

Community Engagement Committee

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

June 25, 2019, 9:30 am – 11:30 am

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

Present: Alex duPont, Chair (WSU Skagit Ext.), Richard Brocksmith (SWC), Lucy DeGrace (SFEG), Stacy Dahl (SLT), Zena Gavin (SLT), Codi Hamblin (NCI), Cindy Pierce (SCD), Andrea Reiter (SWC); Allison Roberts (Kulshan Services), Vilina Sanburn-Bill (SFEG), Kalena Walker (SFEG), and Wayne Watne (WDFW)
Not Present: Kristi Carpenter (SCD), Karen Summers (SCEA, EcoNet)

Call to Order: 9:30 am

1. Welcome and Introductions and approve April 2019 meeting notes

Corrections to notes:

- Page 2, paragraph 3 (part in parentheses): Sedro-Woolley – Remove the assertion that there is no long-term planning for transportation support in Sedro-Woolley. Transportation support does exist in Sedro-Woolley.
- Follow-up on aquaculture in April notes: Wayne Watne (WDFW) outlined recent interest by sports fishing groups in using fish traps which were outlawed in the 1930's because they were so effective. If this technique is adapted, it could help in the restoration of salmon and help with food supplies for Orca. The concept is to capture wild juvenile Chinook, bring them to maturity in acclimation ponds near areas with freshwater inflow, then release the fish in the river where they naturally spawn. These Chinook don't go to the ocean and are "keyed in" on the freshwater inflow near where they were held. This technique greatly reduces predation and capture in the ocean and bolsters survival rates which would have a direct and near-term benefit for the ecosystem.

***Wayne will locate information and the link to the webinar where he learned about the Wild Fish Conservancy's Cathlamet River fish trap system. *He will provide a link to the webinar where he learned about this.** The Chair of the CEC asked for concrete ways for the CEC to effectively advocate/educate people to use this concept. This is a link to a 2016 article on the issue: <http://wildfishconservancy.org/resources/publications/wild-fish-runs/lethal-fish-trap-gets-second-chance>

SFEG and SCD felt that if an acclimation pond were implemented nearby, they might be open to supporting the project with volunteers. In keeping with the CEC's role in education and outreach, if Wayne were to identify grant money targeted to aquaculture or Orca, this idea could be advocated for regarding its value in community outreach and education.

2. Next steps on the Resource Guide

- ***Andrea will provide the members with a link to the draft which has been updated.** CEC members are asked to read through the guide content to confirm accuracy of the information on their organization. **Send any edits to Andrea; review deadline is mid-July. *Andrea will have print versions ready for each school by mid-August.** **CEC members asked for extra attention in notifying teachers by email and through the brochure about the presence of the updated Resource Guide at their school and online.** Andrea noted that she had added updated the guide deleting some programs no longer in

operation and with new programs: Friends of the Forest Land, MONA, Skagit Audobon, Viva Farms, MRC Kids on the Beach program, and REsources Young Water Stewards program.

***At the suggestion of CEC members, Andrea will update the look/cover with new images to differentiate it from the previous edition. She will ensure the photo(s) used are photo-released. Andrea will also make sure the link is the same as last year's edition, so people can easily access it online.**

Alex noted that WSU Extension is getting updates to their phone system which will change their phone numbers over the next couple months. SCD had a phone system upgrade and they now have extensions. Andrea indicated that she can make these changes to the online version anytime; just let her know.

- The guide will not be in a searchable database unless people download it and put in keywords. Richard noted that they still hold a vision for a searchable database. Andrea noted that there is renewed interest for a STEAM Resource Guide in Whatcom as well with a WWU Graduate student. ***Wayne asked Andrea to share the name of the grad student interested in doing this. He wants to share a contact person at Ferndale HS.**

Andrea also noted that there are two other groups with online resources:

- (SeaDoc Society is creating an online database – Junior SeaDoctors – 5th grade) Andrea will send the CEC members the website so each can reach out to SeaDoc to get their program on the online database.
- Viva Farms – also has Farm to School in partnership with either OSPI – may be regional. ***Andrea will send out the links to both databases.**
- A recent article about high school programs offered by REsources came as a surprise to some CEC members. (https://www.goskagit.com/news/local_news/area-environmental-education-programs-grow/article_6c5bdfdf-8408-59b2-8f19-16df0f985bb6.html) REsources reached out to the SWC about adding a 9th grade program in Burlington SD. REsources did reach out to Sedro Woolley SD as well to tie in their nonpoint source pollution curriculum to SWSD's 9th grade Orca curriculum. While the idea is to build upon concepts already learned, the committee discussed how new programs are vetted and expressed concern about redundant curriculums. If desired, Andrea can provide more information about the REsources curriculum.

3. Strategic outreach scheduling - Work parties, fundraisers, educational programming

- There are lots of work parties planned this summer. Members indicated they don't seem to conflict or negatively impact their attendance.
- If organizations need volunteers, it's recommended people contact Kristi C. who has extensive mailing list for volunteers. Alex also has a list of Master Gardeners. SFEG would like to reach a larger volunteer population. Also, Andrea said she can share the need for volunteers online and post flyers on Facebook as well as post events on the SWC calendar. Andrea said that flyers are really easy and effectively shared on Facebook.

