

## Final Notes, Skagit Watershed Council Technical Working Group July 13, 2023, 12:30-1:30pm, Hybrid Meeting at Skagit Watershed Council

(decisions underlined, \*action items in bold)

**Attending:** Emily Derenne (Skagit County, acting chair), Regina Wandler (SLT), Aundrea McBride (SWC), Taylor Scott (SCD), Colin Wahl (SRSC), Jeff Fisher (SCL)

**Guests:** Holli Watne (SWC), Richard Brocksmith (SWC)

### Beginning Business

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Reviewed the agenda. Approved the agenda unanimously.

Approved the June notes, allowing for potential additions by Mike LeMoine in the future to revise/clarify notes on his presentation (Mike was unable to review notes prior to this meeting).  
Motion by Collin. Taylor seconded. Unanimous (including email input by Rick).

### Committee Reports

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Board of Directors – Did not meet, instead they have their LECC Workshop on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

Protection Subcommittee -- Greenlighted 3 parcels:

- Illabot Creek 1 (#3) and Illabot Creek 2 (#4): Site 1 has a trailer and other junk to be removed. Site 2 has very little debris to remove. Both sites are right next to each other, just below Carefree Acres. Adjacent to land protected by SCL. A lot of illegal timber harvest in the area, and it's believed that the culprit resides in this area (but is not the property owner).
- Mill Creek Area (#5): This site contains two pieces of land on either side of the South Skagit HWY. The south end scored 0 because it's out of the floodplain, but the north side is good enough habitat that the whole parcel met protection criteria.

M&AM Subcommittee – Did not meet.

Riparian Work Group – Continues to work on conference via email. We have 4 speakers confirmed: Greg Hood and Sarah Schooler, Madelyn Loy, David Heimer and Daniel Zimmerman, and Bengt Miller. Pursuing other leads for speakers. Program should go out in Oct or Nov. A save the date will go out before that. No keynote speaker... just lots of time for Q+A. Due to feedback from past participants, the conference will stay virtual. Invasives management is the theme for the conference. Riparian Database: Aundrea is working on getting polygons imported with sponsors.

## Debays Slough project changing sponsors

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Follow up on discussion in June notes—the TWG would like a copy of the letter the County sent to SITC regarding the County’s policy to not contract with SRSC. **\*Emily will send out the letter.**

## Continuing Discussion of Including Samish and “non-Chinook Plan” projects on the 4 YWP

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Purpose of the 4 year work plan: It helps us ID funding bottlenecks. It helps us sequence phases. In the past, we’ve just kept it on an Excel sheet. Now (as of 2 years ago) RCO and PSP want it in the Salmon Recovery Portal database. RCO uses the list to advocate for funding from the legislature. PSP requires the list, but at this point does not publish it, though they talk like that is their intention. Options:

1. All projects, including Samish projects, in the SRP go on the official 4ywp. Makes it easier to write letters of intent that aren’t necessarily Tier 1 or 2. Would give a more complete picture of the work being done in the Skagit. Meets contract obligations of RCO to include all projects in the watershed in SRP. Implies that SWC supports implementing all those projects.
2. Keep them off the SRP list, track separately or not at all. This would impact sponsors trying to get other funding and SFEG qualifying for release of liability under new legislation. Advantage is it would not imply that we support non-CK projects.

### Discussion:

- Richard suggests starting with what’s realistic and letting it grow over time.
- Collin – speaking for SRSC, uncomfortable with including Samish projects on the 4ywp... but fine with them being on a separate list. Funders would need an explanation as to why there is more than one list, but he doesn’t think that will be a problem.
- Emily suggests having one plan/list, noting that SRF Board only funds certain projects. Maybe there would be a separate tag for Samish/non-CK projects. Aundrea says this has been done in the past.
- Non-CK projects proposed this year include:
  - 3 phases of Samish Island restoration by SLT
  - 7 SFEG fish barrier removal projects on small streams
  - 1 barrier assessment in Samish watershed by SFEG
- This seems more of a policy question and not a technical question.
- The group generally agreed to send the board the two lists and ask them to decide what to do about including non-CK with the ones that meet our RFP.
- Regina says the SLT projects are near Padilla Bay. It looks like a pocket estuary project, but there’s a possibility of future connection over time. This is SRF Board eligible because this is considered within range of Skagit delta. Regina said she’s not planning on applying for SRFB\$. Getting \$ through Padilla Bay. Doesn’t matter to her if it’s on the 4ywp or not.

## 4 Year Work Plan Update and Approval

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Projects meeting the RFP criteria (CK projects) added since the last approval of the 4YWP:

- Some updates of years for projects that have been moved out in time/delayed.
- New additions for our standing projects (Acquisition, collaborative riparian projects)
- An acquisition in the Big Lake conservation area has been added by SLT as a standalone project outside the usual block grant.
- 4 additional riparian restoration projects outside the usual set aside projects have been added (several sites each).
- 4 monitoring projects related to better understanding connections between salmon growth and survival and habitat conditions have been added (proposed by the M&AM Subcommittee, TWG has seen these already).
- Addition of Gilligan culvert project.

Discussion:

- Do other lead entities have things on the 4ywp that they would not fund? They have non SRFB projects, yes. I don't know if they have projects they would not support based on their strategies.
- There already are some Samish projects in SRP that were added through other organizations like SLT or SFEG that have other funding but they don't have 4ywp tags. Found by location, not tag.
- We should review the projects in the 4ywp every year.
- Going over all the data in the plan is useful for making sure it is correct together.
- In the past the 4ywp has been a list of all the projects we want to do. They have all fallen under the Skagit Chinook Recovery Plan, but not necessarily SRFB funding. They would all qualify under our SRFB RFP as well.

Approved 4 Year Work Plan, with some minor edits, deferring the question of including Samish and other non-Chinook projects to the LECC. Motion by Collin. Second by Emily. Unanimous.

## Announcements

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Sauk Plan – great comments in by comanagers. Agreed to have a project workshop on Aug 1<sup>st</sup>. Open to the public. Agenda and invitations will be sent out before long. More info soon. Emily – make sure to document the comment and review process. It would be wise to make note if the county has no official comment after having the opportunity to do so.

Riparian Proviso – approved by the board. Currently can be distributed