

Final Notes, Skagit Watershed Council Technical Work Group (TWiG) March 17th, 2022 1:00pm-3:00pm

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

Attendees: Alison Studley (SFEG, Chair), Bob Warinner (WDFW), Aundrea McBride (SWC), Regina Wandler (Skagit Land Trust), Doug Bruland (PSE), Colin Wahl (SRSC), Rick Hartson (Upper Skagit Indian Tribe), Emily Derenne (Skagit County), Tom Slocum (Skagit Conservation District)

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

Guests: Richard Brocksmith (SWC), Hannah Liss (PSP ERC)

Beginning Business

Introductions and check-in

Agenda review

Approved February notes as presented, motion by Tom, second by Regina, approved unanimously with Emily abstaining (she had technical difficulties and missed a lot).

Committee Reports

Board: Met March 3rd and focused on bylaws and organizational structure. County requested the Board change to being governments only. USIT requested that tribal appointees be self appointed and not approved by the general membership.

- Consensus that tribes self assign representatives to dedicated seats on the Board. Probably the same for County.
- Discussed guest policy, proxy voting and 3 organizational structure options: status Quo, tiered structure with comanagers as executive board (patterned after PSE), and changing Board to governments only.

Protection Subcommittee: No properties to review. Looked at Sauk Protection Strategy map.

M&AM Subcommittee: Reviewed 4 potential monitoring projects for this grant round.

Watershed Leads (Regional group): An additional \$25mil for restoration projects under \$5mil and another \$50mil for projects over \$5mil was approved by the legislature.

SRFB Meeting: The additional PACSRF money was allocated for the Targeted Investment program rather than the grant round allocation. Additional funds were added to the Cost Increase account, available on a first come first served basis.

Grant Round Updates

LOIs: 13 projects were submitted for a total of \$6.8mil. All are eligible except the following have questionable aspects:

- Race Lagoon Culverts: the culverts are on two small streams entering the lagoon, 200ft (?) from the lagoon. Are the streams part of the pocket estuary and thus eligible? They do not appear to be tidally influenced. Based on other pocket estuaries, the streams entering are part of the rearing habitat used by Chinook.
 - Decide that Race is eligible but that benefit of the stream habitat needs to be explained.
 - **Discussing streams in pocket estuaries is future TWG topic**
- Davis Slough Riparian: Wetland planting in shadowed/isolated floodplain is in question. Site meets SRFB requirements which do not disqualify shadowed/isolated floodplain.
 - Decide that Davis Slough is eligible but may score lower because of shadowed/isolated habitat.
- EF Nookachamps: Part of the project area is outside the tributary floodplain in Tier 3 area.
 - Decide it is eligible and that ideally match should be used for the Tier 3 part of the project and the onus is on the project sponsor to justify.

Targeted Investment (TI) and PSAR Large Cap:

- SWC proposes Milltown Island be submitted simultaneously for these programs and the regular grant round.
- Acquisition project also qualifies for PSAR Large Cap but likely won't compete well.
- All agree Milltown should be submitted for TI and PSAR Large Cap.

Cedar Grove: will be applying for funds to cover cost overruns. TRC has the option of treating those funds like a set aside or 'scoring' the cost increase and ranking it with the other projects.

We will discuss further in May.

Site visit schedule draft presented.

2022 Site Visit Schedule

20 minute presentations with 20 minutes for Q&A and comment summary

		arrival time	departure time	drive time
May 3rd (in the field)				
Chuckanut Park and Ride		8:30	8:35	
Clark Creek	USIT	9:40	10:25	1:05
Alder Creek	SRSC	11:05	11:50	0:40
lunch @ Raser State Park		11:55	12:30	0:05
Davis Slough	SRSC	12:45	1:30	0:15
EF Nookachamps	SFEG	2:10	2:55	0:35
Chuckanut Park and Ride		3:20		0:25

May 4th (virtual)

Milltown Island	WDFW	12:30
SFEG Riparian	SFEG	1:10
2022 Collaborative Riparian	SFEG	1:50
break		2:30
Barnaby Riparian	SRSC	2:40
Habitat Acquisition VI	SCL/SLT	3:20
Cedar Grove	NRSP	4:00

May 5th (in the field)

			7:35	
Chuckanut Park and Ride		8:30	8:35	
Bowman Bay	SFEG	9:05	9:50	0:30
Race Culverts	SFEG	10:35	11:20	0:45
Similk Beach	SRSC	12:10	12:55	0:50
Lunch spot?				

Note from Emily: Osterman project will have returned funds. The County would like to pivot those funds to a new project. May is the expected timeframe. The Lead Entity has a process for return funds. We do a call for cost overruns among active projects. Decisions are approved by the Board. Motion to recommend returned funds go to Cedar Grove and that anything above that project's need go to a call out for cost overruns by Doug, second by Bob.

Approval Process for Restorable Lands

A small group of Emily, Colin, Regina, Alison, and Bob will work on revising the last draft for the May meeting.

Brian Abbot Fish Barrier Removal Board Letters

6 projects have submitted pre-applications for culvert projects in the Skagit. BAFBRB has asked SWC if we will be submitting letters of support. Discussion:

- SWC doesn't have a culvert strategy or prioritization against which to evaluate these projects. The County has one and SFEG is working on one. We have the culvert study underway.
- Until we have a strategy, the 1998 strategy in general would support removing fish barriers, especially Chinook barriers should be focused on.
- There should be a difference in the type of support letter for Chinook barriers vs. non-Chinook barriers.
- Aundrea and Richard will draft letters and send out via email for red flag review.
- Note the Norway project is linked to DOT project and that letter should focus on that coordination.
- Tom doesn't support any BAFBRB projects because they take money away from salmon restoration via SRFB.

Announcements and Updates

Next Skagit Salmon Science installment is May 4th 10-12. It will focus on ESA and an overview of recovery plans.

Adjourn 3:02

Upcoming TWG Meetings:

May 3-5 site visits

May 4 Skagit Salmon Science Series

May 19 regular TWG meeting

June 8 Council Membership meeting, Science Series, and sponsor presentations

June 16 regular TWG meeting

July 14 TRC followed by TWG