

WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council
Meeting Notes
Kirkland City Hall
November 15, 2012
3:05 – 5:02 p.m.

Members Present

Dr. Don Davidson, Chair (Councilmember, Bellevue); Joan McBride, Vice-Chair (Mayor, Kirkland); Layne Barnes (Councilmember, Maple Valley); Susan Boundy-Sanders (Councilmember, Woodinville); Diane Buckshnis (Councilmember, Edmonds); Chris Eggen (Deputy Mayor, Shoreline); Don Fiene (Councilmember, Lake Forest Park); Ava Frisinger (Mayor, Issaquah); Lisa Jensen (Councilmember, Newcastle); Kirk Lakey (WA Department of Fish & Wildlife [WDFW]); Bart Masterson (Councilmember, Mill Creek); Hank Myers (Councilmember, Redmond); Mike O'Brien (Councilmember, Seattle); Andy Rheume (Councilmember, Bothell); Carl Scandella (Councilmember, Yarrow Point); Gary Smith (Trout Unlimited/WaterTenders); Frank Urabeck (Citizen).

New Members Present

Noel Gilbrough (Mid-Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group); Tyson Greer (Friends of the Cedar River Watershed).

Others Present

Loren Brokaw (Adopt-A-Stream); Rika Cecil (Shoreline); Diana Foreman (Portage Bay Coalition for Clean Water [PBCCW]); Kathy Minsch (Seattle); Tom Murdock (Adopt-A-Stream); Jerallyn Roetemeyer, Redmond); Susan O'Neil (Puget Sound Partnership [PSP]); Phil Roni (NOAA NW Science Center); Stacey Rush (Kirkland); Bruce Wulkan (PSP); Anonymous Male (Kirkland); Linda Grob (WRIA 8 Team); Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz (WRIA 8 Team); Scott Stolnack (WRIA 8 Team); Jean White (WRIA 8 Team).

1. Public Comment

Diana Foreman, PBCCW, reported on the proposed coal export terminal at Cherry Point in Whatcom County. If the terminal is approved 54 million tons of coal per year will travel through five states in open coal rail cars, before being shipped to China. She explained that a new study by the National Wildlife Federation examined the true cost of coal if the terminal is built, concluding it will be a threat to fish and communities, water and air quality. The Army Corps of Engineers is holding scoping meetings around the state to determine the scope of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the terminal. The scoping meeting in Seattle will be Thursday, December 13, 3:00 to 7:00 p.m., at the Convention Center. All affected communities are encouraged to provide comment, and she listed two websites where comments are being accepted until January 21, 2013: www.coalfreenorthwest.org and www.powerpastcoal.org.

2. Approval of Meeting Notes for September 20, 2012

The Salmon Recovery Council unanimously approved the meeting notes for the September 20, 2012 meeting.

3. Updates & Announcements

General Announcements:

Jean White, Watershed Coordinator, made several announcements:

- **WRIA 8 Salmon Tour:** This year's tour on October 5 was very successful. Participants engaged in a lot of networking, and good contacts were made.
- **Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council (PSSRC):** The PSSRC held a three-day implementation conference in October to set priorities to advance implementation of the Puget Sound Chinook Recovery Plan. The PSSRC meets again on November 29 to adopt the 2013 work plan. Priorities are likely to include lack of funding for salmon recovery, support for monitoring and adaptive management, and future workshops to address permitting issues for restoration projects, regulatory

loopholes, and balancing growth and salmon in urban areas. Jean mentioned that the PSSRC's local portion of its legislative agenda may be related to a watershed investment district study bill. As far as adaptive management and monitoring is concerned, each WRIA is being asked to take its salmon conservation plan and translate it into a uniform regional framework. This effort will be funded, and NOAA will release information in 2013 on how to update our plans.

