

SUMMARY NOTES

SNOHOMISH SUSTAINABLE LANDS STRATEGY

SPECIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WITH FUNDERS, PHASE 3 2015

Wed., Oct. 21, 2015 11:00 – 3:00pm, Stillaguamish Casino Board Room

Angel of the Winds Casino & Hotel 3438 Stoluckquamish Ln, Arlington, WA 98223

PURPOSE: Conduct special extended Executive Committee session with regional funders, including NOAA, Ecology, Puget Sound Partnership, WDFW, TNC's Floodplains by Design team, USDA, and others. SLS partners will identify examples of funding needs funders will identify and describe relevant programs, and the group will discuss potential matches and steps to apply for funding (see attached table of example needs in Appendix). The Executive Committee will also receive brief updates and reports from farm, fish, and flood control representatives.

PARTICIPANTS:

Executive Committee Members: Brian Bookey (poultry farmer, National Food Corp / Cherry Lane); CK Eiden (Ducks Unlimited); Kristin Kelly (FutureWise, Pilchuck Audubon); Tristan Klesick (family farmer); Monte Marti (Snohomish Conservation Dist Manager); Terry Williams (Tulalip Tribes, Treaty Rights Office Dir.); Shawn Yanity (Stillaguamish Tribal Chair).

Funders & Special Guests: Jessica Hamill & Colin Hume (Ecology, FbD Contract Managers); Jay Krienitz (WDFW, ESRP Program); Jennifer Steger & Jason Lehto (NOAA Restoration Center); Sherre Copeland (NRCS / USDA); Loren Brokaw (WDFW); Shauna Joy (WA Conservation Commission).

Conveners, Support Team, Other Participants: Pat Stevenson & Jeff Tatro (Stillaguamish Tribe); Morgan Ruff & Preston Hardison (Tulalip Tribes); Deborah Knight (Stanwood City Administrator); Kat Morgan (TNC); Heather Cole (Puget Sound Partnership); Chuck Hazleton (Stillaguamish Flood Control District); Gregg Farris, Kirt Hanson, Mike Rustay, Kit Crump, Lauren Tracy (SnoCo SWM); Linda Neunzig (SnoCo Ag Coordinator, sheep farmer); SLS co-coordinators Cynthia Carlstad & Dan Evans, assisted by Tessa Gardner-Brown.

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTION (11:00 – 11:10)

- a. **Review purpose, agenda:** Focus on matching multi-benefit projects and other funding needs in the Snohomish and Stillaguamish basins with potential sources of funding during this special, extended session of the SLS Executive Committee.
- b. **Introductions:** Special guests – state and federal funders – were introduced, including Jessica Hamill & Colin Hume (Ecology, FbD Contract

Managers); Jay Krienitz (WDFW, ESRP Program); Jennifer Steger & Jason Lehto (NOAA Restoration Center); Sherre Copeland (NRCS / USDA); Loren Brokaw (WDFW); Shauna Joy (WA Conservation Commission), along with self-introductions by other participants.

2. BRIEF UPDATES FROM SLS PARTICIPANTS (11:10-11:25)

a. Ag & Infrastructure Updates:

Monte Marti (Snohomish County Conservation District Manager) updated the group on funding opportunity:

- Sen. Patty Murray and Rep. Suzan DelBene secured funding for agricultural and conservation improvements through the new Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), administered by the USDA.
- Monte encourages all opportunities to show SLS projects to State representatives, such as Murray and DelBene, to increase Congressional understanding of support for multi-benefit, net gain projects and strategies. He urges SLS to pursue the RCPP grant funds before they are allocated to other areas.

Linda Neunzig (Snohomish County Ag Coordinator) provided an update on recent efforts from Focus on Forestry.

- Focus on Forestry is developing a Forestry Action Plan and Implementation Plan.
- Upcoming conference (November 19) to discuss a variety of topics including forest health, economic opportunities for the forest industry, and resiliency planning with a focus on the next two- to five-years.
- Mention of a Tulalip conference on climate impact assessments in late January 2016.

