

**Snoqualmie Watershed Forum**  
**MEETING SUMMARY**  
**March 19, 2008**  
**Meeting 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.**  
**Duvall Church – Duvall, WA**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Charles Peterson	City of Snoqualmie Councilmember
Elizabeth Walker	City of Duvall Councilmember
Dave Cook	City of North Bend Councilmember
Will Harper	Citizen Representative
Bill Knutsen	Citizen Representative
Gary Roberts	Citizen Representative

**MEETING PROCEEDINGS**

**Introductions and Minutes**

- Interim Forum Chair Charles Peterson explained that several forum members could not make today's meeting as it conflicted with a rescheduled meeting of the Snoqualmie Valley Governments Association involving Ron Sims. Yvette has checked, and this is the only date in 2008 where there is a conflict.
- The Forum approved the meeting summary for the January 16, 2008 meeting.

**Announcements**

Yvette provided the following announcements:

- In January and February, the Forum staff delivered briefing-type presentations to local councils in the four valley cities and the Snoqualmie Tribe. Over the next weeks, staff also plan to meet with Councilmember Lambert and with the Forum's ex-officio representatives.
- The 2008 Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) grant round is underway. This year, we have approximately \$700,000 to allocate to salmon recovery projects in the Snohomish Basin. Pre-applications were due March 18.
- King County Council's Growth and Natural Resources Committee will be hosting a series of public hearings on the county's 2008 Comprehensive Plan Update. They include two hearings in the Snoqualmie Valley – in Snoqualmie (March 20) and Carnation (April 9).

- King County has posted its responses to public comments on the draft Shoreline Master Program (SMP) update. They plan to release a third Draft SMP in late summer. They will hold a final comment period this fall before transmitting the final SMP to County Council.

### **King County Flood Control Zone District – Subregional Opportunity Fund**

Sandy Kilroy (King County Regional Services Section Manager) informed the Forum of an upcoming decision of the Flood Control Zone District (FCZD) Advisory Committee.

- As part of the 2007 Flood Control Zone District (FCZD) levy decision, it was agreed that ten percent (10%) of the FCZD funds would be allocated to a sub-regional opportunity fund to address flooding problems not located on mainstem river or large tributaries – the focal areas of the District’s main work program
- The District Board of Supervisors has asked the FCZD Advisory Committee to provide recommendations on eligible activities and a process for allocating the Sub-Regional Opportunity Funds. The Advisory Committee will be meeting on April 4, 2008 to develop recommendations on the following four questions:
  1. Definition of sub-regional - should sub-regional mean any stream system not specifically named in the District’s comprehensive plan?
  2. How should the funds be allocated – competitive process or distributed to jurisdictions based on total assessed value?
  3. What activities should be eligible?
  4. How will the district transfer the funds?
- If cities have particular preferences around these questions they should communicate them to their valley representatives on the FCZD Advisory Committee. The three valley representatives include Mayor Matt Larson (Snoqualmie), Mayor Kenneth Hearing (North Bend), and Mayor Mike Flowers (Carnation). Mayor Mike Flowers (who also serves on the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum) was unable to attend today’s meeting and was therefore unable to advise members on the upcoming sub-regional opportunity fund decision.

### **Comments and Discussions**

- Lara Thomas (Senior Planner, City of Duvall) expressed concern that city staff were not advised of this upcoming decision prior to the Forum meeting. In response, it was explained that the FCZD had consulted with local government staff serving on the Snoqualmie Basin Technical Committee – the official staff advisory body to the FCZD. This committee includes public works staff from the four valley cities and the Snoqualmie Tribe.
- It was mentioned that not all planning staff were informed of the Snoqualmie Basin Technical Committee recommendations. This highlighted a need for improved communication at several levels. Yvette mentioned that Snoqualmie Forum and FCZD staff had discussed the need to work together to improve coordination between our two groups and would be working to do so.

- Action: As a follow up, Yvette offered to provide a written backgrounder on the FCZD to help put the Sub-Regional Opportunity Fund and the upcoming decisions into context.

## **Puget Sound Partnership**

- Yvette presented two guest speakers from the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP). Gary Rowe is the Skagit County Administrator. He represents our Whidbey Action Area on PSP's Ecosystem Coordination Board. Linda Lyshall is staff to the Partnership. She serves as regional liaison for the Whidbey Action Area.

Gary Rowe provided a brief presentation on the Puget Sound Partnership.

