

Skagit Watershed Council Community Engagement Committee

March 31, 2020 by Zoom 9:30 – 11:30 am

Present: Richard Brocksmith and Holli Watne (SWC); Codi Hamblin (NCI); Stacy Dahl and Abby Weaver (SLT); Kristi Carpenter and Cindy Pierce (SCD); Allison Roberts (Kulshan Services); Lucy DeGrace, Claire Howell and Maddie Reid (SFEG); Susan Wood (Padilla Bay Reserve); Michelle Quast and Scott Bohling (special guests, WDOE), Kim Simon (MoNA); Peter Haase (Skagit MRC); Sylvi Thorstenson (WSU – may take over Shore Stewards)

Not Present: Karen Summers (SCEA, Skagit EcoNet), Wayne Watne (WDFW)

1. Participation in CEC meetings
 - a. Holli has created a new email group for easy CEC communication: CEC@skagitwatershed.org
 - b. Holli invited all contacts in the STEAM Educator Resource Guide to join the email group.
 - c. The email group currently has 31 members, with new membership from Skagit Audubon, Padilla Bay Reserve, Skagit MRC, PUD, SV College, Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, WWU @ Shannon Point, WDFW, Museum of Northwest Art, Friends of the Forest, Pacmam and the Sea Doc Society.
 - d. Special guests from WDOE attended this meeting. They are working on a project to reduce water temperatures in tributaries of the lower Skagit. They may ask the CEC for community engagement ideas for this project.
2. Direction of CEC
 - a. The Skagit Watershed Council is looking for a new Chair of the CEC as Alex has stepped down; Holli is serving in an interim role. ***Please reach out to Holli if you would like to take the lead.**
 - b. Review/discuss Community Engagement Framework and Implementation Plan: Richard spoke to the history and purpose of the CEC – The Watershed Council of 44 members is tasked with community partnership for salmon that is science-based and applies capital resources to projects in the watershed. The CEC was established by the Council to increase communication/collaboration within our entire community “To build a constituency within the Skagit Basin that is knowledgeable, interested, and motivated to act to protect Skagit’s salmon and other native fish species, the natural environment, and our communities.”
 - c. The CEC implemented a strategy (to be updated every few years). At that time, it featured two phased approach: Phase 1 - Goal was to listen and engage community members about what they LOVE about the Skagit to build a more inclusive audience. Phase 2 - More education about what is limiting fish in the watershed and getting people to act.
3. How do we make the collaborative stronger and stitch in more ideas and action steps: group event/project/goal?
 - a. **Holli suggested we create a Skagit Watershed Coloring Book.**
 - i. ***Susan W. suggested Annie England of the Padilla Bay Reserve who is an amazing artist who could be pulled into such a project.** It would be not just a coloring book, but it would be interactive and have creative activities built into it.
 - ii. Claire also offered her artistic skills to this project
 - iii. Coloring book could feature illustrations and activities related to fish, glaciers, nearshore, salmon lifecycle etc.

