

**Snoqualmie Watershed Forum  
MEETING SUMMARY  
November 15, 2017, 6:30-9:00 pm  
Snoqualmie City Hall, Snoqualmie**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

|                  |  |
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| Henry Sladek     | Town of Skykomish Councilmember, Vice-Chair                  |
| Jason Walker     | City of Duvall Councilmember                                 |
| Chris LaPointe   | Stewardship Partners, Non-profit Organization Representative |
| Brian Bodenbach  | SVGA Citizen Representative                                  |
| Cindy Spiry      | Snoqualmie Tribe   |
| Trevor Kostanich | City of North Bend Councilmember                             |
| Bryan Halloway   | City of Snoqualmie Councilmember                             |
| Eileen Carrel    | Citizen Representative                                       |
| Becky Chaney     | Citizen Representative                                       |

**Other Attendees:** Michael Ross, Snoqualmie Tribal Council; Dave Steiner and Matt Baerwalde, Snoqualmie Tribe; Eric Beach & Teresa Lewis, King County; Perry Falcone, Beth leDoux, & Elissa Ostergaard,, Forum staff; John Velimesis; Ed Hazen, Raging River Conservation Group; Jordan Grant, Sound Salmon Solutions; Jamie Burrell, City of North Bend; Charlie Kellogg; Ryan Tate

**MEETING PROCEEDINGS**

**I. Introductions, Updates and Announcements**

Henry Sladek, Forum Vice-Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and led off introductions.

*ACTION:* The Forum approved the minutes from the September 20 meeting.

Update on Puget Sound Net Pens: Elissa Ostergaard, Snoqualmie Salmon Recovery Manager, shared news from the Seattle Times that Wild Fish Conservancy (WFC) has filed a citizen lawsuit against Cooke Aquaculture under the Clean Water Act with the allegation of negligence for releasing farmed Atlantic salmon into public waters. The article stated that all western Washington treaty tribes have called for a ban on the net pens. After the August 20 net pen failure at Cypress Island, escaped Atlantic salmon were found widely distributed around the Salish Sea and Puget Sound, including in the Snohomish and Skykomish rivers ([www.wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/salmon/atlantic\\_catch\\_map.php](http://www.wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/salmon/atlantic_catch_map.php)). Recovered fish had empty stomachs and none have been seen since October 25. A 2006 US Forest Service white paper warned of the potential risks to native Pacific salmon from farmed Atlantic salmon. The paper listed issues such as disease, competition for food, or increased risk of establishment in Washington streams with repeated net pen escapes ([https://www.fs.fed.us/pnw/pubs/pnw\\_gtr697.pdf](https://www.fs.fed.us/pnw/pubs/pnw_gtr697.pdf)).

Brian Bodenbach suggested the Forum may want to write a letter to the governor and Department of Ecology opposing the net pens, stating it is important for us to fight this before it becomes a more serious issue. Elissa replied that our staff team tries to respond strategically to issues, and in this case, Puget Sound Partnership may be in a position to represent the many salmon recovery groups on our behalf. Cindy Spiry, attended a net pen meeting hosted by Washington DNR on November 14, 2017. DNR will provide an opportunity for citizens to put pressure on the legislature to not approve any new net pen leases. Cindy also said that there are eight net pen leases that expire in 2024, and are all in violation to various extents.

Henry Sladek, Vice-Chair suggested the Forum keep apprised of comment periods and perhaps comment later. Trevor Kostanich offered that our staff may not want to put a lot of time into it, but a simple letter opposing net pens may make a difference. Beth leDoux said that the Snohomish Basin Technical Committee is tracking the issue closely, and is working with Ecology as they continue to update net pen recommendations. The Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Forum is also considering whether to write a comment letter, so this could be a joint effort in the future.

Floodplains by Design Grants for 2018: Pre-applications for funding from the Floodplains by Design (FbD) grant program are due on February 16, 2018. Top applications will be invited in March to submit full proposals. FbD is a partnership of state, local, federal and private organizations working to fund projects that reduce flood risk and restore river habitat. Washington Department of Ecology administers the program, and grant rounds are held every two years. For more information, see the web site at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/floods/index.html>; contact Adam Sant at [Adam.Sant@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:Adam.Sant@ecy.wa.gov) with any questions.

Floodplains by Design Workshop: December 6 at 9:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. at the Mountaineers Conference Center in Seattle. The workshop will bring together state experts, local leaders and practitioners to share experiences and knowledge in support of our collective efforts to increase the productivity and resilience of Washington's floodplains. In addition to hearing from experts, the workshop will be interactive and provide opportunities to network and learn from colleagues across the state. For more information, contact Jim Kramer at [jim@jkramer.com](mailto:jim@jkramer.com) or 206-841-2145.

