

Community Engagement Committee Notes

Skagit Watershed Council November 28, 2017 -- 9:30 am – 11:00 am

SWC office at 815 Cleveland Ave, Suite 201

Present (alphabetical): Richard Brocksmith (SWC), Alex duPont, Chair (WSU Ext.), Lisa Miller (SLT), Cindy Pierce (SCD), Allison Roberts (Kulshan Services), Scottie Schneider (SWC), Karen Summers (SCEA) and Codi Hamblin (NCI),

Not Present: Lucy DeGrace (SFEG), Samantha Russell, and Kristi Carpenter (SCD).

1. Welcome and introductions (5 minutes) - Alex

No changes to the October meeting notes, except no action required to correct the Illuminight invitation because it was just a sample.

2. Review action items (10 minutes) – All

3. Illuminight Event - ***Meet at Tri-Dee on Thursday, January 25th at 4:00 to make luminaries and 5:30 – 6:30 to walk.**

- All event plans are in place; advertising in several publications. Tri-Dee Arts is working on a new poster for the Illuminight event for distribution the 1st week of January. Release is intentionally timed for greatest impact. Downtown Association is getting the posters out to all schools.
- CEC members may provide materials at the SWC table for public outreach. ***Get materials to Scottie by 2nd week of January.**
- ***SWC will put out a call for volunteers** (need only a few) to help kids and get people to sign liability waivers. ***Reach out to Kristi Carpenter who has Watershed Masters who need volunteer hours.**
- ***CEC members may pick up posters at SWC offices in the first week of January.**
***Scottie will share the Illuminight press release on the SWC Facebook.**

4. SWC 2018 Calendar Decision and Discussion

- SWC spoke with designers and printers to use Seasons of Skagit photos in a hard copy calendar. Printing only a few hundred doesn't meet the goal of expanding our audience; printing 1000's is too expensive where the simplest calendar print of 300 at Lithtex would be \$1500 and a graphic designer for a more complex effort would be an additional ~\$1500. Instead of a calendar, efforts will be focused on targeted outreach.
- Use more video. An effective and interactive medium for social media. Apply funds to bringing more videos.
- ***Richard could contact Scott Terrell at Skagit Valley Herald** to see if they could do a calendar using Season of Skagit photos. Note: The newspaper just sold, so not sure how receptive they'll be.

- Allison shared a uniquely-designed desk calendar that uses a CD cover and a page for every month of the year. Cost would be lower and double sided would provide space to feature organizations. Suggestion: Consider making a 12- or 16-month calendar in this format to sell at next year's Salmon Festival.
- Public Travelling Art Show: Feature framed prints of the Seasons of Skagit winners in a local restaurant, museum, Food Coop and/or Lincoln Theatre gallery. Print them professionally and put in 11 x 14 frames (from Costco?).
 - **Check into whether the art could be sold.**
 - Partner with other events – Illuminight, Skagit Water Weeks, biannual Poetry Event May 17-20, 2018. The museum is hosting an event during this Poetry event. Perhaps we could invite the poets of Skagit to use the photos as inspiration for poems and then pair the poems with the art at the MONA poetry event – they have a room reserved. Contact partners to offer free content in electronic outreach.
 - Solicit venues for electronic showing of the photos – The group brainstormed two venues: Concrete Theatre and Anacortes Theatre. ***Cindy will contact Valerie at the Concrete Theater to see if they could be featured. She could also contact Anacortes Theater to do the same.**
 - Show the photos at the SWC members meeting before the meeting. The photos were already shared at the Wild and Scenic Film Event.

5. Social Media Discussion – status of hashtag use and suggestions for improvement

- Hashtags increase the reach and are a valuable way to gain traction on Instagram and Facebook. When someone clicks on a hashtag, every post that includes the same hashtag will automatically show up. Engagement is well-above what it is on posts without hashtags.

We coined the following hashtags: #Skagitpeople #Skagitplaces #Skagitabundance #SeasonsofSkagit #OurSkagit. ***CEC members should always use #OurSkagit in their posts.** Other hashtag use is ok too. ***Alex will urge other SWC members to use our hashtag at the Quarterly SWC Members meeting tomorrow as well.**

- Social media - More training? Cross-marketing? Sharing?
- Educator's Guide – link is working now to the Guide. Alex put in a plug for the Guide at the County Commissioners' meeting last week. Salmon Festival Website – Margaret Horowitz got 700 likes on her Facebook for her exhibit at the Salmon Festival.
- Capacity – ***Discuss at EcoNet how to share the workload of finding good content and cross sharing.** Perhaps assign days for organizations to post and then others can cross-share. Efficiency helps - schedule posts and events ahead of time. What is the best time to post? Define the categories/topics we're looking for content – people, places, history, trivia, resources, events.

- ***Allison will share Mike Sato's blog which has material from which to post.** <http://salishseacomunications.blogspot.com/2011/10/salish-sea-communications-truth-well.html> . She will also share the social media training notes from the recent Whatcom County SBDC/SCORE-sponsored training. Another source to post from – www.windyty.com that shows wind and weather events visually on a map.

6. Update on SWC Interviews – Richard

- Nathan Rice has completed three interviews: Saul Weisberg, Upper Skagit tribal folks, Ag folks. How to use them is the next step. Also to keep up the interview process. Richard emphasized that content is much more likely to be reposted if they include short videos. Nate got some of the interviews on video and transcribed the audio recordings. (He didn't have video clips on the Upper Skagit interviews. Perhaps we could go back and do that.) The interviews are great content. ***The committee wants to see continued effort in doing interviews.**
- These interviews are somewhat similar to the "Brief but Spectacular Life" series on PBS. Take a look: <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/brief/>
- Richard spoke with the editor (Collette) at Skagit Valley Herald regarding possible willingness to post these interviews as blogs or articles in the Herald. They don't do blogs/news columns because they want to make ensure reputable sources and data. They are not eager to include blogs by outside sources. ***Richard could approach her about a use of the Seasons of Skagit photos.**
- Allison will speak with Stacey Sledge of WhatcomTalk (<http://www.whatcomtalk.com/>) about progress on the possibility of a SkagitTalks – being started in Skagit.

