

**Snoqualmie Watershed Forum**  
**MEETING SUMMARY**  
**March 24, 2010**  
**Meeting 5:00 - 9:00 p.m.**  
**Snoqualmie City Hall, Snoqualmie, WA**

**MEMBERS AND STAFF PRESENT:**

Elizabeth Walker	City of Duvall, Councilmember (Vice Chair)
Chris Garcia	City of North Bend, Councilmember
Cindy Spiry	Snoqualmie Tribe, Staff (Alternate)
Jim Berger	City of Carnation, Councilmember
Bryan Holloway	City of Snoqualmie, Councilmember (Alternate)
Bill Knutsen	Citizen Representative
Lauren Hollenbeck	City of Snoqualmie, Planning Department
Christine Jensen	King County, Policy Director for Councilmember Lambert
Sandy Kilroy	King County, Water and Land Resources Division
Linda Scott	City of Carnation, Planning Department
Jamie Burrell	City of North Bend, Planning Department
Lara Thomas	City of Duvall, Planning Department
Matt Baerwalde	Snoqualmie Tribe, Environment and Natural Resources Department

**MEETING PROCEEDINGS**

**Introductions and Minutes**

- Yvette welcomed Forum members and other participants to an extended Forum meeting. For this meeting Forum members, jurisdictional staff, Forum staff and Snoqualmie Mayor Matt Larson were all invited to sit at the table to discuss the future Forum interlocal agreement.
- The Forum approved the January 20, 2010 meeting summary.

**Announcements**

Janne Kaje, Forum staff, outlined proposed changes to the Army Corps of Engineers' policy related to vegetation on levees. The changes are driven by the Corps concerns regarding vegetation affecting stability of levee systems. The Corps' nationwide policy, which was developed in a very different suite of levee systems like those in the Mississippi River, does not allow significant vegetation on levees if they are to receive Corps funding for repair. Until recently, a regional variance has allowed some vegetation to grow on levees in Puget Sound (e.g. allowing a 4 inch vs 2 inch diameter for trees). It is the status of that regional variance, and others like it, that is at issue. Based on decades of local experience, King County and other entities are concerned that removal of vegetation could affect stability of levees and cause significant riparian degradation along salmon bearing rivers. Staff drafted a Forum comment

letter on the issue. Forum members asked staff to include a request for a 2-year extension on the current regional variance (to mirror one of the Flood Control District's request in its letter) so that there would be adequate time to review science related to vegetation on levees. The Corps previously committed to basing its decision on the results of a scientific assessment.

Decision: The Forum was asked to provide feedback on the draft letter by Friday April 2. Staff will finalize the letter and forward to the Corps.

### **Snoqualmie Forum – KCD Grant Rounds**

Perry Falcone, Forum staff, explained that the Forum has \$587,000 in 2010 KCD funds to allocate to projects. This includes \$571,000 in new 2010 assessment funds allocated to the Snoqualmie Forum, plus \$16,000 in returned funds from past grants. KCD will be providing an extra \$100,000 to this amount (as its match to the Opportunity Fund) bringing the total funding for 2010 grants to \$687,000. These funds will be divided between 2 grant programs:

- *KCD Regular Grant Round (\$487,000):* The KCD Regular Round is primarily targeted at priority salmon recovery and water quality projects. Pre-applications were due March 9. Funding requests totaled over \$760,000. The project review committee is starting its ranking process. The Forum will discuss the projects and make funding recommendations on May 26.
- *KCD Opportunity Fund (\$200,000):* The Opportunity Fund provides small grants <\$30K for stewardship, tributary and landowner based projects. The Forum has set aside \$100,000 of its 2010 KCD allocation for this fund. This amount is matched 1:1 by KCD (from its own operating funds) bringing the total funding to \$200,000.

