

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

March 19, 2020, 1:00pm-2:45pm

(numbered attachments in parentheses, actions underlined, [Materials in Box here](#))

Attendees: All participated by Zoom meeting. Alison Studley (SFEG, Chair), Rick Hartson (Upper Skagit Indian Tribe), Bob Warinner (WDFW), Devin Smith (Skagit River System Cooperative), Aundrea McBride (SWC), Kari Odden (Skagit Land Trust), Jeff Fisher (Seattle City Light)

Absent: Doug Bruland (PSE), Tom Slocum (Skagit Conservation District), Jeremy Gilman (USFS),

Guests: Richard Brocksmith (SWC)

Beginning Business

Review the agenda--approved

Approve February notes (with edits)—delete the Protection Subcommittee action item. **A discussion of who receives what documentation in the purchase approval process will be tabled for another meeting after staff reviews guidelines.** Notes approved with this change.

Membership Recommendations—

- Devin will be on the TRC, but this is his last TWiG meeting. He may also be on the LECC or may find another rep for LECC. After SRSC hires a new project manager folks may be rearranged.
- Steve wants to be on the TWG. With short notice we will put this decision off for now.

Committee Reports

Board of Directors –March 5th meeting, last in-person for a while.

- Canceled Council of Members meeting
- Approved nominating Devin for Board. Ballot was sent out to full council for a proxy vote. Have not received a majority back yet.
- Discussed Skiyou project. Steve withdrew request to transfer project and resubmitted as 2020 SRFB project. SRSC also submitted a proposal for Skiyou.

M&AM Subcommittee

- Approved the estuary vegetation monitoring project (SRSC) to go forward to draft application.

- Worked on last review of Report

Protection Subcommittee

- Looked at TMDL properties.
- Still looking for County and SFEG participation.
- South Fork property—referred to TWiG because outside the Strategy area (lack of documentation). SLT would like to purchase, no habitat issues. May provide access to the river that could be a threat to habitat. Also provides permanent legal access to another SLT property that is in the process of being purchased. Assessed value is \$100. In negotiation with TNC about providing access to the other SF property under consideration. Other SF property won't be purchased without legal foot access.

Decision: TWG approves this property be moved forward to Board (Devin and Kari abstain).

SWC Lead Entity Program

LOIs Final Review Opportunity (LOIs [in Box click here](#))—Projects are straight forward and qualify except for 'grey' projects: Wiley and the issue of two projects submitted for the same project.

- Duplicate projects: This may be a Board decision. Board guidance was to tell Steve he was eligible and that the process will sort it out. The process is robust and will solve the problem or sponsors can sort it out themselves.
- Wiley: This may be of questionable benefit to fish and thus not eligible. This may be only an infrastructure project. The LOI presents the project as an extension of the original restoration project (a fix). Not all agree on the basic premise of the project (different starting assumptions).

Discussion:

- How is this year's proposal different from last year? It was not a requirement as they pulled the previous proposal, however last year SWC said stakeholders needed to be included in the alternative selection. That has not happened.
- It could go through large cap PSAR. Wiley may score lower in the local SRFB process because it would take the whole allotment in lieu of all other projects. Discussions between SRSC and WDFW are ongoing over the next weeks.
- More information may be needed. The information gathering is probably not possible within the SRFB timeline. WDFW probably has a lot of question answering to do before this proposal will be 'ready' or successful in the local LE process.

- WDFW sees this as a fix-it project for a broken salmon project. TWiG is not clear that it is eligible. A Tribal government has questions about the data provided, and notes that “it’s a really expensive project.” Should WDFW have opportunity to correct shortcomings?

Decision: Richard will write a letter with questions and state that we cannot determine eligibility at this time with the information provided, proceed at own risk.

- DeBays Slough—**Devin and Emily will talk off line.**
- Day Creek—**Emily and RB will talk off line**
- Decision: TWiG concurs that all projects are eligible except Wiley, which is not clearly eligible or ineligible. If they proceed it will be at their own risk.

Funding Update

- Likely allocation for the 2020 grant round— SRFB = \$1,120,677 (based on 2019 formula)
PSAR = \$4,169,897 (based on 2018 formula)
 Total = \$5,290,574
 less \$625,000 we need to pay back to the PSAR Rapid Response fund from the 2019 grant round.
Leaving \$4,665,574 available (98% sure)
- PSAR returned funds thus far: \$840,000
 - \$363,000 of returned funds have already been reallocated to 6 projects currently funded and underway.
 - \$476,774 left of returned funds for reallocation. The Board recommended part of it needs to go to barrier assessment project, Presentin, any other summer projects in need.
 - SRSC will have additional returned funds in the near future.

TRC Membership— All members of the TWiG present at this meeting except Emily and Kari will participate on the TRC. Doug Bruland has not yet responded to the inquiry.

Site Visit Discussion Re. Corona Virus: Given Governor’s orders, how business has been conducted at site visits needs to change. Staff will be working with sponsors to lay out a virtual meeting agenda and how to present projects.

Presentin Park Floodplain Restoration

Technical Review of Amendment Request: The original project was funded in 2016. Now with final design and permits and required changes, plus 4 years of inflation and extra staff work over that time, the final engineer's estimate and project cost has increased by 739,212. No substantial project changes. SFEG is asking for \$628,330 out of PSAR returned funds. Funds expire June 2021. SFEG thinks they can spend it in time. Want to break ground 4/1/21.

Discussion

- Trade-off is funding culvert phase 2 between now and September 2020. Culvert field study won't begin until fall 2020. Culverts will probably not spend much money between now and September.
- Do we recommend money go to Presentin now? What portion?

Decision: TWG recommends Board approve remaining PSAR returned funds all go to Presentin. Motion from Bob, Kari 2nd (Jeff, Alison, Emily abstain)

Adjourned 4:05

Upcoming TWG Meetings

- April 16
- Site Visits May 5, 6, 7
- **No Meeting May 21**
- June 18
- July 16 9:00-4:00 TRC meeting and 1 hr. TWiG
- October 15
- November 19
- December 17