

Snoqualmie Watershed Forum
MEETING SUMMARY
July 18, 2018, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Meadowbrook Farm Interpretive Center, North Bend

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Cindy Spiry	Snoqualmie Tribe, Chair
Brian Bodenbach	SVGA Citizen Representative
Colin Wahl (for Ryan Miller)	Tulalip Tribes Representative (alternate)
Kathy Lambert	King County Councilmember
Peggy Shepard	City of Snoqualmie Councilmember
Trevor Kostanich	City of North Bend Councilmember
Charles Kellogg	Citizen Representative
Becky Chaney	Citizen Representative
Jessica Lange	Non-profit Representative (alternate)
Mike Remington	City of Duvall Councilmember

Other Attendees: Jamie Burrell, City of North Bend; John Velimesis; Heather Khan and Melisa Snoeberger, Washington State Department of Ecology; Cynthia Krass, Snoqualmie Valley Watershed Improvement District; Bob and Karlen Seana; Mackenzie Dolstad, Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust; Jessica Olmstead, Washington Department of Natural Resources; Karen Chang, U.S. Forest Service; Liz Stockton, King Conservation District; Eileen Carrel; Erin Murray, Puget Sound Partnership; Matt Distler, Oxbow Farm & Conservation Center; Janne Kaje, Mark Ruebel, and Joan Lee, King County; Perry Falcone, Elissa Ostergaard, Beth leDoux, and Laura West, Forum staff

MEETING PROCEEDINGS

I. Introductions, Updates and Announcements

Cindy Spiry, Forum Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. and led introductions.

Brian Bodenbach suggested a change to the May 16, 2018 Snoqualmie Watershed Forum meeting notes. In the discussion on knotweed, Brian was calling attention to the amount of money going into knotweed restoration as compared to the total budget. Brian suggested that some of that money could be directed to different types of restoration in other areas of the watershed, to diversify our restoration efforts. Knotweed currently makes up 26% of the total budget. Brian will send Elissa a summary of this change.

ACTION: The Forum unanimously approved the meeting minutes from the May 16, 2018 Forum meeting with Brian Bodenbach's changes.

Elissa Ostergaard, Salmon Recovery Manager, highlighted the following updates:

- **Jet Skis on the Snoqualmie River:** It has come to King County's attention that personal watercraft, such as jet skis, are being used on the Snoqualmie River. There is concern that juvenile salmonids rearing along the edges of the river could be impacted by waves and erosion, and small fish or their eggs could get sucked through the personal watercraft's jet propulsion systems. Limited research exists on this topic and the Snoqualmie staff team is looking into the issue to see

whether action is warranted. Kathy Lambert commented that an acceptable alternative location would need to be identified if personal watercraft use was banned. Brian Bodenbach agreed with Kathy, and acknowledged they can cause damage, but Brian is unsure how to prevent use. Elissa mentioned that King County code has speed limits for every river except the Snoqualmie and Skykomish. Kathy added that she is on that Council committee. Elissa will follow up with Kathy.

- **Outreach and Communications Position for Snoqualmie Watershed Forum:** Forum staff are in the process of hiring an intern or work study student at the graduate or undergraduate level to help develop an updated outreach and communications plan. The communications plan would then be implemented by a part-time staff person and the existing staff team. This approach is not expected to result in an increase in cost shares for the foreseeable future, and staffing levels can be adjusted in the future based on the budget. This will be part time position at less than \$20 per hour.
- **Fish, Farm, Flood 2.0:** The Fish, Farm, Flood Implementation Oversight Committee has had two meetings, and the fish caucus, led by Cindy Spiry, recently had a call to discuss implementation. Jason Walker represents the Forum on the Oversight Committee. Cindy met with the other caucus chairs and King County management to bring forward specific requests and concerns. The Buffer Task Force, led by Beth leDoux, held its first meeting in June, with a second meeting scheduled for the fall. The Regulatory Task Force has met almost monthly this year, and continues to focus on agricultural drainage practices and permitting. Elissa Ostergaard participates on both the Buffer and Regulatory Task Forces, and has been sharing information and receiving input from the Forum's non-profit partners.
- **State Funding for WRIA 7 Salmon Projects:** The Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Project Ranking Committee for WRIA 7 has finalized its review and ranking of all WRIA 7 proposals for Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) and Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) grants. The top two projects are highly likely to receive funding. The top project is Pilchuck Dam removal, sponsored by Tulalip Tribes. Pilchuck Dam used to provide water for the City of Snohomish, but the city now relies on another source and the dam can be removed. This project is also being considered in the PSAR Large Capital grant round, and if it gets funded in that round, it won't need to be funded through SRFB. The number two project is design of the Hafner-Barfuse floodplain reconnection project in the Snoqualmie-Fall City reach. Funding decisions will be made next week. Charlie Kellogg asked about the project timeframe for Hafner-Barfuse. Joan Lee replied construction is scheduled to start in 2022. Perry commented that it is a significant project to complete, as it spans both sides of the river.
- **Lee Grumman Celebration of Life:** There will be a party to celebrate Lee Grumman's life on Sunday, July 22, from 3-7 pm at the Carnation Tree Farm. All are invited.

