

WRIA 9 Implementation Technical Committee
Meeting Summary – February 21st, 2018 9:00-Noon
King Street Center, 6th Floor- King/Chinook Rooms

Attendees: Brian Anderson, Boeing; Kerry Bauman, King County; Katie Beaver, King County; Karen Bergeron, WRIA 9; Jeanette Dorner, Midsound Fisheries; Larry Fisher, WDFW; Chris Gregersen, King County; Matt Goehring, WRIA 9; Colin Hume, Ecology; Jasmine Ka, Forterra; Josh Kahan, King County; Janne Kaje, King County; Matt Knox, City of Kent; Kathy Minsch, City of Seattle; Joan Nolan, Ecology, Jen Rice, King County; Dennis Robertson, City of Tukwila. Call in: Tyler Patterson, City of Tacoma.

Habitat Plan Update: Habitat Goals – Matt Goehring

After introductions and a brief overview of the outline, Matt presented the current status of the habitat plan update and the remaining tasks needing ITC input. Up until this point, we've broken down the master habitat goals document into not tracked, monitoring, and implementation targets. These combined with the white papers have identified the following gaps that need to be addressed by the ITC:

Lower Green off-channel habitat

- The necessary future condition for this is 45% of historical habitat. The types of habitats discussed that contribute to this include high flow side channel, floodplain trib channel, backwater, floodplain wetland, and other 100-year floodplain. For setting the 10-year target, we developed a potential list for upcoming projects and broke this down into potential contributions to each of these off-channel habitat types. Additionally, there is one category for in-channel (low flow) side channel habitats separate from the off-channel habitat types.
- First question for the ITC- we have two separate categories for side-channel habitat. Off-channel side channel (outside bankfull), and low flow side channel (within bankfull). Should we include low flow side channel within the off-channel grouping?
 - Janne clarified that the in-channel and off-channel side channel habitats are functionally different. A low flow habitat at high flow is no longer functioning to produce low velocity edge habitat, which fish need, at low flow. A high flow channel is providing this rearing habitat only at higher flows, and at these flows an in-channel side channel is too fast or submerged and not providing any habitat.
 - Group agreed to keep these separate.
- The group noticed that some of the numbers don't look correct. We will follow up on these and get the correct numbers in. Also, question of whether or not the in-channel and off-channel habitats overlap?
- The next question for the ITC- where do we want to set our goals? How far do we "stretch" the numbers to set our goals- is 5% enough of an increase for our 10 year goal? Karen mentioned

that rather than setting these based on funding, we should base our goals more biologically to demonstrate the shortfalls with the budget as they pertain to meeting our goals. There was a general question about knowing exactly what percent increase we need in order to provide meaningful habitat. It's difficult because we don't have a good baseline, and while it's a heavily modified system we still need to provide meaningful habitat where we can.

- Tasks- Matt will work on improving the numbers, and allow for more of a stretch than 5% increase for our 10 year goal.

Middle Green River floodplain connectivity

- We need to set a 10 year implementation target for floodplain connectivity (area subject to lateral channel migration).
- The existing condition (~1683 acres of a historical 3185ac from Collins and Sheikh 2005)
- Question for the ITC- what do we want to have as a 10 year implementation target?
- Future projects that should contribute to floodplain connectivity are Auburn Narrows, Lones, Turley, Hamakami, Horath, and Porter. Josh Kahan mentioned that we should add Flaming Geyser to the list, since this has a lot of potential to add to this with future work.
- Matt presented a map based on Collins and Sheikh that shows future projects as well as areas that are connected and disconnected floodplain habitat.
- Necessary future conditions were based on a target of 65% historic availability, which means we need about 387 acres of floodplain connectivity over current conditions to meet the 65% level (we're currently at 51%). The estimated potential gains from the listed future projects are about 169 acres.
- For the goals, Matt proposed 150 acres (gets us to 57%), 175 acres (gets us to 58%), or 200 acres (gets us to 59%). The group agreed that 200 acres seems like a good target given that our current list of future projects looks to provide about 169 acres.

