

Snoqualmie Watershed Forum
MEETING SUMMARY
March 16, 2016
7:00-9:00 pm
Snoqualmie Tribe Administrative Office

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jason Walker	City of Duvall, Chair
Lee Grumman	City of Carnation, Vice-Chair
Cindy Spiry	Snoqualmie Tribe (Alternate)
Bryan Holloway	City of Snoqualmie
Henry Sladek	Town of Skykomish
Josh Meidav	Tulalip Tribes (Alternate)
Eileen Carrel	Citizen Representative
Jenn McKeown	Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, Non-profit Representative
Trevor Kostanich	City of North Bend

MEETING PROCEEDINGS

I. New Member Introductions

Jason Walker, Forum Chair, introduced the new North Bend representative to the Forum, Councilmember Trevor Kostanich. Jason also introduced Martha Moritz, the new education director at Sound Salmon Solutions. The Forum then approved the minutes from the January 20th meeting.

II. Updates and Announcements

- ***Snoqualmie River Hydraulic Study***

Janne Kaje, Snoqualmie Salmon Recovery Manager, shared with the Forum that the King County River and Floodplain Management Section released a final draft of the 2015 Snoqualmie River Hydrology and Hydraulics Study. This study is an independent technical analysis of flood risk reduction benefits and impacts of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Snoqualmie River "205" channel widening project and Puget Sound Energy's (PSE) replacement of a weir and removal of fill associated with their hydroelectric facilities above Snoqualmie Falls. King County is holding a public meeting for this report on March 22, 2016 at the Tolt Middle School.

- ***Snoqualmie Tribe Green Summit***

Janne congratulated the Snoqualmie Tribe on the success of their Green Summit held last week. The Forum participated by organizing a tour of some of the successful watershed restoration projects and points of interest for conference attendees. Janne reminded the Forum that staff are happy to organize tours for other groups.

- ***Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) Grants***

Beth leDoux, Snoqualmie Watershed Forum Technical Coordinator, gave the Forum an update on the CWM grants. Twenty one pre-applications were submitted for a total funding request of \$1,498,141. In this round the Forum has \$855,141 to disperse, leaving a \$643,000 shortfall. The projects included 13 restoration projects, 4 monitoring projects, 3 education projects and 1 planning project. Forum members will receive a

packet in May that will have the ranked project list from the Project Ranking Committee and short descriptions of each project. At the May Forum meeting, this ranked list will be in front of the Forum for approval.

- ***Floodplains by Design Grants***

Perry Falcone, Snoqualmie Watershed Forum Project Coordinator, updated the Forum that both the Cities of Snoqualmie and North Bend have been approved to submit final applications for the Department of Ecology's Floodplains by Design grants. Snoqualmie will be applying for two grants related to their Riverfront acquisition and restoration project and North Bend will be applying for their Nintendo levee setback project.

III. Summer 2015 Water Temperature Monitoring Results

Josh Kubo, King County Environmental Scientist, came to present the findings from the 2015 Summer Water Temperature monitoring effort. Josh provided information about the extreme conditions the Snohomish Basin faced last year including a warm winter with little snow pack and above average summer temperatures. These conditions created what is considered an extreme weather event. The presentation further showed how the Snoqualmie River and tributaries had water temperatures that were well above state standards for the majority of the summer. The lack of water flow made the rivers very susceptible to air temperature and this illustrated the need for instream flows high enough to buffer the extreme summer water temperatures. The documented hot water temperatures in the system created stressful conditions for salmon and were at times high enough to be potentially lethal.

Findings included that tributaries remained cooler this summer than the mainstem, potentially providing temperature refuge for fish. There was also a detection of cool ground water inputs in a few places in the valley that pointed to the importance of ground water to provide the river with cool water. Also, water temperatures in the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie were much warmer than either the North or South Forks this summer and since it provided the majority of flow to the system, the Snoqualmie River was warm from the headwaters to Cherry Creek. Josh noted it would be interesting to do some exploration on the Middle Fork to understand the temperature dynamics in that system.

Last summer was extremely warm and helped us understand the potential conditions that salmon face in our basin during extreme weather events and events that may potentially become more frequent with climate change. It will be important to study and plan ways for the Snoqualmie Basin to become more resilient and flexible in light of the changing climate. The technical memo that analyzes and summarizes these findings will be available by the May Forum meeting.

This presentation generated a lot of questions including if the study correlated vegetative cover to the water temperatures in the tributaries. Josh said no, but studying that would be interesting especially from a perspective of salmon refugia in the system.

IV. Fish In, Fish Out – Snoqualmie Salmon Population Status

Matt Pouley from the Tulalip Tribes came to talk about the Snoqualmie River screw trap data and also provided a snapshot of the salmon populations in the basin. The presentation focused on the 2015 screw trap monitoring effort that focuses on juvenile salmon. In 2015, 95 Chinook were caught in the trap, which is significantly lower than any other year on record. Coho numbers were also low but not as drastic as Chinook. However, Matt noted that there were potentially environmental factors like winter floods and warm water temperatures that could have caused the fish to leave the system earlier, in January. Since the

screw trap begins monitoring in February, it may have missed fish that migrated earlier. In comparison, the screw trap on the Skykomish River had numbers that were much more typical.

Matt was asked if the habitat projects that have been done in the basin can be linked to changes in salmonid population numbers. Matt responded that it is too soon to see any effect from the habitat projects. Hopefully in the future they will be able to see an increase in salmon populations that points to habitat restoration but that will have to occur over a longer timeframe.

V. Forum Business

Client Survey

Janne presented the Client Survey to the Forum. The results were really good in general, with most scores having gone up since last year.

- There were 13 responses (across 6 jurisdictions) compared to just 9 responses last year. Three of those have been “clients” for 10 or more years!
- There is a slight dip in the rating of how our broader Forum community (Forum, jurisdictions, delivery partners, etc) is doing on outreach, education, and stewardship. It is possible that this is due to the very small amount of grant dollars allocated to outreach and education. The Forum discussed how they can focus on education and outreach in meaningful ways. Perhaps there needs to be a shift of education dollars in the CWM grant program to help that. The Forum decided to revisit the conversation.
- One disappointment is that only 1 out of 13 respondents identified as an elected official. Next year Janne will do more personal outreach to the elected officials to ensure their opinions are heard.

Forum Letters

Janne walked the Forum through three letters that were written since the last Forum meeting in January.

- The first was a response to the Black Canyon Hydro project draft license application. The Forum wrote to share concerns about the proposed hydro-electric project in the North Fork of the Snoqualmie River. This letter was a Forum directive to the staff from the January Forum meeting.
- The Forum also wrote a letter of support for the Tulalip Tribes application for a federal watershed capacity grant. The mission of the grant is to build capacity to work on watershed restoration and protection projects. This work is directly in line with the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum’s mission.
- The third letter was to congratulate the Snoqualmie Watershed Improvement District’s (WID) recent formation and expressed a desire to collaborate with this new district in the future. The Forum has expressed interest in potential joint meetings and sharing information across the two groups. Interaction with the WID would help broaden the Forum’s knowledge and understanding of issues facing groups in the basin.

IV. Public Comment

None

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be May 18 at the Preston Community Center in Preston from 6:30pm to 9:00pm. Please note the earlier start time.