

**SUMMARY NOTES**  
**SNOHOMISH SUSTAINABLE LANDS STRATEGY**  
**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 3.7.8**

**Tuesday August 8, 2017 10:00 – 12:00**

Snohomish County Admin East 6th floor Conference Room 6A04  
3000 Rockefeller Ave. Everett, WA 98201

**PARTICIPANTS**

Terry Williams, Tulalip Tribes, SLS Co-Chair (Fish)	Tristan Klesick, Stillaguamish farmer, SLS Co-Chair (Ag) by phone
Brian Bookey, National Food, SLS EC Ag rep	Kristin Kelly, Pilchuck Audubon Society
Monte Marti, Sno Conservation Dist. Manager, EC Ag rep	C.K. Eidem, Ducks Unlimited, SLS EC Fish rep
Dan Bartelheimer, Snohomish County Farm Bureau	Dan Calvert, Puget Sound Partnership Liaison
Dan Evans, SLS Facilitator	Dianne Hennessey, WA Dept. of Ecology
Erik Stockdale, Snohomish County SWM Special Projects Coordinator	Fariba Fuller, Snohomish County, Executives Office
Hilary Aten, PCC Farmland Trust	Kate Riley, Sno Conservation Dist
Katrina Sukola, SnoCo SWM Planner	Kurt Nelson, Tulalip Tribes
Leif Fixen, American Farmland Trust	Linda Neunzig, SnoCo Ag Coordinator
Lindsey Desmul, WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife	Lisa Bertelson, American Farmland Trust
Morgan Ruff, Tulalip Tribes	Nick Bratton, Forterra
Paul Cereghino, NOAA Restoration Center, Coordinated Investment	Robin Fay, PCC Farmland Trust
Ray Renfro, Sno Conservation Dist	Sono Hashisaki, Springwood Associates, Inc. President
Terri Strandberg, Snohomish County, PDS	Kurt Nelson, Tulalip Tribes (Nat Res Dept)
Joe Uravitch, Consultant to Tulalip Tribes	

**PURPOSE:** Review and discuss with SLS Executive Committee and partners the SLS Strategic Priorities and Work Plans. There was also an update by the Regulatory Efficiency work group on culvert replacement, drainage maintenance, and responsible stewardship and a discussion of the SLS communications strategy.

**1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTION (10:00-10:10)**

- a. **Review purpose, agenda:** The Executive Committee was called to order. Dan Evans reviewed the agenda and purpose for the monthly Executive Committee meeting, noting that the Regulatory Efficiency Task Group had met with the Executive Committee and several core team members in executive session immediately prior to the full SLS session to discuss a coordinated 5-year programmatic, multi-agency permit package for drainage maintenance, and a regulatory assessment.

- b. **Introductions:** Dan thanked Snohomish County for making their conference room available for the SLS meetings, and called for self-introduction of participants. Lisa Bertelson, the new NW Regional Director of the American Farmland Trust, and, later, Fariba Fuller, the Continuing Improvement Director for SnoCo, were introduced to the group.

## 2. SLS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, WORK PLAN OBJECTIVES (10:10-10:50)

### a. Overview and discussion of SLS Strategic Priorities (see attached worksheet)

Dan Evans provided an overview of the six SLS Priority Objectives and Worksheet, as part of the continuing SLS effort to produce tangible progress toward farm-fish-flood “net gain.” The purpose of the SLS Priority Objectives worksheet, which is a “living document” that will be updated and adapted regularly, is to ensure clarity and focus on key objectives and tasks, identify team leads and members, and provide the basis for work plans to advance the objectives. Task leads will make brief monthly reports, in writing or verbally, during monthly SLS meeting.

The six SLS Priority Objectives include:

1. Regulatory Efficiency
2. Reach-scale Plans
3. Resource Land Protection
4. Ag Resilience Plan
5. The Lower Skykomish Confluence Project
6. Communications and engagement

See SLS Priority Objectives Worksheet in Appendix 1.

