

Community Engagement Committee

Meeting Notes

Skagit Watershed Council

November 14, 2018 -- 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm, Padilla Bay

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

Present: Lucy DeGrace (SFEG), Alex duPont, Chair (WSU Ext.), Kristi Carpenter (SCD), Stacy Dahl (SLT), Zena Garin (SLT), Cindy Pierce (SCD), and Andrea Reiter (SWC), Karen Summers (EcoNet), and Wayne Watne (WDFW),

Not Present: Richard Brocksmith (SWC), Lucy DeGrace (SFEG), Kalena Walker (SFEG), and Scottie Schneider (SWC)

Call to Order: 1:04 pm

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Approved September meeting notes
3. Reviewed action items
4. Discussion about engaging an Adult Audience
 - How do organizations that are represented at the CEC educate and engage adults?
 - WSU Extension (Alex): Shore Steward supports workshops already happening in the community re: 10 guidelines in hopes they'll implement them on their property. She doesn't do focused classes on any specific topic; they are broader in scope on water quality issues. They have been experiencing budget cuts. Always looking for ways to speak with the adult populations.
 - ~~SFEG~~-SLT: Stacy is in a master's program and doing her capstone to set up a master naturalist program. NCI has a NW Naturalist certification. Many Extensions have the Master Naturalist program, but there isn't one in Skagit. They noted that there is the Salish Sea Stewards, but she sees a need for a certification that focuses on the land. Alex noted that there is a new course at WSU Extension focused on forestry (Kevin Zobrist) and one on orchard management that will be open to adults. Getting new programs funded at WSU is difficult at present.
 - WSU Country Living Expo: Kevin Zobrist has taught a lot of classes at the Mount Vernon Library a local education event with WSU – the last weekend in January at Stanwood HS. He is contracted with WSU to work in Snohomish and Skagit He's also teaches classes on mushroom farming.
 - Tom Westergreen is with a statewide organization – small forest landowners and forest road networks. **Wayne will provide his contact information.**

- SCD: Watershed Masters, StreamTeam, Backyard Conservation Stewardship Program, Marine Biotoxin Volunteer Program, guest educational events, LID training, Fact Sheets on Stormwater, Conservation District plant sale (not educational, but touches a lot of adults, Habitat Teams she meets with once a month (Samish Watershed), and workshops for various audiences. These are community driven programs.
- Skagit Land Trust: Their Americorps person is trying to add a component of education once a month. They did invasives removal at March Point Heronry They find that volunteer work parties serve to educate people – most of them adults.
- Skagit Land Trust: They helped to sponsor the recent Orca Recovery Day. 30 people (maxed out attendance) signed up with adults and two kids. SLT would like to promote more volunteer opportunities and then pair them with speaker or a learning opportunity. Themed component and education with volunteerism has been successful.
- Think and Drink: Why not do a Stewardship Happy Hour at local micro-breweries that allow families with kids? Focus could be on Sedro Woolley, Mt. Vernon, and Marblemount. Consider breweries, golf courses, and other “third places” where people gather by affiliation as possible venues to reach new audiences. Make it real and a discovery.
- Other Venues: Young and old men are at the golf courses – new audience. Get the influential people from various network and local celebrities to promote a message. Talk with the local Chamber of Commerces (Burlington, La Conner, Mt. Vernon). Work with Leadership Skagit. You don’t have to be a member to get your event into the Chamber event announcements. Do educational presentations at retirement homes, church-related groups, neighborhoods, and community-focused groups. The Skagit Island County Builders Association (SICBA) is a busy and connected group. Rotary Club (Mike Janicki and Lisa Janicki) – Cindy Pierce has a good connection with them.
- SCEA Trivia Night: This catches people who are at the bar who didn’t know about SCEA. Themed trivia nights have been successful too – perhaps with categories of questions from our organizations. We could tap into existing trivia nights or sponsor our own trivia night. Some felt that existing events might want to keep their own focus.
- Eagle Watch: There’s a training at Howard Miller this weekend.
- MRC: Forage Fish Monitoring volunteer opportunities.
- Pioneer Museum: This is a mostly adult venue. Karen suggested we distinguish between adult and retired. Attention to this would mean planning different events or taking into consideration time constraints for adults with families vs retirees who may have more flexible schedules.

- SFEG's Wild and Scenic Film Festival: Look up the trailer on the movie Fish in the Trees. SFEG showed this a while ago.
- Could there be a week-long event tied to an already successful event? Could this include a speaker series? Or tie additional, adult-focused programming for instance to Illuminight, the Salmon Festival, the Wild and Scenic Film Festival, or Water Weeks that would provide a more concentrated focus on these natural resource issues.
- Video – GoPro videos. Or a Day in the Life of... (30 seconds video of people in our organizations doing good work.)
- Academy of Lifelong Learning at WWU – Could we have a speaker from our groups teach a class or two to this audience of engaged, intelligent, active minded people who have time and resources?
- Orca Recovery – capitalize on the world's attention on the story. Seattle Times had a great article yesterday.
- Speaker Bureau – Could we start a list of people (and their contact information) who can speak on topics related to the land, stewardship, the environment.
- Plastics Recycling Education: Joan Drinkwin is leading this. ***Zena will email who is doing the recycling education in Skagit County.** In Boulder, CO, EcoCycle provides award-winning educational programs to over 25,000 kindergarten through 12th grade students in approximately 1000 Boulder Valley and St. Vrain Valley classrooms annually. They also provide educational services for the community, including a Boulder County recycling hotline to answer recycling and waste reduction questions. They have trained more than 750 volunteers county-wide to do targeted recycling education (even in apartment complexes).
- How are our adult education events effective?
 - Watershed Masters is an effective program because they work as a cohort and this builds relationships. While their volunteerism is great, they are already part of those committed to the environment.
 - Use our networks (CEC, SWC, or SCEA) to project more clout. At the SWC quarterly meetings, host a forum about the work the organizations are doing.
 - North Puget Sound Association of Realtors (NPSR): Karen suggested the real Estate agents have meetings with a short speaking opportunity for nonprofits.
 - Develop a presentation that anyone could give.
 - Get business cards for the SWC's CEC group or EcoNet or SCEA with a designated person to contact that could provide more information.
- Is there a need within CEC members for help in enhancing adult education/engagement?

- Brainstormed the components of an event that appeal to adults: camaraderie and connection, meaningful experiences, being social, alcohol, incentives to go, provide good reason to get people out the door (working adults needs and barriers?). Emphasize the social aspect of engagement and volunteerism.
 - We need to relay compelling and relevant messages to the general public. Target different professions. These topics aren't just natural resource issues. Our natural resources provide a sense of place and meaning. Some perceive that the salmon are there for humans, but they are also there for the trees, eagles, whales, and other creatures. We're not the only ones.
 - Develop talking points and targeted messages we want to send. Include calls to action and how people can they get easily involved.
- Action items:
 - *Investigate ways to better fund our efforts.**
 - *Explore the potential of donor advised funds with the Skagit Community Foundation or other investment houses.**
 - *Consider planning social events such as a trivia night or a Stewardship Happy Hour at a couple micro-breweries. Consider giving raffle prizes, although getting raffle donations is time-intensive.**
 - *Increase awareness: Get CEC-branded business cards we can hand out to people.**
 - *Start a Speakers Bureau list. Collect information from CEC members, SCEA, and EcoNet on speakers via Survey Monkey.**
5. Member information sharing – We ran up against the EcoNet meeting, so this didn't happen.
 6. Meeting wrap-up and Adjourn: 2:30 pm
- *Next CEC Meeting: January 29, 2019 – 9:30- 11:30 AM**