

WRIA 9 Implementation Technical Committee
Meeting Summary – March 20, 2019, 9:00am – 12:00pm
King Street Center, 7th Floor- King/Chinook Rooms

Attendees: Elizabeth Butler, RCO; David Casey, City of Maple Valley; Jeanette Dorner, Midsound Fisheries; Larry Fisher, WDFW; Chris Gregersen, King County; Kollin Higgins, King County; Josh Kahan, King County; Matt Knox, City of Kent; Nate Malmborg, USACE; Katie Moxley, Boeing; Cleo Neculae, Ecology; Doug Osterman, WRIA 9; Brandon Parsons, American Rivers; Mike Perfetti, City of Tukwila; Dennis Robertson, City of Tukwila; Suzanna Smith, WRIA 9

WRIA 9 Environmental Stewardship Fund – Suzanna Smith

The group discussed the environmental stewardship fund, and we will be deciding which projects to fund at the April meeting, which will then go to the forum for approval at the May meeting. Suzanna also presented this year's funding strategy for WRIA 9:

3 sections for funding-

1st is high priority project funding. This year we're looking at:

- Lowman Beach- daylighting a creek, removing a failing seawall, and putting in a natural shoreline. Insert costs
- Lones Levee- levee setback/floodplain reconnection on the Middle Green- this has a matching source, and this is one of our SRFB fundees this year.
- Point Heyer/KVI property acquisition on Vashon (salt marsh and radio tower).
- Riverton Creek flapgate- removing a flapgate to connect off channel habitat in the Duwamish.
- Revegetation Project I8-I444 cost increase- resulting from the landscape laborer cost increase.

2nd section is education and stewardship funding.

- Environmental Science Center - \$30k
- Middle Green River Smolt Trap - \$40k
- Monitoring/assessments/studies - \$80k
- Seattle Aquarium Beach Naturalist Program- \$21k

3rd section is revegetation and Million Trees Funding- Apps due March 25th.

- Million trees fund from KC - \$175k
- "Green the Green" Reveg Grant Round - \$250k

Monitoring/Assesments/Studies

- Represents \$120k of the funding (currently 6.8% of CWM)

- Historic decision was for 10% or currently \$175,656
- Middle Green River smolt trap (\$40k)- will be discussing with stakeholders the funding allocation and how we can better share this cost.
- Monitoring Work- \$80k- Up for discussion at the next meeting

Reminder- SRFB review panel site visits

- Monday March 25th
- Please let Suzanna know ASAP if you would like to attend!

Kollin- Monitoring priorities 2019

Kollin presented some discussion points for this year's monitoring funding (\$120k including screw trap). In the future, we will need to discuss the 10% issue that Suzanna described, in that historically the \$120k was decided based on 10% of the \$1.2M available. Currently, studies that cost more do not get put on the list because of the low availability.

Kollin presented a list of 2018 monitoring priorities, as well as the ideas on the table for 2019
2019 monitoring ideas on the table for the \$120k

- Smolt trap \$40k
 - Costs currently split between Tacoma, WRIA 9, WDFW, USACE
 - Very important source of data and is routinely used by WRIA 9
 - What about a screw trap in the lower Green to assess rearing habitat below the middle Green? We currently have an NTA regarding this, Tom Nelson tried this in early to mid 2000's but had some issues with a screw trap. The NTA that Chris G proposed would use a PIT tag fin array.
 - Muckleshoots do not fund this, but do run another screw trap on Newaukum creek instead.
- Another round of otolith analysis (Year 4): \$50k for 100 fish (WDFW)
 - We have 3 years of this data, but last year chose not to fund another round because the data we received was the same for the prior 3 years (fry migrants not surviving to adulthood).
- Upper Green- Partially take on Program U-1 with a focus on developing a protection strategy.
 - Develop a strategy to protect the upper Green river and its tributaries.
 - Bring data together from riparian/forest condition, climate change impacts, potential salmon distribution, wildlife connectivity, road inventory/ownership/maintenance
 - Work on coordinating with landowners to find creative ways to consolidate property ownership.
 - Conservation Northwest is also very interested in this. Under this grant they would be brought in as part of the working group.