Floodplain Vital Sign Spatial Data Refinement Project- Colin Hume

Ecology is currently working on improving the metric for the PSP floodplain vital sign, and interested in having WRIA 9 participate as a pilot watershed. Floodplain is a PSP near term action item, funded through the national estuary program. There are indicators associated with the floodplain PSP vital sign, one is floodplain protection, and the other is restoration of floodplains. Part of the challenge with tracking this vital sign is that we don't have good estimate of how much is and was available. This project will try to hone that vital sign indicator.

To accomplish this task, they began by pulling together many sources of data to create the "frankenfloodplain" map, to give us a baseline map that brings together many data sources including FEMA, hydrologic maps, and TMZ's to get at the extent of floodplain. The purpose of this is to incorporate maps that bring together useful information that build upon our knowledge of floodplain. Using this, they then can assess connectivity and landcover to determine the condition and degradation of this floodplain area. The intent is to do some interim work, then go through the process of refining it.

This map won't be the end product, rather the idea is to use this to refine decisions. Currently they are working on decision rules, and incorporating other data sources to refine the extent of floodplains and conditions. Through this pilot process (looking at 3 watersheds), they will develop a regional set of rules to help create a useful floodplain measure for all of Puget Sound.

Colin mentioned that the Green/Duwamish would make a good pilot, and if people want to participate WRIA 9 would sponsor this effort in the watershed. This would require 2-3 meetings over late spring and summer working with ecology, PSP, and consultants. This is a technical work group, where you would bring your own data and help the group refine the footprint and assessment of condition. This would ultimately be used for the state of the sound reporting as well.

The end result will include historical floodplain extent, along with assessment of condition to get at what is connected and not connected, and the gradient of land use that makes the various levels of floodplain functionality. This will be used to develop strategies for Puget Sound and communicate progress, as well as for the state of the sound reporting. This is not intended for regulatory purposes. The most meaningful version of this map will use the pilot watersheds to ground truth a method for all of Puget Sound.

Collin mentioned that they reached out to 9 watersheds, and selected these potential pilot watersheds based on willingness, conditions, and array of impacts that make them useful for this exercise. We would want to bring floodplain maps and any data to help assist as mentioned earlier.

The ITC had a few questions-

- Is climate change a factor in this? Collin mentioned that it has definitely been a part of the discussion, and it is important to recognize this for target setting in the future. This project is focused more on tracking the condition relative to the 2011 conditions use by PSP. Climate change is more relevant to target setting, and we'll have more discussions about this in the future.
- How will this be tracked in the future? Collin said that in 2020, that will be the appropriate time to reassess the vital sign conditions. Part of the project will also be to suggest a revised target for the future.

Matt told the group that if you have any data, or if yourself or anyone you know would be a good candidate for this process, please contact him to help collaborate for participation with Colin in the project. This isn't for analysis, they have a technical consultant team for that, this would be just to participate in the pilot watershed work and bring data together while gathering input on appropriate methods.

Habitat Plan Update Workshop- Matt Goehring

The workshop is scheduled for March 27th from 10-2:30. The workshop is to get at the habitat plan update and serve as a launching point for getting involvement with project partners outside of the usual

ITC and forum group. Matt opened this up to the group to help flesh out the agenda and topics that we will want to discuss. Some potential topics included:

- 2005-2017 retrospective
- Update the scope and timeline
- New science implications
- 2 sub-watershed breakout groups
- New project and program solicitation

The target audience will be ITC, WEF and political bodies, as well as hopefully a broader cross section of stakeholders in the watershed. This will also bring together members of the ITC who normally don't participate in the technical aspects of the work. The subwatershed breakouts will probably be about 30-40 minutes each. The plan is to do 2 rotations to allow people to participate in multiple subwatershed conversations. These are to develop the direction that we want to go (not make a list of projects). There is some concern that folks won't know exactly where we are as far as goals, projects, and context. ITC suggested maybe having some graphics or background info to get everyone on the same page.

