

SNOHOMISH SUSTAINABLE LANDS STRATEGY (SLS) MEETING SUMMARY



Thursday December 12, 2019 10:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.
Snohomish County Campus, East Bldg, 6th flr, Room 6A02 (Mt. Baker conf rm)

PARTICIPANTS (Executive Committee members in bold):

Anton, Michele – Snohomish County SWM
Bookey, Brian - National Foods, SLS EC Co-chair (Ag)
Bartelheimer, Dan – Snohomish Valley Farms
Bratton, Nick – Forterra
Bertrand, Vince – City of Monroe
Boehnlein, Dave – Terra Phoenix Design
Celt, Stephanie – Washington Department of Natural Resources
Cole, Heather - The Nature Conservancy
Crump, Kit - Snohomish County SWM
Desmul, Lindsey - Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)
Dittbrenner, Cindy - Snohomish Conservation District
Eidem, CK - Ducks Unlimited, EC Fish rep
Fay, Robin – PCC Farmland Trust
Kaufman, Ben – Beneficial Ventures
Lakey, Kirk – WDFW
Lyshall, Linda - Snohomish Conservation District
MacIlroy, Carol – Carol MacIlroy Consulting
Nelson, Lisa – Washington Department of Ecology
Roberts, David - Kulshan Services (SLS facilitator)
Ruff, Morgan - Tulalip Tribes
Stevenson, Pat – Stillaguamish Tribe
Werkhoven, Andy – Werkhoven Dairy

Follow-up actions

All - Get ideas to Lindsey on how to make SLS the website more interesting. See farm.fish.flood.org
David – Schedule monthly meetings and conference calls into the future. Send calendar invites.
All – Read Carol MacIlroy’s handout from the Stilly IT on roles and responsibilities.

Welcome, introductions and agenda review

David welcomed everyone and apologized for the calendaring changes as we transition away from Bob Bernard sending out the appointments. David will send meeting invitations in the future. All meeting materials and agendas will be attached to the calendar appointment to reduce email and confusion.

Roundtable/Sharing

- Heather Cole sent card around to sign for Terry Williams.

- Stephanie Celt from DNR introduced herself. She is the new primary contact for developing the agency's salmon strategy. She will be working in WRIA 7 and looks forward to connecting with SLS efforts. (See handout attached.)

Primary presentations or discussion topics

- Ag Resilience Plan (Cindy Dittbrenner)

Cindy provided a presentation on the Ag Resilience Plan which has been under development for the last 3 years. She passed out copies of the plan and brochures. The plan is an SLS product that shows what farmers need to address flooding and erosion issues in both the Stilly and Snohomish drainages. A link to the plan and a video on the plan can be found on the Snohomish Conservation District website. [Ag Resilience Plan](#).

Cindy discussed how the plan was developed and the involvement of a steering committee. She also showed a variety of examples from the plan including maps showing the locations of remaining farmland, flooding and groundwater issues. Andy commented how "the map shows that not much farmland is left." Cindy indicated some primary challenges in each of the two basins and gave examples of how those need to be addressed.

Funding actions in the plan will be a primary issue for the Executive Committee (EC) and SLS in the future. The intention is to integrate the actions in the plan with the project identification and funding efforts of the IT groups.

- Stillaguamish IT Phase Preproposal Package (Carol MacIlroy and Stilly IT members)

Carol provided a preliminary list of projects being considered by the Stilly IT for inclusion in the Floodplains by Design preproposal application package due by the end of January. (*See attached list.*) The list was compiled from existing salmon recovery plans, the Ag Resilience Plan and other sources. It contains a total of 19 candidate projects and was organized to show how the projects addressed fish, farm and flood needs. Five of the projects needed further development work over the next month. The goal is to assemble a list of projects that address a variety of benefits that everyone can live with. The IT wants the total package to be under \$9 Million to be competitive with other submittals. At the January 16 SLS meeting they will be asking for SLS support for the preproposal package so it can be submitted to Ecology by the end of month deadline.

Discussion included how work gets prioritized and how projects fit the mission. Can the list of projects meet the broader community interests? What other sources of funding could be used for the projects on the list? What happens if someone wants to move forward with a project outside SLS?

