

Snoqualmie Watershed Forum
MEETING SUMMARY
January 17, 2007
Meeting 7:00-9:00 p.m.
Duvall Fire Station

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bill Paulsen	City of Carnation Councilmember
Charles Peterson	City of Snoqualmie Councilmember
Dianne Brudnicki	City of Duvall Councilmember
Gary Roberts	Citizen Representative
Bill Knutsen	Citizen Representative

MEETING PROCEEDINGS:

Welcome and Announcements

- The November 15, 2006 meeting summary was approved by the Forum.

Announcements

- Yvette Lizée-Smith summarized the current status of the Puget Sound Partnership's budget request to the Governor's office. The original proposal totaled approximately \$100 million (over 3 years) for watershed and nearshore restoration projects throughout the Sound, with roughly \$7 million targeted for the Snohomish Basin. The Governor's proposed funding package includes \$52 million spread across several categories of actions that include nearshore and watershed restoration. While the proposed package will likely change before it is finalized and approved by the legislature, it is likely that the Snohomish Basin will receive a substantial boost in funding during this biennium. These funds are over and above those allocated through the Salmon Recovery Funding Board.
- Yvette Lizée-Smith unveiled the Snohomish Basin presentation folder that was developed by Forum staff in collaboration with Snohomish County. The folder is one component of a suite of outreach and informational materials being developed for the basin. The Snoqualmie Basin brochure is almost complete, pending final proofs and printing.

Forum Program Updates

- Yvette Lizée-Smith presented updates on year-end projects that were approved by the Forum at the last meeting (see handout 3a for details).
- Staff have initiated work with the County's flood and hazardous waste groups to address the Forum's request for information related to the management and storage of chemicals and other hazardous materials during floods. Charles Peterson asked whether propane tanks are included in the list of concerns. Staff will follow up on this topic, but believe that propane tanks will be

included as a specific topic for development of best management practices or other recommendations.

- Yvette Lizée-Smith reported that approximately \$32,000 are rolling over from 2006 to 2007, but that \$20,000 have been committed to projects approved by the Forum as year-end actions that have yet to be completed. The remaining funds will be available in 2007.
- Staff provided an update on the use of Monroe corrections crews for maintenance projects (see handout 3b). The pilot effort will provide a maximum of \$2499 each to two local watershed groups to pilot the crews. This amount will cover 10-12 days worth of work, depending on crew size, a substantial savings compared to traditional crews. Forum staff will work with the watershed groups to document the contracting process, project results and overall evaluation of the pilot effort.
- Yvette Lizée-Smith provided an update on the use of Stewardship Partners to provide maintenance services at planting projects, including projects implemented by other groups in the basin (see handout 3b). Approximately \$20,000 of the \$42,000 received by Stewardship Partners will be spent on projects of other sponsors.
- In conjunction with these specific updates, the Forum discussed the role of maintenance in project success. Bill Knutsen explained that the King Conservation District (KCD) has developed an “inspection plan” to address maintenance short-falls on KCD funded projects, and that KCD takes maintenance very seriously.
- Bill Paulsen expressed his understanding that if the Monroe correction crew pilot project is successful, then those crews might serve as a resource for sponsors in the future. Yvette Lizée-Smith noted that the plan is to use corrections crews together with trained crews to increase capacity, but also maintain high quality. Corrections crews may also be available in the future for unexpected maintenance needs, such as those caused by flooding. The outcome of the Monroe pilot will be shared with broader partners should they be interested in contracting with the Monroe Corrections themselves.

King Conservation District (KCD)

- Perry Falcone provided an update on the KCD assessment, including projected funding available to the KCD and Forum for project funding (see handout 4). Currently, the projected amount available for the grant round is just over \$574,000. Perry summarized the funding formula, including the per-parcel assessment, the division between WRIs, KCD and member jurisdictions, and the distribution between WRIs 7, 8 and 9 (i.e., 20%, 40%, 40%).
- Charles Peterson asked when the number of parcels is counted by the assessor. The City of Snoqualmie is adding new tax parcels daily through development. Bill Knutsen clarified that the assessment occurs twice per year, in conjunction with the property tax process.
- Perry Falcone reviewed the 2007 grant round selection criteria. These have been modified slightly to increase the emphasis on adequate project maintenance (see handout 4). Specifically, the new criteria ask that sponsors budget for 3 years of maintenance (including the initial project year) in their grant request. This is intended to avoid funding requests for maintenance of recently completed projects, and to ensure that maintenance occurs on all projects while plants are still getting established.