7. Grant opportunities coming up and coordination with Whatcom

- ***Focus grant research and efforts on the following focus areas:** producing more video, Resource Guide updates and website, ramping up interviews.
- ***Allison will set a meeting regarding efforts in Whatcom County to unite resources on environmental education.** The meeting will be with Whatcom Community Foundation, (Pamela Jons), Richard, and Wild Whatcom's Emily Highleyman who spearheaded the Whatcom Environmental Educators' network.
- ***Put grant writing on hold until we know more about funding.** Richard is looking for resources to fund more video interviews. There was a recent grant that Richard knew about that piqued his interest. We could Approach Skagit Community Foundation, PUD for funding. ***Follow up on upcoming quarterly Tulalip grant round.** Upper Skagit doesn't do this. Could ***Richard speak with Bill Blake about his connections with Tulalip and potential opportunities there. *Richard will speak with Bill Mitchell from the Swinomish.**
- Cindy Pierce mentioned a Costco grant.

- Richard got a note from PSE regarding their Powerful Partnership effort. WSU got it last year, but felt that it's not very much money (\$5,000) with a lot of work involved. SFEG is applying this year. Skagit Land Trust didn't go for it.
- ***Keep eyes open for a good grant over \$10,000, otherwise not worth the time.** Specific target is the Resource Guide to update the Guide and get it electronic.
- Richard has a ball-park figure for a database-fed website. We need to know which functions we want it to perform. Richard is waiting for capacity - the capital budget to pass so we can get outreach going. To write the grants, do the social media, to update the Guide. Capital Budget resolution is up in the air. March is the watershed month for a decision, but there are some people working on the Hirst decision now.

8. Skagit ECO Net Preparation – Karen

- Next meeting is 2-4 pm on December 5, 2017. 22 people will be there. Susan Wood and Chandra are giving a 45-minute presentation on Climate Change that was done at the Storming the Sound with round-table discussions afterwards. ***She will urge use of hashtags we want to use - #OurSkagit – it connects all of us.** How to help each other to get more information. ***Query the group and their social media efforts.**
- ***Lisa will prepare business cards with our hashtag “OurSkagit” on it for the ECONet meeting.**
- ***Regarding efficiently collecting calendar events, Cindy will call on people and Karen will take notes on the events.** They may try distributing around a list-view calendar for people to put their events. ***Karen will put the calendar info on the SCEA website.**

9. SWC Council of Members Presentation on 11/28/2017 re: CEC – Alex

- ***Alex will present at the SWC Council tomorrow about the CEC.** She will provide context about the CEC, our membership, lessons learned, purpose of our network, and why it got created. She will update them about the Resource Guide – how to download it and how it's being used. ***Richard will bring a sample of the Guide to the meeting for Alex to share.** She'll outline steps moving forward and funding need for an interactive, online platform. She'll speak briefly about our branding and use of social media efforts and #OurSkagit hashtag use. She will ask them to follow SWC on Facebook. ***She will also share about Illuminight.**
- Feedback from users – none lately. Cindy went to the recent STEM night with a lot of families present (not as many teachers as she thought). She left Resource Guide materials in the teachers' lounge.
- ***Put the Resource Guide link on our Facebooks (<http://www.skagitwatershed.org/wp-content/uploads/Skagit-STEAM-Educator-Resource-Guide-1st-Editionv2.pdf>).** ***Richard will approach the school districts about posting a link on their school district websites.** Mt. Vernon said they would do it, but Richard couldn't find it. Re-approach them. It is on the STEM Network website.

- ***Bring Resource Guide brochures to Storming the Sound which is the same day at Illuminight.**
- Cindy and Lisa will have the brochures about the Resource Guide at their booths at Storming the Sound. The agenda – Susan Wood – puts the agenda together for Storming the Sound. Lisa may be doing a breakout session. She could have a copy of the resource guide at this session. ***Richard will get a guide to Cindy Pierce to show people. *Cindy or Scottie will ask Susan if we could do a presentation at Storming the Sound about the Resource Guide and our vision for what it could be.**

10. Other?

- STEM Night – A lot of families were there; not as many teachers. They loved the Watershed Model that Cindy brought. Lisa was there as well.
- Cindy gave Richard her spreadsheet that tracks her stormwater presentations.
- What are the analytics for seeing engagement on our Resource Guide. Richard will look at this.

11. Member information sharing

Skagit Land Trust's Kelly's Point Campaign (Yellow Bluffs on the SW end of Guemes Island) only needs to raise \$100K more - almost there on the \$1.4 million project. They have a challenge grant going on so people can pledge to match or contribute. Donate online: <https://co.clickandpledge.com/sp/d1/default.aspx?wid=56644>

Story on GoAnacortes recently - https://www.goanacortes.com/news/article_3b20f9ba-c992-11e7-9f46-cb2b81a85d95.html

Case Statement - (<https://myguemes.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/KP-Final-Case-Statement-B-The-Campaign-to-Save-Kellys-Point-1.pdf>)

- Worthy of Note: The protection project on the Skagit River succumbed to the most recent flooding at Thanksgiving and went right around the concrete jacks and took out ½ the road at Cascadian Farms. The road is only one lane right now.

12. Meeting wrap-up and Adjourn (11:25 am)

- Next meetings: January 30, 2018, February 22, 2018.