Purpose of Today’s Presentation

• Present a high-level overview of the Floodplain Land Strategy Document, which is out for review today

• Briefly touch on the substantive elements of the Strategy, with a focus on what’s new
  • Many of you have participated in at least one meeting about the substance of the Strategy

• Answer any questions on the document or on the substantive elements of the Strategy as time allows
Purpose of Floodplain Land Strategy

• Grant deliverable under a 2019-2021 Floodplains by Design grant with Ecology
• Focused on the Lower Skykomish River
• Will guide acquisitions, easements, and other land projects under the current (2019-2021) FbD grant and future FbD grants
• Could inform work in other areas or under other grants, but there are no current plans or resources dedicated to expanding the tool to other geographic areas
• Intended to harmonize with other plans and policies
Purpose of Floodplain Land Strategy

• The Land Strategy will guide the County’s property acquisition efforts in the Lower Skykomish, but it also includes other tools to achieve multiple benefits without acquiring property, such as easements

• All acquisitions and easements would be voluntary and would only be done with willing landowners

• The Land Strategy includes tools and implementation approaches designed to help keep land in farming
Input Process

• **SLS Agriculture Caucus** and **Snohomish IT** meetings in August 2020 to discuss draft criteria and implementation pathways

• Presentation at **SLS Partners** meeting in September 2020 to solicit input on draft criteria and implementation pathways

• **SLS Special Topics** meeting and **Snohomish IT** meeting in March 2021 to discuss the data analysis and Decision Support Tool

• **SLS Agriculture Caucus** meeting in April 2021 to discuss the data analysis and Decision Support Tool

• Review of Draft Floodplain Land Strategy Document today through May 27
LOWER SKYKOMISH FLOODPLAIN LAND STRATEGY

DRAFT

Prepared for:
Snohomish County Surface Water Management

Prepared by:
Environmental Science Associates

May 2021
Contents

- Chapter 1: Introduction and Background
- Chapter 2: Criteria
- Chapter 3: Decision Support Tool
- Chapter 4: Implementation
  - Toolkit
    - Implementation Pathways
- Chapter 5: References
Criteria

• Four sets of criteria:
  • Criteria to identify priority areas for farmland conservation.
  • Criteria to identify priority areas for salmon recovery.
  • Criteria to identify priority areas for flood risk reduction.
  • Integrated criteria to synthesize the priorities at the landscape scale.

• Large portions of the Lower Skykomish floodplain have potential competing priorities (i.e. high priority for farmland preservation and salmon recovery)

• Therefore, the integrated criteria doesn’t tell us where to acquire property; it tells us what conversations to have, what to look into further, what tools to apply, and who to collaborate with to advance actions on specific parcels with willing landowners
Decision Support Tool

• Chapter 3 includes:
  • a link to the Decision Support Tool web app
  • a description of each layer in the tool with the source of the data
  • screenshots of layers
  • descriptions of how the information in the Tool can be used
Toolkit

• Farmland Conservation Easements
• Acquisitions
• Subdivide for Acquisition and Farmland Conservation Easements
• Locate Alternative Farmland
• Channel Migration Easements
• Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
• Voluntary Projects on Privately Owned Land
Implementation Pathways

- Each Integrated Criteria output has an implementation pathway
- The implementation pathways lay out what to consider, who to collaborate with, what tools to consider, and how to advance actions
4.3.6 Implementation Pathway 5: High Priority for Multi-Benefit Land Project – Not Actively Farmed

This implementation pathway is for areas mapped as “High Priority for Multi-Benefit Land Project – Not Actively Farmed” under the integrated criteria. The following steps should be considered as part of this implementation pathway.

- **Coordinate**
  While acquisition of a parcel in this category would not reduce the amount of actively farmed land in the Lower Skykomish floodplain, the first step should be to inform agriculture-focused partners (the Snohomish Conservation District and Washington Farmland Trust) and the SLS Agriculture Caucus to provide an opportunity to flag substantial impacts.

- **Research**
  Research why the property isn’t actively farmed and whether it could be productively farmed. Ask the landowner, consult past years of Washington State Department of Agriculture agricultural land use data, determine whether there is a water right, etc.

- **Consult**
  Consult with the Conservation District, Snohomish County Agricultural Advisory Board, Agriculture Caucus, Farm to Farmer program, SnoValley Tilth, etc. to identify whether there are farmers who would be interested in farming the property or a portion of the property.

