

SNOHOMISH

SUSTAINABLE LANDS STRATEGY 2019 RETREAT

November 16, 2019 Port of Everett Blue Heron Room

PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

We began our meeting by using individual and small group discussions to help us develop some concepts about the purpose and principles of SLS.

Ideas about a shared purpose:

- Developing integrated and resilient landscape vision, strategies and actions
- Developing a common understanding of cause and effects (including climate)
- Coordinating with land use
- Influencing policies (*Needs more discussion)
 - Determine what is important
 - Narrow or broad?
- Working with community to craft solutions that work for them

Why is the SLS work important to you and/or the larger community?

- Integrated vision/plan/strategies/actions for complex natural resources conservation and solves different problems that no single entity can do.
- Moving beyond the “F”s.
- Developing integrated, resilient landscape vision and plan (includes climate change).
- Workable landscape in concert with Nature.
- Multigenerational focus.
- Developing a common understanding of cause and effects (especially climate).

Principles: What must the SLS do/not do together to achieve our Purpose?

Must dos:

- Forward momentum but recalibrating often [balance flexibility and stability];
- Have an agreed upon plan and relationships;
- System of voluntary accountability;
- Acknowledge that private landowners are a key to solutions. View them in a positive light;
- Get outside and learn about projects and farm management;
- Be open and transparent;
- Lean toward strategic, but don't ignore the opportunities;
- Look at the full suite of solutions;
- Stay open minded and learn from each other;
- *Suggestion addition from David: “Build credibility” (See discussions below on Collaboration and Decision Making.)*

Must not dos:

- Mislead private landowners
- Be sneaky
- Be paralyzed by inaction and process
- Get stuck seeking perfection

Benefits: What SLS functions have benefited you or your organization in the past? And which of these functions are essential for SLS success in the future?

Note: Shaded terms resonated best with everyone

- **Outcomes** (Transformation/landscape scale);
- **Relationships** and an expanded network;
- **Educational group** with new perspectives and information;
- **Shared data**;
- **Funding**:
 - energy from participants
 - pooling funding and experts (big table)
 - stronger together
- Profitable and sustainable business;
- Dialogue has expanded our learning;
- Project implementation – collaboration working through challenges;
- Opportunities through connections;
- Opportunities to solve complex challenges and resources to implement solutions;
- Collaboration resulting in a better product;
- Relationships that go beyond SLS (with tribes, County Council);
- Setting a positive example;
- Leading edge impression with outside world;
- Grow regionally and support local efforts.

Participants also answered the question: What has **not** been a benefit from being part of SLS:

- Some changes have not happened through relationships as anticipated;
- Real world examples of what is not working.

COLLABORATION

In this activity, we revisited the concepts originally presented by Carol MacIlroy in September trying to dig a bit deeper into what collaboration looks like. Key discussion points included:

- the need for SLS to have a clear vision, goals, strategy and actions;
- a consideration of scale – at what specific scale is SLS most focused;
- developing a system or tools to keep each other informed, to identify where and how we can collaborate, and where our authorities demand we work in other arenas;
- each interest developing vision, goals, strategies and actions for their participation in SLS; and
- seeking opportunities to expand collaboration in areas previously not expected.

Carol pointed out that SLS's authority comes from its credibility and clout. Through our process we can elevate or diminish that authority by what we choose to do and how we go about it.

DECISION MAKING

Strong agreement that SLS should **build credibility.**

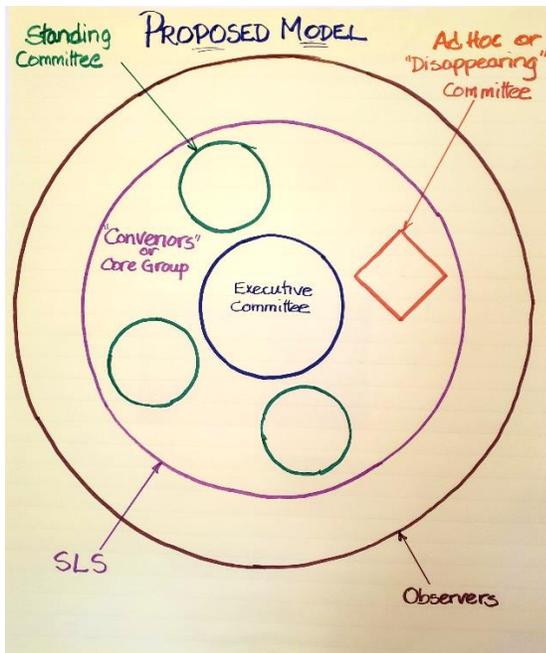
What decisions do you want to make now?

