

**SNOHOMISH SUSTAINABLE LANDS STRATEGY  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC) 3.8.10**

**Tuesday, October 9, 2018 10:00 – 12:00**

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

**PARTICIPANTS**

Bartelheimer, Dan - Snohomish Valley Farms

Bernhard, Bob - Snohomish County Surface Water Management (SWM)

Cole, Heather - The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

Desmul, Lindsey - Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

Dittbrenner, Cindy - Snohomish Conservation District (SCD)

**Eidem, CK - Ducks Unlimited, EC fish rep**

Evans, Dan - Dan Evans Consulting, facilitator

Hennessey, Diane – Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology)

**Kelly, Kristin - Pilchuck Audubon Society, EC fish rep**

Lahey, Kirk – WDFW

**Marti, Monte - SCD, EC ag rep**

Neunzig, Linda - Snohomish County

Sandercock, Maria - Ecology

Stockdale, Erik - Snohomish County SWM

Werkhoven, Andy - Werkhoven Dairy Inc.

**Williams, Terry - Tulalip Tribe, Co-chair (Fish)**

**PURPOSE:** The October SLS Executive Committee meeting has a countywide / Ag focus and includes: SLS housekeeping (Executive Committee & Integration Team); reviewing SLS State funding priorities and support; follow up regarding the September 18<sup>th</sup> Farm-Fish Dinner; discussing SWM budget & ag issues; and general updates on county-wide matters.

**1. Welcome, Introductions (10:00-10:10)**

The meeting began at 10:10 with a quick review of the SLS EC meeting purpose and agenda. All in attendance introduced themselves. Diane Hennessey introduced Ecology's new shoreline planner for the NW region, Maria Sandercock.

**2. SLS "Housekeeping" Matters (10:10 - 10:40)**

a. Election of Andy Werkhoven, SLS Executive Committee (Ag Caucus)

- Monte Marti motioned to nominate Andy Werkhoven as an executive committee member of the SLS agricultural caucus. Kristin Kelly seconded the motion, bringing the nomination to a vote. Before the vote has held both Linda Neunzig and Terry Williams spoke highly of Andy and were delighted to have him as a potential member of the SLS EC. The vote was held and all members were in favor of electing Andy to the caucus. Brian Bookey was not present but sent a proxy to Dan Evans.

b. Election of Ag Caucus Co-chair

- With the departure of Tristan Klesick from SLS in October, the agricultural co-chair needed to be filled. Monte Marti motioned to nominate Brian Bookey as co-chair with a second from Kristin Kelly. All EC members were in favor.

c. SLS Integration Team (IT) update

- Cindy Dittbrenner gave an update on the formation of the IT and will present recommendations and next steps to the SLS during the next SLS EC meeting on November 7<sup>th</sup>.
- On October 3<sup>rd</sup> Cindy, Morgan Ruff (Tulalip Tribes), Erik Stockdale and Ann Bylin, and Paul Cereghino (NOAA) discussed IT components, goals and meeting frequency. It was agreed that further discussions would take place prior to the November 7<sup>th</sup> SLS EC meeting.
- The Lower Stillaguamish River was identified as a reach the IT could work with, identifying locations for habitat restoration and reaching out to landowners about easements (e.g., Stilly Valley Protection Initiative) and buffer development.
- Terry Williams mentioned that Brad Warren (a consultant for the Tulalips) and the [Washington Association of Conservation Districts](#) are working together to find funding to explore the agricultural conditions of the uplands.
- Terry also mentioned that Kurt Nelson (Tulalip Tribes) and Bob Aldrich are looking at water storage capacity within the Snohomish River watershed, from the glaciers on down.
- Terry spoke about a group of scientists from WA and OR that are currently updating the [Ecosystem Diagnosis and Treatment \(EDT\)](#) and U.S. Forest Service [Ecosystem Management Decision Support \(EMDS\)](#) models. Federal, state and local land use managers will receive the findings from the update. The updated models can help determine what levels of protection are needed to achieve habitat restoration goals. The updated models can also be used to identify priority areas for fish and agriculture uses, which would be helpful for the IT when developing project packages.
- Linda Neunzig mentioned that it is critical to save upland areas from development if agriculture is steered away from lowland areas where sea level rise, saltwater intrusion and increased flooding are making farming more difficult. Terry also mentioned that climate squeeze (saltwater intrusion and increased flooding) will make moving upland more difficult/competitive.

d. Executive Committee schedule and coordination with IT

- A discussion was held amongst the attendees regarding the 2019 SLS EC meetings.
  1. It was agreed that EC meetings should be held separately from IT meetings, if not IT meetings will just become an extension of the EC and the attendance will be too large.

