

Snoqualmie Watershed Forum
MEETING SUMMARY
January 18, 2017
7:00-9:00 pm
Carnation City Hall, Carnation WA

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lee Grumman	City of Carnation Councilmember, Chair
Henry Sladek	Town of Skykomish Councilmember, Vice-Chair
Jason Walker	City of Duvall Councilmember
Trevor Kostanich	City of North Bend Councilmember
Cindy Spiry	Snoqualmie Tribe (Alternate)
Josh Meidav	Tulalip Tribes (Alternate)
Eileen Carrel	Citizen Representative
Chris LaPointe	Stewardship Partners, Non-governmental Organization

MEETING PROCEEDINGS

I. Introductions

Lee Grumman, Forum Chair, welcomed everyone to the January Forum meeting and led off introductions for the meeting.

Perry Falcone (Acting Salmon Recovery Manager) presented the schedule for the 2017 Forum, Planning Committee and Project Review Committee meeting dates.

ACTION: The Forum approved the minutes as submitted from the November 16th meeting.

II. Updates and Announcements

Draft Snohomish Basin Climate Change Issue Paper – Beth leDoux (Snoqualmie Watershed Technical Coordinator) updated the Forum on the work Snohomish Basin partners are doing relating climate change to salmon recovery strategies and goals. Snoqualmie Forum staff are lead on this project and the paper will inform the Snohomish Basin status and trend update document as well as the ten-year Salmon Conservation Plan update. The document highlights seven key areas that will be affected by climate change and how salmon habitat will be impacted in the Snohomish Basin. The paper also recommends key actions for restoration priorities that build resilience for both salmon and the larger Snohomish Basin ecosystem.

Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) Grant workshop – Beth alerted the Forum and attendees about a CWM grant program training opportunity. The workshop will be held on the morning of January 25th at the King County offices at the King Street Center in Seattle. This opportunity is a joint training between the Snoqualmie Forum and the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council. The workshop is designed for all project sponsors to have an opportunity to learn about competitive types of projects and programs, elements of a successful grant application, the contracting process and the grant close out procedures.

Staffing Changes – Perry briefed the Forum of staffing changes occurring at King County Water and Land Resources Division (WLRD). WLRD hired Josh Baldi as the new Division Director (Mark

Isaacson's former position). Josh's career in natural resources has spanned 27 years, most recently as the Regional Director for the Department of Ecology's Northwest Region where he led a management team of nine environmental programs comprised of about 220 employees. Prior to becoming Ecology's Regional Director, Josh was a strategic advisor for the Director of the Department of Ecology and he also worked for the Washington Environmental Council.

Janne Kaje, Former Snoqualmie Salmon Recovery Manager, has been promoted to Regional Partnership Unit Supervisor overseeing the King County watershed teams and the watershed stewardship team. Janne will represent King County as service provider for the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum's interlocal agreement. He will be involved in the 10-year Salmon Plan updates for King County watersheds as well as helping ensure King County has a robust habitat restoration program.

Perry Falcone will be the Acting Snoqualmie Salmon Recovery Manager until the position is permanently filled. Recruitment for the position closed on January 16th.

The Forum and Forum staff expressed their thanks and wished Janne good luck in his new position. Janne made a few remarks and reminded everyone that the Snoqualmie will always be his "home watershed".

III. South Fork Snoqualmie River Capital Investment Strategy

Mark Ruebel (King County River and Floodplain Management Section) presented the current status of the South Fork Snoqualmie River Capital Investment Strategy (CIS). At this time the King County River and Floodplain Management Section is gathering input on the CIS for the Flood Control District (FCD).

Mark began his presentation discussing the background of the CIS explaining that there has been concern about the stability and current insufficient flood containment of the levees along the South Fork Snoqualmie River. Levees in the 1960s were built higher on the right bank (City of North Bend side) of the river vs. left bank leading to frequent flooding of unincorporated neighborhoods of Berry Estates and Shamrock Park in addition to flooding of the commercial area at Exit 31 and Bendigo Boulevard South. In addition, the technical analysis has identified flooding risk to I-90 during floods greater than the 50 year flood event on the South Fork Snoqualmie River. To date a 50-year flood has not been experienced on the South Fork Snoqualmie River and hence I-90 has not been flooded in this location. The FCD and River and Floodplain Management Section goals are to reduce flood risk and increase public safety in the South Fork Corridor. The CIS hopes to address this using many tools including levee repairs, levee modifications, home elevations and culvert replacements.

