

WRIA 9 Watershed Ecosystem Forum Meeting Summary

Renton City Hall // November 9, 2017, 4:15 – 6:36 p.m.

Members Present		Affiliation
1.	Councilmember (CM) Bill Peloza, Meeting Chair	City of Auburn
2.	Al Barrie	Mid-Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group (MSFEG)
3.	CM Kathryn Campbell	City of SeaTac
4.	Jay Covington	City of Renton
5.	CM Bob Edgar	City of Burien
6.	Noel Gilbrough	MSFEG
7.	Mike Mactutis	City of Kent
8.	Joe Miles	WA Department of Natural Resources (WA DNR)
9.	CM Erika Morgan	City of Black Diamond
10.	Joan Nolan	WA Department of Ecology
11.	Lisa Parsons	Washington Environmental Council
12.	James Rasmussen	Green/Duwamish Watershed Alliance
13.	Brandy Reed	King Conservation District
14.	Stewart Reinbold	WA Department of Fish and Wildlife

Alternates Present		Affiliation
15.	Maiya Andrews	City of Burien
16.	Jonathan Loos	American Rivers
17.	Tom Malphrus	Covington Water District
18.	Kathy Minsch	City of Seattle
19.	Loren Reinhold	City of Des Moines
20.	Ron Straka	City of Renton
21.	Greg Volkhardt	Tacoma Public Utilities

Other Attendees Present		Affiliation
22.	Katie Beaver	King County
23.	Karen Bergeron	WRIA 9 Habitat Project Coordinator
24.	Maggie Gipson	City of Auburn
25.	Matt Goehring	WRIA 9 Planning and Technical Coordinator
26.	Kollin Higgins	King County
27.	Janne Kaje	King County
28.	Leah Kintner	Puget Sound Partnership
29.	Tara Luckie	Environmental Science Center (ESC)
30.	Megan Moore	King County
31.	Jessica Olmstead	WA DNR
32.	Doug Osterman	WRIA 9 Salmon Recovery Manager
33.	Larry Reymann	ESC

I) Welcome and Introductions

Meeting Chair Bill Peloza called the meeting to order at approximately 4:15 pm.

II) Public Comment

Noel Gilbrough spoke on a need for adequate signage to explain the restoration efforts at two project sites, North Winds Weir and Cecil B. Moses.

James Rasmussen reported on an ongoing situation with a Superfund site on the Duwamish. He said a roundtable caucus is being formed to determine decisions on river cleanup, and that WRIA 9, as an important source of input, should have a voice in this process. Doug Osterman, WRIA 9 Salmon Recovery Manager, replied he would research the situation and follow up.

III) “Salmon Heroes” Program at Environmental Science Center (Presentation)

Dr. Tara Luckie of the Environmental Science Center (ESC) presented on their “Salmon Heroes” hands-on student education program. The full presentation by Dr. Luckie, including her contact information, can be located online [here](#).

Chair Peloza praised the program, and pledged to reach out to the Auburn school district to get them involved. Dr. Luckie and Larry Reymann indicated plans to work with more non-profits and other entities, such as the City of Renton, and that they are interested in field trips further upstream in the watershed.

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IV) Approval of Prior Meeting Summary (Action Item)

Jay Covington motioned to approve the meeting summary for the August 10, 2017 WEF meeting. Noel Gilbrough seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Kathy Minsch noted one error; a mention of the “Clallam” tribe should be “S’ Klallam.”

V) Green/Duwamish Urban Waters Federal Partnership (Action Item)

Action: Approve the Green/Duwamish UWFP as a member of the WRIA 9 WEF.

Doug Osterman said Tracy Stanton of the Green/Duwamish UWFP sent her thanks to the WEF for their participation in UWFP and for voting for the UWFP to win the Sammie award. He recommended, per the statement in the cover memorandum for tonight’s meeting packet, the WEF to consider adding the UWFP as a member of the WEF, with Ms. Stanton as their delegate.

Noel Gilbrough motioned to accept the UWFP as a new WEF member, with Ms. Stanton as delegate. Kathy Minsch seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

VI) Technical Briefing #5: Green River Temperature and Salmon

Kollin Higgins, Environmental Scientist for King County DNRP, presented findings from the “Green River Temperature and Salmon” white paper, on behalf of its author, fellow KC Environmental Scientist Josh Kubo. Its findings detail the increasing negative impacts of higher water temperatures at multiple stages of the salmon life cycle, and future consequences of climate change on the watershed. The full paper is available for review [here](#), and the presentation is available for view [here](#).

Kathryn Campbell asked, since water begins heating up high in the watershed below Howard Hanson Dam, if there is a way to control flow from the dam in peak seasons to reduce temperatures. Mr. Higgins answered that while there are mechanisms in place for such an action, including frequent conference calls among agencies and the tribe, in which balancing the needs and priorities of multiple species of salmon and steelhead using releases from the Dam are discussed. Greg Volkhardt said in the spring a large amount of water at the Hanson reservoir is designated for steelhead, and some in the fall is designated for Chinook. He reiterated Mr. Higgins’ point about balancing priorities. He added that there is still a desire for more water to protect the fish.

