

Final Notes, Skagit Watershed Council Technical Work Group (TWiG)

December 17, 2020, 1:00pm-3:00pm

(decisions underlined, **action items in bold**)

Attendees: All participated by Zoom meeting. Alison Studley (SFEG, Chair), Rick Hartson (Upper Skagit Indian Tribe), Aundrea McBride (SWC), Regina Wandler (Skagit Land Trust), Tom Slocum (Skagit Conservation District), Emily Derenne (Skagit County), Bob Warinner (WDFW)

Absent: Jeremy Gilman (USFS), Doug Bruland (PSE), Jeff Fisher (Seattle City Light)

Guests: Richard Brocksmith (SWC), Erin Murray (PSP)

Beginning Business

Agenda review

- Add discussion of Regina joining TWG (discussed by board, not by TWG)
- Addition of one item – meeting schedule for 2021 - Can we meet in August?

Introductions and check-in

- Committee acceptance of Regina as committee member (moved by Tom, 2nd by Emily, passed by all)

Approve October notes

- Accepted as revised by Emily (moved by Bob, 2nd by Emily)

Committee Reports

Board of Directors (Richard)

- Reviewed final funding plan –Cascade River partially funded, Day Creek project withdrawn
- General business - 990 forms, audit schedules, organized quarterly meeting (pretty well attended)
- Approved letter to DFW on alternatives assessment for Skagit Wildlife Area island unit – supported full restoration alternative 4
- Working on legislative priorities going forward
- Jeff Parsons holds weekly calls (Fri 11:30 to 12:30) to provide updates during legislative session – info here: https://psp.wa.gov/legislative_updates.php
- Peter Browning looking forward to joining SWC team at Board level to replace Ken Dahlstead.

Protection subcommittee (Bob)

- Sandifer: Near Rockport, going to look at on the ground with?
- River Tract: S side of Cockerham Island, very small parcel

Commented [ED1]: I'm wondering if this needs to be phrased differently? Can he just join?

- Not moving forward with Thunderbird Ln property (previously discussed) - isolated by riprap, smaller area, and no interested landowner

Lower Skagit challenges flagged - block grants don't really apply to Fir Island area but could go after stand alone grants

M&AM Subcommittee--No update at this time

2021 Program Guide updates (Aundrea)

- Typical annual updates (dates, etc)
- Changes related to/required by changes at RCO and with Manual 18 (HWS becomes SRP, revised timeline, revised Review Panel process, using new PRISM Review module)
- Added information about virtual meetings as an option and how video taping of virtual meetings will be addressed (everyone must agree, given to sponsor to distribute or not)
- Reorganized process steps to better align with what we actually do in practice
- Step 3 (Site visits)
 - Options for site, virtual, or office presentation of project.
 - Committee choice as to whether site visit necessary for evaluation.
- Step 4 changes (Initial review)
 - Review module in prism database – how to handle comments.
 - Suggested less is more in this section until the committee / sponsors have a chance to get familiar with review module in prism and can add more detail if needed next year.
 - SFRB review panel process – added option to have up to 1 hour phone call to discuss comments.
- Step 5 (Council of Members presentation)—unchanged, but in different order, after review due to RCO timing.
- **Aundrea will get clean draft out to folks ASAP for review and hopefully approval at January meeting, to recommend at February Board meeting.**

Commented [ED2]: Is it possible to talk about this further? I think it would be really unfortunate if, after COVID, the committee – whoever that is – chooses virtual presentations. I didn't realize we were making a decision about okaying that (if I'm understanding the notes correctly).

Discussion of Adaptive Management Policy (attached)

- Currently no defined path for funding for adaptive management (AM) of existing, closed projects where a negative impact needs to be addressed. Richard and Aundrea developed initial AM process for consideration and presented it.
- Aundrea suggested running example projects that have come up through this process to see how they fare.
- Rick suggested including language about exhausting other opportunities for funding (eg, going back to SFRB first).
- Richard envisions this as part of program guide (could decide it would be standalone).
- **Will let committee review and think about and bring it back for discussion at next meeting. This is just a start.**

Other Business / Updates

- South Fork match removal – Emily seeking committee approval for removing match from project to reduce paperwork since not needed. No concerns (match not used as ranking criteria) – committee supportive of her request. Emily also flagged availability of cottonwood / alder mulch from project (pending Dike District approval to store the mulch) – looking for places to put it. A couple of leads came up.
- Samish weir removal – Bob shared photos of area weir removal project, 1st part complete (of 2).
- Meeting schedule – will use time at regularly scheduled meetings.
- Salmon Recovery Portal (HWS) evolution – update that will hopefully make it more useful rather than a chore. Updating out of date technology to make easier to use.
- DOT O'Brian project – Aundrea contacted DOT, they are ready to go and fulfill all obligations as outlined in response to critical comments from committee.
- Funding for next year – likely to be 1.2 million, need to pay back Kalispel Tribe loan (\$103,000), then will have about 1 million left. That won't feel like a lot of money, so coordinating to work together to choose highest priority projects will be very important.

Commented [ED3]: What does this mean?

Adjourn meeting