- He began by highlighting some of the issues affecting the Sound including:
  - Population growth – Now at 4 million with 1.5 million more people expected by 2020
  - ESA listing of various endangered species, most notably Chinook salmon and Orcas.
  - High toxin levels in marine animals. Puget Sound orcas are the most contaminated whales in the world.
  - Beach closures and increased shut downs on clam/oyster harvesting.
- The PSP is developing an Action Agenda to clean up the Sound by 2020. This initiative is seen as our last best chance to reverse current trends and restore this important ecosystem. Geographically, the Action Agenda is intended to cover the full area of Puget Sound – from the headwaters to the marine areas.
- The Action Agenda will address four questions: 1) What is the current health of the Sound? 2) What does a healthy Sound look like? 3) What actions, policies and programs are necessary to restore the Sound? and 4) Where should we start?
- In answering these questions, the Action Agenda will seek to integrate the many efforts being undertaken by diverse groups and agencies working on different issues in the Sound (habitat, water quality, water quantity, marine resources, toxins etc) and assemble them into a single unified plan. In so doing, it will aim to better coordinate various restoration and protection efforts and identify strategic gaps and priorities for action. The Action Agenda will also put emphasis on public education and accountability as part of its broader strategy.
- It is recognized that the Action Agenda will not be perfect, particularly in this first iteration. It is intended to be a living document.

Linda Lyshall gave added updates on the Action Agenda process.

- The deadline to complete the Action Agenda has been extended from September to December 2008. The extension will allow more time to work through the different stages. Currently Action Agenda activities are happening at two levels.
  - At the Sound-wide level, teams of experts are developing Topic Forum white papers around key action agenda objectives (water quality, water quantity, habitat and land use,

species and biodiversity, and human health). There will be opportunity to comment on these papers once they are posted in mid-April. Those interested are also welcome to attend one of the Topic Forum workshops planned through late April and May.

- At the Whidbey Action Area level we will be working to develop a profile that will detail our area-specific status, threats and priorities. All action areas are preparing such profiles, which will eventually roll into the sound-wide plan.
- PSP will inform the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum and its member jurisdictions of pivotal opportunities to input into these products and into the overall Action Agenda. Yvette currently serves on a core team of individuals from different parts of the action area who are advising Gary and Linda on the process.

### **Farm-Flood Taskforce Report**

- Janne explained that The Farm-Flood Taskforce Report ties back to the farm pad issue he has been tracking for the Forum and introduced the two presenters: Tom Bean, Engineer with King County's River and Floodplain Management Unit, and Claire Dyckman, Program Manager with the King County Agriculture Program.

Claire Dyckman gave a background on the Taskforce Report and its key recommendations:

- For the past 15 years, regulations have limited the ability of farmers to build or expand their agricultural infrastructure in the Snoqualmie floodplain. In 1990, a temporary window was opened and some fill allowances were made for critter pads. With the loss of dairy in the Valley, many of the pads have gone into disrepair.
- The Farm-Flood Taskforce was established following the November 2006 floods which caused considerable farm losses in the Valley.
- The report makes a total of 16 recommendations. Among the recommendations, the report would allow farmers to construct flood-proof non-residential, agricultural buildings in the floodway, including structures on farm pads. It would provide \$100,000 in annual funding from the King County Flood Control Zone District to help pay for hydraulic analyses and to elevate agricultural buildings in the floodplain. It would also allow pads to be constructed within the floodway, provided FEMA floodplain standards were met before construction.
- The latter condition (related to farm pads) presented particular challenges. King County staff had to be creative in determining how pads could be constructed/raised in the floodplain without exceeding FEMA's zero rise limitations – which if exceeded would impact insurance rates. To do so, they had to keep pads small and find compensatory storage – sites where equivalent fill could be removed. Such elevated compensatory storage sites are very rare in the Snoqualmie floodplain, so King County staff spent considerable time trying to locate and map their locations.
- In addition to the recommendations already mentioned above, the report proposes the establishment of a compensatory storage bank. It also allows farmers to store equipment, farm supplies and feed on their farm pads – which in the past were limited to livestock.

Tom Bean explained the analysis and modeling guiding decisions around the placement of pads:

- King County has been using the HEC-RAS model to estimate how flow will be affected by new/elevated pads in the floodplain. As part of a pilot study, the model was run for the 13 initial pads recommended for construction/elevation by the King County Agriculture Commission. The model showed no measurable rise from these projects individually or as a whole.
- In its analysis, King County has had to determine the flood storage volume (pre and post project) and compensate for any displacement both in volume and at equivalent elevations with an aim of preserving hydraulic function and preventing cumulative impacts.
- In terms of next steps, the Taskforce report and ordinance will be transmitted to King County Council in April/May 2008. Work related to code changes, establishment of the compensatory storage bank and additional modeling will continue into fall 2008.

