

DRAFT

**Snoqualmie Watershed Forum
MEETING SUMMARY
March 20, 2013
Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm
Snoqualmie Tribe Office, Snoqualmie, WA**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jason Walker	City of Duvall Councilmember, Forum Chair
Bryan Holloway	City of Snoqualmie Councilmember, Forum Vice Chair
Erin Chamberlain	City of Carnation Councilmember
Ryan Kolodejchuk	City of North Bend Councilmember
Cindy Spiry	Snoqualmie Tribe (Alternate)
Micah Wait	Wild Fish Conservancy, Non-profit Representative
Jennifer McKeown	Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, Non-profit Representative (alternate)

MEETING PROCEEDINGS

Introductions and Minutes

- Jason Walker introduced himself as the incoming Forum Chair and then introductions went around the meeting. Two candidates for the citizen position on the Snoqualmie Valley Governments Association citizen seat introduced themselves.
 - Tom Kemp has a BA in Wildlife science, is involved in the Upper Snoqualmie Elk Management Group and lives in North Bend.
 - Matthew Gray works for HDR with a focus in water resource engineering and aquatic restoration. He is also from North Bend.
- The Forum approved the January 16th, 2013 meeting summary without changes.

Forum Updates and Announcements

Duvall Receives Ecology Grant for \$207,000: The City of Duvall applied for and received a grant from the Department of Ecology’s National Estuary Program’s Watershed Protection & Restoration funding source for the Watershed-based Land Use Planning for the City of Duvall project. The grant will help Duvall perform planning updates required by the Growth Management Act while developing a more integrated, watershed-based approach to land use. The Snoqualmie Watershed Forum provided a letter of support for the grant.

Watershed Investment District Legislation Update: The Sound Cities Association Board of Directors unanimously approved support for the formation of a stakeholder group as the means to reach consensus on a watershed investment authorities/districts bill for the 2014 legislative session. Representative Upthegrove conducted a House Environment Committee study session on watershed investment districts during the 2012 legislative session and is now willing to “champion” the next step to reach consensus on a bill that will be introduced in 2014. The WRIA 9 Management Committee will coordinate a regional summit on Watershed Investment Districts later this year.

DRAFT

Jason Walker shared what he heard from his trip to Olympia. He said that the only criticism he heard from the elected officials is that the legislative requests for salmon recovery capital spending utilize job creation claims, but those claims require more supporting information. He urged the Forum members to send letters and e-mails to the elected officials in the 5th and 45th districts to urge support of the capital budgets.

Chinook and Coho Already Utilizing McElhoe-Pearson Floodplain Reconnection Project: In fall 2012 King County completed the McElhoe-Pearson Floodplain Reconnection project near Carnation. Site monitoring included periodic nighttime snorkel surveys when juvenile fish are most active. In early March, about 30 Chinook and 100 coho salmon juveniles were recorded at the site, as well as a few steelhead (or rainbow trout). The Snoqualmie Watershed Forum, the State SRFB, and a grant through the Snoqualmie Tribe provided funding for the design phase of the project. Construction and monitoring was funded by King County and WSDOT.

Stillwater Project Public Meetings Held in February/March: Project partners Wild Fish Conservancy, WDFW and Ducks Unlimited held two public meetings to solicit input on the proposed Stillwater Restoration Project. The project is proposing to remove up to 2000 feet of revetment and to plant native riparian vegetation along the Snoqualmie River on WDFW's Stillwater Wildlife Unit and the adjacent private land with support of agricultural landowners. Attendees asked questions about the likely rate and pattern of bank erosion or river migration, and about potential changes to accessibility of certain hunting areas within the WDFW property.

Tolt River Swiftwater Acquisition: King County Flood District has a signed purchase and sale agreement for 18 acres of forested floodplain along the Tolt River within the City of Carnation. The project will protect the floodplain from future development and provide for a potential levee setback project to reduce flood hazard and improve salmon habitat. The project site, upstream of the Lower Tolt Floodplain Reconnection Project is a high priority area for Chinook habitat restoration. Forum staff assisted King County and the City of Carnation this month to apply for \$215,000 in Conservation Futures Tax (CFT) funds, the final piece of funding needed to complete this long-time acquisition priority.

