

# Community Engagement Committee

Skagit Watershed Council, SWC office at 815 Cleveland Ave, Suite 201

November 26, 2019, 9:30 am – 11:30 am

(Underline indicates decision point; \***bold indicates action item**)

**Present:** Richard Brocksmith (SWC), Lucy DeGrace (SFEG), Stacy Dahl (SLT), Cindy Pierce (SCD), Maddie Reid (SFEG), Allison Roberts (Kulshan Services), Karen Summers (SCEA, EcoNet), Wayne Watne (WDFW), Abby Weaver (SLT), and Holli Watne (SWC).

## Call to Order: 9:30 am

1. **Update on hiring Community Engagement Coordinator** – Welcome to Holli Watne (not related to Wayne). She has been a homeowner in Skagit since 2012 and knows our community. She and her husband have been Steam Team volunteers that whole time. She has a master's in environmental education from WWU. Her grad program included a 13-month residency at NCI. She worked at Padilla Bay Reserve.
2. **STEAM Update**
  - a. Andrea did a great job finalizing the STEAM Educator Resource Guide prior to her departure. Copies of the guide and bifold info sheet were provided at the meeting and have been distributed to the school districts.
  - b. Cindy has struggled with the Burlington 2<sup>nd</sup> curriculum this fall. They aren't ready yet. It would be better in the spring once they mature 6 months. Should it be done in 5<sup>th</sup> grade instead? Cindy has always done this program in 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade. While it made sense in sequencing, it is not appropriate for this age group. The magic happens when the teachers prep the kids. How could we educate the educators? She is done with all of the fall classes, so **\*Cindy will document her concerns and share her observations with Tiffany at BESD with the hope of making this offering more successful or switching when it's offered and to whom.**
3. 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Illuminight Winter Walk, Friday, January 31, 2020 – SWC is a primary sponsor and works with several other entities to pull this event off. Participants can make luminaries-in-the-moment at Tri-Dee Arts before the event. A local school band will be play. Last year 900 people came. Richard provided a map Route 2020 (poster) of the event but it's not for the general public.
  - c. The idea is to broaden the event to community-centric and not simply salmon centric. We need to use this event to obtain more supporters. 6,000-7000 people like the event on Facebook.
  - d. SWC will have three tents (10x10 and 2- 2x20) strategically placed along the walk. SWC is going to have a more powerful PA system for announcements and the marimba band. Create an agenda of the event for ½ page handout when they do the waiver.
  - e. Create a handout with our upcoming CEC member events for the Winter. Tabling for the groups is less productive than they need it to be because of the darkness, weather, and crowds. Salmon mascot. Look for inspiration from Night Markets.
  - f. Sensebellum (Whatcom County) uses light to create nighttime interactive experiences. (<https://www.sensebellum.com/the-sensatorium>, <https://www.sensebellum.com/geodesic-dome-rental>, <https://www.sensebellum.com/arborealis-dynamic-tree-lighting-system>, <https://www.sensebellum.com/the-sandbox-of-life>) Volunteers needed: Cindy can help, maybe Lucy.

- g. Strategic outreach scheduling - Work parties, fundraisers, educational programming
- h. **SFEG** – They are finished with Jr. Stream Stewards for the calendar year and Salmon in the Classroom is almost all done too. They have been going up to Marblemount Hatchery. No eggs in the tanks until after Christmas. The kids love it. They bring 250 eggs/tank @ the 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> of January. “Standing in awe of salmon.”
- i. **Steam Train** – Richard provided information to Mt. Vernon for the 4<sup>th</sup> grade water-focused classes, but we didn’t hear back from them. This was part of the No Child Left Inside Grant which we didn’t get. SWC will keep trying.
- j. **Darrington Collaborative** – Wayne mentioned this. They are doing a program there in partnership with a school in an urban area. Wayne will share the website with Richard. They are working with the Forest Service and have some great partnerships set up. Wayne will be engaging Jeanette – a co-worker. There is pressure to provide support to Darrington after the landslide. Wayne will stop in Darrington and speak with Buck Marsh, the Superintendent to learn more and to inform them about our SWC efforts.
- k. **Skagit Land Trust** – They are working with Emerson (every other week) and State Street School (1x/month). Abby has been out with the kids with stewardship activities. Tree planting (forestry project) and tree identification. They were contacted by Bayview Elementary to do a tour in March 2020; they will be touring Cumberland Creek and the Reservoir. They may see if more teachers want to do this with more 5<sup>th</sup> graders.
- l. **Dream Rangers** – This will be happening in the Spring of 2020 with 6<sup>th</sup> grade in Sedro-Woolley and 5<sup>th</sup> grade in Burlington.
- m. **SWC** – Illuminight 4 schools are signed up for 5<sup>th</sup> grade in Burlington. Both of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade art classes in Mt. Vernon. MONA will help with staffing as well as our new CEC coordinator. Lucy can offer help in this. Maddie, their intern, may be able to help as well. **\*Send any photos from last year to Richard for promotion.**
- n. **SLT** – Work Parties are Sat. Dec. 7, Fri., Dec. 17, and Sat., Dec. 21; they are also doing wreath making from invasive species – one in Anacortes, and one at Samish Flower Farm, Hurn Field. They are doing Opt Outside for Green Friday with a guided walk and invasive species removal.
- o. **SCD**– They no longer have a staff assistant at their office. Eventually someone will be hired, but the organizations is going an entirely new direction with this.
- p. **SCEA** – Karen applied for funding and it looks like they may get it. Karen will be setting a January meeting (January 21 from 12:00-4:00. **\*Karen will send out a doodle poll.**
- q. **SCEA** – Skagit Water Weeks will be in May instead of September.
- r. **Storming the Sound** – It is scheduled for January 30, 2020.
- s. Information sharing, cross promotion, Skagit River Salmon Festival
- t. **Feedback and update about the Salmon Festival** —2,000 people in attendance; while marketing was great, it’s not growing. Vendors would like more people. We had more vendors, but attendance felt under-populated.
- u. Scottie asked for ideas. **\*She also said to pass names on to her of people that might be good for the Festival board.** They need more Board members (only four now) especially since after many years of service, Kevin Tate is stepping down.
- v. Festival feedback: Cindy - People love the games, but don’t want stuff. The art and food vendors wouldn’t want it to be shorter, although it is a long day for the CEC organizations. 11 a.m. to 5

p.m. has worked in the past. Soccer is competition for that first weekend of September. The theme of the festival could be to celebrate the river (Celebrate Skagit) to expand the audience. There is a huge recreation industry because of the river. Industry-related businesses could be engaged.

- w. Is there someone who would spearhead a salmon chowder contest? How could we involve the WWU Bread Lab with a chowder contest? Maybe even include local beer brewers. Engage the Hispanic community and central Mt. Vernon; proximity to Edgewater Park. 1000 free tickets were printed, but not that many were distributed.
- x. How do we involve business with our nonprofit focus? Reach out to business: Eddyline, Rozema Boats, Tulip Town, Janicki, Paccar and more. Business involvement could add money and cache to the event. However, some members warned to be careful to not dilute the mission of the festival. There is no other event like this, so they feel it's wise to not try to be like the others.
- y. Look to SeaFeast in Bellingham for ideas. <https://bellinghamseafeast.org/2019-highlights-1>

Adjourn: 11:15 am

Next CEC meeting, January 21, 12:00-4:00 (to be confirmed and announced)