1) **Regulatory efficiency** is at the heart of the Farm-Fish-Flood net gain objectives, and it cuts across the fish-farm-flood spectrum of interests, since almost all projects are subject to permitting and regulatory approvals. In addition, some farmers are willing to step up to higher levels of conservation and should be rewarded for “responsible stewardship.” Brian Bookey noted the need for County permits, such as building permits, and asked how those permits will be included in the efficiency process. Snohomish County has undertaken a *Lean* process review and approach process to improve permitting efficiency and effectiveness. Fariba Fuller, who was introduced to the EC, will lead this effort for the County.

2) **Reach Scale Plans:** Erik Stockdale stated that with the finalization of the Lower Skykomish Reach Plan development of the Stillaguamish Reach Plan process has begun. This area is from Arlington west to the mouth of the delta and Port Susan Bay – including the main channel through Hat Slough and the Old Channel next to Stanwood. The Stillaguamish Plan will be more challenging than the Sky Plan due to a more engineered river system (with extensive dikes and drainage systems), ‘green areas,’ and sea level rise impacts in the area. The “finalized” Lower Sky Reach Plan (it is also a living document that will be updated periodically) has been posted on the [SLS Website](#).

The Snohomish River and Estuary are two separate reaches, but because they are part of one complex, continuous inter-tidal area, will be conducted into one combined reach

plan. Development of the Snohomish River and Estuary Reach Plan will begin in early 2018.

3) **Resource Land Protection:** Linda Neunzig described an initiative to create an easement and exchange program for Skykomish farmland. Landowners are losing land to the Skykomish River due to erosion. SWM has worked for several years in the RM 10-13 stretch on a suite of projects to test and demonstrate new river management tools, such as flood fencing, flow deflectors, and woody revetments. There are 3.5 acres for potential habitat and restoration projects, which is also an area for juvenile habitat. There is also a 106 acres property in the center of the farmed area available for purchase. Although the existing owner is interested in subdividing the land, a land trust could buy the farm and secure a conservation easement that could be held, for example, by the County or Tulalip, and effectively exchange pieces of the protected form land for eroding acreage along the river that could then be used to give the river breathing room and restoration projects. Thus, there is the potential to save farming in the area and keep businesses whole, reduce flood management costs, and provide 3.5 miles of river front habitat. The cost savings, compared with expensive erosion control projects and flood hazard reduction, could be considerable and generate “net gain” for multiple interests. There is interest, and significant buy-in, from landowners in the area. Terry Williams noted tribal staff and consultants, Linda, Forterra, TNC, and Dan would discuss specific tools and strategies to further advance the concept. The task group will gather information and report back.

Brian Bookey provided an update on Betcher Farm effort to protect it as farmland. The property owner, Arlington School District, has a duty to get highest value for the property. One way to make the farmland option competitive is to build education value into the farmland protection option. Toward that end, there appears to be an opportunity to partner with the School District on an agricultural training and experience through FFA (formerly known as Future Farmers of America). Terry noted we could have a committee to further discuss how to acquire land in the area, especially where there are good opportunities for ag.

4) **Ag Resilience Plan:** Monte Marti summarized the status of the Ag Resilience Plan, which is managed by Cindy Dittbrenner (Ag Resilience Lead), who was on leave. Initial funding for the Ag Resilience Plan has been committed from State, Federal, and other sources. Additional funding will be needed to fully develop and implement the plan.

Included under the umbrella of the Ag Resilience Plan is the PCC Farmland Trust’s resource land prioritization effort, which is well underway. At Hilary Aten’s request, Robin Fay provided an overview of the farmland prioritization initiative and map. PCC Farmland Trust was contracted to develop a farmland protection prioritization tool, including GIS based map for the County. The prioritization process and map use a number of [Criteria](#), including quality of the farmland soil, parcel size and zoning, threat of imminent development, contiguity with other farmland (i.e., whether it is part of a large unfragmented block of ag land), access to water, proximity to key infrastructure and markets, among other factors. The draft prioritization map is available for review, and final edits will be completed by the end of August.