Discussion

Q: Trevor Kostanich asked if there is an ongoing program to manage sediment.

A: Mark responded that the last sediment removal project was in the early 1990s. He talked about the difficulty of getting sediment removals projects permitted due to the impact to fish and aquatic species. However, there is an evaluation underway to look at gravel removal as part of the I-90 Flood Risk Reduction Project.

Q: Jason Walker asked if flood deposition considered naturally sourced sediment.

A: Yes. Sediment deposition is natural and the gravel deposition in North Bend is normal because it is built on the alluvial fan. The confinement of the South Fork Snoqualmie River by levees, forces gravel deposition to occur between the levees versus settling out in the floodplain, which is

what occurs in unconfined systems. Sediment deposition between the levees has reduced the hydraulic capacity of the river, exacerbating flooding.

Q: Henry Sladek asked how we can manage sediment.

A: Gravel removal is being explored as a tool. Rivers and Floodplain Management staff also recognizes levee setbacks as important tools for sediment management since they provide the river access to floodplain to deposit sediment providing long term sediment storage.

Q: Josh Meidav asked if the CIS considered climate change impacts in the 30 year time frame. Or did it use a proxy flow, like a 100-year flood event, to account for climate change.

A: Precise information on how climate change will manifest in the Western Washington River Systems is not available. Consistent with climate predictions for transition from a mixed (snow-rain) precipitation climate to a rain dominated climate, the team used the 500-year flood event as a proxy for future hydrology. 30-year forecasts were completed for sediment accumulation in the South Fork Snoqualmie River corridor and used to simulate “future” river bed conditions but the hydrologic estimates were based on current data.

Q: Jason Walker asked if land use speed up the erosion process and cause more sedimentation.

A: Historically this area was heavily logged (until the 1970s – 1980s) which influenced sediment delivery. Forest systems have recovered over the last decades and mass wasting of bare hill slopes has declined. Sedimentation of the South, Middle and North Fork Snoqualmie Rivers continues due to natural sediment input and seems less influenced by forest management practices.

IV. Tolt Corridor Capital Investment Strategy

Chase Barton (King County River and Floodplain Management Section) presented the current status of the Tolt River Capital Investment Strategy (CIS). At this time the King County River and Floodplain Management Section is gathering input on the CIS to bring to the Flood Control District (FCD).

Chase began his presentation orienting the audience to key areas in the Tolt, in particular the leveed reach, which includes Carnation and the Snoqualmie Valley Trail, and the valley reach which is less developed and contains smaller neighborhoods like San Souci and Rio Vista. The key hazards facing the Tolt River are flooding, landslides and channel migration. Concerns in the leveed reach include public safety from flooding; up in the valley reach there are concerns with public safety from flooding, landslides, and isolation from floodwaters.

Chase mentioned the neighborhoods of Rio Vista and San Souci and the Tolt Natural Areas are of particular concern. At a 2 year flood flows, 40 homes can become isolated. In the leveed reach the facilities are outdated and offer different levels of flood protection.

As Chase stepped through the CIS he mentioned that projects are ranked based on the severity of consequences, the frequency of flooding, funding availability, potential funding partnerships and implementation readiness.

Discussion

Q: John Velimesis (citizen) asked if a cost benefit analysis was performed on individual projects and by sets of projects within a river reach.

A: Chase responded that the hydraulic modeling will look at the benefits provided by both the corridor work and each individual project.

Q: Brian Bodenbach (citizen) asked how much sediment moves during any given storm event.

A: Chase answered the sediment monitoring on the Tolt River looks at bed levels and not movement so it's difficult to predict.

Q: Eileen Carrel asked if there were any project opportunities in less developed areas that would more inexpensive to implement.

