

Meeting Summary

Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Technical Committee

WDFW Office, Mill Creek

9:00 am – 12:00 pm, Dec. 3, 2018

In attendance:

1. Alexa Ramos, Snohomish County
2. Beth leDoux, Snoqualmie Watershed Forum/King County
3. Elissa Ostergaard, Snoqualmie Watershed Forum
4. Mike Rustay, Snohomish County
5. Denise Krownbell, SCL
6. David Beedle, SCL
7. Jessica Lange, SSS
8. Carson Moscoso, SCD
9. Kevin Lee, WDFW
10. Lindsey Desmul, WDFW
11. Julie Lewis, Snoqualmie Tribe
12. Colin Wahl, Tulalip Tribes
13. Erin Murray, PSP

Meeting Summary:

Introductions

Mike opened the meeting with introductions.

Updates – Basin, Regional, State

Project Updates

Cherry Creek: Tech Comm will see a request to approve a revised budget that incorporates cost increases for the Phase 1 project. Note that funds to cover the cost increase have already been tentatively approved by the Tech Com during last year's 2017 SRFB grant round as well as additional PSAR return funds we re-allocated to the project. When we made those decisions, we made the caveat that a final revised budget and description of any scope changes would be provided to the committee. The project has seen some delays, but Sound Salmon Solutions and Wild Fish Conservancy staff are working closely with Elizabeth, Gretchen, King County staff, and DD7 to finalize the scope and budget. Rodney Pond has taken over, since Kevin's departure, with help from Jessica. They have established a path forward and received a good faith bid for the work to take place next summer. The project has been encouraged to seek CWM funds for any further associated cost overruns. Tech Comm will ask for an official update from SSS at a future meeting.

Mid-Spencer: the Tech Comm will likely see a request to approve a cost increase via email within the next couple of weeks. The cost increase (~\$70,000) is to cover increased construction costs. Funds will be requested from RCO (returned SRFB funds, not funds from any of our Basin's allocation)

Steelhead Recovery Plan

NOAA will publish the recovery plan in the federal register for public comment in December. We're hoping to have a representative from NOAA provide us with a review of the recovery plan at one of our next meetings.

Orca Taskforce

Agencies are developing new budget requests to address recommendations. DNR created \$90 million request, I'm uncertain how other agencies are responding

Estuary Work Group (EWG)

We have a EWG meeting planned for Dec. 13th at the Tulalip Tribes office. Expect to hear more from Morgan later this week

Snohomish Forum

We will focus on water quality during our Feb. 7th meeting. Sandi O'Neil and others will be presenting. Gretchen is curious if the Tech com wants to provide the Forum with any... recommendations for action? Information? Requests? Susan O'Neil, via some outside funding, is helping to strategize how we may highlight the water quality issues in our estuary.

Susan was scheduled to attend today's Tech Comm meeting, but was unable to. Since that sequencing got switched, the Tech Comm will likely not have recommendations to offer for the Forum meeting. Mike encouraged the Tech Comm members to attend the Forum meeting. He also noted that it might be more effective for the Forum to hear directly from Susan and Sandy first and then they can direct the Tech Comm's work on water quality from there. Elissa added that it could be a good idea to coordinate with King County; the Executive is focused on water quality issues and assessing the effluent of the treatment plant.

Blue Heron Slough

Jim Shannon with Hart Crowser/Port of Everett reported that project construction is planned for Summer 2019. The conversations on the consent decree are moving along.

Snoqualmie Update

There is \$170K in funding available for tree planting (Million Tree Project). The project proposals will be ranked through the Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) process. There are no requirements related to buffer widths, but there will be on the type of tree (i.e. only *trees* are eligible; not shrubs, etc.). Only project planting costs will be eligible. CWM awards don't require match, but CWM money can be used as match for this funding.

The Snoqualmie Tribe and Wild Fish Conservancy have been conducting water typing to update map data. King County has to approve any water typing changes. The process for is vague for resolving disagreement on the typing.

Blue Carbon Finance Feasibility

After the presentation at the last Tech Comm meeting there was a lot of interest from members in attending their next workshop. It will be held on January 29th. Mike and Beth will keep the Tech Comm updated as the effort moves forward.

Riparian Buffer BAS Synthesis

Beth leDoux with the Snoqualmie Forum presented on the FFF 2.0 effort to produce a report examining the issue of variable buffer widths. The buffer widths recommended in the 2005 salmon recovery plan are not the best for the small, unnamed streams that dominate the Snoqualmie Valley. If those widths were enforced, it would remove a significant amount of land from farm production.

The buffer taskforce focused their work on a literature review for low gradient floodplain areas. The three main factors that related to the functions of buffers for habitat improvement were identified as: temperature, large woody debris, and bank stabilization. So the research team pulled out that relevant information during the literature review. Beth provided an overview of the research process and findings.

Elissa commented on the concerns around these findings being used widely as an excuse to allow narrower buffers even though this research project was done specifically for the ag. District of Snoqualmie Valley.

Beth added than another function of this report is to demonstrate what we "get" in terms of ecosystem benefits returned for the voluntary participation of the farmers.

Denise asked if any of the studies used included climate change considerations. Moving forward, she thinks it should be a consideration in terms of nutrient loading, river flashiness, etc.

The FFF effort is also producing an Ag. Issues paper. This document includes surveys conducted with King Conservation District to elicit the opinions and thoughts of farmers on buffers on their property as well as neighbor's property. Beth gave a brief overview of the perceived benefits and challenges of placing buffers on properties. The opinions gathered seem to be very context-driven and personal. Beth welcomed review and feedback of the document by Tech Comm members. Comments are due by the end of the month.

2019 Work Plan

Mike discussed some of the work products from 2018 that remain unfinished and suggested that some meetings in 2019 be set aside as working meetings to finish these up. The Committee agreed. As with 2018 there will be a work plan Doc on the website that can be updated throughout the year.

The 10-Year Status & Trends Report contract with Anchor QEA has been extended so they can help with the finishing touches. A draft will be brought to the Tech Comm for feedback early next year. The project team has made a table of metrics which can be shared for the Tech Comm to review and comment on before sharing with the Forum in February.

The Water Quality paper that Colin is working on was put on the back burner for a bit, but he has picked it back up since November. He can check back in with the Tech Comm on it next month.

Upcoming meeting topics

- Brett Shattuck would like to share the GIS tool and metrics to be used in the Acquisition Strategy.
- Jason Hall would like to share his model for looking at various productivity scenarios which could inform our target setting.
- There could be a discussion on the Tolt project with Seattle City Light. Their FERC license is due 2029, but the clock starts in 2024 so they're preparing now by beginning to gather data.
- Heather Khan will also likely share an update on the Pilchuck TMDL in 2019.
- King County is developing a fish passage barrier program right now so it could be a good idea to review their documents and process.

Meeting adjourned at 11:50 am.