Habitat Plan Update: Project Updates- Karen Bergeron

Karen presented the progress and planning for our project updates for the next 10 years for the project portion of the habitat plan update. We will be utilizing the WRIA 8 template for our approach at the project list. Materials will be based on what is in the habitat plan already, and what we need. The update will include the following components:

- Workshop to present new science
- Breakout groups and request for new projects (pre-applications)
- From this develop a project list by reviewing pre-applications, soliciting full applications, and identifying gaps.
 - Possibly create a numerical criteria to measure how these projects help us meet our goals
 - Qualitative goals to help determine whether the projects utilize latest science or other methods that will also help us meet our goals
 - Request full applications for projects that are definitely a "yes" and those that have potential. Karen would like to utilize a vet for hire to bring on someone to track the data and details associated with all of these applications. They would help flesh out all the projects and pull together info.
 - Each project would ultimately have a dedicated page in the habitat plan update.
 - From this, work on project development to develop project descriptions, cost estimates, and prioritization. This would include development of the 1-pager for the update.
- Develop a prioritization technique. This may change with available science, so we want to keep this separate to give some opportunity for change.

Group asked if this was for all projects or just new ones? Karen clarified that we would like to do this for all projects to get updated information. Kathy mentioned that WRIA 8 did 1 day workshops for each sub basin where people could come add their info, and concerned that the timeline is too fast. Karen clarified that for existing projects, it would mostly just be filling in data gaps rather than whole project development. The purpose is to get the same data for each project rather than have missing data throughout the project list. Pre-applications will be due by the end of May. The pre-applications will be for new projects only. For ones already in the plan, we'd just like to go through them and update our information with additional details from the project sponsors. Brian mentioned that we need to think about including other projects outside of the WRIA (like NRDA and superfund projects that are going on). We'll need to capture this so we know how our 10 year goals are being met. Jeanette mentioned that we might want to do more of a programmatic approach, listing projects in a way that shows how they help us reach the 10 year goal. Matt clarified that this would be a program, and we've been discussing how to include programs in this, which are separate from the actual habitat plan. The program portion will come afterwards.

Karen then gave an update on CWM funding. We've had 120k for monitoring in the past (10%), now, our total CWM is 1.69 million, should we ask for 10% of that now (169k)? The way the monitoring funding works is that Karen tracks the ideas from the ITC throughout the year. If anyone has ideas for monitoring, Karen requested that you send them to her **in the next week**. She will then distribute this list prior to the next meeting so we can have a discussion on this. The current list looks like this:

- Middle Green smolt trap
- Otolith study, should we fund a third year?
- Pre-project monitoring for upcoming projects
- Vashon nature center forage fish studies
- Water quality sampling in the Duwamish (Group mentioned maybe not include this since there's current ongoing monitoring looking at that)
- Upper Green watershed – develop baseline information for habitat plan
 - Include things such as BIBI, mass wasting, selective road inventory, riparian condition, wildlife connectivity.
- Any other ideas, please submit them!
 - Kerry mentioned getting floodplain/side channel info similar to Collins and Sheikh for the lower Green
 - Katie mentioned that Mike Perfetti is interested in getting water quality data in lower Green/Duwamish tribs.

Green/Duwamish Revegetation Update – Jasmine Ka

Jasmine presented an overview of Forterra's revegetation and outreach efforts throughout WRIA 9. The program has a couple parts, outreach to landowners to inform on goals and practices, revegetation, and noxious weed control. The program is currently funded through Boeing and CWM, and able to offer

services through this program at no cost to landowners. Because they're a nonprofit, they can be very adaptable in how they operate and can change based on new lessons or operations.

Background- this program first got started in the Duwamish, and expanded from there. The watershed wide program was introduced in 2015. During their time working on the Cedar River, King County was also working on knotweed control. Forterra replicated this effort in the Duwamish and joined with local partners to implement this.

Knotweed control in WRIA 9- Forterra recognizes the need to control it to keep from comprising ongoing restoration efforts in the watershed. Jasmine presented a map showing the years of effort going on to help knotweed control throughout watershed. Forterra and King County team up on grants to carry out this work, and includes things like weed control, management/maintenance, and revegetation.

