessment. The town expressed an interest in the Forum and will be exploring the possibility of membership in the future. Forum staff continues to reach out to Skykomish and intend to assist the town in identifying restoration priorities and developing partnerships with other organizations.

Flood District Approves Budget and Funding Increase: On November 12 the King County Flood Control District approved their 2014 budget and adopted a levy rate increase of 3 cents per \$1000 of assessed value (\$9,866,830 in 2014). Half of the funding will go to expanding grant programs and half of the funding will go toward corridor plan implementation and specific capital projects. Included in the budget is an increase to the Snoqualmie Forum's 2014 grant program from \$600,000 to \$798,862 annually. The Forum received a more equitable increase than in the past budget negotiations and will also see increases annually due to adjustments for inflation.

Other important Flood District budget increases include:

- Sub-regional Opportunity Fund increases to \$3.857 million annually and includes a funding floor of \$10,000 per jurisdiction. This provision will directly benefit the City of Carnation and the Town of Skykomish.
- A new annual grant program was created to allocate \$2.66 million per year for emerging flood risk reduction needs not currently on the CIP list.
- Increased funding for corridor planning and high priority capital projects, such as:
 - Capital implementation funding for Tolt, South Fork and Middle Fork Snoqualmie corridor plans
 - \$5 million for South Fork Snoqualmie Corridor Early Action Projects
 - \$3 million for the SE 19th Way Revetment Repair (Lower Snoqualmie)

Snoqualmie Watershed Forestry Workshop: Beth LeDoux, Forum staff, hosted a forestry workshop on October 29th. Expanding on the Snohomish Basin Protection Plan effort, the Snoqualmie Watershed Team is working on a smaller companion grant that is focusing on understanding the different types of protection tools (e.g., regulations, incentives, acquisition) to protect and enhance important hydrological functions within the watershed. The workgroup comprised representatives from federal, state and local governments, tribes, non-profits, and private industry. Fifteen people attended the three hour workshop and participated in an engaging conversation that ranged from overall challenges facing forestry to specific challenges of protecting hydrological functions. Some of the top challenges were funding to increase technical assistance for small landowners, continuing long term monitoring and gathering new data (such as LiDAR) , updating forest science (e.g., effects of climate change), watertyping (i.e., regulatory stream mapping that protects streams during harvest activities) and forest road decommissioning and maintenance. Much of the workshop was spent talking about the challenges faced by small landowners such as access to technical assistance and education/outreach programs and materials geared to the small forestry landowner.

Snoqualmie Fish, Farm, Flood Process (R-650): The Advisory Committee for King County’s Snoqualmie Fish, Farm, Flood process convened for its first meeting on Tuesday, November 19. The Forum is represented on the committee by Bryan Holloway, but several other Forum members, alternates and staff are also involved: Lara Thomas – City of Duvall; Cindy Spiry – Snoqualmie Tribe; and Micah Wait – Wild Fish Conservancy. The committee expects to meet twice per month through April 2014 for a total of 10 meetings. The Snoqualmie Forum will have this topic on the agenda in January and March for more in-depth discussion.

Knotweed Control Projects in the Snoqualmie Watershed

Frances Lucero, King County’s Noxious Weed Unit and Jennifer McKeown, Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, provided an overview of knotweed control projects in the Snoqualmie Watershed. Frances described King County’s knotweed and noxious weed control efforts. Washington State has designated 147 noxious weeds and created three categories of noxious weeds related to the severity of infestation and requirements for control. King County levies an approximately \$2.50/parcel assessment to track noxious weeds and control Class A weeds. King County’s knotweed control program is a watershed based effort that is predominantly grant funded as this weed is pervasive and control is not required. Efforts have been underway on the SF Skykomish River, upper forks of the Snoqualmie River and the Raging River since 2005.

Jennifer provided an overview of the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust's Raging River knotweed control project. The Greenway has been working to control knotweed and reestablish native plants along the Raging River since 2008. Reestablishing native plants has been achieved mostly through natural propagation due to the mature riparian vegetation along the Raging River but the Greenway conducted some active riparian planting. Working with landowners is key component of the program and landowners have been very supportive of the work. Sound Salmon Solution is conducting weed surveys along the Tolt River but the Lower Snoqualmie and most of its tributaries are still significantly infested.

Cindy Spiry asked if covering knotweed controls the weed. Frances responded that mechanical methods such as covering can be effective but it involves large amounts of material and can be more expensive. Bill Knutsen asked why crews have been moving away from injection and utilizing more spraying. Frances explained that spraying is more effective and less expensive than injection due to new chemicals. Jason Walker asked how often we are spreading knotweed in comparison to other weeds. Frances responded that knotweed is easily moved in soil during construction projects so it is a challenge compared with other weeds.

Snohomish Basin Protection Plan and Transfer of Development Rights Program

Janne Kaje, Watershed Coordinator, provided an overview of the Snohomish Basin Protection Plan. The Environmental Protection Agency provided funding to Snohomish County, King County and the Tulalip Tribes to develop the plan in 2010. The plan will determine where watershed protection is necessary to protect hydrology and salmon habitat in WRIA 7 and recommend strategies and actions to accomplish significant protection. This plan will ultimately be incorporated into the Snohomish River Basin Salmon Conservation Plan. The Snohomish Basin Technical Committee is currently developing the technical approach and a steering committee will complete the recommendations.

Janne introduced Darren Greve, King County Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program manager, to discuss the TDR tool that will likely be a part of the final protection plan. Darren provided an overview of King County's TDR program including sending sites, receiving sites and the broader marketplace. The program creates a marketplace to encourage protection of resource lands in exchange for increased development density in urban areas. King County acts as the broker, facilitator and operator of the TDR bank. TDR has helped protect 142,000 acres of land in King County. The current Seattle South Lake Union deal will include 800 TDR credits for a total of \$18M. The Seattle deal has a priority to protect agriculture lands but will also protect other resource lands. As part of the deal King County will forego 17% of the tax revenue to the City of Seattle so they can deal with the increased development.

Forum members asked what the market value of one TDR credit is currently. Darren responded that one credit is worth approximately \$15,000 to \$20,000. Another Forum member asked how King County gets the word out to landowners. Darren explained that the county utilizes the county website, outreach to landowners and outreach through committee and venues such as the Forum. Darren added that regarding agriculture conservation easements, the county will be using the new easement language which is more flexible allowing restoration than the older Farmland Preservation Program easements. Ross Loudenback asked if the Whittaker property was included in the TDR program and Darren confirmed that.

Forum Business

2014 Chair and Vice Chair Selection

Janne Kaje asked Forum members to consider if they are interested in stepping into the role of Chair or Vice Chair of the Forum. Jason and Bryan 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. The final decision will be discussed and approved in January 2014.

Citizen Representative Seat Recruitment

Janne Kaje provided an overview of the citizen seat selection process for the unincorporated area seat. In October, Forum staff solicited interest in the citizen seat position via email and the Forum's website. Four individuals submitted applications and only three were deemed eligible based on location of residence. King County staff conducted phone interviews and provided information to King County Executive's Office who will ultimately appoint the position. Hopefully the seat will be filled by the January meeting.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be January 15 (7-9 pm) at the Duvall Community Center.