

Skagit Watershed Council – Final Notes
Meeting of the Board of Directors, via Zoom
December 1st, 2022, 10:00am to noon

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

Attending: John Stein (Chair), Bill Blake, Michael Kirshenbaum, Brian Lanouette, Andrew Bearlin, Devin Smith, Mike See (10:30), Brendan Brokes (11:10), Aundrea McBride, Richard Brocksmith, David Hawkins, Clyde Halstead (for bylaws agenda item)

Call to Order 10:06am

Introductions. Brendan will be joining late. Quorum achieved.

Motion by Bill, seconded by Michael, to approve the agenda. Approved unanimously, Brian abstains.

Motion by Michael, seconded by Bill, to approve the November notes. Approved unanimously, Brian abstains.

Executive Director and Committee Reports

September and October Financials—Nothing of note except that the Seattle City Light revenue has been changed to deferred income, as noted last month. Motion by Bill, seconded by Devin, to approve the September and October financial reports. All approve, Brian abstains.

TWiG—Officially removed Jeremy Gilman and Doug Bruland from the committee. Greenlighted the Cape Horn Road property for purchase using the new Approval Process for Restorable Lands, having decided that the wooden training wall had too little habitat benefit and too much unknown risk to remove at this time. Got an update on the Sauk Habitat Plan, including a presentation from NSD about possibly treating reach 50 with ELJs at a large scale. The TWG had questions about the certainty of outcomes for this treatment. ***There will be further discussion.**

Protection Subcommittee did not meet this month due to a lack of quorum.

M&AM Subcommittee—Proposed 5 monitoring projects for the 4 Year Work Plan, in part because having them on the list facilitates applying for other PSP funding sources. Not all would qualify for SRFB funding, especially effectiveness monitoring. John asked why not. Monitoring funds through SRFB are awarded at the regional level and projects must have regional significance to get funded and meet state requirements. We have been able to make the case

for some effectiveness monitoring projects having regional significance (monitoring Britt Slough and SF Dike Setback as representative of projects outside the dikes).

Riparian Work Group—The conference program has been distributed and registration is open. This informal group also discussed how they are operating and what they work on. Richard forwarded the idea of scoping improvements to the riparian actions geodatabase and ***the group scheduled a follow-up meeting to discuss the database in late January.**

CEC—Working on a continuing education course for credits for teachers (Drain Rangers). Working on how best to market and outreach existing programs to teachers. Do we need a queryable website? How would it be maintained? The CEC met in person.

Old Business

Bylaws discussion—No additional thoughts shared on this topic this month. Last month we heard from the USIT that they are in support of the County's position of a smaller board of directors made up mostly of governments. David Hawkins is monitoring meetings for USIT. Clyde Halstead is attending for bylaws discussions.

Voluntary Riparian Incentives Proviso Draft Report Follow-up—Goal is to add extra value and tools to voluntary riparian restoration programs so that they will be used by more private landowners. Report outlines barriers to landowners and recommendations to surmount those barriers. Draft was shared with Tribes and County first, then briefed to the Lower Skagit Temperature TMDL Advisory Group. Core team is still working with governments to address their comments.

Discussion:

- How do we ratify this as an organization?
- The broader riparian topic is in flux with the Governor's Salmon Task Force and Legislative session coming up.
- This is a statewide report with the opportunity to implement recommendations using Skagit examples.
- The County has a concern over the small number of landowner participants. ***They want to meet and discuss further.**
- This report was done at the same time as Ecology and the Conservation District's Community Based Social Marketing report which interviewed 16 people who had already participated in riparian restoration.
- ***Provide minutes authorizing this project to Brian.**
- The project is coordinating with the Nookachamps watershed assessment in order to reduce any duplication or confusion.

New Business

Quarterly Members Meeting on December 7th—Short meeting. Agenda includes:

- Overview of what we have done so far in Skagit Salmon Science Series and where the documents and videos can be found.
- Preview of what's next—freshwater habitats (all habitats are important).
- List of projects currently underway and those coming up next (on the 4 Year Work Plan) as related to recovery plan in 'batches' (pocket estuaries, estuary, mainstem floodplain, tributaries).
- Voluntary Incentives Program review (will not share too much because it is in draft).
- County staffing update

Discussion:

- Thanks to SRSC staff for all their follow up conversations with folks regarding 4S questions. 4S has generated some good conversation.
- There may be benefit to having a round table discussion at the end of the 4S process with planning of what is next.
- ***SRSC wants to have further discussions about the Sauk ELJ concept before it goes public**, which is one of the reasons this topic didn't make it onto the quarterly agenda.

PSAR 10 Year Business Plan—The idea to develop the PSAR 10 Year Business Plan is the outcome of a Salmon Recovery Council retreat 2 years ago where the group said we need to make a strong case that we know what needs to be done and we need more resources. The retreat also decided to focus on critical stocks for the interim 2 years until the plan was finished. SRC is considering/has proposed focusing on critical stocks for the entire 10 year plan, contrary to input from many lead entities. Richard raised the point at the SRC meeting that this discussion was still to be had and not decided. SRC then approved the Terms of Reference setting up a process to follow for the Plan, but also agreed this policy topic needs to be revisited.

Discussion:

- It's complex, but a singular focus on critical stocks for 10 years is problematic.
- Perspectives from many watersheds need to be respected.
- There may need to be hard choices.
- 'Spreading the peanut butter' may not have worked. Or maybe there was never enough peanut butter to be successful.
- These will be huge projects every 3-5 years if you want to move the needle.
- It isn't clear that we have the right list of critical stocks, even if that approach is selected.

***Richard will work on the policy side for the first few months and Aundrea will help with nuts and bolts for the lead entity; both will report back to Board.**

Good of the Order

Michael—Barney Lake property will close soon. 5 acres of swan and fish habitat. SLT raised \$50K via grassroots to match salmon money.

Andrew—SCL submitted a draft license application to FERC.

Adjourn 12:00