- **Pursue Project**
  If research suggests that the property is not farmable, or if consultation does not identify potential farmers for the property, then Snohomish County should pursue an acquisition. Otherwise, all of the tools in Section 4.2 should be considered in the development of a multi-benefit project. The property may represent an opportunity to expand farmland (see Section 4.2.4).
Next Steps

• Accepting comments on the Floodplain Land Strategy Document through Thursday, May 27
  • Send comments to seaston@esassoc.com
• The ESA team is also developing a Geospatial Methodologies Report and a Story Map
• The Final Floodplain Land Strategy Document will be done by the end of June
Questions
## Farm and Fish Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Data Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criteria for Farmland Preservation</td>
<td>• Farmland Conservation Prioritization for Snohomish County (PCC Farmland Trust, 2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria for Salmon Recovery Acquisitions</td>
<td>• Snohomish Floodplain Acquisition Strategy (Tulalip Tribes, 2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Expansion Opportunities (Cardno, 2020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lower Skykomish Reach-Scale Plan (Snohomish County, 2018)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Flood Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Data Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highest Priority Flood Hazard Areas</td>
<td>• Flood Protection Infrastructure at Risk (Very High Risk) (Cardno, 2020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Three area of greatest concern from geomorphic assessment (Cardno, 2020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Overlapping avulsion and lateral channel migration areas (Cardno, 2020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Risk Deep and Fast Flowing Floodplain</td>
<td>• Deep and Fast Flowing Floodplain (High Risk) (WSE, 2020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areas for Flood Risk Reduction Acquisitions</td>
<td>• Avulsion Areas (Cardno, 2020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Flood Protection Infrastructure at Risk (Cardno, 2020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Erosion/Migration areas (Cardno, 2020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Substantial Damage Determination areas (Snohomish County Building Official)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Integrated Criteria Outputs

- High Priority to Remain Farmland
- High Priority for Salmon Recovery
- High Priority for Flood Risk Reduction
- High Priority for Salmon Recovery and Flood Risk Reduction
- High Priority for Multi-Benefit Land Project
- High Priority for Multi-Benefit Land Project – Not Actively Farmed
  - Based on WSDA Agricultural Land Use data, 2019
- High Priority for Multi-Benefit Land Project – Substantial Flood Risk to Agricultural Productivity
  - Based on depth/velocity in a 2-year flood, avulsion areas, and erosion/migration
Initial Implementation Pathways

High Priority to Remain Farmland

Implementation Pathway
- If the owner is interested in an easement, land trust partners would pursue farmland conservation project
- Don’t pursue for property acquisition for salmon recovery or flood risk reduction purposes with Floodplains by Design funding

High Priority for Salmon Recovery

Implementation Pathway
- If there is a willing seller, pursue property acquisition (or other tool)
- Coordinate with Tulalip Tribes to determine the best entity to own the parcel if acquired
- Consider active outreach to owners of these parcels
Initial Implementation Pathways

High Priority for Flood Risk Reduction

Implementation Pathway
- If there is a willing seller, pursue property acquisition (or other tool)
- Consider active outreach to owners of these parcels

High Priority for Salmon Recovery and Flood Risk Reduction

Implementation Pathway
- If there is a willing seller, pursue property acquisition (or other tool)
- Coordinate with Tulalip Tribes to determine the best entity to own the parcel if acquired
- Consider active outreach to owners of these parcels
Initial Implementation Pathways

High Priority for Multi-Benefit Land Project

Implementation Pathway
- If there is a willing landowner, partners will collaborate through the IT, with input from SLS Partners, to develop a creative multi-benefit land project, using the following tools as appropriate:
  1. Farmland conservation easements
  2. Voluntary acquisitions from willing sellers
  3. Subdivide for acquisition and farmland conservation
  4. Locate alternative farmland
  5. Channel migration easements
  6. Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
  7. Voluntary natural resource projects
Initial Implementation Pathways

**Implementation Pathway**

- If there is a willing landowner, inform agriculture partners, the SLS Executive Committee, and SLS Partners of the project to provide an opportunity to flag substantial impacts.
- Research why the property isn’t actively farmed and whether it could be productively farmed. Ask the landowner, consult past years of WSDA ag land use data, determine whether there is a water right, etc.
- Consult with the Conservation District, Ag Board, Ag Caucus, Farm to Farmer program, etc. to identify whether there are farmers who would be interested in farming the property or a portion of the property.
- Depending on the outcome of conversations and research, pursue a multi-benefit land project that minimizes impacts to/creates benefits for agriculture.

High Priority for Multi-Benefit Land Project – Not Actively Farmed
Initial Implementation Pathways

Implementation Pathway
- If there is a willing landowner, inform agriculture partners, the SLS Executive Committee, and SLS Partners of the project to provide an opportunity to flag substantial impacts
- Explore whether flood risk could be mitigated. If so, what would be the cost? Would there be downstream impacts? Environmental impacts?
- If flood risks could be mitigated, consider a multi-benefit project that mitigates flood risks to benefit agriculture and improves habitat conditions
- If flood risks could not be mitigated and there is a willing seller, pursue a multi-benefit land project that minimizes impacts to / creates benefits for agriculture