

Community Engagement Committee

Skagit Watershed Council June 27th, 2023, 1-2:30 pm

Present: Holli Watne (SWC), Cindy Pierce (SCD), Jeff O + Colleen Shannon (SAS), Holly Henderson + Lucy DeGrace (SFEG), Gabby Janunski + Stacy Dahl (SLT) , Pete Haase (MRC +), Melissa Ciesielski (SITC), Kevin Tate (PUD)

Draft Minutes

1. We approved the May 2023 notes

2. Roundtable of updates

a. From **Skagit Audubon Society (SAS)**

- i. Jeff and Colleen are leads for youth education. They just finished scheduled programs for the year with a field event at Rosario State Park.
- ii. The Jefferson Elementary Visions program participated with Skagit Audubon and the Salish Sea School. A great turnout and a very good event.
- iii. Working on classroom projects and being mindful of limitations with volunteers.
The search for volunteers continues.

b. **Swinomish Indian Tribal Community (SITC)** will be facilitation a workshop on their Between Two Worlds curricula at the NMEA conference on 7/24.

c. From Pete Haase:

- i. The **Skagit Marine Resource Committee (MRC)** will be hosting Fidalgo Bay Day on Aug 26th.
- ii. The Letterbox trail at **Padilla Bay Reserve** is now open.
- iii. On July 19, he will help at a class by **the Salish Sea School** at Samish RV Park doing some Forage Fish survey stuff.

d. From **Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group (SFEG)**:

- i. Will be doing a fun activity for Concrete Youth Adventure Day.
- ii. Looking into working with Boys and Girls Club this summer
- iii. Exploring possibilities for a service project for older kids.
- iv. Our two WSC members finish on July 14. Two new ones start Sept 1st.

e. From **Skagit Conservation District (SCD)**

- i. Putting on a multi-day workshop to train teachers in forestry-based programming for grades 6+. **Pacific Education Institute (PEI)** is a big help with this, including sponsoring STEM clock hours for the workshop.
 - ii. The last field walk for the Pasture Walk Series is next Tuesday and will focus on horse management. This is the second time they've done this series, but the first time doing it in-person. The program is a "150% better than doing it virtually".
 - iii. New district manager. Emmet is doing a great job, though has been down with COVID recently.
- f. From **Skagit Watershed Council (SWC)**
- i. Working with **PEI** to offer STEM credits for my Drain Ranger's workshop at the NMEA conference next month.
 - ii. Richard will be stepping down as our Executive Director. A job announcement will be coming out before long.
 - iii. Planning several summer programs with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Skagit County and the Mount Vernon Parks and Enrichment Department.
- g. From **Skagit Conservation Education Alliance (SCEA)**
- i. Nearing the completion of the dissolving the organization. This is their last month at the office at Padilla Bay.
 - ii. Remaining assets will be transferred to following likeminded 501(C)(3) organizations:
 - 1. Padilla Bay Foundation (getting the majority)
 - 2. Skagit Watershed Council
 - 3. The Salish Sea School (TSSS)
 - 4. WA Native Plant Society – Salal Chapter
 - iii. TSSS has graciously decided to take over the EcoNet. It will now be run through the email admin@thesalishseaschool.org

h. The **Skagit River Salmon Festival** will once again just exist as a booth at the Mount Vernon Farmer's market this year. The date for that is Sept 9th. Holli and Scottie from SWC will be running the booth, with help from new WSC members from SFEG. *If anyone has any handouts they'd like to be included at the event, please contact Scottie (schneider@skagitwatershed.org).

3. K-12 Discussion

- a. Seven CEC organizations have submitted information about their resources to include in TeachSkagit.org. Kevin will start work on building the website soon, using the information provided.
- b. Holli has submitted updated STEAM Train proposals for BESD and SWSD. The science directors from each school district has agreed to share the document with science teachers for grades K-8.
- c. Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) resources
 - i. PEI has shared a pdf that summarizes the 6 standards of SEL
 - ii. SEL involves five interrelated areas of competence:
 1. *Self-awareness* - recognizing feelings, thoughts and values and the impact these have on behavior; knowing personal strengths and limitations; demonstrating honesty and integrity; understanding identity; developing interests and a sense of purpose.
 2. *Self-management* - managing emotions and stress, self-discipline, goal setting, planning and organizing skills
 3. *Relationship skills* - the ability to maintain positive and supportive relationships, communicating effectively (speaking and listening), practicing teamwork and collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution, resisting social pressure and showing leadership.