Forum Staff - Public Outreach and Communications Update: The Forum's Public Outreach and Communications Coordinator, Polly Freeman, departed in August after her three-year, part-time position ended. At our January meeting we will discuss whether the Forum supports hiring a part-time permanent staff, and alternatives for funding the position. Future funding may require an increase in cost share contributions under the Inter Local Agreement. The 2016 Client Satisfaction Survey indicated that over 90 percent of Forum members felt it was important or very important to cost share public outreach and communications.

New Grant Amendment Process: Beth leDoux, Forum Technical Coordinator, explained that the process to amend agreements for the **Flood Reduction Grants** and the **Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) Grants** is changing. Historically, the director of King County Water & Land Resources Division determined whether to approve amendments. Recently, the King County Flood Control District (FCD), which approves and provides funding for these grants, notified us that they will make final amendment determinations. It is advised that amendment requests are made at least three months prior to the date you want it to take effect. The process for requesting an amendment is unchanged and requests are still sent to Kim Harper ([kim.harper@kingcounty.gov](mailto:kim.harper@kingcounty.gov)). Requests must be in writing, email is fine. Amendments are not guaranteed and additional documentation supporting the need for an amendment may be required as needed.

## II. Upcoming Grant Opportunity

Perry Falcone, Forum Project Coordinator, announced the Snohomish-Stilly Local Integrating Organization (LIO) is soliciting Near Term Actions (NTAs) for the Puget Sound Action Agenda. NTAs will be eligible for funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2019. This process will occur every four years. They want a large list of actions in hopes it may attract more than just EPA funding. Non-capital actions addressing stormwater, shellfish and habitat are being specifically solicited. Example NTAs include education, broad assessments, behavior change, learning from experiments, and

programmatic approaches. There is an informational meeting tomorrow, November 16, and Perry will attend. To be eligible for funding, a required step is to pre-register the NTA by December 22, 2017.

Henry Sladek asked whether this is a new program. Perry said EPA funding has been around for almost 10 years, the NTA process for about four years. Henry then asked whether Forum staff refers assessment, education, or planning projects to NEP since we don't have enough money for all the projects that are proposed under the CWM grant program. Perry replied that some projects first get funding from CWM, and that NEP is more competitive. However, larger non-capital projects (\$200K or more) may be referred to NEP because it would be a large proportion of our CWM funds. Additionally, CWM can fund ongoing work; EPA would not.

### **III. Forum Business**

2018 Forum Meeting Schedule: Elissa Ostergaard presented the 2018 Forum meeting schedule. Forum members discussed whether the meetings could start and end earlier. They agreed that 30 minutes earlier would work for everyone.

ACTION: The Forum agreed to start 2018 meetings at 6:30 p.m. instead of 7:00 p.m.

Forum Chair and Vice-Chair for 2018: The positions of Chair and Vice-Chair are renewed every year by the Forum. Chair Lee Grumman has stepped down from the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum, and from her seat on the Carnation City Council. Cindy Spiry (Snoqualmie Tribe) expressed interest in serving as the Forum Chair. Michael Ross, Snoqualmie Tribal Council, stated that the Snoqualmie Tribe supports her representing the Tribe in this role, and expressed appreciation for the collaboration and benefits the Tribe has gained from its participation. Henry Sladek (Town of Skykomish) indicated his willingness to continue serving as Vice-Chair.

ACTION: The Forum moved to name Cindy Spiry as Chair and Henry Sladek as Vice-Chair for 2018.

Ex Officio Citizen Representative: Eileen Carrel is stepping down as citizen representative for unincorporated King County because she has moved out of the Snoqualmie basin, so she is no longer eligible. Elissa explained the process for King County Executive Dow Constantine to appoint a new citizen representative, who will serve on behalf of the citizens of the unincorporated King County areas of the watershed. Three applications were received from Ed Hazen, Charles Kellogg, and Lyn Watts; however, Lyn Watts withdrew his application because he has conflicts with the Forum meetings. Ed Hazen and Charles Kellogg each introduced themselves. Both are residents of Fall City and would like to contribute to improving conditions for salmon. King County staff will interview the candidates, and hope to announce the appointment in January.

### **IV. 2017 Forum Highlights**

Perry shared the Forum's accomplishments for 2017, highlighting funding secured for projects in the basin, including \$872,286 for 13 projects allocated from the Cooperative Watershed Management grant program. This program can fund a wide variety of projects that can otherwise be difficult to fund. Since 1998, the Forum has allocated over \$11.5M to 242 projects, leveraging approximately \$35M from other funding sources.

