

**Skagit Watershed Council – Final Notes**  
**Meeting of the Board of Directors, via Zoom**  
**May 16th, 2022, 1:00pm to 3:00pm**

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

**Attending:** John Stein (Chair), Brendan Brokes, Bill Blake, Devin Smith, Michael Kirshenbaum, Brian Lanouette, Peter Browning, Aundrea McBride, Richard Brocksmith

**Absent:** Andrew Bearlin

**Call to Order 1:04pm**

- Introductions, quorum achieved.
- Motion by Michael, second by Brendan, to approve the agenda. Passed unanimously.
- Approved Board Notes for March 3, 2022. Motion by Brian, second by Devin, approved unanimously.

**Executive Director and Committee Reports**

Financials

- In the black for the month and the year. Insurance line item exceeded expected amount due to Illuminight. Motion by Bill and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Brendan to approve March Financial Report, approved unanimously.

Committees

- Lead entity had site visits. Small group is working on the Approval Process for Restorable Lands. TWG recommended any anticipated return funds from Osterman Creek project go first to Cedar Grove which is over budget.
- Protection Subcommittee recommended C.J. Jones take Mike See's place on the subcommittee. Motion by Bill, second by Michael to appoint C.J. All approve. Bill hopes C.J. will watch the Salmon Science Series videos. \***Aundrea will forward links.**
- M&AM Subcommittee approved two monitoring projects for the regional process. Recommended Rick Hartson and Mike LeMoine as co-chairs. Motion by Brian, second by Devin appointing Rick and Mike as co-chairs. All approve.
- CEC is working on in-school programs and discussing STEAM Train concepts.

**Old Business**

Organizational Structure

- All received an email from Swinomish this morning sharing their position on governance.
- \***Upper Skagit (USIT) requests this topic be forwarded to another month's agenda.**

- Swinomish (SITC) likes having board members approved by the board and no 'floating' membership but alternates allowed. USIT doesn't feel board approval is appropriate for a sovereign.
- SITC is willing to join SWC if appropriate. Board participation by SITC (when needed) would be cleaner if SITC joined.
- **\*John and Richard will take all the input received and lay out action items and decision points in a memo for next meeting with procedural steps for adopting changes.**
- There will be some bylaws changes and some procedural changes proposed with the goal of getting bylaws changes to the September Council of Members meeting.
- Commissioner Browning suggested their intention is for SWC to get more and more meaningful for salmon recovery in Skagit County.
- SITC wants notification if legal counsel is going to attend a SWC board meeting.
- The state has formalized rules for NGOs, being silent on director alternate eligibility but allowing standing proxies. **\*We will need to check this new language and bring back.**

#### Salmon Science Series

- 3<sup>rd</sup> event is June 8<sup>th</sup>. First 15 minutes will be Q&A for salmon habitat project sponsors in the grant round.
- **\*Will presenters touch on the HDM project? They need to specify how much of the estuary is a target to restore.**
- **\*We might need to add a forward looking part to the agenda. Put HDM in context. Telegraph Slough and HDM are in the 4 Year Work Plan for example.**
- Are we reaching more members? What feedback are we getting? Jenna Friebel and Brandon Roozen said the 4S series is excellent background info. Brandon sent the link out at ag. leaders meeting in a positive way. New Mount Vernon Public Works Director joined. PSP and other non-local staff have attended. Good for them to learn about Skagit.
- **\*Goal is to get 4S in front of others, so now that we're deep into content it's a good time to really ask how to continue those discussions.** Think about our broadest audience and continue to spell out context and relationships in the salmon recovery process.
- **\*How do we get input from folks? A survey? A discussion at the end?**

#### Support Letters

- Followed the communications policy to send out multiple support letters recently, some outside of well-established salmon recovery process, such as Floodplains by Design. That process gave opportunity to internal reviewers to see if there were red flags.
- Prefer when projects go through committees. Not all projects are equally vetted or fit equally with existing strategies.
- Where is the line? When should a letter not be written? What is good for salmon?

- **\*We need an ecosystem plan for voluntary projects outside our strategies.** Sounds like a Local Integrating Organization.
- There should be a vetting process. We can have more than one process. Vetted through the TWG.

## **New Business**

### Work Plan and Budget

- See attached PowerPoint reviewing last year's accomplishments (2021/2022) and beginning to outline next year's (2022/2023) tasks.
- **\*Board wants to know more about Drain Rangers-future agenda item.**
- Thinking of asking for a 6 month extension on Sauk Habitat Plan.
  - \$10k will be left unspent at the rate we are going.
  - Still need to vet Sauk Plan with landowners over the next 6 months.
  - **\*Board suggested that a time extension was appropriate here, so Richard will request.**
- In response to a question, Richard noted that developing an East Fork Nookachamps protection strategy is a draft work item for 2022/2023 if capacity allows and Board approves that.
- Income sources are less than expenses: LE and PSAR, SCL MOA (behind schedule), County grant may not continue in 2023. Total \$342k currently estimated in income. Expenses are about \$360k estimated, but **\*there's time to align those better before next fiscal year.**
  - We have the smallest budget Richard has seen since 2013, mostly because we have the smallest income projection.
    - The LE grant has been the same for 20 years but expenses have gone up.
    - We are banking less of the PSAR grant than in previous years as an early bow wave of funding has been eroded a bit over several years.
- **\*LE Program Guide updates will start in September. Updates not incorporated last year will be part of next year's update, if supported.**

### Riparian Proviso

- Motion to approve the scope and budget amendment by Brian, second by Peter. Bill abstains. All others approve.

### Sauk Habitat Plan

- Motion by Devin, second by Brendan, to authorize the scope of work amendment and budget not to exceed \$40,000 contingent on steering committee decision, all approve.

## Cedar Grove

- This is a County project replacing a culvert with a pedestrian bridge, going to construction this year. It is \$200,000 over budget due to reasons reviewed and supported by a TWG review.
- TWG is in favor of covering the cost increase some way. Options are:
  - The County may be returning \$80,000-\$280,000 from the Osterman/Sauk Valley culverts project. There is a process for distributing any return funds that arise.
  - This project is going back through the grant round for more money.
- Can we score the cost increase?
- The County will build the project regardless.
- We need to set a policy for the future for how to rank cost increase projects
- **\*Want to have some kind of cost/benefit/opportunity analysis relative to other projects, otherwise we'd be blinded by just setting aside that money without being able to compare to other proposed projects.**
- What happens if it is not funded this year (timing analysis).

**Adjourn** 3:09 pm (most left meeting at 3:04)