Linda Neunzig also noted a recent SLS project milestone: execution of a purchase and sale agreement for the historic Faber Farm in the Arlington area:

- Acquisition will preserve 160-acres of agricultural land and avoid subdivision for private homes.
- Funding was secured through a number of sources including Forterra, Snohomish County, Department of Ecology, and the City of Arlington.
- This project highlights the power of the SLS organization and meets a variety of goals by securing grant funding, reclaiming brownfields, engaging diverse private and governmental support, and providing growth protection for these lands.
- SLS and partners should consider acquisition of properties adjacent to Faber Farm to preserve more agricultural land in the south slough restoration project area – doing so would create a contiguous area protected for farming.

Chuck Hazleton (Stillaguamish Flood Control District) offered a brief report the efforts within the Stillaguamish FCD, including Diking District 7 repairs and sediment management initiatives.

b. Salmon Recovery and Other Updates:

Terry Williams (Tulalip Tribe) provided an update regarding a recent visit to Washington D.C. to work with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ).

- CEQ reported reduced budget for projects pursuing funding for facilitation and planning.
- Terry stressed the importance of facilitation funding for SLS.
- Terry would like SLS to develop a list of projects needing funding and would distribute the list to CEQ in an effort to find additional funding opportunities. SLS participants agreed that a project list should be generated and maintained.

Mike Rustay (SnoCo SWM), speaking on behalf of the Snohomish Forum's Technical Committee, offered the following update

- Currently preparing a salmon recovery report to summarize 10-years of Snohomish County efforts, describing what has been done and discussing current conditions.
- Team is working to find funding for four recovery projects, and could use assistance from SLS to find a funding match. Projects include:
 - Middle Pilchuck –funding needs for design to reduce bank erosion
 - Woods Creek –funding needs to create habitat for fish through riparian plantings
 - Raging River –funding needs to acquire properties along banks and improve fish habitat
 - Snohomish River – funding needs to repair rearing habitat in back channel connections

Pat Stevenson (Stillaguamish Tribe) reported on Stillaguamish Watershed Council's Technical Advisory Group, including flood plain monitoring efforts, habitat conditions assessment, and next year's priority projects (Zis a Ba, Leque, Irvine Slough, DD7, Gold Basin sediment control, etc.)

3. REVIEW OF SLS APPROACH, LESSONS (11:25-12:00)

- a. **SLS net gain approach:** Co-facilitator Dan Evans briefly outlined the SLS' multi-benefit / net gain approach and model.

The group discussion on funding experience, needs, and lessons learned included the following points from various participants:

- Need a document that “tells the SLS story” and describes why SLS is effective in its mission. This document can be reused in grant applications and outreach to interest groups and the public.

- Need to develop a clear mission statement (and logo) to focus SLS pursuits and quickly describe SLS to potential funders and to interest groups and the public.
- Need to develop a project list for SLS so all participants have an understanding of what is being pursued and can share the information in relevant conversations and funding pursuits.
- Need to develop a list of SLS projects that have secured funding – results would support new pursuits and highlight the efficacy of SLS.
- Need to strengthen technical approach to packaging projects and improve stakeholder relationships.
- Need to better understand criteria for various funding opportunities so projects can be matched successfully.
- Need to provide more opportunities/forums for meetings between SLS and funding partners.
- Need to foster communications and ensure that participants are communicating frequently, and effectively communicating project needs.
- Need to engage the agricultural community and represent those interests in SLS projects.
- Need to find projects that are meaningful to the agricultural community, not just token projects.
- Need additional staff capacity to find funding sources and complete grant applications.
- Need to write letters of support for SLS projects that are pursuing funding.
- Opportunities to improve from recent (third-round) funding package:
 - Coordinate early and often with stakeholders
 - Packages with new elements must be fully flushed out prior to stakeholder presentation
 - Keep presentation of issues simple and avoid making project packages too big
 - Strive to balance benefits for farm, fish, and flood control in all packages before presenting to group of stakeholders

4. WORKING LUNCH (12:00-12:45) – BREAKOUT GROUPS & REPORTS

Participants broke up into four lunch table group, each with a mix of F3 interests and funders to address the general topic the SLS' greatest needs and opportunities.

Table 1 – Focus on Funding Sources

- Funding from the RCPP should be pursued in order to purchase preservation easements on agricultural land, and to similarly reduce growth pressures in these areas.