II. Public Comment

Cynthia Krass invited the Forum to Snoqualmie Valley Preservation Alliance's (SVPA) fundraising event, Taste of the Valley, on July 28. The SVPA is a non-profit that works with farmers, watershed partners, and tribes to protect farmland in the Snoqualmie Valley. Kathy Lambert expressed support for the event.

III. Fish In, Fish Out: Status of Salmon in the Snohomish Basin

Colin Wahl, Tulalip Tribes, presented on salmon populations in the Snoqualmie and Skykomish Basin. Colin defined escapement as the number of adult fish returning to the river to spawn and stated that the 2017 escapement for Snohomish Chinook (Snoqualmie and Skykomish populations combined) was 6119 fish. This was almost double the forecast of 3460, which was especially surprising as 2017 is an odd-

numbered year, and in odd years we typically see smaller returns of Chinook, due to a few factors, including pink salmon spawning in odd years. The 2017 Snohomish uptick was more due to an increase from the Skykomish than the Snoqualmie. 2017 Snoqualmie Chinook escapement was 1705 fish, which was an improvement over the last few years and the highest escapement since 2010. Coho numbers in 2017 were lower than the forecasted escapements. Only 18,000 of the forecasted 91,000 Snohomish coho returned in 2017. Colin noted there was an overexpansion in juvenile numbers from traps and hypothesized that the traps suggest there are more fish leaving than actually are. Colin explained that the average number of adult coho (three year geometric mean) fell below the critical management status line, and coho are now considered “overfished” and are managed differently for harvest. NOAA allows 10 years to get geometric means back above the critical management status line, with potential to be listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act if the numbers stay low. Snohomish chum numbers in 2017 were below the goal, possibly due to winter flooding that impacted redds (egg nests in the river).

Colin noted the traps caught a record number of Chinook in 2017, as measured by fish caught per hours out on the water. 2018 is also looking good. This suggests there are a lot of fish swimming downstream.

Colin defined productivity as the number of progeny returning to spawn divided by the number of spawners that produced them. A productivity of 1 is replacement level. Recently the productivity has been low, around 0.5, meaning 2 parents only produce one fish coming back to spawn. This will lead to a decreasing population. With high productivity, the Snohomish target is 14,000 Chinook adult spawners returning, and with low productivity, the target is 64,000; this is determined by habitat. If the habitat is sufficient, less fish need to return to produce the same number of fish. For Snoqualmie Chinook, many of the last 15 years have been low productivity years. One habitat factor at play is changing ocean conditions, specifically the Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO), which shifts from a cool regime to a warm regime every 10 years or so. The last 5 years have been warmer, which is bad for salmon. Freshwater habitat is another factor that affects productivity, which is why restoration projects are important to improve spawning and rearing conditions.

The 2018 Snohomish Chinook escapement forecast is 3,500. The 2018 Snohomish coho escapement forecast is 44,000, which would be back above the critical management status line. The chum forecast is 28,000 and chum require slightly different habitat conditions than other species. Chum also spawn a little later and are more susceptible to floods.

Colin walked through the Fishery Regulation Assessment Model, or FRAM, which takes the abundance forecast and stock composition to create a fishing plan that prevents overfishing. Colin also showed the exploitation rate trend. Around the time of the ESA listing, there was a decrease in exploitation. The Tulalip Tribes selectively catch more hatchery fish than wild fish.

