

Snohomish-Stillaguamish LIO Executive Committee Meeting Summary

Tuesday, September 22, 2015

9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Snohomish County Campus, Admin Building, 3rd Floor SWM Conference Room

Attendees:

Allan Giffen, City of Everett
Ann Bylin, Snohomish County
Bill Blake, City of Arlington, Acting Chair
Christie True, King County, Co-Chair (by phone)
Gregg Farris, Snohomish County
Heather Cole, Puget Sound Partnership (PSP)
Jason Walker, City of Duvall/ Snoqualmie Watershed
Karen Stewart, Snohomish County, LIO Coordinator
Kit Crump, Snohomish County
Mary Hurner, Snohomish County
Monte Marti, Snohomish Conservation District
Pat Stevenson, Stillaguamish Tribe
Perry Falcone, Snoqualmie Watershed Forum
Tom Stiger, Port of Everett

Welcome, Public Comments, Announcements

Bill Blake, serving as Acting Chair for this meeting, initiated introductions. There was no public comment. Heather Cole requested some changes to the June 18th meeting summary in the Administrative section, as follows:

- The proposal to expand membership of the LIO Implementation Committee should note that the Executive Committee would like to have a discussion about the role federal agencies might have in the LIO.
- It should be noted that Terry Williams requested incorporating climate change information and research into a discussion at the next meeting.

With the completion of those changes and no other changes suggested, the meeting summary was approved.

Bill noted that the Committee should hold a discussion on climate change when Terry is present. He asked if climate change was something the LIO needed to address in the 2 Year plan. Heather clarified that this was not necessary, but that it should be incorporated in the 5 Year plan.

Report from LIO-IC – Work Plan and Priority Pressures

Work Plan: Karen Stewart brought the revised work plan handout to the group's attention. She stated that the Executive Committee will need to meet on November 9th from 1 – 3 p.m. to reach consensus on the prioritized 2016 NTAs that were developed by the Implementation Committee during their all-day workshop on October 27th. A follow up meeting may be held on December 10th from 1 – 3 p.m., if the Committee is unable to reach consensus on that list.

Karen noted that staff will be sending the draft of the first deliverable via email for comment.

Priority Pressures: Next, Karen discussed the “Tier 1 Priority Pressures” table (handout). She stated that the Implementation Committee held two meetings and worked from the Puget Sound Pressure Assessment to identify local stressors and sources for the 6 Priority Vital Signs, shown on this handout. In the left hand column, the highest priority pressures (tier 1) are in red font. The Implementation Committee went through a small group process to reach consensus on these top 5 pressures for each Vital Sign. Black asterisks indicate the other pressures that were noted during the discussion of each Vital Sign. Karen stated that our first deliverables (due on October 8th and on December 31st) will focus on the Tier 1 pressures, as Tier 2 and 3 pressures will be folded into the 5-year Ecosystem Recovery Plan in 2016.

Bill noted that this table reflects the fact that the Freshwater Quality group didn’t take the same approach as the other two groups in their discussion of the pressures. They only identified the top 5 pressures, but other associated pressures could be identified and added later. Karen added that the Implementation Committee will be addressing all of the Vital Signs and their associated pressures beginning in January 2016. The purpose of this agenda item is to provide an opportunity for the Executive Committee to comment on Tier 1 Priority Pressures.

Christie True brought up the pressures that were highlighted across a number of Vital Signs, such as “housing and urban areas” and raised the question about whether or not the Committee will be looking for “across the watershed” benefits. Karen thought about initiating some kind of rank order, but she didn’t want to set up a ranking system that would leave some group’s ideas out. After a short discussion, the Executive Committee accepted the pressures table as presented. Christie commented that she thought it was a good table.

October 8th Deliverable to Puget Sound Partnership

Karen introduced the staff work required to develop the LIO’s October 8th deliverable. Kit Crump is working with Kari Stiles of Puget Sound Partnership to customize PSP’s prototype results chains for the Snohomish Stillaguamish LIO. Mary Hurner is working on the narrative explanation of the LIO’s strategy and proposed actions. Karen is working on the schematics, diagrams based on the results chains.