For those that want access to the SWC calendar, you can also add the SWC calendar to your own calendar: <https://www.skagitwatershed.org/resources/calendar/>

EcoNet calendar goes out @ 3-months: <http://www.skagitcleanwater.org/event/>

Keep communicating and make sure events are on our SWC calendar ahead of time.

4. Information sharing, cross promotion, Skagit River Salmon Festival

- AmeriCorps volunteers are finishing up their terms.
- Social Media Update: SWC is not currently boosting posts but has in the past. WSU spends no more than \$10. SFEG spends up to \$20 on their boosted posts. They can target age

groups and interests. It can popup on people's Facebooks even though they aren't following your page.

Andrea suggested SWC be able to share member posts. Share where you are working.

Photos – make sure you have waivers, but SWC can repost them. If there are so many kids in a photo that it's a blur, this would be ok to share without photo releases. Andrea wants to share more content, not just news.

Photo Releases – The members shared that gathering photo releases is time-consuming. They discussed ways to make this easier and more thorough.

- While schools gather photo releases from each student, asking for this list can open up a can of worms. Many organizations have found it most helpful to ask the teachers which students haven't signed photo releases.
- SFEG is going to do like NSEA: Get the form out at the beginning of the year with all of the other school forms. If the form doesn't come back, then their policy will be that the kids can't go on the tour. Gathering their own releases gives them more freedom. Rely on the teachers to keep a list and refer to this. Some groups give the kids a sticker to identify the kids who have releases. They don't tell the kids what it's for. Others send out press releases and if the Skagit Valley Herald shows up, then they can rely on those photos.
- Include in the info about the field trip, put the onus on the organization to tell you who can't be included in photos. Ask teachers to put kids that can't be photographed in a group (without them knowing). Ask the teachers for the photos.
- SFEG takes photo releases seriously and by doing so, they also can add photos in their grant applications. For instance, Skagit Community Foundation asks that all photo releases are provided for photos used in their grant applications.
- Pop-up Banners for the Salmon Festival has date and time on it for the event – SFEG is using it on July 9,12, August 8, 24. ***Talk to Lucy, if you are open to using this banner too.**
- The Skagit Salmon Festival is scheduled for September 7 at Edgewater Park. Time is: 11 am – 6 pm; Conservation Alley is a great way to reach people. They are securing performers and applications for Conservation Alley should be coming in soon.

Note: The Snohomish River Festival is two-days and well attended. Some say it's due to programming, but others say they've become a music festival rather than a river festival. Our folks said a two-day festival would be too long. They also noted that if the music is loud, then they have a hard time talking at their booths. It was reiterated that festivals aren't a place for political organizing or petition collecting.

5. Member updates and information sharing

- WSU Extension – Ask a Master Gardener Day – WSU Extension, June 29, Free, 27 themed gardens, Discovery Garden on Memorial Highway.
- WSU Extension – Toddlers Day, July 31, 10am-noon, for 2-5-year-olds to promote the garden to families. Registration is required.
- WSU Extension – Free Row and Grow Events
- SCD/SFEG – Water Wonders, July 9, 10am-noon,
- Skagit County Fair – August 7-10
- SCD – Kids and Nature, August 17, 11am-2pm (SCD)
- Fidalgo Bay Days, August 24, 11am-3pm – community outreach opportunity
- SLT – July 6 work party, 10am-1pm, Utopia
- SLT – July 14 work party, 10am-1pm, Samish Flower Farm, help with management plan afterwards
- SLT – July 28 – Annual Picnic, 11am-2pm, Cascadian Farm

- SLT – August 3 – Fidalgo Bay Carstens Stewardship– 10am-1pm
- SLT – They have an Elk Trunk with suggested activities based on Project Wild.
- SCD – Sustainable Samish Farm Tour, July 14, 11am-3pm
- SWC – Annual Lunch, September 12, Hillcrest Lodge, 11:30-2pm
- SFEG – September 14, Salmon Sightings, Grandy Creek, noon-3pm
- SFEG – November 9, Salmon Sightings (chum), Taylor Shellfish at Oyster Creek, noon-3pm
- SFEG – Spawner Survey, October 5 (no location or time yet), walking streams and counting fish with volunteer teams (mostly Coho streams). **Lucy should send volunteer needs to Alex.**
- SFEG - Wild and Scenic Film Fest, October 11, Lincoln Theatre, 6pm
- NCI – They are busy with summer activities. Stay tuned for fall events. There will be no Youth Ambassadors program going forward as they are overhauling their offerings.
- Climate Change presentation for any group that wants it (½ hour to 1 hour), David Roberts could make a presentation at the next EcoNet meeting
- Cindy attended WADE Training (Leavenworth), activity: line up in number of years worked in SD, # times in WADE training, # believe that SD supervisors would be accepting of climate change as part of program in SD (eastside/westside difference)

6. Other?

Low water levels on Samish River and Ross Lake.

TeachClimateScience blog – The Teacher Friendly Guide to Climate Change.

Adjourn: 11:30 am

Next CEC meeting September 24, 9:30 – 11:30