There are currently 8 properties that they are working on revegetating. These projects range in scale from bigger projects at about 1 acre in size, to small private residential planting projects. This gives them a good opportunity to work with landowners to develop stewardship in the watershed. As a result of this, they have noticed perceptions among landowners have changed. On the Cedar, these relationships have been useful for facilitating property purchases or easements. Jasmine gave the following 3 examples of those projects.

- Tukwila – They are working with a landowner to cut blackberry, spray regrowth, then cover plant. This project has 2 phases, and utilizes members of both WCC and Earthcorps. Originally, they weren't very keen on having trees, but were more receptive as they saw the project grow.
- Green River farm in Kent- This is working with land owned by King County. The project is cutting and spraying blackberry, and Earthcorps helped in planting native shrubs and conifers on the upper slopes and lower terraces of the project.
- Auburn- Here they directly reached out to landowners, targeting this area based on the Muckleshoot sun map and because it's the most upstream urban area. 42 landowners were contacted, 4 were interested last year, and 4 more are interested for this year. The typical site is a sunny grass lawn with a small planting strip. They are planting shrubs, and while some landowners didn't initially want trees blocking their view, they eventually agreed to Alders.

This year, Forterra is hoping to increase the area they are working on and increase restoration, as well as thinking outside the box to look at ways to increase canopy cover and getting out of just the small riparian buffer. This could include potentially offering free trees to landowners, and also strengthening partnerships.

The ITC had the following questions:

- How often do you have to keep controlling blackberries? Jasmine said that some sites are good, but many take yearly work. They monitor in the spring and get crews out later in the year to do maintenance. Also trying to work to get landowners to be hands on with maintenance.

- Maybe do more site prep to keep maintenance down? They are experimenting with some options with their sites to see what works best. Due to grants, sometimes they are rushed through these projects, but in the future as the project grows hopefully they'll have more time for each project.
- What about when properties that are sold? It's been ok working with new landowners, since the plants are already there and it's not as much of a sell.
- Have you worked with jurisdictions and their shoreline management plan? Dennis mentioned that some kind of incentive plan is something they are looking at and could work well for programs like this.

Update on Mid Sound Fisheries work in WRIA 9- Jeanette Dorner

Jeanette gave an update on the various work that Mid Sound is participating in throughout the basin. Jeanette started with Mid Sound a little over a year ago. She has been meeting with leads for the watersheds they work in, and talking to people about the places that are most valuable for their group to participate to better enhance each watershed's plans. Most of their work has focused on the Soos creek basin:

- Mid Sound had received a Green the Green grant with Green River coalition to work on revegetating a site at the mouth of Soos creek, as well as Jenkins Creek Park.
 - Mid Sound started implementing those with Green River Coalition. They ran into a snag with city of Covington though, due to a change of staff since first agreement. The city stated that they would need a master plan for Jenkins Creek Park before anything could be done at the site, which should be done soon.
- Green River Coalition had developed a relationship with Green River College, and had created an internship as well as successfully getting a grant with the EPA. This grant was to do outreach to landowners in the Soos Creek basin and identify 28 potential riparian restoration sites, and educate these landowners and do some basic invasive removal and revegetation. This grant is about a year in, and currently Mid Sound has been working to implement the grant and support the students doing the work. This involved looking at any physical constraints, site potential, and special steps needed for each site.
- Opportunities for restoration throughout Covington properties, such as armor removal and physical restoration as well as revegetation. On top of this, community education and outreach.
 - Historically, much of Covington was prairie and oak woodland habitat. Everett soils in Covington area supported this prairie habitat, which has a different type of riparian community than typical western Washington.
 - Jeanette connected with a Muckleshoot tribal elder, and had opportunity to go and have lunch to discuss their interest in having Mid Sound do outreach to tribal members regarding habitat and salmon projects. This has great potential to help bridge that gap between WRIA and the tribes.
- Working with a Rose foundation grant to partner with organizations in the Green/Duwamish (Duwamish Youth Corps, Dirt Corps, Sustainability Ambassadors, Green River Coalition) to work

with and engaging students and tribes in education around salmon and habitat, then did action projects doing planting. The purpose of this work is to expand students' view of their community at the watershed scale.