- RCPP can award funds for up to nine projects through an upcoming RFP process, with additional funds becoming available in spring 2016, but proposals must be tied to a resource concern.
- Resilient landscape designation should be highlighted in proposals and used to secure funding through NOAA's NOS grant program.

Table 2 – Focus on Thought-Provoking Questions

- What is the status and value of SLS reach-scale activities? How do we document an answer to this question?
- Can we identify agricultural benefits and ensure that these benefits would be realized in SLS projects?
- Should SLS focus on projects that reduce development pressure on agricultural lands?

Table 3 – Focus on SLS Story and Template

- Develop a story for SLS that all participants can share.
- Create “talent pool” (Floodplains Design Team, TDI), capacity (SLS fellow) and agency resources, for project planning, funding, and development.
- List projects that are being pursued and projects that have been funded.
- Establish a shared info system: agro meteorological info, climate hub, land use info in GIS.
- Continue to provide a forum to exchange ideas with other similar interest groups.

Table 4: Focus on Stilly, Ag Plans, Reform Funding (multi-benefit, flexible)

- Advance the existing suite of Lower Stilly projects (Zis a Ba, Leque, Irvine Slough) and consider additional high value candidate projects.
- Tailor federal funding for multi-benefit (F3).
- Focus on Ag planning, creating farm clusters / Ag Recovery Areas (critical mass of land), larger Ag parcels (Ag10>Ag20).

5. IDENTIFICATION OF EXAMPLE FUNDING NEEDS (12:45-1:15)

- Assessments and Studies – assessments have slowed due to staff capacity, need to find funding to reinvigorate these activities.
- Scenario Modeling – funding of this type would allow SLS to model project packages and the different scenarios, completing an important due diligence step before moving further.
- Education and Outreach – SLS would like to develop an agricultural engagement strategy, and engage a group of farmers to help SLS better understand key agricultural priorities.
- Tools and Strategies – SLS would like to develop a template on how to coordinate technical, design, and permitting disciplines through complex projects dealing with fish, farm and flood control.

- Policy – SLS could work with federal, state and local entities to develop a list of rules and regulations that are helping and hindering progress with projects of this nature.
- Grant Writing – participants again discussed the need to have an “SLS Story” for grant applications, and a database where successful grant applications are stored so they can be modeled in future efforts.
- Monitoring – monitoring needs to be done to encourage transparency. Ecology’s NEP Watershed Grant Program could fund monitoring efforts.

6. FUNDING SOURCES: BY TYPE OF NEED (1:15-2:15)

WDFW – Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP)

- Cynthia and Dan to serve as SLS representatives for this funding.
- ESRP provides funding and technical assistance to organizations working to restore shoreline and nearshore habitat critical to salmon and other fish species in Puget Sound.
- The next funding cycle for ESRP is March 2016.
- ESRP is a flexible funding source that can even support projects with a learning-objectives.
- ESRP would like to host a multi-day River Delta Consortium to provide an opportunity for state funders, local experts and planners to talk about what is working and what is not working. SLS expressed a sincere interest in joining this event.

Department of Ecology – National Estuary Program (NEP) Watershed Protection and Restoration Grants

- Monty to serve as SLS representative for this funding.
- NEP provides funds to support local efforts in protecting and restoring the Puget Sound.
- Program will have at least \$5.8 million in funding through the next year.
- Program is a flexible funding source that can fund planning, design and monitoring.
- Program may have the ability to compensate farmers for land that is acquired for buffers.

Department of Ecology – Floodplains by Design

- Stillaguamish, Tulalip, and Snohomish County to serve as SLS representatives for this funding.
- Floodplains by design provide funding to projects that include flood risk reduction, ecosystem improvements and stakeholder involvement. Both design and construction can be funded.

- Pre-proposals are due to Ecology by January 29, 2016, and full applications are due by July 1, 2016. Ecology is holding a workshop for applicants in Olympia on November 24, 2015.

United States Department of Agriculture – Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

- Monte to serve as SLS representative for this funding.
- RCPP funds projects with innovative, workable and cost-effective approaches to benefit farming, ranging, and forest operations, local economies, and the communities and resources in a watershed or other geographic area.
- RCPP allocates funds for easements and SLS could pursue funding for agricultural easements.