Tristian Klesick noted there should be a focus on TDR, and have growers sign up under TDR at the County. This would provide political momentum, identify growers, and can source funding. PCC is working on a larger working lands group, where TDR is a component of the program.

- 5) The **Lower Skykomish Confluence Project** was briefly outlined – with multiple F3 benefits, including a 100-acre+ restoration project, sub-reach river strategy, and streamlined permitting -- will be discussed in more detail at a future SLS EC meeting.
- 6) Discussion of the SLS **Communications and Engagement** strategy was taken up at the end of the meeting. See summary below.

### **3. REGULATORY EFFICIENCY TASK GROUP UPDATE, DISCUSSION (10:50 - 11:30)**

NOAA's Paul Cereghino summarized the efforts and progress of the Regulatory Efficiency Task Group. NOAA is supporting this task by providing a significant part of Paul's time to the SLS and coordination of this task. Paul is also leading the Federal-State Coordinated Investment Initiative, which shares key SLS goals and membership, and NOAA has existing relationships that can be leveraged and utilized including relationships with Results Washington, the Office of Regulatory Innovation and Efficiency (ORIA), the Federal Task Force, and the Ecosystem Conservation Board.

During the development process of the regulatory assessment, the Regulatory Efficiency Task Group is seeking to maintain a high level of transparency and accessibility. To accomplish this, online tools, including Google Docs and Trello, will be employed.

The Task Group has two principal projects, which represent two different strategies: 1) the Culvert Replacement Initiative (Project types are similar, similar BMPs, should be a systematic, "checklist" process), and 2) the 5-year, multi-permit Drainage Maintenance Programmatic (place based strategy, more ambiguous, need for clarity; example project is French Slough Flood Control District). For the Drainage Maintenance strategy, there is no attempt to figure out every detail; instead, the goal is to understand the landscape and ecosystem needs, which will be easier for regulators to understand and address from their respective regulatory perspectives with the benefit of a common, coordinated assessment document. Such a tool would reduce time, money, duplication of effort, and uncertainty, effectively streamlining the permitting process.

The common assessment, such as the Biological Assessment under the Endangered Species Act already required for federal permitting in wetlands and salmon-bearing streams, is key to facilitating the permitting application, evaluation, and approval processes. This common informational document would serve multiple permits required for most projects in riverways, estuaries, and nearshore areas, preventing duplication of effort and uncoordinated permitting decisions, improving efficiency and coordination for regulatory agencies and applicants alike.

Questions to consider include: is the County building permit a necessary part of this process, and can the process be replicated in another basin? What regulatory programs and agencies should be part of the Multi-Agency Permitting (MAP) team? In addition to local construction and fill permits, common approvals include the HPA administered by WDFW, Ecology's wetland and water quality approvals, and, for areas under federal jurisdiction, the US Army Corps of Engineers' Section 404 permit under

the CWA and Section 10 permit under the Rivers and Harbors Act, as well as the Services' (NOAA, USFWS) ESA Section 7 consultation. But what about FEMA floodplain mapping and approvals under the National Flood Insurance rules and BiOp, WSDA Dairy Nutrient Management Plans, and other specific requirements?

In the context of drainage maintenance permitting within the big and complex French Slough Flood Control District, the rubber meets the road when the multi-agency permit application – JARPA (Joint Aquatic Resources Permit Application) – is submitted for review and approval by regulatory authorities. The District has to decide if the coordinated process with a common assessment is worth is more efficient and certain than the conventional pathway. NOAA does not want to provide a service to French Slough, but instead provide a tool that can be used in the area.

