

Skagit Watershed Council

Community Engagement Committee Draft Notes

May 29, 2018 - 9:30 am–11:30 am

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

Present: Richard Brocksmith (SWC), Kristi Carpenter (SCD), Lucy DeGrace (SFEG), Codi Hamblin (NCI), Laura Hartner (SLT), Alex duPont (Chair) (WSU Ext.), Keelin Maurmann (SFEG), Lisa Miller (SLT), Allison Roberts (Kulshan Services - notetaker), and Scottie Schneider (SWC).

Call to Order: 9:30 am

1. Welcome and Introductions – No formal introductions necessary as everyone in the group present knows each other. Lisa is leaving SLT (we are going to miss her!!) and Laura Hartner is replacing her on the CEC.
2. **Approve April meeting notes.** Review Action Items – Replace Skagit Conservation District with SCEA on the notes bullet #7. Regarding the need for a shared folder for CEC documents, ***Richard will put together a shared Google folder and will include other files organized for the CEC.**
3. Status of SWC Community Engagement Coordinator Hire – A new coordinator, Andrea Reiter, has been hired and will start in early June. Richard shared a hard copy of her resume and cover letter. She's currently working at Re Sources and possesses experience in social media, websites, public engagement, education and training as well as with NextGen Science Standards and curriculum. She will be at the next meeting.

- Richard shared the Board work plan items and community events pertinent to outreach. ***He asked for the CEC member's input.** The Board also wants more project development and awareness activities. Richard noted that the grey highlighted section represents an addition to the work plan.

Richard updated the committee regarding the five interviews of community leaders which have been completed. He noted that it took time to find the right people to interview. Richard is waiting for the Outreach Coordinator to define how we want to apply these.

It was also noted that creating an electronic database is not on the work plan at this time. The biggest focus currently is integration with the school districts improving, aligning, and incorporating the NextGen concepts with their curriculum and needs. Additionally, fundraising to further this goal is likely to become a high priority.

Kristi shared that the Skagit Conservation Education Alliance (SCEA) continues to fund mini grants which could be a source of funding to move some of the smaller above initiatives forward. She also spoke about stormwater education funding through the municipalities which could find relevance through the schools.

***Lisa, Laura (her replacement), and Richard agreed to discuss how to involve the Skagit Land Trust going forward and determine if and where they can fill in any school-based programming gaps through next school year.** Codi indicated the North Cascades Institute (NCI)

would be interested in these conversations as well. NCI is starting a 3rd grade program in Whatcom County. It's worth exploring whether it can be expanded to the Skagit without duplicating programs. Codi mentioned that the Bellingham SD owns the Gordon Carter site which had been used for pioneer education, but when the program got cut, the property lay dormant. Nonprofits in Whatcom County are talking about education programs on this property. The Bellingham SD wants all 3rd graders to go through an integrated program with focus on people and place. The curriculum for this program is still in the idea phase. ***Lisa suggested Codi speak with Whatcom Land Trust regarding this effort.**

***Allison will share contact information regarding the work Julie Hirsch has been doing with her Garden of the Salish Sea curriculum on shellfish/stormwater/watershed education program in Blaine and Drayton Harbor.**

(<https://oceanacidification.noaa.gov/WhatWeDo/EducationOutreach/SOARCEWebinars/TabId/3463/ArtMID/16157/ArticleID/11606/Ocean-Acidification-Garden-of-the-Salish-Sea-Curriculum.aspx>)

***Kristi suggested that alternative schools are a great place to bring programs. She mentioned Sam Wassen as one of the teachers who got really excited about stormwater education.**

***Discussion touched briefly on the Green Club in Anacortes HS and their highly-regarded work with high school kids on stormwater projects and rain gardens.**