4. *Social awareness* - understanding the perspectives of others – including people of diverse backgrounds, cultures and contexts – feeling concern, empathy and compassion for others and expressing gratitude.
5. *Responsible decision making* - making caring and constructive choices about behaviors and interactions, making reasoned judgments, identifying solutions to problems and using critical-thinking skills effectively.

iii. Here are some common SEL practices for public classrooms:

<https://www.mhanational.org/blog/10-tips-for-classroom-social-emotional-learning>

iv. ***Holli will check in next month to see if more info is needed.**

4. We discussed about behavior management in our programs – especially for upper elementary-level programs. Here are some recommendations:

a. Utilize teachers.

i. If your program involves groups of students working together, ask teacher pre-assign groups to maximize group effectiveness.

ii. Ask teachers how they grab their students' attention when they get distracted and use that.

iii. Some teachers will not jump in to help with behavior management of their students unless you ask them.

iv. Ask teachers to go over expectations ahead of time... especially if meeting outdoors. This is done with the Kids on the Beach program.

b. Have a written outline of the day for students to see. This is especially helpful when there are many steps that need to be done in a short amount of time. When students get distracted, show them what they are working on now and how much you still need to be done with your remaining time.

c. If it's possible to get a second person (such as a volunteer) to help you during the program, students are less likely to get overly rowdy.

- d. Make it clear where students should be. Keep students seated at their desk when inside.
Mark clear boundaries/stations when outside.
- e. List your expectations, especially if they're going outside. You may want to have students repeat important expectations out loud. For example, Holli always has energetic classes all say "this is not recess time" before taking them outside for her Drain Ranger's program. If there's time, have students build expectations.
- f. Get students to slow down before an activity. Here are some things you can ask students to do to calm down:
 - i. Take a deep breath
 - ii. Sit and observe
 - iii. Journaling activity
 - iv. Close your eyes and image
- g. Things to consider getting
 - i. Walkie-talkie (Holli loves [this one](#))
 - ii. Personal PA system (Holli uses [this one](#))
 - iii. A small noisemaker to set students' attention (Holli uses a "teacher's necklace" with a small harmonica and whistle attached).

5. Social Media Discussion

- a. SFEG has been getting help with issues like social media from Julie Burgmeier from Skagit marketing for many years. Lucy says she is a great person to work with suggested we try to get her to give the CEC some tips. The group is interested. *Holli will reach out to Julie and try to arrange a presentation at one of the upcoming CEC meetings. These are the things the CEC is most interested in learning about:
 - i. Which platforms are most important and how to use them well
 - ii. How to expand our reach
 - iii. Search engine optimization / improving websites
 - iv. Using hashtags

- b. Facebook and Instagram are the primary social media platform that we are using.
 - i. This may not be very good for direct youth engagement but works well for adults.
 - ii. If you want a large reach, you have to “pay to play”. SFEG has \$25/month budget for boosting posts. Skagit PUD’s budget is closer to \$100 a month.
 - iii. Melissa says they increase their reach without paying by posting to community group pages for
- c. There have been some attempts at using twitter and tiktok, but these have been largely abandoned.
- d. Some organizations have had luck promoting targeted information using nextdoor.com. It is free and you can target your posts to specific neighborhoods.

Next meeting is **one week earlier than usual**: July 18 25th, 1-2:30, online only

Upcoming events:

- [National Marine Educators' Association Conference, July 23-27](#)
 - o SWC workshop about Drain Ranger program for 8th grade, July 24
 - o SITC workshop about Between Two Worlds curriculum for highschoolers, July 24
- Concrete Youth Adventure Day (SFEG, SLT and SCD are tabling), July 13th, 10-2pm
- Mount Vernon Youth Arts Festival (Holli may do a luminary activity), Aug 5, 11am-4pm
- Skagit County Fair, (Skagit County and Maybe SCD doing outreach) Aug 9-12th
- Fidalgo Bay Day, Aug 26th
- Skagit River Salmon Festival tabling @ MV Farmer’s Market, Sept 9th