Kit Crump updated the group on the results chains, which were shown in poster-size format on the meeting room wall. The results chains are a depiction of the theory of change, and reflect the needs of both our watersheds and the Puget Sound region. They are organized around PSP’s three strategic initiatives (stormwater, habitat, and shellfish). He stated that the objective of the exercise – enhancing the recovery of Puget Sound as well as the health of the Snohomish and Stillaguamish watersheds - was to align near term actions (NTAs) to measurable actions that in some way reduce or eliminate the pressures. By taking the three prototype results chains PSP provides and customizing them for our watersheds, we can analyze which of our 2014 NTAs should continue, which should be dropped and where we have an opportunity to develop new NTAs to reduce existing pressures. The NTAs we develop must be consistent with Action Agenda sub-strategies and the 3 Strategic Initiatives.

Committee members discussed the notations (symbols/color scheme) on the draft results chains. In particular, the orange boxes were highlighted as proposed actions that could be completed but are beyond our participating organizations’ ability to implement or require a term longer than 2 years.

Kit also noted that the pink boxes show Tier 1 pressures, which will change as we move on to working on the 5 Year Plan and Tier 2 and 3 pressures then become elevated.

The group agreed that we need NTAs that support meaningful recovery actions but raised the question as to how we know if we have the right sub-strategies or if we are effectively reducing the pressures and having a positive effect on Vital Signs. Heather suggested that we will need to develop effectiveness indicators for each of the Tier 1 pressures in order to answer that question.

Perry Falcone noted that the LIO has been tracking NTAs through the report card process, but asked who is tracking pressures and what is the monitoring structure for the LIO? Ann Bylin noted that the organizations participating in the LIO helped contribute to the 2020 targets PSP developed. Karen added that every other year PSP prepares a "State of the Sound" report which monitors progress to recover Puget Sound.

Mary Hurner referred to a 1 page handout, "2015 Checklist", that provides a prescriptive list of what PSP is asking for in the October 8th deliverable. She explained that the narrative portion is the background and explanation outlining the strategy our LIO will pursue (as indicated on the results chains) to improve the health of the Snohomish and Stillaguamish watersheds and contribute to the recovery of Puget Sound. She stated that the LIO has consulted the separate guidance documents PSP has also provided to determine Priority Vital Signs and Priority Pressures. Mary stated that staff is working on completing the inputs for the October 8th deliverable and a draft will be emailed to the Implementation and Executive Committees for a minimum week-long comment period as soon as it is finished.

Karen stated that the schematics are based on the Vital Signs, so we will have 6 for the October 8 deliverable. The schematics are conceptual diagrams show a simplified roadmap of how the LIO proposes to contribute to the 2020 targets for the 6 Priority Vital Signs. In contrast, the results chains show the LIO's strategy for improving the 3 key focus areas (or Strategic Initiatives) PSP has identified for Puget Sound recovery. In the October 8th deliverable, our LIO will be submitting 4 results chains and 6 schematics as appendices to a document containing an explanation of the LIO's process for decision making and decisions that frame the chosen actions (proposed 2016 NTAs) to improve our local watersheds and contribute to Puget Sound's recovery.

NTA Selection Process and Solicitation from Strategic Initiative Transition Teams

Karen distributed copies of the NTAs in the 2014 Action Agenda, and stated that she is working on finalizing the contracts with PSP for the remainder of the year, and for the supplemental grant that will cover the overall planning process. The supplemental grant contract will provide \$170,000 to complete an ecosystem recovery planning process beginning now through September 2016.

She also noted the "Preliminary Process and Criteria to Identify Near-Term Actions" handout, which outlined the four key steps the LIO will be following to develop the 2016 NTAs. The fourth step, developing the NTAs, is what we will be doing during the October 27th all day workshop.