Elizabeth Walker asked about changes in the grant criteria and ranking process. Perry explained that the Project Review Committee was adding additional reviewers (KCD and Ecology staff) to provide more depth to the review process. They are also using revised criteria that addresses multiple ranking challenges identified in 2009, and are considering dropping high and low scores to balance scoring.

Decision: The Forum approved the 2010 Opportunity Fund grant round schedule. The round will be open at the end of March and pre-applications will be due May 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **2010 Forum Chair and Vice Chair**

Vice-Chair Walker informed members that a new Chair and Vice-Chair need to be selected for 2010. After an informal survey of members, Councilmember Walker was the only member interested in the Chair position. Councilmember Peterson (who was not in attendance) had expressed interest in the Vice-Chair position and Councilmember Garcia offered to be a "back-up" Vice-Chair if there was need.

Decision: The Forum had unanimous consensus for the following positions:

- *Chair* - Councilmember Elizabeth Walker (Duvall) was appointed Forum Chair for 2010.

- *Vice Chair* - Councilmember Charles Peterson (Snoqualmie) was appointed Vice-Chair. Councilmember Chris Garcia (North Bend) accepted to back up the vice-chair seat as needed.

### **Snoqualmie Watershed Forum - Interlocal Agreement (ILA) Renewal**

Yvette Lizée-Smith, Watershed Coordinator, introduced Dee Endelman with Keys Organizational Consulting. Dee has facilitated events for the Forum and King County in the past. We procured her services to facilitate the ILA renewal discussions for this portion of the meeting – so all members could participate in the discussion. Dee briefly discussed the purpose, desired outcomes and general ground rules for the session. The purposes of the ILA discussions were: 1) to answer outstanding questions regarding the ILA and the Forum role/purpose, 2) to reach tentative agreement on selected sections of the ILA, and 3) to confirm next steps for addressing unresolved questions and finalizing the ILA. Dee reminded the members that the goal was to reach “agreements in principle” and that final decision on a new or extended ILA would come later.

Yvette then provided a brief presentation on the Forum’s purpose and benefits, results of pre-meeting consultations (conducted with members, staff and partner organizations), and answers to common questions received by staff.

The Forum made the following recommendations and decisions regarding the next ILA.

#### ***a) ILA Purpose and Scope of Work***

Forum members provide various perspectives on the value of the Forum purpose and scope of work including coordination on multiple objectives (salmon conservation, flooding, and water quality), collaboration on capital projects and monitoring, and inter-governmental communication. Though new ideas for work program items were discussed there were no suggested changes to the ILA language regarding purpose and scope of work. Councilmember Garcia suggested that the Forum consider using an extension of the current ILA rather than creating a new ILA.

**Tentative Agreement:** The Forum agreed to maintain the list of “purposes” as written in the 2006-2010 ILA. Forum members felt the existing list of purposes reflected the Forum’s continued role and priorities and were broad enough to cover future emerging needs.

#### ***b) ILA Term***

While King County suggested a longer 10 year term for the ILA, most of the city members felt that 5 years was an appropriate check-in point to review the Forum’s role and scope of work to assess its continued importance, and make adjustments as needed. Five years was considered an appropriate timeframe to align with terms of office for elected officials. It would help ensure that future local government councils (whose membership might completely change over in 5 years) would have a chance to input on the Forum’s purpose and activities and would be party to decisions affecting them.

**Tentative Agreement:** The Forum agreed to a 5 year term for the next ILA.

### ***c) ILA Membership***

Forum members agreed that all of the current members on the Forum should continue into the next ILA. There was interest in creating participation and attendance requirements for non-governmental members. Forum members discussed gaps in the current membership and agreed that there would be benefit in adding two new ex-officio seats – one for a non-profit representative and one for the King Conservation District. The Forum discussed whether ex-officio representatives should be given voting authority, as traditionally they have been non-voting members. Since the Forum customarily decides by consensus and has rarely (if ever) resorted to a vote, it was felt that it was not necessary to change the voting status.

