

Skagit Watershed Council Technical Work Group (TWG)

Final Approved Meeting Notes

January 18, 2018, 1:00 – 4:00PM, SWC Office, Mount Vernon

*(numbered attachments in parentheses, actions underlined)

Attendance: Alison Studley, (SFEG, Chair), Emily Derenne (Skagit County), Rick Hartson (Upper Skagit Indian Tribe), Chris Vondrasek (SWC), and Bob Warinner (WDFW).

Absent: Erik Andersen (Aspect Consulting), Doug Bruland (PSE), Ed Connor (Seattle City Light), Jeremy Gilman (USFS), Erin Lowery (Seattle City Light), Kari Odden (Skagit Land Trust), Tom Slocum (Skagit Conservation District), and Devin Smith (Skagit River System Cooperative),

Guests: Richard Brocksmith (SWC) and Allison Roberts (note taker, Kulshan Services)

Start: 1:11 pm

1. Introductions. Review Draft Agenda (#1) Quorum not met.

Reviewed December Meeting Notes (#2) – Those present suggested no changes to the notes.

No vote occurred without the required quorum.

2. Subcommittee and Board Reports

- Richard provided background on Board discussions about defining conserved lands and the finalizing the protected/conserved lands database (for use in the 'connectivity' step of the Protection Assessment). He outlined that the Board agreed that parcel meets the conservation definition if there will be protection into the foreseeable future and it's managed for fish and wildlife. He spoke of Chris' DNR protected lands analysis which found that 78 of the 79 DNR parcels are managed under the rigorous Trust Lands HCP and will be included, except for one DNR parcel of ag land. Regarding County lands, Richard indicated they will meet with the county about lands that are in the Tier 1 and Tier 2 floodplains and then make a recommendation. Four County parks and a parcel on Martin Road will be included since they present reach-scale opportunities. Parcels that aren't being protected for fish and wildlife will be taken out. No further review of the details was warranted.
- Richard discussed the status of two parcels in Lyman damaged by the November 2017 storm. Rather than pay for the appraisals now, the Board agreed it's better for landowners to wait in hopes that FEMA will compensate them at the pre-flood value - a far more favorable compensation for their property.
- Other items:
 - Richard indicated that the Board approved Emily to the TWG and Jane's appointments to Protection Subcommittee.
 - Note: Jon Vanderheyden will be out of town for several months. ***Alison asked that Richard send the Board notes to her in the interim.**
 - ***Richard confirmed that Rick, Bob, Alison, and Chris and Emily will do LE project reviews as members of the Technical Review Committee this year.**
- The Protection Subcommittee met on January 9 and reviewed five parcels:

- 1) Approved: A conservation easement on 12 acres of a 66-acre on the Sauk River in the floodplain. The easement area has 100% forest cover with no restoration needs;
- 2) Approved: An acquisition. Contingent on pending connectivity analysis: a 26.8 parcel with qualifying connectivity score, partially in Diobsud Creek floodplain with 100% forest cover;
- 3) Approved: An acquisition. A 43-acre 100% forested parcel in Ross Island Reach with no restoration need;
- 4) Approved: An acquisition. A 19-acre parcel in the Skiyou floodplain in Ross Island Reach with full forest cover;
- 5) Approved: An acquisition. 8.25 acre-parcel by Rocky Creek across from Illabot Creek with 64% forest cover and no need for restoration.

3. Integrated Protection and Restoration Project Planning (All)

- Chris recapped the January 9th Integrated Restoration and Protection Planning Meeting. This meeting included all of the Protection Subcommittee and representative restoration project sponsors including staff from SRSC and SFEG. Attendees spoke positively about this brainstorming session to explore integrated protection and restoration planning. They acknowledged that the Sauk floodplain and upper part of the watershed could benefit from further analysis. They discussed an effort to outline the “most-important properties” and develop an outreach plan for specifically-targeted properties. They discussed a need to identify a project’s “area of affect” to determine effected properties. While not all landowners are willing to sell, the group acknowledged that some landowners might be interested in restoration. Several meeting participants acknowledged a lack of a complete understanding of the Protection Assessment results, and the group discussed whether a tutorial could be developed to help restoration practitioners to use the Assessment. ***SWC staff will look at several other reach level studies that would help to guide future actions.**
- Members present continued the December discussion on large-scale restoration planning. The Protection Subcommittee is scheduled to meet the week before the TWG meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of the month 9 – noon. Richard and Chris will reach out to the SRSC and SFEG to invite restoration practitioners to the last half of near future Protection Subcommittee meetings to continue to discuss a slate of parcels with restoration needs. The goal is to document more information about parcels with mechanisms to reach out to landowners for possible purchase. This is an opportunity to also look at these parcels with longer-term reach-scale planning in mind. ***Richard will send two-sets of notes – his as well as Chris’s to everyone at this brainstorming meeting and to confirm with the participants in this integrated group to decide when they are ready to meet again.**

4. 2018 Four Year Work Plan (4YWP) (#3) (Richard)

- The TWG members present concluded the TWG review of planned projects on the 1.5-page list of projects on the Four-Year Work Plan (4YWP). The list and a solicitation for additional project ideas was sent to a wide range of people throughout the watershed, and no new project concepts were received. The TWG members present suggested updates to incorporate regarding sponsors, funding level, and status on the 4YWP. These include possibly added in the Skagit HDM project concepts in the 4-year work plan. Richard kept notes about the updates to be made. Richard clarified the 4YWP will be updated every two years and that this iteration represents a list for the 2018-2021 timeframe.

***Once finalized, Chris will enter this information into the Puget Sound Partnership’s smart sheets.**

***Richard will notify the Board that there were five people present at this meeting, and all present agreed to the content on the list.**

***Richard will submit the finalized 4YWP to Puget Sound Partnership due January 31. *Richard will add a notation indicating this project list assumes funding from the 2017-19 Capital Budget is released.**

Those present agreed to the contents of the 4YWP, but no vote occurred without the required quorum.

5. 2018 Lead Entity Program Guide (#4)

- The TWG did not discuss any further the development of questions on cost and benefits on future large-scale projects.
- Richard outlined the final additions in the Program Guide as well as updates in the Appendices involving timelines and new information about the Regular and Large PSAR program funding as well as the inclusion of 10% set-asides for monitoring and \$200,000 set-aside for small-scale riparian work.

Those present agreed to these changes, but no vote occurred without the required quorum.

***Next month: discuss integrated planning projects.**

Emily noted a retirement event for Protection Subcommittee member Jan Flagan occurring January 23 at 8:30 am at the Skagit County offices.

6. Adjourn 3:20

Next TWG Meetings - February 15, 2018, March 15, 2018, April 19, 2018