Carol shared how the Stillaguamish Tribe would like to be the proponent for the grant. She handed out a document showing the thoughts of the Stilly IT regarding the roles and responsibilities of the grant proponent and the partners. Due to time constraints we decided to push this discussion to our next meeting. (*See attached roles and responsibilities to project proponents and partners.*)

- Follow-up to November retreat. Next steps. (David Roberts and EC members)
David met with three of the EC members on December 11 to consider ideas on how to move forward in the future based on input and ideas from the retreat. He passed out a summary of their ideas for moving forward. (*See attached summary document.*) He started by reviewing the Mission as stated in the SLS bi-laws then shared the new purpose statement developed at the retreat with slight revisions.

“The purpose of SLS is to build a coalition that uses its credibility to advocate for projects and policies that are consistent with the SLS Mission.”

David then shared that the EC recommends moving forward with the following list of attributes of a grant application or project seeking SLS support:

- Consistent with SLS Mission;
- 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.

The EC expects that proponents who are seeking SLS support from the EC show how their project, suite of projects, or concept addresses the attributes above. To help move existing grant applications along in the near term, the EC suggests using this list for presentations to the EC.

The EC also discussed membership on the EC. Right now, the EC is at the minimum number of members called for in the SLS bi-laws. The EC can vote to bring on new members at any time and is looking for suggestions and volunteers. They would like to meet with any prospective candidates before voting to include anyone new.

The EC supports the structure proposed at the retreat. (See diagram shown in handout.) Questions remain about responsibilities of the various parts of SLS and their inter-relationship. However, the primary structure is sound and makes sense.

In comments EC members indicated that possible roles for the EC included:

- Making decisions when there isn't clear consensus in SLS
- Hosting meetings and discussions on topics relevant to SLS
- Advocating for various issues important to SLS
- Providing signatures when needed on letters from SLS
- Finding new members for the EC
- Setting a vision for the future.

These need further discussion.

Finally, the EC decided to “rebrand” the meetings and propose a general schedule for meetings in the future. The EC will meet independently on a quarterly basis to discuss strategic initiatives, membership and other topics of a broad nature. The monthly meetings of SLS participants will now be called “SLS Monthly Meetings” and will include the EC, conveners as well as other interested members of the community. The EC members will help define the agenda topics. Standing and ad hoc committees can meet as needed.

Outreach and engagement updates

- Lindsey Desmul shared that she will be releasing the SLS film next month on SLS website: farm.fish.flood.org She is also looking for ideas on how to improve the look and content of the SLS website.

Funding updates

- Nick Bratton (Forterra) provided an update on Tillman Property easement. They have secured a WWRP Grant for \$1.2M and have a commitment of funds from the County Conservation Futures. But they are still short about \$1M to complete the transaction. They would like to send a request to RCO for the additional funding with the support of SLS. The other approach is to offer Mr. Tillman an option payment to allow time to find the additional funds for the easement and/or property purchase. Estimated value of the property is \$4M. The easement is estimated to be about \$2.4M which could be applied to the eventual purchase price.

Dave Boehnlein, Ben Kaufman and one other individual shared that they are involved in a proposal to purchase a portion of the Tillman farm for a development called “Northwest Agrivillage” – small scale concentrated development of 5-10 acres for homes with preservation of the remaining property in agriculture owned and managed by the homeowners. This was new news to all in attendance. Nick Bratton committed to discussing their plans further.

- Vince Bertrand from the City of Monroe shared that the City is attempting to acquire 43 acres of farmland along the Skykomish River for preservation and conservation. (*See [handout attached](#).*) Owner wants to develop property for low-income housing. They are currently unable to acquire property because the appraisal increased and there was a funding shortfall. The City is currently looking to find \$1.0M to complete the deal.

CK shared an idea of finding a way to fund a rapid response for key farm acquisition opportunities before they are sold for development. Ducks Unlimited has a “Buy-Protect-Sell” program he could investigate.

Decisions, next steps and future agendas

- Nick Bratton suggested that we need a group of folks to assist SLS with policy issues. He also volunteered to lead a workgroup. The EC agreed that this would be helpful. We will add an agenda item to each meeting in the future for discussions of this topic during the updates time.
- Next monthly meeting will be January 16th. The primary topics will be the pre-proposal packages for the Stilly and Snohomish FbD grants. There was a request that we provide more time for in-depth discussion and review of what will be presented. So the meeting will start earlier than normal.
- Next conference call is scheduled for December 18th with a delayed start of 10:15.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15pm

Upcoming meetings and proposed topics:

January 16, 2020

- Pre-proposal packages for the Stilly and Snohomish FbD grants (Note: early meeting start.)

February 13, 2020

- TBD