- Don Davidson explained that the PSSRC, on which he serves as Vice-Chair, has decided to take a more active role in salmon recovery plan implementation in their 2013 work plan.
- **Cooperative Watershed Management Grants:** On October 29 the King County Flood Control District (FCD) approved a resolution and adopted a budget to fund WRIA activities and projects at the same \$3 million level previously funded by the King Conservation District (KCD). WRIA 8's portion is \$1.2 million. In addition, the White River portion of WRIA 10 will receive \$150,000.
 - Chris Eggen inquired if the FCD will take over the administration process function previously handled by KCD. Jean said King County will take over that administration, while KCD will continue to administer the existing past WRIA 8 grants until those are closed out.
 - Mike O'Brien asked for an explanation of the difference between the KCD and FCD assessments. Don Davidson replied that the FCD assessment is based on land value, so a high assessed valuation area will pay more.
- **KCD Funding:** On November 13 the King County Council approved a two-year KCD budget which reflects a system of rates and charges that is close to revenue neutral, and includes \$1.2 million for member jurisdiction grants. The median assessment is \$5.14-\$5.18 for two years. King County will convene a multi-jurisdictional task force by December 2013 to look at a needs assessment of conservation and natural resource programs and services in the county. Based on the King County Council's approved KCD budget amount, KCD needs to develop a budget and work plan by December 17.
 - Don Davidson commented that the parcel rate for KCD is also weighted according to direct and indirect benefits. He said there is a considerable difference for some landowners between a per parcel fee and rates and charges system.
 - Chris Eggen asked who will be put on the task force. Jean replied that membership includes two members from King County, two from the KCD Board of Supervisors, one each from Seattle and Bellevue, three from the Suburban Cities Association (SCA) representing each of the three geographical areas of north, south and east King County, and three members representing rural landowners jointly appointed by King County and KCD representatives.
- **Green Shorelines:** WRIA 8 has hired Polly Freeman on a limited term basis to help promote outreach materials with shoreline planners.

Committee Reports:

Scott Stolnack, Technical Coordinator, reported that:

- **Fish Numbers:** There were 409 Chinook redds in the Cedar River in 2012, and approximately 149 redds in the Bear/Cottage Lake Creek system (refer to handouts). These numbers are still well below the abundance numbers in our goals for adult returns.
 - Hank Myers inquired if it is a myth that every female Chinook returns to her original redd. Scott replied that it is a myth.
 - Carl Scandella asked why the redd numbers were so high in 2007. Scott explained that scientists don't know all the reasons for the variation every year, but much has to do with ocean conditions, predation, temperature, etc. He said it's a black box what happens out in the ocean. Juvenile numbers going out are inching upward, and in the Cedar we are beginning to meet our goals in terms of overall juvenile productivity.
 - Layne Barnes asked about the connection between redds right now and the juvenile survival rate. Besides ocean conditions survival is also affected by conditions in rivers and creeks, such as flooding, etc. Scott replied that we preach resilience and floodplain connectivity, which will help make weather events less impactful to juvenile fish. The force in rivers during floods has to do

with velocity and depth. The bulk of returning fish is two- and four-year-olds. The Sammamish Hatchery puts out two million fry, and the wild fish are less than 2% of that.

- Chris Eggen requested the estimated number of juveniles who survive, including hatchery fish. Scott reported that fish traps at the mouth of Bear Creek and on the Cedar are only counting wild fish. He said we haven't seen a real strong correlation between the number going out and numbers coming back three to five years later. We can age carcasses when they come back. Councilmember Eggen commented that it is disturbing for the work we do that there isn't a correlation between fish going out and coming in.

4. Restoring Salmon Habitat for Climate Change

Phil Roni, NOAA's NW Fisheries Science Center, reported that there are ten different climate change models out there. The resolution for global climate simulations is not very good (50-250 km), and we are trying to scale down and do bias correction. For Puget Sound there is predicted to be a 35-75% decrease in lowest monthly flow between the 1980s and 2080s. We are within the range for summer rearing, but the situation is plenty bleak in the Columbia River, which may mean creeks in Eastern Washington won't be suitable for salmon. He said in WRIA 8 we have ocean-type Chinook and a rainfall dominated system, with spring and fall migrations. Interior Pacific Northwest and Interior Columbia are spring-type Chinook, snowmelt to transitional systems, and in 80 years will all be rainfall dominated. Climates in the state are going to get more Mediterranean, with dry summers and wet winters.