The Executive Committee observed that the 2014 NTAs were developed following a less prescriptive process, which led to NTAs that didn't get implemented for reasons that included lack of ownership, lack of staff capacity and not enough funding.

Karen handed out copies of the NTA Solicitation packet recently received from Puget Sound Partnership this morning, and stated that she would email it to Implementation Committee members. She asked if the LIO wants to create its own solicitation based on regional priorities.

Monte Marti asked who would approve the NTA proposals. Heather stated that all local NTAs need to go through the LIO. Regional NTAs will need to align with the local as well as regional recovery plan. The SITT solicitation may work well to apply to local NTAs.

Bill suggested that the IC develop criteria during the workshop. Monte encouraged the Executive Committee to establish an annual process for NTA solicitation. LIO members should think about what would be good NTAs as progress is made. Bill reminded everyone to ensure that the NTAs will align with the targets. Monte commented that agencies could synch their NTA development process and with grant processes.

Pat Stevenson asked whether the 2014 NTAs went away in 2016. Heather stated that once they expire, they will be replaced; but until 6/30/2016 (when they expire) our focus is on implementing them. Ann pointed out that the LIO may decide not to implement some of the 2014 NTAs due to lack of ownership, staff capacity and funding. The LIO communicates the NTAs no longer being pursued via the Report Card. This information can also be found in the Results Chains, and should also include why the NTA could not go forward.

Sno Stilly Administrative Decisions

New contracts - budget for travel/time reimbursement and consultant hiring process: Karen asked for Executive Committee feedback on the LIO providing reimbursement to members involved in regional meetings, where there is a travel/parking cost involved. Right now, we have one member (Monte Marti) participating on the Stormwater SITT committee. The group identified a lump sum on \$2,500 per person, not to exceed \$5,000, to set aside for this activity under the Supplemental Grant funding request.

Karen asked the Executive Committee members if any of them would like to sit in on the interviews for a consultant. Perry Falcone indicated some interest.

Membership on the LIO: On June 18th, the Executive Committee began a discussion of an Implementation Committee recommendation to increase representation on the Implementation Committee to include WSU Extension, King County ECONet and STORM (Stormwater Outreach for Regional Municipalities). This agenda item was brought forward again today, to allow more time for a broader discussion.

Committee members raised the question of what other groups might also be missing. Bill suggested that the EC consider more natural resources groups involved in the LIO. Karen stated that the IC has, on paper, representation from the Agriculture Advisory Board, but that the representative hasn't attended the meetings. Monte suggested encouraging more cities to participate.

Christy asked where the proposals for these three groups came from. Karen stated that we already have Snohomish Camano ECONet, so adding King County would balance the education/outreach representation between the two counties. STORM was considered due to the importance of stormwater as a Strategic Initiative and the relative (current) lack of representation. WSU Snohomish County Extension was nominated by Chrys Bertolotto. Ann noted that, if a seat for WSU Extension is added, this will be the only state agency represented, and asked the group if that made sense.

Alan Giffen commented that if these additional representatives would provide input on the NTAs, this would be good, but we have to be careful not to add so many positions that the group becomes unwieldy. Bill noted the importance of looking at the value a representative could add. Perry recommended that, over time, the group continue to look at the LIO representation more broadly with potential for including more representation from the cities and from other natural resource groups, particularly forestry.

The discussion closed with the Executive Committee agreeing to add the three positions requested to the Implementation Committee.

Karen informed the Committee that Kevin Lee would be the new representative for Sound Salmon Solutions, replacing Robert Sendry who left the organization.

Bill then brought up the topic of climate change, and asked the Committee how they would like to include it in the 5-Year Ecosystem Recovery Plan. He stated that there is a separate group working on climate change already and that we should incorporate their efforts into this process. Bill reminded the group that Terry Williams would like to participate in this discussion, as he is heading the separate group concerned with climate change. Perry noted that King County has a climate change initiative with long-term and short-term goals that might be good to consider. Bill suggested that the climate change group from King County might be able to provide a presentation to the Implementation Committee. The topic was tabled to a future meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.