

Meeting Notes

SLS Steering Committee

June 1, 2022 10:00AM – 12:00PM

Attendance: Daryl Williams*, Erik Stockdale*, Kirk Lakey*, Linda Lyshall*, Linda Neunzig*, Andy Werkhoven*, CK Eidem*, Terry Williams*, Lindsey Desmul, Carol MacIlroy, Kristin Marshall, Spencer Easton, Kari Quaas, Summer Daugherty, Beth Liddell, Robin Fay, Terri Strandberg



Steering Committee Members*

David Roberts, Facilitator
Kat Klass, Notetaker

Notes:

Meeting started at 10:00 AM.

Roundtable Sharing

- Kari Quaas shared that the [Snohomish River Film Festival](#) is coming up on Thursday, June 9 at 5:00 PM.
- Daryl Williams will be giving a [tour](#) of the Qualco Energy Digester at Werkhoven Dairy on Friday, June 17 at 10:00 AM. Lindsey Desmul noted that the Beach Watchers are interested in a separate digester tour.
- Kari shared that the last deliverable for the Floodplains by Design (FbD) funds is a video. The RFP for the project will be released this summer. The other deliverable is a farm-to-table dinner, likely in January or February so that farmers can attend.
- Linda Lyshall shared that the Stanwood dike needs to be replaced. During the next seismic event, given the subsidence that's occurred on the inside of the dike, there could be a dike failure. The Stillaguamish tribe has done lots of work; the CD may take on the role of project lead but the City of Stanwood ultimately owns the problem. Linda met with county partners, the mayor of Stanwood, and the tribe to discuss funding sources.
- Erik Stockdale shared that based on the map, Stanwood isn't in the relevant diking district. This presents an equity issue – residents in the diking district are paying for the dike, while others further south in the floodplain are receiving effectively free flood protection.
- Kirk Lakey shared that the FEMA flood maps go over to Pioneer Highway. The salt marsh and vegetation helps to buffer the dike from tidal action. At king tides during northern storms, water is pushed over the top, so the dike needs to be fixed to USACE standards. The footprint of the dike will be expanded landward, not seaward.
- Erik has asked the County's GIS department to assess natural hazards. In a few weeks, the County should have qualitative and quantitative economic and social costs to Stanwood in the event of a significant dike failure and flood.

- David Roberts pointed out that there is an opportunity to do a special topic on this subject. Erik and Linda L. will be the leads for organizing on a special topic for the Stanwood dike. Jason from the Stillaguamish Tribe should be involved.

Review input from Partners and identify priorities for next two years

The following is a list of potential priorities, compiled by David Roberts and edited based on feedback received from Committee members during the meeting. An asterisk (*) indicates an informal vote for prioritization by a Steering Committee member. Feedback and votes from each member are detailed below this list.

1. Internal: Create and support an SLS funding workgroup (standing committee) to streamline information and assist with development of funding packages that address the needs of SLS. The group could also develop recommendations to present to funding agencies.
2. **Internal: Identify capacity issues associated with implementation of SLS initiatives and efforts including project and grant management that support the SLS vision and goals.
3. *Internal: Establish a policy workgroup to identify and track upcoming policy decisions, complete analyses, and draft responses for the SC. (E.g. Comp Plan, Harvey Field, easements)
4. ***Internal: Continue SLS Special Topics sessions. Expand the use of project specific discussions (e.g. TNC Port Susan project, Ducks Unlimited project).
5. Internal: Continue clarifying how SLS works and is structured for success. Clarify collaboration in SLS and a process to address disagreements.
6. Internal: Consider creating a research workgroup to clarify understanding and support SLS initiatives in topic areas like climate change, water management, drainage and water quality, flood risk, and economic viability.
7. **Internal: Advocate for and support facilitated discussions at the local level to get at heart of challenges and to identify approaches to address concerns. (CFS)
8. ***Internal: Consider funding for a permanent farm rep on the SLS SC who brings that voice to the table and is a voice in the community advocating for farm issues. This person could be the rep for SLS at the Ag Board.
 - *Rep should be picked by farm community. How much are we willing to pay? What is the incentive for getting them there? Should we continue to seek the advice of the Ag Board, rather than having an Ag Rep? Speak with Keith Stocker from the Ag Board about this idea.)*
8. *Internal: Support more surveys of the community to increase understanding of the complexity of issues to be addressed and to seek more input and ideas. Use best practices to insure engagement with special emphasis on overburdened communities.
 - *Needs to be phone surveys for farmers.*
8. ***Advocacy: Advocate for collaborative and no surprise efforts involving all stakeholders to seek an effective solution to the buffer issue with the right elements.

- *Look at the County science. (Conservation Commission, WDFW, Tribes, Gov Office, and Ecology)*
11. *Advocacy: Continue funding SLS communications efforts including the website, newsletters, events, surveys, videos, storytelling, and advocacy support activities. Increase awareness and involvement and promote success messages from SLS.
 8. Internal/Advocacy: Support the Multi-benefit Monitoring effort with people and funding.
 - *(Supports #7)*
 13. *Internal/Advocacy: Increase SLS focus on food security.
 8. ***Advocacy: Seek approaches to funding that increase capacity to address these challenges.
 - *(TNC & Bonneville for FbD; Linda L, Eric, Daryl)*
 15. *Advocacy: Present SLS legislative priorities to County Exec and County Council.