- Additionally, staff recommend that a \$50,000 set-aside be established in the grant round for sponsors who are willing to take on the maintenance tasks associated with a variety of projects. These funds could be used for restoration project maintenance 1 to 3 years after installation if insufficient funding was available (i.e., the original project was funded through a KCD grant round prior to 2006 or funded through another grant source that does pay for maintenance); years 4+ on any projects that still require maintenance; and projects where unanticipated maintenance needs must be addressed. As of May 2006, KCD requires all new restoration projects to include 3 years of project maintenance.
- Gary Roberts asked where the 3-year time window came from if many projects need maintenance beyond that term. Bill Knutsen explained that the KCD selected the 3-year period as being in line with other programs (such as permit requirements), and that it is also in part a compromise between the need to assure plant establishment and the administrative difficulties of keeping grants open for several years.
- Perry Falcone announced that KCD is hiring a full-time grant administrator. Bill Knutsen added that a field staff position is also being filled.
- Perry Falcone described the “Opportunity Fund” proposed by KCD. KCD has offered to provide \$100,000 from its share of the assessment (i.e., bringing the grant round to \$674,000), if matched with \$100,000 from the WRIA7’s KCD allocation. The Opportunity Fund would be devoted to projects that are not necessarily in the highest priority rankings in the Salmon Recovery Plan. These projects would emphasize partnerships between landowners, not-for-profit organizations and local jurisdictions, and would target tributaries. Perry Falcone’s review of past grant rounds shows that the types of projects proposed for the Fund are already getting funded at a fairly high rate; thus, the new round may simply provide an opportunity to expand activities that the traditional grant process already supports.
- Bill Knutsen clarified that the fund may also include a cap on the size of an individual grant in order to provide a larger number of opportunities. He pointed out that of \$3 million in grants given out last year, only one was for fish passage barrier removal, a high-priority category of restoration actions. The KCD would like to see the Fund used for coordination between County Roads and the WRIAs, local jurisdictions, citizens and rural landowners.
- The specific criteria have not yet been finalized by KCD and Forum staff. Depending on the timing of final approval for Opportunity Fund criteria, notification to project sponsors may occur as part of the Forum’s 2007 general grant round announcement (slated for January 22), or as a separate, subsequent notification. **The Forum authorized the staff to continue negotiations with KCD regarding grant criteria, and approved the use of e-mail to receive formal approval to the criteria in a timely manner.**

Filling Vacancy on the Forum

- Yvette Lizée-Smith reviewed the guidelines from the ILA for filling Forum vacancies in light of Matt Stone’s departure. Matt served as both alternate for the City of Snoqualmie and Vice-Chair of the Forum. The city of Snoqualmie would need to select a new city alternate in Matt’s place. The city has the option of appointing a council member or a citizen representative. If they appoint a non-elected official (citizen representative) as alternate, the city must confirm in writing whether the appointee can vote on the city’s behalf.

- Charles Peterson stated that he is not only concerned about the replacement of the Snoqualmie representative, but also about meeting the needs of the Forum in general. He expressed his opinion that the Snoqualmie alternate, in his view, may not need to be a resident of the City.
- Yvette Lizée-Smith has contacted the Snoqualmie Tribe to discuss appointing an alternate representative to ensure regular attendance at Forum meetings.
- Regarding the vice-chair, Bill Paulsen suggested that the decision should be tabled until March. Forum members should be notified about the importance of the decision and the need to attend the March meeting for that purpose. Forum staff were asked to seek member nominations prior to the meeting.
- Yvette offered the services of Forum staff to help familiarize new Forum members or vice-chair with the Forum process and activities to help bring them up to speed.

General Housekeeping

- In an effort to reduce paper waste and duplication of effort, staff suggested that Forum materials be distributed electronically, unless specific members prefer hard-copies. The Forum agreed that electronic distribution is sufficient, but that individual members can indicate their preference to receive hard copies by mail.
- Bill Knutsen suggested that the *Snoqualmie Valley Record* or other local news sources be contacted to regularly provide updates on the Forum's activities and meetings in order to raise the profile of the program. Bill Paulsen also recommended the *River Current* – a free, local paper that focuses on the cities of Carnation and Duvall.
- Yvette Lizée-Smith will work with our outreach coordinator, Saffa Bardaro, to contact local papers to explore how best to communicate Forum activities.
- Forum meeting minutes will be posted on the web once approved.

Public Comment

- Kurt Beardslee (Washington Trout) asked why there is a cap on the amount per grant and per year that not-for-profits can receive from KCD. Mr. Beardslee noted that such organizations have a very broad range of expertise and that Washington Trout, for example, is very capable of taking on substantial projects with extensive technical components. He wishes that funding decisions were made on the basis of the merits of the proposal and the record of the applicant.
- Perry Falcone clarified that the KCD has a \$50,000 cap per project and \$150,000 cap per year for an individual not-for-profit organization. The allocation is the policy of the KCD, not the Forum.
- Ralph Svrjcek (Dept of Ecology) is very supportive of combining funding sources to achieve more on-the-ground benefits. He believes that tributary projects are very worthwhile and is glad that such projects may get more funding through the Opportunity Fund. He also encouraged flexibility in funding mechanisms to enhance the ability to take advantage of opportunities as they arise, such as acquisitions.

Next Meeting

- The next meeting will be held on March 21, 2007 at the Mt. Si Senior Center in North Bend.