Phil went over the key questions that form the decision support framework for evaluating a restoration plan and adapting it to climate change:

- What habitat factors limit salmon recovery?
- What are local predicted climate change effects?
- Do proposed restoration actions reduce climate change effects?
- Do proposed restoration actions increase habitat diversity or ecosystem resilience?

He said we did a literature review to see if a restoration action ameliorates a climate change effect (increased peak flow, decreased low flow, increased stream temperature), and increases habitat diversity and population resilience. Categories of restoration actions and changes affected are:

- Restore riparian areas/plantings = reduced temperature.
- Restore flow regimes/instream flows = reduced temperature, increased flows.
- Restore incised channels back up to the historic floodplain = more flow in summer, lower stream temperature, added refuge during peak flows for juvenile fish. Incised channels are common in urban area, and the Stillaguamish is incised 50 meters. Putting in some structure adds a few centimeters per year. Beaver dams add 40 centimeter/year.
- Increase habitat diversity and resiliency through floodplain restoration. Phil said there were more than 25 life history types of salmon in the Columbia River, whereas now there are only four of five. A mosaic of different habitat types result in different fish rearing. Dams blocked salmon from access to the headwaters and cool water areas, and we need to restore access to diverse habitats.

In summary, Phil explained that all models predict changes in low flow, peak flow, and temperature. Restoration actions vary in their ability to ameliorate climate change effects, but most instream restoration won't ameliorate climate change. Some restoration strategies can help increase salmon resilience: restoring connectivity; increasing habitat diversity (floodplains); restoring flow regimes. Applying the decision support framework will help evaluate whether to adjust restoration plans or actions for climate change.

Discussion;

- Hank Myers noted that the transition zone on the Sammamish has become over grown, and he asked if that is the sort of repair that would improve climate change effects. Phil Roni responded that the Sammamish Slough is really channelized.

- Carl Scandella commented that if we are going to have temperature changes, it will affect our salmon, but salmon species will also evolve. Phil said evolutionary biologists are arguing about that now. We are discovering that salmon evolve pretty quickly and can adapt to climate change, but we don't know how quickly and what the change will be. Certain salmonids like bulltrout that like cold water are really going to be affected.
- Kirk Lakey said his understanding was that a rain-dominated system riparian restoration maintains water temperature, but doesn't have an impact on reducing the overall system. Phil said the information we have is not on streams that have healthy vegetation. The study was done on agriculture land on Coos Bay where the temperature pre-riparian planting was 20° C, and after planting was 15° C. Kirk said he understood riparian restoration had more of an effect on a snow-dominated system, than on a rain-dominated system like the Green River. Phil agreed that on the Green riparian planting will maintain temperature, but not reduce it. We are maintaining the temperature of the cold headwaters here, but on the east side of the mountains there isn't much cold in the headwaters.
- Diane Buckshnis inquired if NOAA considered the impact of people using pollutants, and putting them in the water. Phil said we haven't considered those yet.
- Susan Boundy-Sanders mentioned that the effect of beaver dams was exciting, and she inquired if beavers will only get to work on the Columbia. Phil reported that beavers were historically found throughout the west, except at really high elevations. They can only work in smaller streams.
- Mike O'Brien asked if NOAA looked at ocean acidification. Phil replied that there is a lab looking at that at NOAA, but we don't know what they found yet.
- Layne Barnes commented that a 35-75% decreased low flow in summer time will apparently make salmon very uncomfortable. If there are super low flows in eastern WA, would we see our temperatures rise here. Phil agreed that low flows mean higher temperatures. He said above 80° F is not just uncomfortable, but hard for salmon to handle.
- Don Fiene said our conservation plan has a ten-year horizon, and he asked if we should be looking longer-term because species are evolving. Phil said if we're going to see some big changes in the mix of species we will need to look at that. Alan Hamlet at UW has been producing smaller scale maps which we will need to look at. We will also probably have to look at a longer term time frame.
- Susan Boundy-Sanders said she heard in the presentation that the Pacific Northwest is getting dryer in the summer, but she has also heard we may get cooler and wetter conditions. Phil responded that it depends on where you are. Some places in the Pacific Northwest will have more snowfall.

