

Skagit Watershed Council - January 30, 2018

Meeting of the Community Engagement Committee – Final Notes

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

Present: Richard Brocksmith (SWC), Kristi Carpenter (SCD), Lucy DeGrace (SFEG), Alex duPont, Chair (WSU Ext.), Codi Hamblin (NCI), Lisa Miller (SLT), Cindy Pierce (SCD), Allison Roberts (Kulshan Services), Karen Summers (SCEA), and Susan Wood (Padilla Bay).

Not Present: Scottie Schneider (SWC)

Call to Order: 9:35 am

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. November notes and updates on Action Items

***Richard sent an email to the editor at Skagit Valley Herald inquiring about partnering to share Seasons of Skagit photos, but hasn't heard back.**

***Cindy will speak to Valerie at Concrete Theatre.**

***Lisa will create business cards with #OurSkagit hashtag for ECONet.**

***Richard will reach out to educator group in Whatcom about collaboration on a digital website for the Resource Guide.**

- Seasons of Skagit photos and their future use - For a cheaper option, consider producing a calendar in the CD case; Wayne has a connection to calendars and videos; Keelin has been taking video and still shots for SFEG on various programs with overdubbed interviews using MovieMaker on Office; SFEG has a lot of video footage to put together into something for broader distribution.

Allison suggested using the photos similarly to the Sierra Club's Ray of Hope daily photo and quote (<https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra-club-email/daily-ray-of-hope>). Also, she suggested we speak with Wild Whatcom about what they learned in producing their video (<https://vimeo.com/140358067>). Could we do a poster combining the photos in a Seasons of Skagit collage? Examples: (<https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/travel-collage-can-be-used-cover-442874650>, or https://www.zazzle.com/ireland_collage_landscape_poster-228928239559601383).

***Moved and seconded approval of the notes after reviewing the action items in the notes.**

3. Resource Guide and School District Program Integration - Scope and Sequence Discussion – We can't be all things to all people. We need a real time view of what each organization's educators are doing, where, and when. Could the teachers provide input? The assumption is that our programs build on each other – but do they? How do we know the kids didn't already hear the same presentation last year? We need to connect the dots better. Cindy shared with Richard the spreadsheet she uses to track her classroom work. Lucy does the same.

***Cindy and Lucy will work together to coordinate their spreadsheets.**

***We need to have discussions and direct market with districts to not only bridge the gaps but to roll out our programs in a more intentional way. Respond to district needs rather than create programs without district and teacher input.**

- Opportunities
 - Skagit Conservation District will be applying to expand base funding with a county-wide assessment – something they haven't done before. This will create dedicated funds for CD to enhance programs
 - Frank Atkinson from Mt. Vernon SD wants all their 4th graders to experience nature-based education at least 2x/year. They put together a \$12K No Child Left Inside grant proposal and SWC along with 5 other proponents/CEC members submitted letters of commitment and support. Sedro Woolley also inquired about the program concept. The CEC could help stitch this interest together and better align current efforts in the school districts.
 - Shawn Doffing (Business teacher) is helping implement STEM in Sedro Woolley SD via Skagit STEM. Some schools are doing STEM, some are in transition, and others are not making it a primary focus.
 - Skagit PUD has been ramping up education and has its own budget and staff serving kids all over the county. This is an opportunity to continue better communication and synergy.
 - Darrington SD gets left out since it's out of the way and is on the Snohomish County border. They do a Youth Forestry group with WSU Extension and USFS. Cindy has taken programs to all schools except for those in Darrington and Concrete.
 - Make a Skagit County map available that shows the watershed and the school district overlay. Kristi says it's in the Watershed Guide, but it's not electronic. Chris has all kinds of maps, so Cindy can check with him. Susan at Padilla Bay has one too.
 - Grades Overview
 - Padilla Bay (grades K-12, but mostly 4-6 grade)
 - Conservation District (grades 4-6: Stormwater, Envirothon HS, Conservation Days 6 grade)
 - SFEG is at capacity and needs more staff (grades 3-8: grade 3 - Salmon in Classroom, upper elementary - Kids in Creeks, Jr. Steam Stewards - 7, 8 grade)
 - NCI is mostly at capacity (grades 5-8 Mountain School; mostly grades 7 and 8 in Snow School; experimenting with grade 3 pilot next fall in Bellingham SD)
 - SLT offers to K-12; may have up to 10 sites to use as outdoor classrooms. Other partners could use these sites too.
 - Other opportunities:
 - Field trips: to the hatchery (WDFW) and to the wastewater facility plants (PUD)
 - Curriculum development and putting kits together
 - Train the teachers to teach the lessons so that we aren't using capacity to be in the classroom. Padilla Bay does this 2-3 times a year. Promote Project Learning Tree.
 - NCI teaches how to be comfortable outdoors but doesn't do much curriculum instruction.
 - Schools want mentors outside of the school for STEM.
 - SLT is making site-specific field kits for teachers and students.
4. STEM Like Me! – Four STEM professionals spoke to classrooms in SWSD, including Callie. STEM Like Me is a program out of Seattle. There is interest in expanding this in the schools. Skagit STEM is looking for volunteers to set this up in other school districts with MVSD next. CEC members aren't scientists. ***Several CEC members can generate a list and Richard will share list of ideas of potential STEM professionals with Shaun when he requests it. *Also suggest that Shawn tap into**

SVC (Corrine Hamburg and Shaun Bell) and WWU Compass to Campus program for STEM speakers.