Tentative Agreement: The Forum agreed to maintain the membership format delineated in the current ILA with a few amendments. Specific recommendations were as follows:

- Maintain elected representatives and alternates for each member government.
- Maintain 3 ex-officio citizen representative seats – Per the existing ILA, 1 seat is appointed by the Snoqualmie Valley Governments Association, and 2 seats are appointed by King County District 3. Citizen seats should be coordinated to ensure a balance of upper/lower valley representation and participation of different types of landowners – e.g., farmer, small forest landowner, rural residents and/or city resident.
- Add 1 ex-officio non-profit seat – the non-profit organization serving in this seat would be expected to work with Forum staff to facilitate communication with other non-profit partners.
- Add 1 ex-officio seat for the King Conservation District
- Strengthen participant requirements for non-profit and citizen seats by setting clear service terms and meeting attendance requirements.

### ***d) ILA Funding***

The Snoqualmie Tribe confirmed that they would continue to contribute \$5,000 per year, but could not increase their contribution at this time. Other member governments could not confirm their cost-share at this time. Local governments raised concerns about their ability to cover all or part of the cost-share, particularly under the current economy. King County said they would contribute funds but the amount was not set until their budget was more firm. Duvall expressed a willingness to contribute funds toward the cost share in 2011 and Carnation expressed doubt that they would have funds to contribute. North Bend and Snoqualmie conveyed reservations in contributing funds due to tight budgets and a belief that the KCD grant funds were an appropriate source of funding for the Forum's project support and regional capacity building services.

Various Forum members questioned why the KCD grant could not be used in the future to offset the amount expected from the cities. Some participants responded that even though this had worked in the past there were potential problems with this strategy in the future: (1) increasing staff costs and increased population in cities have made the Forum's grant submission to KCD (that has traditionally offset city cost-shares) larger each year leaving less money for other projects funded by the Forum's KCD allocation; (2) the KCD Board has expressed reservations in funding grants for non-capital activities such as those contained in the Forum grant submission

(e.g. planning/coordination/project support/outreach) and would prefer fund on-the-ground projects; and (3) cities in other watersheds typically pay some amount toward their ILA cost shares.

Bill Knutsen, Chair of the KCD Board, explained that the KCD Board prefers to fund on-the-ground conservation projects rather than planning grants. Mayor Larson felt the Forum's grant should be approved by KCD since the cities contribute to the KCD Assessment and \$100,000 was a small amount compared to the \$6M assessment. Others mentioned that planning is an important element of conservation and that conservation planning/coordination, project support and capacity building activities should be a suitable use of KCD assessment funds. Forum members requested that: 1) staff set up a meeting with KCD to discuss the potential for another Forum coordination grant, 2) look into alternate grant funding sources to cover the cities cost share, and 3) investigate cost saving measures that could reduce the Forum's overall budget.

#### Tentative Agreement:

- The Forum agreed that the current ILA wording regarding budget and cost-shares continued to be appropriate and could be maintained in its current form under the next ILA.
- Cities asked that Forum staff continue to seek grants to fund elements of the Forum's work program to help offset their cost-share fees. It was agreed that the ILA termination clause offered member governments an emergency safety net, if the Forum was unable to secure grants, and individual governments found themselves unable to cover their fees.

#### *e) ILA - Next steps*

Forum staff was asked to assemble and provide the following analysis at the May 26 Forum meeting:

- Ideas for possible grant submissions to KCD and recommendations for outreach to KCD.
- Ideas for other grant funding sources the Forum might investigate to fund elements of its work program and off-set cost-shares.
- Data showing how much funding has been leveraged through Forum grants and staff support (and possibly other indicators of Forum services/benefits) .
- Suggestions for reducing costs.

#### **Public Comment**

No public comment.

#### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be Wednesday, May 26 from 6:30-9:00 pm at Preston Community Center. This will be an extended meeting to continue discussions of the next Snoqualmie Forum Interlocal Agreement and to allocate the 2010 KCD Regular Round grants.