The Task Group's "Coordinated Regulatory Assessment in French Creek FCD" work plan includes the following steps:

- a. Verify District Scope of Work (drainage maintenance)
- b. Define regulatory assessment requirements (jurisdiction, permits req'd)
- c. Summarize stewardship program (BMPs, habitat improvements)
- d. Complete coordinated ecosystem assessment (common assessment, such as Biological Assessment already required by ESA)
- e. Submit JARPA

See Appendix 2.

#### **4. SLS COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY (11:30 - 11:45)**

Kate Riley (Snohomish Conservation District) led the discussion regarding the communication objectives for SLS. She outlined several priorities:

- a. Communications strategy overview
  - i. Articulate SLS value Proposition – Using it to build more trust and understanding of SLS benefits
  - ii. Support other Priorities (farm, fish, flood, community) – Building broad support and identifying key audiences:
    - Tier 1 audience of policy makers (leadership with the County), and funders – Already doing well with Policy Makers, but can improve even more.
    - Tier 2: Target interest groups; Funders
    - Tier 3: Wider public, landowners, voters (don't have funding for this, and not skilled at this).
  - iii. Tell the SLS story to the wider community – Helping communities think about an integrated, multi-benefit watershed and resource management system and how the SLS and its partners can touch and improve peoples' lives

Kristin Kelly noted that the SLS needs to get buy-in from the public. Currently, the SLS has little capacity to reach this audience.

Kate suggested the SLS needs its own, independent and neutral website. The existing website, hosted by SnoCo SWM, is a great resource for SLS meeting agendas, notes, reports, and other information. However, the SLS is producing work products on behalf of a number of entities and would benefit from having its own voice and branding, including a website. However, the cost of building and sustaining a new website and other communications infrastructure is considerable. Funding would need to be secured and sustained. The SLS may be in a good position to seek private foundation funding, including for a website, which could cost several hundred thousand dollars to build and maintain.

This matter will require additional discussion and consideration. Kate will pull together other communications specialists and members of the Executive Committee for this continued conversation.

b. Special events: Farm / Fish to Table Dinner, other SLS events

Due to a potentially perceived conflict with a contract awarded to Republic services, the Community Stewardship Service Award ceremony scheduled for presentation to SLS at the County Fair, has been moved to later in year and will be awarded at another public event, perhaps Focus on Farming November 1<sup>st</sup>.

Planning for the Farm / Fish to Table dinner will be discussed by the communications task group and members of the SLS Executive Committee in the near future.

## **5. WRAP UP AND ADJOURN (12:00)**

The next SLS EC meeting is scheduled for 10:00 – 12:00 September 13th (Wednesday) at the Tulalip Administrative Center (Training Room 162).

