

DRAFT

**Snoqualmie Watershed Forum
MEETING SUMMARY
January 16, 2013
Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm
Carnation City Hall, Carnation, WA**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Jason Walker City of Duvall Councilmember
- Bryan Holloway City of Snoqualmie Councilmember
- Bill Knutsen King Conservation District (Acting 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
- Kent Renno Citizen Representative
- Isaac Cunningham Citizen Representative
- Jennifer McKeown Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, Non-profit Representative (alternate)

MEETING PROCEEDINGS

Introductions and Summary Approval

- The Forum approved the November 14, 2012 meeting summary.

Updates and Announcements

Lower Tolt Floodplain Reconnection Project Receives Award: On January 7th, the Puget Sound Partnership honored "Puget Sound Champions" from the Snohomish and Stillaguamish watersheds during a ceremony in Everett. King County and City of Seattle's 50-acre Tolt River Floodplain Reconnection Project was selected for the award honoring the critical salmon habitat restoration work accomplished at the site.

Pickering Beaver Dam Breach: As directed by the Forum, staff continue to work with counterparts at King Conservation District (KCD) to assess the potential to re-scope the existing Opportunity Fund grant awarded to Mr. Pickering to address alluvial fan conditions on his property. A joint site visit has been scheduled for later in January. In addition, six beaver dams have been identified as case studies for a broader county effort to assess risk associated with beaver dams, at least four of which are in the Snoqualmie watershed.

South Fork Skykomish Restoration Opportunities Study: The South Fork Skykomish River Restoration Opportunities Study is a collaborative effort between the Forum, King County, the US Forest Service and Herrera Consulting to study existing conditions and restoration opportunities in the SF Skykomish Watershed. King County has received \$245,000 from the Forest Service for the study and has already identified over 100 restoration opportunities. Perry Falcone, project manager for the study, has released the draft study for technical review and plans to finalize the study by March. Perry Falcone will provide a SF Skykomish presentation to the Forum at the March meeting.

Forum Business

Selection of 2013 Chair and Vice-Chair

- Bill Knutsen, Acting Chair, explained that Jason Walker and Bryan Holloway were interested in assuming the Forum's Chair and Vice-Chair positions. Bill asked the Forum members if there were any others interested in the positions. There were no additional candidates.

DECISION: The Forum moved to nominate Jason Walker and Bryan Holloway for Forum Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively. The Forum voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

- Janne Kaje, Acting Watershed Coordinator, asked the Forum if they would prefer to utilize a more formal selection process or continue to use a more voluntary process. The Forum members suggested leaving the process as an informal process for now as it seems to be working well.

Citizen Representative Resignation

- Derek Young has resigned as the SVGA-appointed Citizen Representative due to scheduling conflicts with his work. Forum staff has offered to assist the SVGA with the recruitment process for the Forum seat. Janne plans to attend the next SVGA meeting and will offer to email a solicitation and application to potential eligible members.

Watershed Forum Client Survey

- Janne reminded Forum members and staff that they can still fill out the client customer service survey. As of the meeting only 7 participants have responded.

2013 Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) Grant Program

- Perry Falcone, Project Coordinator, presented an update on the Forum's 2013 CWM grant program. The program will follow the same schedule and criteria used in previous grant rounds but there will be a revised application form. The Project Review Committee will review the grant applications and provide the Forum with a recommendation in May. Perry explained there is approximately \$30,000 in additional King Conservation District funding (frozen during the KCD lawsuit) that could be allocated to 2013 projects. The Project Review Committee will make a KCD funding process recommendation at the next Forum meeting.
- Isaac Cunningham asked if there are guidelines for planting projects. Perry responded that there are various strategies but the Forum is developing a planting checklist based on the Forum and King County's recent planting effectiveness work.

DECISION: The Forum approved the 2013 CWM schedule and funding priorities.

Tolt Corridor Project Presentation

Chase Barton and Clint Loper, King County River and Floodplain Management Section, provided a presentation on the existing conditions findings of the Tolt River Corridor Study. The study initially requested by the City of Carnation encompasses the lower six miles of the Tolt River. The study will assess physical and biological aspects of the river corridor and is intended to identify multiple-objective recommendations related to improving flood hazard reduction, salmon habitat, and recreation. Chase described some of the early findings and modeling results.

DRAFT

- Isaac asked who owns the levees in the watershed. Chase responded that the landowner typically owns the land and King County may hold an easement over the land to allow for maintenance access to the facility, but the particular circumstances of each facility have to be evaluated individually.
- Ryan asked if levee set back and planting projects will increase sediment build up on project sites. Chase responded that sediment will typically deposit due to set back and planting projects, but there is a much greater area for sediment deposition once such facilities are removed.
- Bob Seana, landowner, asked if sediment deposition in the lower Tolt River would influence Snoqualmie River flooding. Chase responded that they did not model impacts on the Snoqualmie River, but that historically sediment from the Tolt has clearly affected the Snoqualmie and forced the river against the west valley wall through much of Carnation.
- Micah suggested running the models without the 2010 Lower Tolt Floodplain Reconnection project to see if the project has impacted Tolt River sediment and flow velocities.
- Chase and Clint added that the City of Seattle's South Fork Tolt dam is not operated actively to provide flood control and is not engineered to do so, but it does alter the flow regime. The study concluded that the dam has reduced peak flows in the Tolt by approximately 30%.

Regional Restoration Funding Requests

Perry Falcone presented an update on three separate regional funding initiatives. Several efforts are under way at the regional scale to address chronic funding shortfalls for salmon recovery efforts and broader watershed management objectives. Puget Sound-wide regional partners are only receiving one third of funding necessary to achieve salmon recovery. In the Snoqualmie watershed alone, progress on 10-year salmon recovery habitat goals lacks well behind the pace called for in the recovery plan, primarily as a result of inadequate federal, state and local funding. Three initiatives are currently under way to significantly increase funding for salmon recovery:

- Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) is leading the \$80M 2013-2015 Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) funding request to the state legislature.
- The Nature Conservancy, PSP, US Geologic Survey and other partners are leading the Integrated Floodplain Capital Project funding request of up to \$100M to the state legislature stemming from the "Floodplains by Design" partnership.
- WRIA 9 and Sound Cities Association are encouraging the legislature to authorize a stakeholder group to convene during 2013 to develop a consensus bill on Watershed Investment District concept for introduction in the 2014 legislature.

ACTION: The Forum directed staff to draft a letter in support of the PSAR funding request. The draft letter will be circulated to Forum members via email for comments.

- Jason Walker would like the letter before his visit to Olympia on February 13 and 14, if possible.

Public Comment

Micah Wait announced that Wild Fish Conservancy, WDFW and Ducks Unlimited will hold public meetings for the Stillwater Habitat Restoration Project in February and March.

Next Meeting

The March 20th Forum meeting will be held at Snoqualmie Tribal Offices from 7pm to 9pm.