A: Chase answered that they are looking at all areas of the Lower Tolt River and he offered to follow up with Eileen to provide more detail.

V. Forum Business

2017 Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) Grant Round Launch: Beth leDoux shared the CWM grant schedule, funding priorities and historical funding summary with the Forum. The plan is to open the grant round on January 27th for pre-applications, the Grant Ranking Committee would provide the Forum grant recommendations in May and the Forum would approve a project list at the May 17th meeting.

Beth also revisited the proposal to dedicate some of amount of our grant funding to the Duvall juvenile salmon screw-trap, sponsored and run by the Tulalip Tribes. Monitoring of fish populations is imperative to understanding how the salmon populations are doing in the Snoqualmie and broader Snohomish Basin. Over time, the data will provide a critical measure of restoration success by helping to identify trends in juvenile salmon abundance and productivity.

For the last three years, and intermittently before that, the Tulalip Tribes have requested funding from the CWM grant program. Since this is such a critical piece of monitoring for the Snoqualmie Watershed, the Snohomish Basin and the Puget Sound region, the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum has consistently awarded grant funds, typically at partial funding levels. In fact, the request typically ranks near the top of all grant submittals. The CWM Ranking Committee and Tulalip Tribes have requested that the Forum dedicate CWM grant funding to fund the screw trap for up to three years to provide greater assurance to the Tulalip Tribes about this critical funding source and to reduce the uncertainty associated with applying year after year.

The annual cost of operating the trap is roughly \$120,000. In the past three years, the Forum has recommended an award between \$60,000-80,000, with the balance of trap funding coming from other sources, such as the federally funded Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund.

In a memo prepared by Beth leDoux, the Grant Ranking Committee has identified four options for the Forum to consider:

Option #1: Do not set aside dedicated funding and continue to have Tulalip Tribes submit applications through the annual competitive CWM grant round.

Option #2: Fund the screw trap at \$60,000 dollars for 3 years, outside of the competitive CWM grant round, and reevaluate for the 2020 grant round.

Option #2A: Fund the screw trap at \$75,000 for 3 years, this option would reinforce the funding that the traps have received in the past 3 years.

Option #3: Fund the screw trap at the full annual funding, of approximately \$120,000 per year, request for 3 years, outside the competitive CWM grant round and reevaluate for the 2020 grant round. Tulalip Tribes would inform the Forum of the need annually.

Option 2A was new from the November meeting. Councilmember Kostanich proposed option 2A with the thought that \$75,000 was more in line with what the Forum has awarded to the trap in past grant rounds, reinforcing a strong leadership in supporting monitoring, while still conveying the message that this is a multi-partner and funding source effort.

The Forum discussed the different options and agreed that dedicated funding would be important but most members preferred Option 2, providing \$60,000 in funding to the trap.

ACTION: Forum moved to fund the Tulalip Tribes Duvall screw trap at \$60,000 a year for three years to support fish monitoring.

Snoqualmie Valley Governments Association (SVGA) citizen representative selection: Perry Falcone told the Forum that Matt Gray, the current SVGA appointed citizen representative, completes his 4-year term on the Forum in March 2017. The seat will be opened to citizens living within the cities of the Snoqualmie/SF Skykomish Watersheds (Skykomish, North Bend, Snoqualmie, Carnation and Duvall). Forum staff will run the application process for a month and look for a citizen to fill this vacancy. The final decision will be made by the SVGA on March 22nd.

ACTION: The Forum approved the SVGA seat solicitation process to begin immediately.

VI. Public comment

Brian Bodenbach commended the Forum on the great projects going on in the basin. He wants to reiterate the importance of funding projects where watershed problems are created and not where problems are felt. He emphasized the need to look at acquiring lands especially in the Tolt headwaters. There is heavy logging there that creates unsafe situations, like landslides. He emphasized the importance of protecting headwater conditions and monitoring the hydrology of the watershed.

Josh Meidav highlighted the work of the Snohomish Basin Protection Plan that includes land acquisitions and other methods to protect key hydrologic areas of the watershed.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be March 15, 2017 at Snoqualmie Tribe Administration Building from 7:00pm to 9:00pm.