4. Follow-up on Opportunities with MVSD and SWSD – Richard – Unfortunately, Mt. Vernon SD didn't get the No Child Left Inside grant due to a small, but consequential limitation in the match money. Fred Atkinson will keep the discussion moving forward to get 4th graders out for two field trips every year, but that discussion hasn't picked back up yet. As the group discussed last time, we want to focus on a few major programs and see if we can incorporate some improvements in delivery systemically. Richard did share our engagement and education ideas with Shameem Sherwin (K-6 TOSA – Teacher on Special Assignment for STEM) from Sedro - Woolley SD (SWSD), who is super excited about them. Several pieces are falling into place now but could be broadened. SWSD is starting with salmon ed in early grades, stormwater education in 6th grade, and Junior Stream Stewards in 7th. These are a great next step in Sedro-Woolley. ***Expanding salmon tanks in early grades and approaches to stormwater could be main priorities for the year there.**
5. Illuminight 2019 – Richard – While currently set for the 4th Thursday in January, there are thoughts about changing the date to May when weather is better. Staff met with Richelle Potter who will continue to help SWC keep Illuminight going. The group discussed the pros and cons of January versus May. Sponsors are pretty sure they want to move to a weekend night – Friday. CEC members felt early October, March, or early May might work better, with ***October a new idea that the project sponsors will further consider.** No decision was made at this time.
6. Caring for the Kenai Contest called Richard about holding this event in Skagit which is funded by Endeavor which just bought Tesoro in Anacortes. Richard discussed this idea with Katie Quinn an event organizer for this contest on the Kenai Peninsula in Alaska with a 30-year tradition in their local high schools. Richard seemed to prefer approaching Endeavor about Skagit-grown projects which could apply their funding. However, before a conversation with them could happen, we need to solidify our efforts. Caring for our Backyards is the program and it is for high school students with

the focus “How would you care for what matters to you?” Committee members seemed to question whether we would want to try to translate this Alaska program to the Skagit where we have a lot already going on. One concept that came up during this discussion is to bring high school students to produce and showcase the best films in the SFEG Wild and Scenic Film Festival. ***Keelin indicated she could bring it to the SFEG Board.** *Richard is happy to pass on information about the Kenai program to anyone who is interested.

7. Grant opportunities coming up? ***Richard asked members to keep eyes peeled for upcoming grants. SWC is happy to spend some time putting our ideas out there in grant apps.**

8. Skagit ECO-Net ***Meeting date set for June 26 2-4pm at Padilla Bay**

9. Summer Event Coordination: Everyone is gearing up for the following summer programs:

- June 2 – SFEG – Monitoring Program (native plants identification, restoration sites and monitoring efforts) Hamilton Town Hall – 10am-3pm
- June 6 – Skagitonians Breakfast
- June 7 - Orca Toxics
- June 9 – SCD Stream Team Annual Rewards and Recognition event (72 will be honored)
- June 13 – SWC Council of Members meeting – discuss salmon project proposals. Ria Burns from Ecology will be talking about Instream Flow.
- June 23 – SCD Discovery Day
- July 7 – Discovery Garden – WSU Extension – 10-2 pm “Ask a Master Gardener Day”
- Sunday, July 15 – Skagit Conservation District – Sustainable Samish Garden Tour
- Saturday, July 22 – SLT Annual Picnic on Guemes Island – (at the newly acquired Guemes Valley property) this year – Skagit cycle will do a family ride from March Point, carpooling, geology walk on Kelly’s Point, guided hike. Fidalgo Flyfishers, Skagit Indian Tribe, Audubon Society will be there. Music from local musicians. 11am-2pm
- August 18 – Skagit Conservation District – Kids and Nature in Samish
- Month of September - Skagit Conservation District - Skagit Water Weeks Sept 1-30
- Saturday, September 8 - Skagit River Salmon Festival
- September 27 – SFEG partners with PSE. Doug Bruland will give a tour of the Baker River facility and talk about sockeye.

10. Updates:

- Lisa Miller is starting Eco Restore - a new permaculture design business. Her going away party at SLT is on May 31.
- NCI’s Mountain School is now going to be in Burlington-Edison SD – a huge success starting 2018-19. This will start Mountain School into the first week of December.
- SCD’s program has kids at Padilla Bay Reserve putting their clues together for the LetterBox Trail. This program has evolved over the years. Having grade school kids do this has been successful.
- Laurie White and Kristi Carpenter are excited to be presenting to the National Stormwater Conference in August in Denver! WDOE’s Christine McGinnis asked Kristi to submit an abstract which was accepted.

11. Meeting wrap-up and Adjourn 11:10 am.

Next CEC meeting is scheduled for June 26.