## APPENDIX 1: SLS Priority Objectives

### SLS PRIORITY OBJECTIVES WORKSHEET (work-in-progress draft) AUGUST 7, 2017

Priority Objective	Description	Tasks	Task Group, <b>Lead</b> (policy, <i>tech</i> )
<p>1. Regulatory Efficiency</p> <p>(a) Streamlined Culvert Replacement Programmatic Permitting Demo</p> <p>(b) 5-year Drainage Maintenance Permit Package</p> <p>(c) Responsible Stewardship</p>	<p>Develop streamlined multi-agency programmatic permitting paths for:</p> <p>(a) culvert replacement (based on SnoCo demo), and</p> <p>(b) 5-yr drainage maintenance approvals</p> <p>(c) reward farmers for hi-levels of conservation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define scope, WP, personnel, budget</li> <li>• ID water course types &amp; BMPs</li> <li>• Multi-agency BMP menu by water course type</li> <li>• Coordinated multi-agency review &amp; approval process</li> </ul>	<p><b>Paul Cereghino</b> noaa Monte / Cindy scd Erik Stockdale sno Dan Evans sls <i>Kirk Lakey wdfw</i> <i>Jim Wright noaa</i> <i>Diane Hennessey ecy</i> <i>Frank Nichols acoe</i> <i>Tribal reps</i> <i>PDS rep... etc.</i></p>
<p>2. Reach-scale Plans</p> <p>(a) Lower Skykomish</p> <p>(b) Lower Stillaguamish</p> <p>(c) Snohomish River &amp; Estuary</p>	<p>Complete Lower Sky reach-scale plan (Aug)</p> <p>Launch reach-scale plans for:</p> <p>(b) Lower Stillaguamish River in July 2017 (due end of year)</p> <p>(c) Snohomish River &amp; Estuary (combined) in fall 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use Sky reach plan template &amp; lessons to develop scope, structure</li> <li>• ID team, key stakeholders (S/H)</li> <li>• Engage S/Hs</li> <li>• Develop draft RP with team</li> <li>• Review/revise draft with S/H input</li> </ul>	<p>(a) <b>Erik Stockdale</b> <i>Anchor QEA</i></p> <p>(b) Stilly Reach Plan: <b>Erik Stocdale &amp; Kit Crump</b> SnoCo Pat Stevenson stilly Erik Stockdale <i>AnchorQEA</i> Others TBD</p> <p>(c) Snohomish/Estuary Reach Plan: <b>Erik Stockdale</b> Sno <i>AnchorQEA</i> Others TBD</p>
<p>3. Resource Land Protection</p> <p>(a) Betcher farm (ASD)</p> <p>(b) TDR / easement – sign up farmers, get \$, SVPI</p> <p>(c) Sky farmland easemt swap (RN 10-13)</p>	<p>Task groups tackle specific Res Land Protection objectives: a-c</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define scope, WP, personnel, budget</li> <li>• ID team, key stakeholders (S/H)</li> <li>• Engage S/Hs</li> <li>• Develop draft Res Land Protect Strat &amp; specific objectives</li> </ul>	<p>(a) Betcher: <b>Brian Bookey</b></p> <p>(b) TDR / Easement: <b>Heather Cole</b>, Tristan Klesick, Hilary Aten, Nick Bratton</p> <p>(c) Sky farmland easement / exchange: <b>Linda Neunzig</b></p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pursue, implement approved objectives</li> </ul>	
<p>4. Ag Resilience Plan</p> <p>(a) Ag Resilience Report</p> <p>(b) PCC Farmland Trust Prioritization of farmland</p>	<p>(a) Ag Resilience Plan:</p> <p>i. Develop Ag Resil Plan</p> <p>ii. Ag rep @ plan tables</p> <p>iii. Help secure funding</p> <p>(b) Land Prioritization: County-wide analysis of farmland protection opportunities to inform Res Land Prot Strat and Ag Resilience Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define scope, WP, personnel, budget</li> <li>ID team, key stakeholders (S/H)</li> <li>Engage S/Hs</li> <li>Dev Ag Resil &amp; Prioritization Plans</li> <li>Implement priority objectives</li> </ul>	<p>(a) Ag Resilience: <b>Cindy Dittbrenner</b> scd</p> <p>(b) PCC Prioritization: <b>Hilary Aten</b> pccft</p>
<p>5. Confluence Project (Lower Sky RM 0-9)</p>	<p>Private landowner-tribal joint venture to demo subreach farm-fish-flood net gain action plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define scope, WP, personnel, structure</li> <li>ID / engage team, key stakeholder S/H</li> <li>Review Meadow Wd</li> <li>Protect / enhance Confluence site</li> <li>Dev subreach strat</li> </ul>	<p><b>Dave Remlinger / Tulalip</b></p>
<p>6. Communications &amp; Engagement</p>	<p>Develop SLS communications strategy and tackle key objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define scope, WP, personnel, budget</li> <li>ID / engage team, key stakeholder S/H</li> <li>Tackle key tasks -- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Overviews, flyer</li> <li>ii. Website, o/l info</li> <li>iii. Focused outreach</li> <li>iv. Annual dinner</li> <li>v. Advocacy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Kate Riley</b> scd</p> <p>Kristin Kelly pas</p> <p>Lindsey Desmul wdfw</p> <p>Others...</p>

## APPENDIX 2: Coordinated Regulatory Assessment in French Creek FCD

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION 17-0803

### Coordinated Regulatory Assessment in French Slough Flood Control District

**Objective:** Develop an efficient and clear mechanism for French Slough Flood Control District to obtain permits to manage their drainage system as part of a net-gain ecosystem management approach (stewardship). Develop a coordinated regulatory assessment approach that supports evaluation of future reach scale efforts.

