

**SNOHOMISH SUSTAINABLE LANDS STRATEGY (SLS)
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC) MEETING SUMMARY
Thursday February 14, 2019 10:00a.m – 12:00p.m.**

PARTICIPANTS (SLS EC members are underlined)

Bartelheimer, Dan - Snohomish Valley Farms	Hamill, Jessica - Snohomish County/SWM
Bernhard, Bob - Snohomish County/SWM	Lakey, Kirk - WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
Britney, Erika - ICF	<u>Marti, Monte – SCD (SLS EC Ag rep)</u>
Calvert, Dan - Puget Sound Partnership	Masterson, Ikuno - Snohomish County/PDS
Cereghino, Paul - NOAA	Nelson, Lisa - WA Dept. of Ecology/Floodplains by Design
Cole, Heather - The Nature Conservancy	Neunzig, Linda - Snohomish County
Desmul, Lindsey - WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife	Pfundt, Adam - NOAA
Dittbrenner, Cindy - Snohomish Conservation District (SCD)	Ruff, Morgan - Tulalip Tribes
Evans, Dan - Dan Evans Consulting, facilitator	Tracy, Lauren - Snohomish County/SWM
Fajardo, Gabriela – US Dept. of Agriculture/NRCS	<u>Werkhoven, Andy - Werkhoven Dairy Inc. (SLS EC Ag rep)</u>
Fay, Robin - PCC Farmland Trust	

PURPOSE - Review and discuss SLS 2019 priorities and work plan; funding updates, session overview, priorities and engagement; and farm-fish-flood news and updates.

WELCOME & INTRODUCTION – Due to inclement weather the February SLS EC meeting was held via a conference call. After Dan took role call the meeting began with a review of SLS priorities and work plan for 2019.

SLS PRIORITIES & WORK PLAN – Review and discuss 2019 SLS priorities and work plan.

Resource Lands Protection: SVPI, TDR bank, flex easement

Robin Fay (PCC Farmland Trust) spoke about current and future work on the [Stillaguamish Valley Protection Initiative \(SVPI\)](#)¹. PCC Farmland Trust and Forterra have submitted applications to Natural Resource Conservation Service's (NRCS) [Regional Conservation Partnership Program \(RCPP\)](#)² for permanent conservation work/easements on properties belonging to six landowners. Four of the properties are located within the lower Stillaguamish Valley while two are a little further upland, near Arlington. RCPP has funds allocated for the Stillaguamish Valley so Robin believes the applications will be approved. Currently PCC Farmland Trust and Forterra are working on draft easement terms with the landowners. The SVPI working group (i.e., PCC Farmland Trust, Forterra and The Nature Conservancy) is examining other funding sources (e.g., [Snohomish County's Conservation Futures](#)³). Robin expects more landowners (half dozen to a dozen) to participate in conservation easement in the future, but the landowners need to do a little housekeeping first (e.g., surveys, gifting land to family before easements are determined). Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office's [Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program \(WWRP\)](#)⁴ has grant

¹ <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/40951/Stillaguamish-Valley-Protection-Initiative?bidId=>

² <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/farmbill/rcpp/>

³ <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/141/Conservation-Futures-Program-Advisory-Bo>

⁴ <https://rco.wa.gov/grants/wwrp.shtml>

rounds on the even years (e.g., 2018) but currently there's a supplemental grant round for forestland and farmland. The SVPI working group will try to use these grant funds for agricultural easements in the Stillaguamish Valley.

Linda Neunzig (Agriculture Coordinator, Snohomish County) gave an update on transfer of development rights (TDR). The County executive directed Snohomish County's Planning and Development Services to develop language that would defer fees until the sale of a development right has been completed (no sale = no fee). Linda believes the TDR language and its adoption by the County will be finalized by the end of July. After the adoption of the TDR language, a request for proposals will be issued in order to find a third party to be the bank for the fees collected by the sales of development rights.

Integration Team and Reach Plans

Morgan Ruff (Tulalip Tribes) updated the meeting participants on funding resources that will be utilized to implement the [Integration Team](#) (IT)⁵. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has allocated funds from the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) to begin working on plans for the lower Stillaguamish Valley. Funds from [Floodplains by Design](#) (FbD)⁶ will likely be awarded to the IT to begin working on the [Skykomish River's Sultan Reach](#)⁷, pending approval of the state budget. FbD funds will be awarded in July, but with contract administration, monies may not be available until the end of the year. Two near term actions (NTAs)—NTA 2018-0613: *Developing tools for multi-benefit project selection and sequencing in the Snohomish River Basin*; and NTA 2018-0715: *Integrating climate resilience into farm-fish-flood project packages in the Snohomish and Stillaguamish River floodplains*—are on the [2018 funding recommendation list](#)⁸. Pending public comments (open through March 8th), the Puget Sound Partnership will award the NTAs the requested funding in March with fully executed agreements by May. Both NTAs listed above have monies allocated for IT use. Cindy Dittbrenner (Snohomish Conservation District) is finalizing a request for proposals and hopes to interview prospective applicants for a temporary IT facilitator very soon.

