

Final Notes, Skagit Watershed Council Technical Work Group (TWG) October 20th, 2022, 1:00pm-3:00pm, Zoom Meeting

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

Attendees: Alison Studley (SFEG, Chair), Aundrea McBride (SWC), Colin Wahl (SRSC), Emily Derenne (Skagit County) Regina Wandler (Skagit Land Trust, until 2:00), Rick Hartson (Upper Skagit Indian Tribe), Jeff Fisher (Seattle City Light)

Absent: Jeremy Gilman (USFS), Doug Bruland (PSE)

Guests: Richard Brocksmith (SWC), Taylor Studzinski (Conservation District), Kate Galambos (Skagit County VSP), Tim Hyatt

Beginning Business

Introductions and check-in: quorum achieved. Tim Hyatt will be presenting today on new hydrography and shade modeling. Kate Galambos is the new VSP Coordinator at Skagit County and is here to hear Tim's talk.

Agenda review: approved the agenda

Notes: Those who were present on September 15 agreed the unofficial notes were accurate. This was not an official meeting because quorum was not achieved. **July notes still need to be approved and will be sent out with November's meeting packet.**

Committee Updates

Protection:

- Did not meet.
- Working on reviewing the 2022 Protection Strategy update.
- Still working on Cape Horn Road acquisition for new approval process.

M&AM:

- Did not meet.
- Will be working on 4 Year Work Plan

Riparian:

- Working via email on the conference. 7 speakers booked, Sent out save the date flyer. Program going out soon.

Board:

- 3 Directors were elected to new terms (Andrew, Brendan, and Michael)
- The special PSAR hold over policy passed at Salmon Recovery Council, SWC will be able to shelter \$2.7mil in project funds for next year. Those funds will be tentatively earmarked for Island Unit.

- Organizational structure was tabled until November, awaiting draft bylaws coming from Brian Lanouette and David Hawkins.
- Bill Blake will be going to part time in January and retiring in June.
- TWiG membership is a concern. Marcus Reeves is the new “Bob” at WDFW. Jeremy Gilman is busy but still wants to be involved. Doug Bruland has stepped away for health reasons.
- Jenny Baker and Jenna Freibel spoke at the Board mtg. and reviewed the Estuary Restoration Strategic Assessment. SWC to continue advancing projects identified in this report (“HDM Projects”)

New Business

DeBays: Cost increase request for \$95,690 from PSAR/SRFB and will provide an additional \$16,886 in matching funds. Contract was \$39,868 more than proposed, fish use data needs to be added and the timeline extended for \$18,832 and \$16,250 respectively, and new/additional stakeholder awareness work needs to be done for \$21,000.

- Money spent on stakeholder engagement is money well spent.
- Seasonal fish use is an important idea to get across.
- Dissolved oxygen and other water quality parameters are being added.
- SFEg will be looped in as a stakeholder.
- Motion by Colin, 2nd by Jeff to approve cost increase application. All approve.

Taylor: Motion by Emily, 2nd by Colin to recommend Taylor to the Board for appointment to this committee. All approve.

Pocket Estuary Discussion: How do we distinguish between pocket estuaries of varying quality/value in our Strategic Approach?

- Want to have a conversation about the value of a pocket estuary early in the process.
- What if we have more money than projects? Will we fund a low priority PE or loan the money to another LE for a more impactful project?
- Size matters.
- NOAA has some criteria from Section 7 consultations about assessing Pes (within 5 miles of natal river, etc.) may be worth looking at.
- Prioritizing PE is already included in the scale and benefit and watershed processes and habitat features scoring criteria.
- Agreement to stay with language already in the Strategic Approach revised last year and note that we may want to update the language next time the Strategic Approach is up for revision.

TWiG Work Plan: We want to have meaty agendas and are looking for suggestions.

- Sauk Plan presentation next month.
- Coordinated Riparian Proviso
- Cost increase study presentation
- Riparian summaries
- Work with Ecology on database

Manual 18 Updates and the 2023 Grant Round:

- Design only projects not requiring match will be increased from \$200K to \$300K and the required timeline of project completion for design-only projects without match changed from 18 months to 24 months. SWC will advocate for this change being approved.
- “Design-Build” projects will be changed to “Field Fit” projects. These are small projects that do not have to be phased. Currently there is a \$250k cap of them that has been in place for a long time. SWC will advocate to increase the cap to \$500k. The TWiG often puts design review contingencies on these projects.
- We are setting the schedule for 2023 grant round. Site visits will likely be first week of May. Review Panel comments will not be available until July 20th, the day we have tentatively schedule our LECC info meeting. Ranked lists are due August 4th, so there are only 2 weeks between LECC meetings. This is not ideal. **Staff will raise this issue with RCO.**

Tim’s presentation

Adjourn 3:00

Upcoming TWG Meetings:

November 17

December 15