Forum Business

Policy surrounding Support Letters

Janne Kaje, acting Watershed Coordinator, presented the proposed policies for writing letters of support from the Forum. This will help standardize the types of projects that may warrant support letters from the Forum and the process for review and approval. General policy guidelines include a provision that letters of support will not be provided for grant applications to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board, Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration and Cooperative Watershed Management grants due to conflict of interest with the Forum as Forum staff are actively involved in project ranking for each of these programs.

The Forum Chair and/or Vice-Chair will sign all letters when applicable. When a contentious issue is brought forward, the letters will be circulated for review by the full Forum. Copies of all letters will be distributed to all Forum members. Staff signed letters may be provided only for projects that are clearly consistent with Forum priorities and are non-controversial.

DECISION: The Forum moved and accepted the Proposed Policies for Letters of Support.

DRAFT

Client survey results review

Janne Kaje presented the results from the client survey. Forum services were generally ranked in the excellent/good category. However, lower rankings were listed by a few respondents for how well the Forum team helps project sponsors in identifying, developing and funding projects. Under the category of implementing actions in the watershed, water quality activities and land use programs (regulator and incentive) were ranked lower than the other topics. This feedback is very useful to the Forum staff and Janne encouraged all members to continue to give feedback and he would like to talk more in depth on how to improve in those areas that the Forum team was ranked “fair”.

Jurisdiction requests for staff support

Perry Falcone, Forum Project Coordinator, presented the list of support requests from Forum member jurisdictions including various capital projects, technical assistance and policy analysis. Member jurisdictions as well as other conservation partners can request assistance any time throughout the year from Forum staff.

Unallocated King Conservation District (KCD) Funds

Perry described the approach to use approximately \$65,000 in unallocated Snoqualmie Watershed KCD funding. The Project Review Committee recommended utilizing the 2013 Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) grant program by adding the KCD funding to the 2013 CWM grant allocation process. The only caveat is that KCD requested that projects funded with KCD funding be completed by December of 2014.

DECISION: The Forum moved and accepted the proposal for the use of the unallocated KCD funding as part of the 2013 grant program.

South Fork Skykomish Restoration Opportunities Report

Perry Falcone presented the South Fork Skykomish Restoration Opportunities Report. The work focused on taking inventory of baseline information such as geology, armoring, and large woody debris in order to identify restoration opportunities. The report identifies over 100 potential restoration and project projects throughout the watershed. In general, the watershed has a lot of intact and functioning habitat (in comparison to other King County river systems) however there are significantly degraded areas along the South Fork and its tributaries. For example, five miles of armored shoreline were identified in the study, a dearth of wood was observed as well of a lack of side channels along the South Fork Skykomish River.

- Audience members representing the City of Skykomish were very encouraged by the work and are looking forward to using the results from the project. Perry will be going up to Skykomish to present these findings to the Town of Skykomish in May or June.
- Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust asked about surveying for noxious weeds. Perry answered that the time and budget for that survey was not possible but the King County Noxious Weed Program is already doing a tremendous amount of work controlling knotweed along the river.
- The Skykomish Environmental Institute was also present at the meeting and spoke of their work on Maloney Creek and how the salmon have come back to use it after the restoration was done.

DRAFT

Salmon Recovery Agriculture and Floodplain Management – King County policy R-650

Janne Kaje presented the background on the “Farm, Fish, Flood” issue and the new King County policy R-650. The presentation encompassed the 3 priorities of the policy, farm productivity, fish recovery and flood hazard reduction because these issues often intersect at the same place on the landscape. The Salmon Plan has largely focused on capital work on public land to date but now the focus is shifting to partnering with private landowners. This can create difficult situations when salmon recovery, flooding hazard reduction and agriculture production have competing interests and uses for the land.

Comments from Forum members included that more work needs to be done in the small drainages to work on reducing the temperatures flowing into the Snoqualmie River. Other comments included that there is a lot of room for these diverse interests to come together, cooperate and explore successes.

Ryan Kolodejchuk agreed that doing more projects in the tributaries would be beneficial and wanted to see a list of projects from the staff that target tributary restoration. He also wanted to talk at future meetings about areas where armoring can’t be removed and how to improve those areas.

Public Comment

No public comment

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be May 15th (6:30 – 9PM) at Preston Community Center. Please note the earlier start time.