Comments and input on project ideas:

- *Daryl Williams:*
 - #2 seems very relevant, as many watershed groups are scrambling to make use of new funding and are at capacity already.
 - #8 (permanent farm rep) would be helpful and provides an opportunity to have farmer representative at the table.
 - #10: With respect to salmon enhancement and restoration, it's apparent that we can't get where we need to go with voluntary buffers only. There should be some kind of regulatory backstop, but we need to work with farming communities and the county to find a solution that works for everyone.
- *Linda Lyshall:*
 - #11: The SLS communication team has done outstanding work and it would be ideal to continue that.
 - #12: Multi-benefit monitoring will contribute to and support community floodplain work.
- *Erik Stockdale:*
 - #4: This effort should be continued. It's a matter of continuing to identify special topics, which have addressed many diverse areas in detail.
 - #14: Support for seeking funding approaches that increase capacity to address challenges.
 - Comment on #10: This is a big regulatory issue that SLS might not want to wade into. SLS can advocate for a collaborative solution that includes everyone, but SLS shouldn't be prescribing buffer solutions independently.
- *CK Eidem:*
 - #8: Especially valuable if they're chosen by the farm community.
 - #7: There are a lot of challenges popping up in certain geographies, and it would be useful to facilitate discussions to address issues as they arise and get ahead of them.

- #10: It would be beneficial for the Steering Committee to discuss what makes a successful buffer solution. SLS should take a position but shouldn't make a one-sided decision.
- *Linda Neunzig:*
 - Vote for #3, #4, and #14.
 - Comment on #8: There has to be enough compensation to make it worth the representative's time. How much money does that need to be?
 - Comment on #9: Surveying ag community needs to be using direct phone calls.
 - Comment on #10: This is a controversial area. SLS may not need to fund new studies; could go back to the original documents. What happens if the science shows that the best buffers are 200'? How will this be negotiated with the ag community?
- *Lindsey Desmul:*
 - [Chat comment] Communications (efforts) can be tied into a lot of these, but especially #7. I have already been in touch with some folks from the County to combine efforts in the Stillaguamish once the WDFW Stilly video is done to have public meetings in specific reaches. That could certainly be tied to SLS.

Summary of input – David Roberts:

- Internal priorities: #2 and #4, with #7, #8, #9 as needed.
- Comment on #8: This is a question of whether SLS wants someone sitting at the table specifically representing farmers or whether it's enough to continue communicating with the Ag Board.
- Advocacy priorities: #10 (advocate for more open buffer process), #11, #13, #14

Multi-benefit Monitoring Update (Linda Lyshall)

- Linda Lyshall had recent meetings with staff at Tulalip Tribes and Snohomish County. Based on input from meetings, they have decided to downsize the geographic region of the project and align it with the geographic range and products for Community Floodplain Solutions.
- They plan to align the program with the Farm, Fish, & Flood metrics that have already been identified. They also plan to ask new questions if there's new data that needs to be gathered, especially in the Fish category.
- For the Farm component, they have been meeting with the Ag Resilience committee and identifying information and priorities for developing an agricultural resiliency story.
- For the Flood component, developing a story around flood risk reduction will be the most labor-intensive part moving forward.
- There is a consultant on board helping with this effort.
- Linda L. will give a presentation on multi-benefit monitoring at the next Steering Committee meeting, which will be followed by an in-depth Committee discussion on this effort.

Ag Issues Update (David & Linda Neunzig)

Ag Board update:

- The Ag Board approves of the relationship with SLS. They were frustrated with their relationship with PDS and not receiving information in a timely manner. Once everyone is up to speed, SLS can start bringing items to them sooner.

- The Ag Board's attitude toward SLS partnership has been positive; they want to engage and have a voice in what's being done. SLS may get more from communicating with the Ag Board rather than having an ag rep.
- SLS can ask the Ag Board if there's anyone on the board who would want to be on the committee. The Ag Board members likely don't know when Partner or Steering Committee meetings are scheduled. The Steering Committee should make sure that they have access to those meetings and the opportunity to participate by adding Ag Board members to the SLS Partners mailing list and informing them about the special topics sessions (posted on the website).
- David will add Jon Van Nieuwenhuyzen back to the SLS Partners mailing list.
- An option for a farm representative is Mark Craven. Linda L. and Linda N. both voiced support for Mark as a representative. He knows the community well, has effectively advocated for the ag community at the state level, and has served on Ag Board for many years.

Fertilizer:

- Fertilizer and fuel costs are incredibly high right now and still rising quickly because of the Russia-Ukraine war.
- There's a lot of food waste statewide where nutrients aren't recaptured. If SLS could develop some digester projects, we might be able to get fertilizer or compost to farmers more effectively.
- Cedar Grove composting has excess compost, but as a private business, they need a better margin. The cost of trucking compost is very high. Could SLS implement a program that pays for Cedar Grove fertilizer and gets it out on farm fields?
- How can SLS do something at a scale that a commodity producer would find worthwhile?
 - On Vashon Island, they are capturing methane for their vehicle fleet.
 - The high tipping fees for food waste are another consideration. Other companies ask if Qualco can take their food waste, but Qualco is already busy.

Agenda Items for June Steering Committee meeting

- Presentation and more in-depth discussion on Multi-Benefit Monitoring (Linda Lyshall)
- Further discussion on fertilizer challenges (Linda Neunzig)

Agenda Items for future Partner meetings

David Roberts and Sarah Parker will make the final plans for the upcoming SLS Partners meeting which will be held on July 13th at the future site of the Snohomish CD's office (3202 91st Ave SE, Lake Stevens, WA 98258). The focus will be on presentations from efforts in Snohomish that are tangential to the SLS efforts.

Meeting adjourned at 12:04 PM.