#### Comments and questions

- Charles Peterson mentioned that Councilmember Kathy Lambert was heavily involved in the farm-flood effort. Christine Jensen (staff to Councilmember Lambert) thanked the individuals involved in the Taskforce on Kathy's behalf.
- Bill Knutsen described a project on Haskell Slough in Snohomish County where an oxbow was reconnected to accommodate more water. He asked whether such projects would offer extra storage potential in the Snoqualmie? Tom Bean explained that oxbows and other depressions in the floodplain represent so-called 'dead storage' that does not provide any help during flood conditions as these areas are fully inundated at much lower flow levels. The need for storage is at higher elevations.
- Will Harper expressed concern that the proposed new allowances for agricultural structures in the floodplain and on farm pads would lead to misuse and/or encourage the storage of contaminants (oil, herbicides) in the floodway. Claire explained that such agricultural materials are already in the floodway because some farmers currently have no elevated areas on their properties to store them. It is specifically these farmers that are targeted by the new taskforce recommendations. Generally when floods occur, farmers have insufficient time to move everything to higher ground. The Taskforce recommendations are intended to reduce risks to farmers and to water quality by ensuring that farm equipment, animals and supplies are safely stored above the floodwaters.

#### **King County Large Wood Report**

Tom Bean gave an update on King County's Large Wood report.

- The placement of large wood in rivers and streams is becoming standard practice for habitat, structural, flood hazard management and other functions. Large wood can pose a safety hazard. Its placement is currently not regulated for recreational safety factors.
- In late 2007, King County Council passed motion 2007-0622 directing King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks (KC-DNRP) to develop rules and regulations for

large wood placement in local streams. The motion stemmed from public safety concerns raised by boaters and other river recreation users.

- Tom explained that King County's current practices involve recreational users in project design through an informal process. The recreational community was generally satisfied with King County's practices and standards. Their key concern related to the lack of standards on outside projects.
- As part of its response, KC-DNRP convened a multi-stakeholder Task Force to look at the large wood issue and develop procedural standards for large wood placement in King County waterways. The Large Wood Task Force's recommendations are presented in a recently issued report entitled *Report Addressing Safety in Placement of Large Wood in King County Waterways*. It includes recommendations related to stakeholder input, design standards, development of design guidelines, and river safety education among other items.

#### Comment and discussion

- Yvette advised the Forum that ILA staff had prepared a draft Forum comment letter on the Large Wood Task Force report. Hard copies of the letter were included in the meeting package. If agreed, staff would email an electronic version of the letter for member review and comment.
- Decision: The Forum agreed to review the draft letter on large wood and provide comments by Friday March 28.

#### **2008 King Conservation District (KCD) Grant Round Update**

- Perry reviewed the status of past KCD grants. There were no issues of concern to report.
- Perry gave an update on the 2008 grant applications.
  - The pre-application periods for both the Regular Round and Opportunity Fund have closed. We have received a total of 45 pre-applications under both rounds (including 13 proposals under the Regular Round and 32 under the Opportunity Fund). The final applications are due in early April.
  - Staff do not recommend refining the Opportunity Fund criteria this year given the broad scope of projects, the amount of technical analysis that would be required to define such diverse ecological priorities, and the current stage in the application round.
  - Staff recommend continuing with the current schedule, with the Forum making allocation decisions on both funding sources at the May 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. If staff see a need to change the schedule once the project review process is complete they will advise the Forum.

## **Forum Business**

### *Selection of Forum Chair and Vice Chair*

- Charles Peterson and Elizabeth Walker currently serve as interim Chair and Vice Chair to the Forum. At the last meeting, Forum members agreed to postpone the selection of the permanent Chair and Vice-Chair until this March 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- Yvette surveyed Forum members prior to the meeting to see if anyone had strong interest in serving in one of the seats. If not, Charles and Elizabeth offered to serve for the remainder of 2008. All members supported Charles and Elizabeth serving the full year.
- Decision: Motion to appoint Charles Peterson as Forum Chair and Elizabeth Walker as Forum Vice-Chair through the remainder of 2008. Approved.

### *Inquiry Regarding Ex-Officio Representatives*

- Bill Knutsen explained that he currently serves as the ex-officio representative for the Snoqualmie Valley Governments Association (SVGA). It has been years since he has met with the SVGA. Bill questioned whether SVGA would prefer to have a new ex-officio representative of their choosing, such as a local resident from one of the four cities.
- On his side, Bill would like to remain involved in the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum and asked whether the Forum might consider adding a non-voting agricultural/KCD seat, particularly since this is the role he often informally fills.
- Members questioned whether the SVGA still wanted an ex-officio seat on the Forum. If not, an alternative would be to change the SVGA seat to an Agricultural/KCD seat.
- Action: The Forum agreed to postpone the decision. Elizabeth Walker offered to discuss the question with Mayor Will Ibershof of Duvall (who serves on the SVGA) and confirm whether they would like to maintain an ex-officio/resident seat on the Forum.

## **Public comment**

No public comment.

## **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be May 21, 2008 from 6:30-9:00pm at the Preston Community Center. The meeting will start 30 minutes early to allow sufficient time for the KCD grant decisions. Dinner will be provided.