- Letters of support;
- Endorse projects;
- Support for planning activities like Ag Resilience, Its, Reach plans;
- Determine which topics should be discussed;
- Staying open minded and learning.

What decisions would you like to make in the future?

- Establish vision, goals and strategies.
- Bring decisions back to each organization's leadership (make sure they are in the loop and supporting the decision);
- Face to face influencing;
- Figure out what actions to implement;
- Develop metrics and define success (should consider impacts on people);
- Set expectations.
- Advocate from Executive Committee;
- Provide guidance to local decision makers;

DEFINE A STRUCTURE THAT SUPPORTS OUR PURPOSE AND DECISION MAKING



In this part of the meeting Morgan Ruff provided a look-back at the structure and approach to facilitation in the early days of SLS. After some discussion, CK Eidem presented the structural concept shown to the left that was developed by the retreat planning team. There seemed to be reasonable agreement that this structure makes sense. Also, that a structure like this speaks to mutual support over hierarchy. Membership within the SLS sphere should be voluntary.

There are lingering questions about the functionality of this structure that need to be addressed. They are primarily focused on how the component parts relate to each other, what and how decisions are made, and the specific needs for standing and ad hoc committees.

GRANTS AND PROJECTS

The following ideas were shared concerning the *attributes of a project* seeking SLS support:

- Consistent with SLS vision, goals and strategies;
- Transparency: SLS sees all the parts;
- Identifies money, scope and schedule;
- Fundable*;
- Permittable*;
- Locally developed;
- Explainable to a local community with buy-in;
- Context and alignment in the bigger strategy;
- Opportunity costs understood;
- Identifies political issues, if any;
- Builds or deepens partnerships.

*These were identified as opportunities for SLS advocacy

SPONTANEOUS DISCUSSION

The following idea was put forward and refined:

“SLS would like to build a coalition and use its credibility to advocate for projects and policies that are consistent with the SLS vision, goals and strategies.”

Other thoughts/questions raised but not fully addressed:

- SLS is about building resilience.
- (We should be a) platform for future generations (to continue the work).
- Does the Stilly Tribe need to be at the EC table to be part of SLS?
- Should we hold Caucus meetings to set priorities? (seems there is support for this)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOLLOW-UP

David suggested there were several policy issues that the Executive Committee should consider in the near future. He offered to facilitate a separate meeting with EC members to further this conversation. These included:

- Membership;
- Term-limits;
- Voting;
- EC Meetings vs SLS meetings; and
- Changes to By-laws if necessary; and
- Identification of EC support needs.

PARKING LOT

The following items were not fully addressed and need to be revisited at a later date:

- Who is at the table?
- Does the Stilly Tribe need to be at the EC table to be part of SLS?
- Big picture strategic vs on the ground? (EC issue?)
- Should we hold Caucus meetings to set priorities? (seems there is support for this)
- SLS as a County Board?
- Innovative ideas to generate funds for recovery
- Hosting meetings at different places to learn something new. Tie to field trip?
- Upland Ag strategy – identify opportunities and funding. Put a proposal together for RCO. (EC priority?)
- Advocacy with NRCS (EC)

ACTIONS

The following actions need follow-up:

- Put a decision package together for December EC meeting based on Retreat. Should include alignment of SLS with Stilly IT.
- Snohomish County Farmland Working Group: Bring information and ideas to EC for support
- Need more flood representation on EC (risk management focus)
- Follow up on issues

Post Retreat – David identified the following additional actions from the notes:

- Establish vision, strategy and actions for SLS. Refer to Purpose, Principles and other concepts developed in the Retreat.
- Identify some 2-year outcomes.
- Define what support functions are needed for SLS to achieve the purpose and how those should be structured in SLS.

MEETING EVALUATION

Positive

- Small group engagement in the beginning
- Balance of small and large group activities
- Homework
- Elephants in the room were OK

Change

- Have ice cream and cookies
- Love to have the Stilly Tribe present
- Not always reaching conclusion
- More small group activities in the afternoon