Milestone	Task	Owner	Description
1. Verify District Scope of Work	Provide existing	FSFCD - Dave	Obtain fish presence evidence, digital map work, and old JARPA scope
2. Define regulatory assessment requirements	Draft framework	NOAA - Paul	Identify authorities; define ecosystem components related to authorities.
	Review framework	WDFW - Kirk, Ecology - Diane, NOAA - Janet, USACE - Frank County - Sean	Technical staff from regulatory agencies improve framework.
3. Summarize stewardship program	Interview FSFCD	NOAA - Paul	Define maximum scope. Both positive and negative impacts
	Review WDFW HPA	NOAA - Paul	Verify WDFW requirements as starting point for Water Type/Specifications/BMPs
	Draft Stewardship Program	FSFCD - Dave NOAA - Paul SCD - Monte	Identify self-funded and externally funded activities that enhance ecosystem function, supported by FSFCD
	Regulatory Review	WDFW - Kirk, Ecology - Diane, NOAA - Janet, USACE - Frank	Provide input on scope, specifications, BMPs,
4. Complete coordinated ecosystem assessment	Draft site assessment	County/NOAA	Based on ecosystem component framework in step 2
	Draft impacts		
	Draft improvements		
	Draft accountability		
5. Submit JARPA	Prepare JARPA for maximum time period	FSFCD - Dave	

Reviewer	Affiliation	E-mail
Kirk Lakey	WDFW	Kirk.lakey@dfw.wa.gov
Brendan Brokes	WDFW	Brendan.Brokes@dfw.wa.gov
Tom Jameson	WDFW	Thomas.Jameson@dfw.wa.gov
Randi Thurston	WDFW	Randi.Thurston@dfw.wa.gov
Diane Hennessey	Ecology	diane.hennessey@ecy.wa.gov
Lauren Driscoll	Ecology	lauren.driscoll@ecy.wa.gov
Frank Nichols	USACE	frank.t.nichols@usace.army.mil
Janet Curran	NOAA	janet.curran@noaa.gov
	Stillaguamish	srockwell@stillaguamish.com, pstevenson@stillaguamish.com, klyste@stillaguamish.com
	Tulip Tribes	knelson@tulaliptribes-nsn.gov, dmarks@tulaliptribes-nsn.gov, darylwilliams@tulaliptribes-nsn.gov, ryoung@tulaliptribes-nsn.gov, kfinley@tulaliptribes-nsn.gov, knelson@tulaliptribes-nsn.gov, tbrewer@tulaliptribes-nsn.gov, ktsangkapreecha@tulaliptribes-nsn.gov, mmchugh@tulaliptribes-nsn.gov
	Skagit Coop	thyatt@skagitcoop.org, swalsh@skagitcoop.org
	Sauk-Suiattle	jjoseph@sauk-suiattle.com, smorris@sauk-suiattle.com, gkirby@sauk-suiattle.com
	Muckleshoot	karen.walter@muckleshoot.nsn.us, laura.murphy@muckleshoot.nsn.us, glen.stamant@muckleshoot.nsn.us, Martin.Fox@Muckleshoot.nsn.us
	Snoqualmie	steve@snoqualmietribe.us, adam@snoqualmietribe.us, mattb@snoqualmietribe.us
	Suquamish	aosullivan@suquamish.nsn.us, dlewarch@suquamish.nsn.us
	Samish	twoodard@samishtribe.nsn.us, jferry@samishtribe.nsn.us, adeshields@samishtribe.nsn.us