Capital actions completed this year include City of Duvall's project to replace two culverts on Thayer Creek to improve fish passage for coho salmon; King County acquired four parcels along the Tolt River floodplain and 120 acres in the headwaters of Patterson Creek; and the Town of Skykomish completed a

stream habitat enhancement feasibility study, which identified new opportunities for improvements. The Snoqualmie Tribe continued Kimball Creek work, including 2,600 feet of stream bank.

Other Forum accomplishments include completion of the Snohomish Basin Climate Change Issue Paper, providing project assistance and site visits to six project partners and other landowners, advancing technical studies on juvenile salmon rearing and water temperatures to inform future projects, and hosting a project tour of Town of Skykomish, Wild Fish Conservancy and King County projects in the SF Skykomish watershed with 45 participants.

For a full list of accomplishments, please contact Forum staff.

## **V. Snoqualmie Valley Watershed Improvement District Drainage Prioritization and Other Programs**

Cynthia Krass, Executive Director for the Snoqualmie Valley Watershed Improvement District (WID), presented on the history and recent activities of the WID. It was formed in 2015 as an irrigation district in order to improve agricultural viability in the Snoqualmie Valley and remove barriers to farming. The district is located in the lower valley from Fall City to the county line, and includes 13,500 acres with 300 unique property owners. The main priorities include getting irrigation water on farms to grow food crops in late summer, and improving drainage in spring to lengthen the growing season. No new water rights have been issued since the mid-70s. There has been a generation of deferred drainage maintenance, because regulations have made it complex, onerous, and overwhelming; people were afraid they would be fined. The WID is governed by five commissioners, who are elected by peers to serve 3-year terms. Each parcel is assessed at \$7/acre.

The WID received a grant from Ecology and started a water bank by purchasing a water right for Tokul Creek from Weyerhaeuser. Private sellers with valid water rights then made them available to the bank. An auction was held to discover the price for water, since there were no comparables. The market clearing price was \$125/acre-foot for one year. Permanent rights are not granted; in 2018 the WID will provide 5-year leases.

Cynthia went on to explain the WID's approach to prioritizing drainage projects, using some funding provided by the King County Flood Control District. Their goals were to understand the drainage needs of the district, protect investments in drainage activities, use a hydrologic approach, and get ecological benefits. Five consulting firms responded to their Request for Proposals, and they selected Northwest Hydraulic Consultants. They used LiDAR to create 72 hydrologically connected planning units, independent of parcel ownership, of different shapes and sizes. They prioritized where to work based on need using four sources of wetness and an acreage score. Basins 56, 9, 1, 4, 7, and 6 are top priorities, and they plan to construct in 56 and 9 during 2018. Cynthia handed out maps of drainage basins; maps and lists are available on their web site. She and Erin have been meeting with regulators.

### Discussion

Trevor Kostanich asked how they select who qualifies for a lease. Cynthia replied that there is more supply than demand, and they will likely have another auction if they get more demand than supply. Also, because farmers are paying for water, they are conserving. Brian Bodenbach asked what the amount of water available through the water right was since it had not been used. Cynthia responded that the water right had been held in trust, so even though it wasn't being used, it was still transferable. Bryan Halloway said that unexercised water rights have a tendency to evaporate. Cynthia responded that the quantity was reduced to 15 acre-feet from 60 acre-feet due to the change to consumptive vs. non-consumptive use.

Perry Falcone asked how projects will get funded; Cynthia answered that they are working closely with the Agriculture Drainage Assistance Program (ADAP) to see what can get funded by that program. Projects with fish passage benefits could come to the Forum for partial funding. Some wet areas may be targeted for restoration. They also may get some funding from the FCD. John Velimesis asked about the timeframe to obtain permits, for example, Army Corps of Engineers permits can take 18 months. Erin replied that some projects could take longer to permit than others. Eileen Carrel asked how they would reduce flooding during winter. Cynthia said they are not directly addressing winter flooding. There is evidence that drainage infrastructure could affect flood elevations, but they are mostly working with the existing drainage network and improving its function by managing waterways.

Jason Walker congratulated Cynthia on her progress. He asked whether there is a change in practice towards food farming in valley driving need for this, or a change in hydrology. Cynthia responded that crop growers are most concerned with irrigation: they use small amounts of higher elevation land. The larger, long-term farmers are more interested in drainage, largely driven by their historic perspective. She said a recent study showed that flood elevations are rising faster than flows. The valley floor has been rising, so it is wetter, and Cynthia believes it is because people are not dredging. In late spring, peak flood events are more significant; this impacts the growing season directly.

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, January 17, 2018, Carnation City Hall, 6:30-8:30 p.m.