- Fish passage of Green River Flapgates
 - o Chris G is proposing a continuation of his 2018 work, which would look at passability of flapgated streams and the variables associated with flapgates that influence their passability for juveniles.
- Lower Green River Trail Survey
 - o Currently misinformation/conflicting information regarding how the public views the lower Green river, restoration, vegetation, and recreation. This could inform priorities and discussions around management of riparian areas.
 - o This would survey users of the lower Green river trails to help us understand public opinion of salmon habitat, recreation. Also help us create something that the public views as an attractive river environment.
 - o This would serve as information for managers and jurisdictions that must make decisions that involve public recreation.
 - o Could also include private landowners, as well as counters to see who/how many people are using the trail system.
 - o We could look into UW/student routes to leverage funding. Elizabeth suggested getting in contact with the Seattle aquarium.
- Economic Assessment- Brandon Parsons
 - o Issues related to projects and adjacent properties. Past work has shown increase in property values when adjacent to restoration/natural areas. This means higher return on investment when properties are near natural areas. This study would look at properties near restoration/natural areas to see economic value from property tax, which in turn could further increase investments into restoration. This could look at other areas to provide proof of concept (for example 3 to 5 other areas similar to this).

If there are any other thoughts, ideas, or proposals, please submit them by April 1st. We will be deciding at the April ITC meeting as to how to spend our monitoring funds. In the past we have pushed for projects that leverage other funding sources also.

WRIA 9 Plan Update Policy Review – Matt Goehring

Matt began with a follow up on the water quality policies and the topics that were brought up from the last meeting.

WQ1- included some new language for where forest cover exceeds the threshold of 65% that the goal of no net loss should be pursued. For urban tree canopy coverage, local governments should strive to achieve 30-40% targets, as well as reduce impervious surfaces.

WQ2- low impact development. Because much of this is incorporated into codes, should we focus on retrofit? Will add this.

WQ3- groundwater. Ensure rural domestic use of groundwater does not adversely impact salmonid habitat. Currently, there is disincentive to connect to city water in that wells are cheaper. Same goes for septic vs connection to city sewer. Also, support water rights acquisition programs that address chronic low flows.

Based on input from the previous meeting- we have 3 new policies to address water quality issues.

- WQ6- Ensure shoreline management plans, critical areas ordinances, and levee maintenance standards promote healthy riparian tree corridors needed to meet temperature water quality standards established to protect salmon migration, spawning and rearing. Local governments should support implementation of the Green River Temperature Total Maximum Daily Load by protecting and reestablishing mature riparian vegetation within established stream buffers.
- WQ7- Protect existing cold water refugia and restore areas of hyporheic exchange by reconnecting channels to historic floodplain. These habitats provide areas that maintain temperature conditions provide physiological and ecological benefits for cold-water salmonids. Cold-water refugia are characterized as being at least 2°C colder than the daily maximum temperature of adjacent waters. Hyporheic exchange can buffer in-stream temperatures by facilitating heat dissipation and influx of cooler groundwater.
- WQ9- Support reevaluation the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Fish Conservation Guide Curve to maximize benefit from seasonal release of water storage reserved for salmonid conservation at Howard Hanson Dam. Utilize the existing Green River Flow Management Coordination Committee to assess fish habitat needs based on best-available science and basin-specific climate change projections. This would support making this better- not necessarily saying that it is being done wrong, but to ask if there is a better way to do this.

Regarding WQ9, there is also the issue around taking of water. They currently take water during the juvenile Chinook rearing window, which benefit from higher flows- so is there a better way to do this? There should be a discussion around how and when the army corps takes flow and if they can take flow sooner so that they can maintain higher flows in the spring. We can make edits to cover this issue as well.

There was a comment that the terminology “ensure” has the connotation that the WRIA will be making sure that these things happen, if not “ensure” then how do we push for this? This should be tied with something that we can implement, such as outreach to cities and jurisdiction. This will be difficult to be transcribed or implemented in local code.

Land Use:

LU1- This policy is focused on directing growth and development within existing UGA's and adjust the timeline for the current plan update. Can we be more specific on directing? This is focused mainly at other jurisdictions, so should incorporate that into the wording.

LU2- clarify development standards and examples

Old LU3- Should this be removed as it is already a basic SEPA requirement? Maybe revise the policy to focus more on existing roads, decommissioning roads and public policies around roads in critical areas.

LU3- Regional road maintenance endangered species act program guidelines. Governments should participate in regional forum to support ongoing adaptive management to improve outcomes.