5. Skagit Children's Museum display – They installed a topography table and a water table, and need interpretive signage reviewed. ***Karen and Susan will provide input: fewer words, more images, narrowed focus, and consistency. Wayne also can help with content.** Start with topography and link to biology, vegetation, and fish. Specific information could be linked to trends data linked to our watershed. Baker Dam interpretive center has a nice salmon interpretive sign to emulate. Interpretive text could focus more on the Skagit watershed and what can be done. The rain barrel info could provide information on more things people can do to reduce stormwater.
6. Grant Opportunities: Tabled for next time. ***Alex asked the committee to focus efforts in looking at the grant table for a more substantive discussion in February.** Be looking for grants that could address: gaps, digital database, staff support, scope and sequencing efforts. At Storming the Sound, Alex mentioned the need for a digital effort. Teachers, students, parents showed some interest in expanding this. ***Make sure committee members talk with others about the need for funding.**
7. Events
 - Illuminight – Video hit 55,000 views and Facebook got over 75 new likes in just one month. City took professional videography this year of Illuminight. Estimates are about 500 people attended (similar to last year) and 500 luminaries made. 350 paraded. 6,000 watched the video. The weather was cold and windy but with no rain. Thus couldn't really hand out much of our members materials.

Scheduling discussion: Avoid Storming the Sound since it makes for a long day. Could this be a shoulder season event instead for early spring or fall with better weather. Suggestion was to avoid September and October, but March is a good month. Parking was not an issue (***Richard will follow up with Public Works and the Police**), but if 1,000 had attended, that could have been an issue. Planning committee will debrief next meeting.
 - Skagit ECO Net – Meeting well-attended with robust discussion. Susan made a nice presentation on incorporating climate change into education work. ***Susan is happy to train other line staff at our CEC level on how to incorporate climate change.** Agenda didn't get to how to engage more with social media. Karen will poll the date and topics desired. March 13, 20, 27 will be the options. Alex can hold it at WSU Extension with a social media presentation. Discussion – We are all gatekeepers. Are we promoting diversity? Are we creating barriers to our programs? How can we be more culturally diverse? Make sure we provide in Spanish.
 - Storming the Sound – 177 attended – almost the same as last year. Session topics were well-received and substantive. Suggestion: do one more email reminder prior to the event. Collect input from attendees through the post-survey. Suggestion to blog afterward about lessons learned. Susan's evaluation will not collect this type of data. Collect the resources that were shared at the event and compile it for attendees.

Lisa, Richelle, Alex, and Stacy presented about how to get kids into the outside world and how to utilize the Resource Guide. People were really excited about the Resource Guide and they didn't know it was out there and excited about the online platform. There were some people who wanted to get their information in the Resource Guide. Broaden our scope and outreach to bring in other organizations that we are looking for funding. Partner with Whatcom County. Cascadia-wide platform could start with us and then build upon it.
8. Review DRAFT SWC Community Engagement Coordinator Job Announcement – The committee reviewed the job announcement dedicated to ½ time attention to engagement. NCI suggested we

include diversity encouraged. Developing key messages, social media tools, implementing arts and nature program, moving the Resource Guide to digital, curriculum development aligned with SD, managing projects. We will not have any trouble. Several other folks have approached us with master's degrees. Deadline is February, assuming budgets fall in place. Richard will share with the Board and get it out ASAP. ***If there are any other suggestions, please share with Richard.**

9. Committee Member Event Sharing –

- Earth Day events: Share on Facebooks
 - April 21 – SFEG event at Edgewater Park with trail building/maintenance in vicinity with a side-channel area for non-native invasive removal. ***CEC members who want to table at this event can contact Lucy.**
 - April 21, 22 – Future Fest in Anacortes.
 - April 22 1-4 pm Skagit Land Trust at Utopia with a focus on nature-awareness and nature walks with focus on some stewardship (tree protector removal), restoration walk.
 - February 8 – SFEG's Annual meeting. Keelin's videos will debut at this event. ***Also looking for volunteers – especially kitchen manager.**
 - Salmon Festival –Saturday, September 8 after Labor Day at Edgewater Park. Dan Hammill will be the coordinator again this year. They have secured funding from various sponsors already.

Due to poor weather and new location, last year's event lost money. (Cost to put on the event to break even is \$25,000, funded largely by sponsorships and vendor fees.) To bring financial stability to the event, the committee - after considerable debate - approved charging adults \$5 (18 and older are adults) with kids free and 500 free tickets for low income groups - Community Action, Friendship House, Habitat for Humanity, Catholic Community Services, and DSHS. ***If CEC members know where to distribute the free tickets, please share with Alex.** The event committee is discussing a lot of ways to make the event sustainable: bigger sponsorship recruitment, broaden the types of vendors. ***Lucy will share with Alex some policy changes to the event that affected vendors.**

Discussion and suggestions: CEC members were not sure charging for the event would help the cause. CEC members suggested providing 1,000 free tickets to get attendance up. They expressed concerns about how to enforce ticketing and whether fencing would eat up the difference. They discussed adding more education about the health benefits of eating fish which might introduce new sponsors such as the hospital. They also suggested more Spanish outreach and translated outreach to where Spanish speakers live, play, and eat.

***SWC will help advertise sponsorship opportunities for the Salmon Festival to SWC members. The Salmon Festival Board is looking for additional members. They will meet for 1-2 hours on the 3rd Tuesday at 9 am each month. Feb 20, March 20, and April 17. Members are encouraged to provide input on how to do this better. *Please email Alex about charging for the event and what could change minds about this decision.**

- Second weekend of September – Fidalgo Days.
- March 3 – DASSH 5K for Samish Health.

Adjourn: 12 noon