5. WRIA 8 Legislative Agenda Addition and Next Steps

Jean White proposed adding the following bullet to the previously approved State Priorities portion of the Legislative Agenda:

- Support a study bill of the draft Watershed Investment District (WID) legislation.

She said the WRIA 8 Funding Subcommittee met on November 6, and recommended adding the WID bullet. On November 7 the SCA had a study session on WID, and is creating a study group consider SCA support. The PSSRC may also support a study bill. In addition WRIA 9 is talking about having a funding summit, and is asking if WRIA 8 wants to partner with them. She said there is no legislative sponsor for the study bill.

Discussion:

- Hank Myers asked if we are talking about building a bigger cake for funding. Don Davidson said the state legislature doesn't have a lot of money, and we are already going down to Olympia with a big ask for Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR). He said he personally wants to study the WID in case the legislature pushes it down to the local level. Dr. Davidson said he supports a WID that is Puget Sound-wide, and adding it to our Legislative Agenda.

- Joan McBride remarked that she really supports adding the WID study bill, and she thinks this is the best way to work on it. She suggested that the SRC send a PSAR support letter to Governor-elect Inslee and Governor Gregoire to request they include PSAR in their respective biennial budgets.
- Don Davidson commented that there is a timing issue with signatures, and said he normally signs letters from the SRC. Jean White said she could attach the list of SRC members.
- Hank Myers asked if we know which transition member of the new administration will be working on salmon. Jean said we do not.
- Chris Eggen said he is unclear what a study bill is. Don Davidson replied that we can't say because the study bill is not done yet. There is interest in the state legislature for a tax at the WRIA- or Puget Sound-level. Joan McGilton explained that they can't assign staff until there is a study bill.
- Noel Gilbrough mentioned that he also sits on the WRIA 9 Watershed Ecosystem Forum. He was involved in the initial discussions of seeking additional funding, because we realized with the current level of funding it could take 200 years to do our plan. He said his plan is it takes \$50 per fish. Funding is solvable but not easy, and the goal is to make sure we can get back on track with the recovery plan's timeline.
- Don Davidson mentioned that salmon recovery was not raised as an issue during the recent state elections, so seeking additional funding may be challenging. We are trying to get it on their agenda and find some salmon champions. We are focusing on the state legislature because of losing Representative Norm Dicks at the federal level.
- Chris Eggen asked if we will get talking points if we approve the Legislative Agenda. Jean said she would provide them.

The Salmon Recovery Council unanimously approved the Legislative Agenda with the addition of the Watershed Investment District study bill. By head nod the Salmon Recovery Council also unanimously approved writing a WRIA 8 letter to both Governor-elect Inslee and Governor Gregoire in support of Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration funding.

6. Success Story: Little Bear Creek Barrier Removal at 132nd Avenue

Tom Murdock, Director, Adopt-A-Stream Foundation (AASF), reported that the AASF analyzed 600 culverts in WRIA 8. Most government agencies and jurisdictions have addressed their barriers. There were challenges with the landowners at 132nd Avenue in Woodinville. He said that the 132nd barrier removal project was fully funded at one point, but politics led to a desire to include an expensive bridge that made the project unfeasible.

Tom introduced Loren Brokaw, project manager for the 132nd Avenue barrier removal. Loren explained that at 132nd Avenue AASF pulled out three big culverts, re-graded the slopes on both sides, installed logs with root wads in the stream channel, and diverted the stream flow during construction using a low cost innovative method developed by the AASF and the contractor that uses T-posts with a tarp to serve as the barrier/filter. Spawning sockeye and Chinook have now been seen upstream, and vegetation will be planted next spring.

7. Next Meeting

The next meeting is January 17, 2013, 3:00 to 5:15 p.m., Kirkland City Hall.