Snohomish County Tomorrow PAC

Sustainable Lands Strategy (SLS)
Fish, Farms and Flood Protection

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Sustainable Lands Strategy
Project Description and Overview

• 1999 ESA Listing—Chinook Salmon
• Local plans adopted: Stillaguamish/Snohomish Basins
• Strategies built upon previous gains
• Mainstem river floodplains and estuaries = highest restoration value
Sustainable Lands Strategy
Project Description and Overview

- Agricultural Awareness increases
- Conversion threats mobilize agricultural community
- Community Vision for Sustainable Agriculture
- New priorities and stakeholder groups emerge
Sustainable Lands Strategy
Project Proponents, SLS Convenors

• Stillaguamish & Tulalip Tribes
• Snohomish Conservation District
• Environmental Groups
• Agricultural Interests
• Snohomish County
• State: PSP, ECY, WDFW, Conservation Com.
• Feds: NOAA, USDA/NRCS,
Sustainable Lands Strategy
Project Description and Overview

- “Fish hits the Fan”
- Large-scale projects close to “shovel ready”
- Ag conversion focus: fish restoration projects
- Tribes concerned about slow restoration pace
- County in middle: farm & fish mandates same land base
Sustainable Lands Strategy
Project Description and Overview

• **Phase 1** – Principles and framework for net gain
• **Phase 2** – What net gain looks like – tools, strategies, package outlines
• **Phase 3** – Achieving net gain for fish and farms
Sustainable Lands Strategy
Primary Issues Needing to be Resolved

Defining Net Gain for Agriculture:
• Improve agricultural economic viability
• Farmland protection
• Regulatory certainty
• Infrastructure support

Defining Net Gain for Fish/Environment:
• Continued progress toward Salmon Plan targets
• Improvements in water quality
• Broad based community support for actions
• Recognition of changing watershed dynamics
Sustainable Lands Strategy
Project Description and Overview

Reach Scale Packages:
- Stillaguamish River Estuary and Mainstem
- Snohomish River Estuary
- Lower Snohomish Reach
- Lower Skykomish Reach
Sustainable Lands Strategy
Project Description and Overview

Lower Skykomish Reach
• Create more complex side channel/riparian habitat
• Flood fencing to reduce erosion and debris damage
Sustainable Lands Strategy
Examples of SLS Progress

• **Comp Plan amendments** to recognize SLS approach
• **Flexible funding** grant program just launched by NOAA, PSP, and USDA specifically for the SLS
• **Streamlined permitting**: e.g., DD5 drainage maintenance programmatic
• **Tribal lands** for farming and AEZ
• **Coordinated Floodplain Investment** funding--$5.2 M
• **Multi-year ag leases** on Ebey Island with drainage improvements; WDFW designate Crescent Lake to Ag10
• **Stilly digester** feasibility study and support