

Final Notes, Skagit Watershed Council
Monitoring and Adaptive Management (M&AM) Subcommittee
August 28th, 2022, 9:00am –10:30am, Zoom Meeting

(Underline indicates decision point; **bold** are action items)

Attending: Mike LeMoine (SRSC, chair), Richard Brocksmith (SWC), Aundrea McBride (SWC), Jen O’Neal (Natural Systems Design), Jeff Fisher (SCL)

Absent: Rick Hartson (Upper Skagit Indian Tribe),

Beginning Business

- Draft Agenda approved by all with the addition of changing the meeting time.
- Approved March and April notes unanimously.

Update on the Alluvial Fan project and possible new funding opportunity

The Alluvial Fan project approved by this group in March was declared a project of concern by the state Monitoring Panel in late July, which disqualified it from consideration for funding. We had initially discussed contesting the POC but were told monitoring projects could not be contested the same way as restoration projects. The project was pulled from SWC’s funding list.

There is a new opportunity for FY2023-2025 for up to \$150,000 that has been put forward by Puget Sound Partnership. PSP plans to fund 4-6 projects with a total of \$600k. They are looking for projects from lead entities and their sponsors that assess and report on:

1. The evaluation of progress toward salmon habitat goals and implementation of watershed’s salmon recovery plan,
2. A better understanding of the effectiveness of habitat restoration actions and how the effects of actions combine to affect reaches, sub-basins, and other portions of their watersheds, and
3. The identification of areas and topics where additional monitoring may be needed to support salmon recovery and the planning of projects to address these gaps.

From PSP: They don’t require any record of formal approval/vetting by the lead entity in the questionnaire, but the intention of this funding is to support lead entities and their processes, so they are expecting/assuming that the projects put forth are the ones that are most important to the lead entity. If a project sponsor were to put in a project questionnaire, we would assume that they were encouraged to apply by the lead entity. They can contract with a project sponsor or the lead entity directly. SWC interprets this to mean a project must be on the 4 Year Work Plan and will need to be informally approved by the TWG and Board. A scope change of the Alluvial Fan project would need the same per usual for already approved projects that have scope changes.

We would like to submit the Alluvial Fan project for the new funding.

Discussion:

- Add more sample sites, 3 effectiveness, 3 impaired, and 3 reference.
- SCL did some work on Diobsud fan, adding large wood. The data reside with USIT.
- Eric Beamer has some ideas about reference tributaries. ***Mike will talk with him.**
- The funding opportunity sounds broader in scale than what we are proposing. Should we be thinking bigger or of other ideas?
- There are many needs in the freshwater, unlike the estuary which has had more resources funneled into it.
- Status and trends monitoring has been done in the floodplain, but not ready to recommend anything further.
- The question of applying ELJs in the Sauk could be a topic of study, but there are none currently installed. Work on the Sauk is of interest to SCL.
- Keeping the project focused rather than expanding to the whole basin is best; it could get too ambiguous and complex.
- Can we look at combined effects as stated in the RFP?
- Mike would not suggest looking at cumulative effects at this point.
- What about cumulative effects at the reach scale? Example reach 6 has lots of restoration, good redd distribution mapping...
- SRSC is ok moving forward with the data collection part and partnering on the tool development.

Next steps:

1. **Mike will call Catherine**
2. **Aundrea will send the RFP and questionnaire to Mike.**
3. **Mike will take more time to noodle on this more and meet with Jen and Catherine.**
4. A project with a revised scope will need to go through the TWG and Board for a nod, not a ranking or formal evaluation. **A presentation at the September 14th TWG** will serve.
5. **Final proposal will be ready by the October 5th Board meeting.**
6. Application due October 12th to PSP.

Letter to RCO about the monitoring application process

Aundrea drafted a letter to (who? Greer? To be determined) about the issues we saw with how the monitoring review process worked/didn't work. This topic is tabled because we ran out of time, but it was offered that an introduction should include some background information about why we are submitting the letter. ***Aundrea will revise and send out a new draft for folks to consider.**

New meeting time

All agree to change the meeting time to the 4th Monday at 12:30-2:00. Motion by Jeff, seconded by Jen.

Good of the Order

Jeff offers to present the current state of SCL monitoring plans next meeting or in October. This may pair well with a refresher on our 2020 Monitoring and Adaptive Management Report.

Adjourn 10:15