- iv. ***Lucy said she could share the activity book that KayLani Siplin, SFEG Americorps intern from 2017 created for 3rd -7th grade.** They never produced it, but it could be used as a base for developing something that is inclusive of all of our programs.
- b. **Kristi suggested an all-day 5-day to week-long collaborative outdoor summer camp devoted to watershed, salmon, and habitat studies.** Such a place-based camp could be inclusive of all programs that want to participate. Kristi envisioned each organization taking on a role: one organization could host and administer it, but other organizations could do programming for a day or half-day. This would be for the summer of 2021.
- i. Things to think about: Permission slips, fee collection, medical slips, common parent drop off location, location could vary each day, time could be 9 am to 3:30 pm, age groups from roughly 9 to 14 years old, 15 -20 kids per group with two groups.
 - ii. Padilla Bay does a summer watershed camp with MoNA. ***Susan indicated that Padilla Bay could help with ideas.**
 - iii. Allison suggested people taking a look at the model used by Wild Whatcom: 5-day summer camps of 15 -20 kids each based on different focus areas in their watershed. <https://www.wildwhatcom.org/camps>
 - iv. Richard is on the board of Terra Forma with 15 kids. They are wondering if this will be something they can pull off.
- c. **Water Weeks**
- i. SCD will promote Water Weeks this year, but there will be no public gatherings. There could be video presentations. Perhaps organizations could participate with videos.
 - ii. SWC is planning on participating by posting a “Skagit Watershed Fact of the Day” on social media and putting together a video lecture.
 - iii. Kristi: Stormwater Festival – SCD is planning this festival in May 2021 in conjunction with Water Weeks. Tangentially, Allison suggested ideas could be taken from the Stormwater Discovery Project Kulshan Services collaborated on for the City of Bellingham: <https://stormwater.cob.org/>. Everyone on the CEC could be a part of this event. It will be during the school day. SFEG is also interested.
4. Brainstorm ways to continue our work with “social distancing” due COVID-19
- a. SLT has been stepping up its Facebook content during this time with Backyard Birding Bingo, videos, etc.
 - b. SFEG: Also discussing doing more educational, inspirational, interactive, and positive materials. Perhaps they could use the Birding Bingo as a template for backyard native plant bingo or create a dichotomous key to share. Also, the Skagit Valley Herald did a salmon release article which came out today. https://www.goskagit.com/coronavirus/annual-salmon-project-cut-short/article_2b89a8ba-dc0a-5d43-9258-6350dcf6789d.html
 - c. Padilla Bay Reserve: **Susan indicated she could share organizational resources with her 400-person mailing list. She suggested an at-home resource guide of some kind.**
 - d. SCD: Kristi said they won’t be doing the Letterbox Trail in the usual way this year, but it will be put together at Padilla Bay and families could do one on their own. Someone floated the idea that each organization could do their own letterbox tub that can be used. Currently, SCD has 17 tubs, but they don’t need that many necessarily. ***Holli said she will do a tub on What is a Skagit Watershed? Kristi and Susan will work together on this.** Susan said she could explore a route to do and how to open the box safely with COVID-19 in mind. They

briefly explored the idea of a treasure hunt with rocks. *possible action item: **Kim suggested using QR codes for people to access the content digitally instead.**

- e. SCD is promoting National Arbor Day which is next Tuesday. There will be a proclamation. Remind people of Arbor Day. They are working on a social marketing campaign on pet waste. They have reached out to parks systems and getting the strategy outlined to share with the cities. They had 40 people signed up for the Backyard Stewards. Instead Kristi has been sharing links to those folks.
 - f. MRC: Pete indicated it's important to continue monitoring European Green Crabs which continues to threaten our ecosystem. They are trying to figure out how to continue this important monitoring under the circumstances.
 - a. Holli said is doing an "invasive species" theme of the week on Facebook the week of 4/20, which will end with a lecture by P. Sean McDonald (UW professor and Principle investigator in Crab Team (citizen science project to study European Green Crabs throughout the Puget Sound, through the Washington Sea Grant)). Holli suggested that if Pete has resources on the European Green Crab, she would love to share it that week.
 - g. Kulshan Services: Feel free to sign up for receiving a weekly email with a link to positive environmental news on our Facebook, via MailChimp, and at:
<https://kulshanservices.com/1planetnews.html>
 - h. SFEG: Doing a photo contest of photos taken within the Skagit with 4 different categories. They hope to make a photo book, thank you cards, and/or do a calendar afterwards.
5. Cathy Angell's PowerPoint training at upcoming ECONet meeting.
- a. Holli reached out to Cathy Angell about this training. EcoNet has money in their budget. Cathy and Karen are planning to do this training at the next EcoNet meeting
6. Upcoming events and member updates, cancellations, and information sharing
- a. Most events have been cancelled until further notice as a result of the Governor's shelter-in-place orders.
 - b. SFEG cancelled all volunteer events and all April Events. They haven't cancelled anything in May yet. Many school-related classroom events have been canceled. Vegetation Monitoring still on. Salmon in the Classroom was cut short this year because they had to release all the fish early, due to school closures. They are still on for Conservation School.
 - c. SCD: Stream Team, Marine Biotoxin, and Backyard Stewards are all on hold. It is unknown if when school starts up again that teachers will want visitors or will they want to move quicker through the required curriculum and learning objectives by grade. They haven't cancelled pre-orders yet for the Plant Sale but may have to cancel if shelter-in-place is extended.
 - d. Pete: Salish Sea Stewards got one session done, but subsequent sessions will be online to keep the program going. Beach program for schools were abandoned for the rest of the school year. Fidalgo Bay volunteer events with Anacortes HS haven't been cancelled but may happen. They are waiting until mid-April to see what the Governor says. No students are coming to Padilla Bay; they are working to do some things online.
 - e. MoNA: All in-person events were cancelled until May. They are keeping museum tours past April 24 on the calendar for the time-being. They are sharing new and old podcasts on Monday, Wednesdays, and Fridays through Facebook primarily (<http://monamuseum.org/podcast-mona-moments>). They have found great resources online. ***If member organizations have material/activities to share, MONA can help with art-oriented materials.** It is mostly shared on Facebook. They may also put more effort into Instagram posts.