LU4- A number of jurisdictions plans reference the salmon habitat plan. Ensure that salmon recovery priorities are integrated into long-range planning efforts.

LU5- Supporting flexible development tools to encourage restoration and protection.

LU6- Getting into the compliance piece, partly from what we've found from Kollin's work. This is to set a policy statement to improve permit compliance.

Fish passage policies- There were 2 existing policies in the 2005 plan.

FP1: this is more of a program, so we should be developing a program statement that integrates other jurisdictions as well as King County's new fish passage program.

Provide efficient fish passage at road crossings, flood control facilities. Also include fish passage design considerations to also include juvenile salmonid access to rearing habitat provided in non-natal tributaries.

King County Fish Passage Program – Evan Lewis

Evan discussed the county's new fish passage program that he was brought on for last July.

A new part of the program is technical support, which includes connecting sources of information and people both inside the county and outside. Early actions are beginning soon.

Even though there are roughly 475 barriers on the state database, there are many more county crossings. These inventories have been done by many different groups. We estimate there may be up to 3000 sites that we need to look at. Of those 3000, many of those don't have a stream/culvert, or culvert is a duplicate. The first hire starts Monday, and 4 people will be coming on full time. They will be working on this list of 3000 using WDFW protocol about the site, culvert condition, and potential fish usage. They will be looking into modelling fish passage

for juveniles as well as the typical 6" trout. They will be integrating this information with existing information with the WDFW, WADNR, and other city/outside group data sources.

Initial investment will focus on anadromous fish passage. Beginning with incomplete information, but this will lead into a prioritization. This prioritization will develop categories and rankings to organize potential barriers, such as prioritizing Chinook streams. The next would be steelhead, and while these rankings may create very small groups of occurrences, it could lead to rapid progress.

How do we measure connectivity from our work, as well as habitat quantity/quality? This will likely be more map based information rather than field assessments. Given sites and ownership, ability to do this many sites would be limited. Also, do not want to write something off based on current habitat condition. Idea is to keep this relatively simple and intuitive so that it makes sense at the policy level.

Program procedures: Generally, we want to correct barriers over several decades. We need to identify a program success criteria and what this means. For example, WDFW has 90% gain by 2030. We want to target worst barriers first. Do we want to get to 100% in 30 years, or do we have a different short term target vs long term target. In the near term, we want to develop procedures with fish passage needs and infrastructure replacement. As culverts fail, they present a very real need to maintain use- in the cases where failures don't align with priorities, how can we make these happen when this may be the best chance or these may not otherwise happen? Does this include piped segments of streams? Yes. Definition of an asset- this would include culverts under a road, as well as stormwater assets or buried pipes/streams.

Other considerations- other jurisdictions and collaborating with other barrier efforts, road abandonment, developing solutions like modular bridges, integrating fish passage restoration into other county programs.

Funding will be a large part of this- once they have their inventory, they will develop a cost estimate to solve this, compare it to historical funding for fish passage barriers, and address the funding gap (time, strategies, sources). Currently going to have an inventory by June/July 2021.

Will there be any type of PR plan associated with this to share the project success? Yes- there will be an outreach portion.

Do you know who owns the culverts within levees on the Green? No definite answer likely depends on the individual pipe.

Breda and Milwaukee II Levee Projects – Matt Knox

Matt presented the current plans for the Milwaukee II levee. The project is located at the downstream end of horseshoe bend above foster park levee.

Kent currently has ~11 miles of levees, so they are working to make sure that they're improved to the 500 year flood event. Kent generally has 2 ways of doing this: through earthen levees and flood walls.

Unique to Milwaukee II levee- the Green river trail is the missing link between Foster Park and Horseshoe Bend levee, and there is a railroad underpass that makes construct at this site difficult.

Matt presented a conceptual design, which included setting back the levee and putting in a backwater/side channel feature. Next, Matt gave an overview of the Breda levee project, which is just upstream of Milwaukee II in horseshoe bend. This would continue upstream for work done in 2008 just downstream. The county has currently purchased some of these properties.

Draft Steelhead Recovery Plan – Matt Goehring

If you aren't aware- the steelhead recovery plan is out for comment. King county and WRIAs are working on a comment letter, Matt would be happy to share for those who are interest. IF you are sending a letter let Matt know so we can coordinate. Brandon said American Rivers will be sending a comment letter. The comment period ends March 28th.