Brian Bodenbach asked about the 2001 high return year with low productivity. Colin explained that it is common to have a large return run with progeny that doesn't do well and oppositely, it is common to have a low return year with high productivity, because there is less competition for the juveniles. Brian also asked how high productivity streams are identified. Colin replied there are index reaches that the tribes and state have observed for a while, which they correlate with historical numbers. Brian asked if Colin had seen trends in watersheds that have become urbanized and are declining in productivity. Colin said it is difficult to correlate land use into fish numbers, as it hard to accurately quantify land use changes. Elissa added that the Tulalips are partnering with Forum staff and King County to survey urban coho, looking for Urban Runoff Syndrome. She also said that most of the index locations are high up in the watershed, where it isn't urbanizing, but we have put in a grant proposal to survey streams that do go

through the urban areas to see if urban runoff syndrome is an issue in our watershed. Charles Kellogg asked about the pink decline. Colin hypothesized ocean conditions and spawning conditions from 2015 could be a factor. Brian read that Chinook, chum, and pinks are higher evolved and more specialized salmon and wonders if they are more sensitive to habitat changes as a result. Colin agreed Chinook have specialized needs for spawning.

IV. Middle Fork Snoqualmie River Updates

Mackenzie Dolstad, Stewardship Program Manager at Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust (Greenway) provided an update on work in the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River. The Middle Fork Snoqualmie River is one of Greenway's five priority areas. The Middle Fork is a mix of U.S.F.S., DNR, and King County land. The road was paved in 2017 and the Greenway is looking at recreational enhancements to protect the land better for future recreation use. Use in the area has increased, and with that comes increased needs for parking, outhouses, and services. The Trailhead Direct shuttle service program with King County Parks and Metro is an example of addressing those needs. The Greenway is working with U.S.F.S. and DNR to clean up camp sites and fire rings near streams and are restoring impacted riparian areas. The Greenway is developing the Middle Fork 2040: A Blueprint for the Future with the goal of creating a long-term vision for visitor experience and natural resource conditions.

Kathy Lambert expressed support for the Trailhead Direct program but noted a few issues with increased use on the trails. Kathy's office is working with towing companies to address the overflow parking issue along the road. Kathy is also advocating to reposition a cell tower for 911 emergency cell service and is looking for support on this issue, as there is no cell service in the area and there have been a few emergencies there recently. Kathy promoted "plogging" (picking up garbage while hiking) as a solution to increasing garbage, and mentioned littering fines would be imposed.

Colin highlighted the importance of incorporating tribal concerns over treaty rights and recreation into the planning process. The Middle Fork area, before the road was paved, was a treaty hunting area for deer and elk, but as recreation increases, it limits the ability to hunt. Colin added that "leave no trace" doesn't account for the impact of an increasing presence on the landscape. Cindy Spiry added that the Snoqualmie Tribe shares concerns about increased recreational use of the area, and has been in conversation with the Greenway about this. Cindy noted it is important to consider the historical and cultural impacts on tribes when discussing social justice. Mackenzie stated that the Greenway is starting to have these conversations with tribal partners, focusing on equitable access and an ethos of caring of the landscape.

Beth leDoux reminded the Forum that after a presentation in 2014, the Forum asked staff to look into what we could do in the Middle Fork. Staff has been working with NOAA, U.S.F.S., and the Snoqualmie Tribe on temperature issues. The Middle Fork Snoqualmie River comprises 60% of the summer flow to the Snoqualmie River and has elevated temperatures. King County Science staff have deployed small temperature loggers (thermistors) to identify causes for the high temperatures. Study ideas include measuring temperature above Goldmeyer Hot Springs, using drones to compare seasonal shifts, water budgeting, and using a temperature rope to look for groundwater influences.

V. Forum business- 2019 budget

Elissa walked through the updated 2019 Snoqualmie Watershed Forum budget. The final budget is \$7,359 less than the preliminary budget, with a 3.19% increase over the 2018 budget. Budget numbers changed from the preliminary budget as actual numbers for salaries and benefits were calculated and due to a new

method of calculating overhead at King County. Elissa reminded the Forum that 90% of city contributions are offset by a CWM grant to make it more comparable to what other WRIA 8 and 9 cities are contributing per resident. Brian commented that the overhead seemed high, and asked if there was anything that could be cut. Elissa replied that the overhead isn't something the staff team has control over, but there are a lot of helpful services included with overhead, such as GIS and graphic support. Cindy Spiry commented that she is familiar with overhead charges in the Snoqualmie Tribe's budget and this seems pretty reasonable. Colin Wahl agreed that it was a reasonable overhead rate.

ACTION: The Forum unanimously approved the 2019 Snoqualmie Watershed Forum budget and cost shares.

Elissa Ostergaard noted that work programs will be an agenda item at the September Forum meeting. Kathy Lambert suggested adding a discussion about the 40-40-20 CWM allocation between King County WRIAs for the November agenda.

VI. Closing

Cindy Spiry thanked everyone for coming.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 19, 2018, Duvall Visitor Center, 6:30-8:30p.m.