2. The frequency of SLS EC meetings shall remain monthly but will be revisited halfway through 2019 to gauge whether or not it should be reduced.
3. Presentations on salmon/habitat research are beneficial for SLS EC members. There is also a desire to have presentations on agricultural topics as well.
4. Bob Bernhard will coordinate with the SLS EC members to schedule next year's EC meetings. It was later determined that the 2019 SLS EC meetings will be held on the second Thursday of the month, from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

### **3. SLS Funding Priorities and Support (10:40 - 11:20)**

#### **a. Floodplains by Design (FbD) grant status, 2019-2021 Budget Request**

- Heather Cole gave an update on the FbD grant round that is currently going through the various committees. A ranked listing of FbD applications should be released late October/early November. Ecology is submitting a \$70 million request for funding. Last year \$35 million was awarded. Depending upon where the Stillaguamish and Snohomish FbD applications rank, they may or may not receive funding. If ranked high (within the upper half) chances are better for funding, though this all depends upon the budget received by Ecology.
- Executives from Snohomish, King and Pierce counties are forming a Floodplains by Design coalition to help expand funding opportunities. The first meeting will be held in Snohomish County on October 29<sup>th</sup> with local, state and tribal leaders in attendance.
- Monte suggested the EC send letters of support (for Ecology's budget request of \$70 million) to the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) and the governor's office. OFM sends budgetary information to the governor's office around October 19<sup>th</sup> so letters of support should be sent before October 15<sup>th</sup>. Monte agreed to draft the letters of support with input from Heather Cole and Dan Evans.

#### **b. ESRP Budget Request**

- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife – Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) is requesting a budget of \$20 million for the 2019-2021 preliminary investment plan (see attachment). Last year ESRP received a budget of \$8 million.
- The Ebey Island and Snohomish Delta project (ranked 9<sup>th</sup> on the investment plan list) is a planning project that will examine how the estuarine area can best be used. Scoping aspects will include agriculture improvements, habitat restoration, Diking District 6, Spencer Island and the north tip of Ebey Island. WDFW currently owns approximately 1,200 acres in the project area.

#### **c. Conservation Commission Budget Request**

- Monte reviewed the Washington State Conservation Commission's budget request of approximately \$39 million (see attachment).

- After reviewing the budget request, Monte reiterated how important it is for state and local agencies to work with private landowners in order to achieve restoration goals established in the salmon recovery plans. Without contributions of restoration from private landowners, the goals will never be reached. From this further discussion included:
  1. The need for Snohomish County's Planning and Development Services to work with ag owners to find a collaborative approach for designating effective best management practices/land-use protocols (e.g., riparian buffer width), each of which is site or reach specific.
  2. Terry was in agreement and spoke of the Tulalip's Harmonization Initiative/Local Integrating Organization approach, determining what does and does not work. What can we do to make recovery goals achievable at the same time keeping lands workable for the Ag community? For example, if recommended tree heights can't be established within a riparian buffer (for future contributions of large woody debris) then wood needs to be placed in the waterbody and the right vegetation needs to be established that filters/reduces pollutants from entering the adjacent waterbody.
  3. It was noted that the voluntary stewardship program was determined not to be economically viable for the County and thereafter adopted critical areas regulations (SCC [30.62A](#), [30.62B](#) and [30.62C](#)).
  4. C.K. Eidem visited Whatcom County with Mak Kauffman (Ecology) and was amazed by the effectiveness of the 15 foot [hedgerow buffers](#).
  5. Diane mentioned that Ecology is looking into buffer widths and effectiveness, and stressed the point that the creation of connected corridors is very important. If the IT works on buffer requirements she can join in.

#### **4. Farm-Fish Come Together Dinner, Follow up (11:20 - 11:35)**

- a. Report on Dinner, take-aways
  - Important take-away: 30+ agriculture producers were willing and able to talk with agency heads and tribal members during the dinner.
  - Monte reviewed the draft notes (see attachment) and reiterated that strengthening the connection to private landowners is critical.
  - Monte's call to action (to everyone): We must move forward, are you here to help and if so what can you do?
- b. Follow up with key partners, multi-benefit workshop
  - [Kaleen Cottingham](#) (director of Recreation and Conservation Office): She has 70 different funding accounts, take her staff to the field and show them what we would like to do.

#### **5. Snohomish County's SWM Budget and Ag/FCD Payments (11:35 - 11:50)**

- a. Overview of SWM business plan and budget, Ag payment cuts & restorations (see attachment)

- Erik gave an overview of SWM's current (2018) budget reductions and proposed 2019 budget reductions. SWM contacted the 18 stakeholder groups that will be affected by budget reductions. Proposed reductions (~\$200,000) for 2019 to the Marshland and French Slough Flood Control Districts, Snohomish County [Marine Resource Committee](#) and the SWM [Lakewise Program](#) were restored by County Executive Somers. Included in the 2019 budget reductions is payment to WRIA 8 ([Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed](#)), approximately 10% of WRIA 8's current budget.
- Executive Somers is speaking to county council about a surface water utility rate increase. SWM's preferred rate increase is [Alternative 4](#) in the business plan summary.

b. Next step: Letter to Council?

- Dan Evans proposed the SLS EC write a letter to the county council within the next month. The letter should include a balance of interest (fish, farm, and flood).

## **6. Countywide Indicators & "Headline News" in Brief (11:50 - 12:00)**

- a. Linda reminded everyone that [Focus on Farming](#) is taking place at the Snohomish County fairgrounds on November 8<sup>th</sup>. The theme of the event is technology and agriculture.

## **7. Wrap up and Adjourn -- noon**