Tristan Klesick (Klesick's and former SLS EC co-chair) arranged a meeting with Twin City Foods, local farmers and the Stillaguamish Tribe about the future sales of the Twin City Foods' properties on Florence Island (SSE of Stanwood). Unfortunately the meeting was cancelled due to weather. Heather Cole (The Nature Conservancy) said the meeting has been rescheduled with a tentative date of February 25th.

Regulatory Efficiency: culverts, water issues

Paul Cereghino (NOAA Restoration Center) reviewed a product NOAA is developing to increase the efficiency of regulatory review, at the state and local level, for culvert replacement. The Puget Sound Ecosystem Coordination Board has ratified the

⁵ <https://www.farmfishflood.org/integration-team>

⁶ <http://www.floodplainsbydesign.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/2019-FbD-ranked-project-list-final-11-5.pdf>, Snohomish County's *Advancing Sustainable Lands Solutions in the Snohomish Basin* project ranked 6th out of 18 projects on the *2019-2021 FbD Proposed Funding List* and is within the FbD budget expected to be approved by the state legislature.

⁷ <https://snoco-gis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=50423de792e2484ebdba907361bed1d7>

⁸ <https://pspwa.app.box.com/s/isgvgo26v34qfr5227qhpovcneue6cc/file/402361542600>

project as a pilot of an approach for reducing inter-agency waste. Regulatory agencies have assigned staff to represent their regulatory processes and participate. The objective is to develop a standard approach to presenting a culvert modification that is shared by affected parties. Paul will meet with Snohomish and King County staff to evaluate if this approach serves their interest. Paul has been gathering information from tribal biologists about their interests and developing communication channels. The next step will be to integrate the conversations and create a sample product in alignment with the attached product description (*see attachments*). There will be more solvable and less solvable aspects to this work. Once the problem is defined, replacing the pipe is easy. It's agreeing to the definition of the problem that is difficult. Paul estimates the product will be completed by late summer/early fall. While this initial product is aimed at improving regulatory review for culvert replacement, the lessons learned can be applied to other applications, improving regulatory efficiency and getting things done more quickly.

Agriculture Resilience Plan: SCD

Cindy Dittbrenner gave an update on the Snohomish Conservation District's [Agriculture Resilience Plan](#)⁹. In March, Cindy will be meeting with diking and drainage districts to review [modeling data](#)¹⁰ (i.e., flood, groundwater and sea level rise). Prioritized areas will be identified and potential [on-the-ground projects](#)¹¹ will be discussed by the [steering committee](#)¹². Public outreach, originally planned for the spring, is now expected to occur in the fall.

Communications, engagement, regional coordination

Lindsey Desmul (WDFW) will create a password protected section to the SLS website, <https://farmfishflood.org>, for IT use. Lindsey will create a story map to discuss importance of agricultural parcels. She is asking agriculture representatives and farmers to help highlight the importance of agriculture land so she can develop the story.

FUNDING OUTLOOK, PRIORITIES, ENGAGEMENT

Session update, overview

Jeff Parson (Legislative Policy Director, Puget Sound Partnership) gave an update on the 2019 legislative session. A similar update was delivered to lead entity coordinators on February 11th (*see attachments*). The McCleary decision is \$4.1 billion above the budget, the tribes won the culvert replacement case and the governor allotted \$1.1 billion for Orca protection, thus increased funding seems unlikely for other programs.

Floodplains by Design

Jeff Parson mentioned that \$42.8 million is in the governor's Capital Budget for FdD. The Washington Department of Ecology originally requested \$70 million. The Stillaguamish package is just outside of the budget. Jeff mentioned that budget writers can rearrange priorities except for those that are court ordered (e.g., McCleary and culverts). Heather Cole mentioned that The Nature Conservancy will advocate for the

⁹ <https://snohomishcd.org/ag-resilience/>

¹⁰ <https://snohomishcd.org/impact-assessment>

¹¹ <https://snohomishcd.org/ag-res-projects>

¹² <https://snohomishcd.org/ag-res-steering-committee>

full \$70 million budget request. She suggested to contact budget writers and local representatives between now and the end of the month.

ESRP and Conservation Commission Programs

The Capital Budget for restoring and protecting habitat and promoting Chinook abundance is summarized in Jeff Parson's legislative update (*see attachments*).

Engagement

FbD Day (lobbying) was cancelled due to weather. People are encouraged to make one-on-one contact with legislators and express interest for an increased budget, especially to include packages that are currently straddling the budget cut-off (e.g., Stillaguamish package).

During the meeting the *SLS Letter of Support for Key Programs* (*see attachments*) was discussed. Dan asked if the co-chairs could sign off on it. Heather Cole and Dan Evans created a list of key legislators to reach out to.

UPDATES & REPORTS

Agriculture Caucus

An enquiry was made about the impact of the recent snowstorms to local agriculture. Some farmers have incurred damage to buildings and some have lost manure storage facilities. The concern now is upcoming rain. Flooding could be problematic because the ground is frozen and rain will sheet off in large volumes.

ADJOURN - The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.