Lisa Parsons asked about studies of impacts of springs coming into the Green. Mr. Higgins said measurements clearly indicate cold water input into the river in the Gorge reach and that there is ample infiltration and discharge from sub-surface springs near Enumclaw. Ms. Parsons voiced concern about pending developments and proliferation of private wells and septic systems in the area impacting the springs. Mr. Higgins replied that there are policies in the Salmon Habitat Plan that are intended to guide decisions made about ongoing development in the watershed, including in the areas of cold water sources to the river.

--BREAK--

At the break, Chair Peloza made a statement recognizing the upcoming Veterans Day holiday and the large event, including parade, held in Auburn. He then handed over chairing duties for the remainder of tonight’s meeting to Dennis Robertson.

VII) WRIA 9 Science Foundation Update (Action Item)

Action: Approve Fish Habitat Use and Productivity, Climate Change, and Temperature white papers as addendums to Science Foundation informing the Salmon Habitat Plan Update.

Matt Goehring, WRIA 9 Planning and Technical Coordinator, presented an update to the WRIA 9 Strategic Assessment Report’s Scientific Foundation for Salmonid Habitat Conservation. The presentation included habitat findings and their implications for the plan update, organized by sub-watershed. He also reviewed plan implications resulting from climate change. The findings predominately affirm and validate conservation hypotheses and necessary future conditions outlined in the Salmon Recovery Plan. The full presentation is located [here](#).

Extensive discussion followed the presentation. Jay Covington asked if the action statement should be amended to reflect the need to reevaluate Policy MS1, which directs funding allocation between spawning and rearing habitats. Mr. Goehring replied that more specific plan actions that are informed by the technical information and teed up for consideration by the WEF would go through the Implementation Technical Committee (ITC) before returning to the full WEF for consideration. Kathy Minsch asked what a potential timeline would be to address actions that could be included as updates to the Salmon Habitat Plan, emphasizing the timeline and approach is self-determined and we should take the time to do it right. Doug Osterman replied all four of the WEF’s regular 2018 meetings would be dedicated to this purpose. He said the ITC will also have a series of meetings to identify plan areas for refinement, including possibly incorporating city and county planners on the ITC to advise on land use policy and actions, and then bring recommendations to WEF for discussion and decision. Dennis Robertson observed, noting the recent flooding due to the Houston hurricane that more people should be paying attention to providing places for rivers to flood, particularly in the face of climate change.

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Noel Gilbrough said the crux of this issue in WRIA 9 is getting downstream passage at Howard Hanson Dam. Greg Volkhardt explained that the need for fish passage at the dam is not as highly publicized as other projects and, therefore, the Corps does not feel the pressure to address it. Letters have been sent to the head of NOAA fisheries and the then-Secretary of the Army by Washington's congressional delegation. He added that a collaborative effort is needed to keep the pressure on the Corps on this issue.

Kathryn Campbell stated the WEF should liaise with fishermen's groups, as they present a more attractive face for salmon recovery than the fish. Al Barrie opined that fish passage at the dam is a small issue in comparison to climate change causing an entire ecosystem to potentially collapse. Mr. Robertson countered that while climate change is important, it is not the focus of the WEF and we must continue to focus on salmon recovery and incorporate climate change into actions. He stressed the importance in continuing to protect all parts of the river system, as losing any one part of it can result in a drastic loss of fish. Brandy Reed suggested the WEF strategically ally itself with other priorities beneficial to salmon recovery, such as land/tree cover and stormwater management. Mr. Volkhardt stated there needs to be a focus on larger projects with greater impacts on fish population, and to focus more on the "wins" of what has been accomplished so far.

Jay Covington made a motion to approve the white papers as addendums to the Science Foundation informing the Salmon Habitat Plan update. Stewart Reinbold seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

VIII) Habitat Project Accomplishments in 2017 (Presentations)

- A. **Porter Levee Setback:** Josh Latterell, a Senior Ecologist at KC DNRP, presented on the Porter Reach Restoration Project, a levee setback project on the Green River near Auburn, which was constructed in Summer 2017. The presentation can be viewed in PDF format [here](#) and Dr. Latterell can be contacted [here](#).
- B. **Newaukum Creek Restoration Project – 10 Years of Monitoring:** Dan Eastman, a Senior Ecologist at KC DNRP, presented on the history of the Lower Newaukum Creek Restoration project, which was completed in 2008, and the ten years of monitoring since the project's completion. The presentation can be viewed in PDF format [here](#) and Mr. Eastman can be contacted [here](#).
- C. **Chinook Wind Regional Mitigation Site:** Michael Murphy, Transfer of Development Rights/In Lieu Fee Mitigation Program Supervisor for KC DNRP, presented on the Chinook Wind mitigation project on the Duwamish, between North Winds and Duwamish Gardens. The project involves demolition of a former hotel site and plans to convert it to four acres of intertidal salmon habitat. The presentation, including Mr. Murphy's contact information, can be viewed in PDF format [here](#).

IX) Wrap Up/Next Steps

Mr. Osterman referenced the 2018 meeting schedule noting that, due to elevator work at Renton City Hall, the WEF meetings for 2018 will not be at Renton City Hall. Two of the meetings are scheduled for the Tukwila Community Center and two, as tentative placeholders, at the King Street Center in Seattle. He is looking for other venues for the two tentatively scheduled in Seattle. Brandy Reed suggested the Renton wastewater treatment facility as a possible space.

The November 9, 2017 meeting of the WRIA 9 Watershed Ecosystem Forum adjourned at 6:36 pm.