Federal Emergency Management Agency – Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)

- Tulalip Tribe to serve as SLS representative for this funding.
- HMGP helps communities implement hazard mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate long term risk to people and property from natural hazards.
- Terry would like to evaluate whether funding could be used to preserve shoreline aquifers that are being inundated with saltwater from sea level rise.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Fisheries – Multiple

- Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) provides funding for projects in on the west coast that will help to reverse the decline of Pacific salmon and steelhead.
- PCSRF allocates a large extent of funds to research, science and collaboration.
- Community-based Restoration Program provides funds and technical expertise for high-priority habitat restoration projects with conservation values. Upcoming solicitation in November 2015.

7. COORDINATION DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS (2:15-2:55)

- Dan to check in with group to gauge whether a meeting between the SLS Executive Committee and Funders is valuable and if it should be held annually.
- SLS representatives assigned to lead effort for funding sources should be tracking upcoming funding opportunities and sharing with SLS as applicable.
- SLS to produce a 1- to 2-page document describing funding needs prior to the November 19, 2015 visit from Ann Mills, USDA Deputy with responsibility for the Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- SLS to develop document that tells the SLS story and can be used in grant applications or for outreach to other interested groups or the public.
- SLS to monitor www.grants.gov, a broad area announcement, to track other funding sources.

- Funders to populate “SLS Funding Needs” matrix with potential matches and send to Dan Evans, who will distribute to SLS.
- Jen, with NOAA Fisheries, to send a list of funding opportunities that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers may have available.

8. COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, NEXT STEPS (2:55-3:00 – adjourn)

9. PARTICIPANT FOLLOW UP DISCUSSIONS (3:00-3:30)

APPENDIX
NEEDS AND SOURCES FOR SNOHOMISH AND STILLAGUAMISH BASINS

DISCUSSION DRAFT WORKSHEET OCTOBER 21, 2015
POTENTIAL SNOHOMISH PROJECTS FOR 2017-18 FUNDING ROUND

PROJECT NAME	2017-18 BUDGET EST	SPONSOR	COMMENTS
FBD 2nd ROUND PROJECT REQUESTS			
1. Sno Basin River Flow Pilot		Tulalip Tribes	
2. French Creek Restoration		FSFCD, SnoCo, SCD, Tulalip, SLS	
3. Pilchuck Confluence Floodplain Enh		SnoCo, FSFCD	Corps, buried revetment
ADDITIONAL PROJECT CANDIDATES			
4. Farmland protection priorities, PDR		SCD, SnoCo,	
5. Water rights, storage for ag, flow, WQ		SCD, SnoCo, ECY, FSFCD	
6. Nutrient management, soils initiative		SCD, Tulalip, NRCS	
7. Mid-Spencer, (No. Ebey Restoration)		SnoCo	
8. Landowner engagement initiative SCD		SCD, SnoCo Ag Coord.	

POTENTIAL STILLAGUAMISH PROJECTS FOR 2017-18 FUNDING ROUND

PROJECT NAME	2017-18 BUDGET EST	SPONSOR	COMMENTS
CI-9 1ST ROUND FUNDED PROJECTS			
9. Leque Island Restoration Redesign	Funded (?)	WDFW, Ducks Unltd	320 ac., waterfowl replacemt hab
10. Zis-a-ba (Matterand)		Stillaguamish Tribe	83 ac.
11. Irvine Slough Flood Drainage Channel		Stanwood, SFCD	
12. Diking Dist 7 Dike Repair		SnoCo,	
13. Gold Basin Landslide Remediation		Stillaguamish Tribe	
14. Ellingsen Farm dike setback, nutrient management demo		SnoCo, SCD, Stilly Tr	
15. Stillaguamish Bio-Digester		SCD, Stilly Tribe	
ADDITIONAL PROJECT CANDIDATES			
16. South Slough Restoration			
17. Climate Change Adaption / Resilience			NOS grant pending, buildout?
18. North Meander, Phase 3			
19. Replacemt waterfowl habitat (Leque)			
20. Water rights, storage for ag, flow			
21. Trangen Bend			

22. Replacemt waterfowl habitat (Leque)			
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