- f. SLT: They have cancelled all events up to May. They are not sure if teachers will want to do field trips even if they return to school. All 7 schools in Sedro-Woolley had field trips planned. Stacy is wondering if they should she do the prep work if school isn't going to happen.
 - g. SeaDoc Society: Junior SeaDocs has put out a homeschooling page with social distancing in mind. Their 5th grade book has been an advantage. <https://www.seadocsociety.org/>
 - h. SWC: Holli had to cancel school visits to do the Drain Rangers program. She recently reached out to the teachers suggesting a home-based version of the program. None of the teachers had responded yet at the time of the meeting, but since then she has received teacher interest and started on this project
 - i. SFEG: Claire said she used Google forms effectively to send info on the salmon pledge. She learned that not all students have experience using online resources and/or don't have internet access. She got back 46 responses. **She could help in using Google Sheets as an outreach tool.**
7. Other:
- a. Allison suggested we create a site or online resource where parents could access activities provided by each of our member organizations. All CEC organizations could contribute activities for parents and their kids to do outside or inside in a google sheet shared among the CEC. We are not necessarily creating special content, but we are looking for content that is already available. A motion passed to do this.
 - a. Abby will create the sheet and send the link. Anyone with the link can edit it.
 - b. Holli will use the information on the google sheet to put together a cleaned-up and user-friendly resource guide with hyperlinks for teachers/parents. The goal is to have a draft to share by next Tuesday, April 3. Once the pdf is finalized, Holli share it via the SWC webpage, social media and will reach out to Susan to share with her email list.
 - i. Allison suggested there could be something learned about how to make this crowd-sourced, activity-based information available by looking to what Garden of the Salish Sea has done: <https://www.gardensalishsea.org/curriculum-guides/>
 - ii. Kim has a Google Sheet shared with her from a woman in Virginia. She will share this as a model for setting up our framework.
 - b. What are School Districts doing? Next week is the first week of required online classes statewide. Teachers are not sure how they are going to do online teaching. ***Cindy will consult with her school districts for resources they use.**
 - c. Teachers may be overwhelmed. Our resources may be very helpful. This is a great opportunity for the CEC to really provide helpful material to our community.
 - d. ***Holli will check to make sure Karen Summers gets the meeting emails.**
 - e. Pete: In the fall, we should capture feedback after this is all over on what outreach efforts worked. This is a great group to keep focused on the watershed and salmon.

Next Meeting: April 28th, 9:30-11:30 at Skagit Watershed Council (or via Zoom, TBD)