

SLS Steering Committee Notes

August 12, 2021

10:00AM – 11:45AM



Present: Erik Stockdale, Linda Lyshall, Linda Neunzig, Daryl Williams, Carol MacIlroy, Kristin Marshall

David Roberts (facilitator) and Allison Roberts (notetaker)

Tasks:

- Daryl, Linda L and David meet with the Stilly IT in September. Kristin will coordinate the date.
- David will arrange a special topic session pertaining to the TNC blasting project on their Port Susan property.
- Kristin will share ideas improving engagement with the Steering Committee with David after consultation with the Stilly IT.
- Daryl and Linda L will draft a letter for the SC review pertaining to the City of Snohomish's annexation and rezone of the Harvey Field and the former Seattle-Snohomish Mill. David will send approved letter to the County Exec, County Council and Snohomish Tomorrow.
- Linda L will connect with David regarding the schedule for Multi-Benefit Monitoring meetings.
- Linda N and Linda L will discuss opportunities for a water quality project.
- David will distribute SC notes to all SLS Partners using a link to the file on the County's website.
- Linda N will ask the Ag Board if they are willing to serve as an extended Ag Caucus to better engage farmers with SLS.
- David will share John Postema's letter concerning recent health department regulations.
- David will update everyone's calendar invitations for meetings for the remainder of the year.

1. Opening and greeting

David welcomed everyone to the meeting and shared how this is the first meeting where members from the Stillaguamish IT were present for a conversation with the Steering Committee (SC). The goal is to learn about current IT and SC efforts and discuss ways the SC can provide support.

2. Conversation with Stillaguamish IT (Kristin Marshall)

Kristin is working to move projects forward in integration and mitigation and this depends on the SC and shared advocacy. They are working hard to prepare for the next round of biennium funding from Floodplains by Design, FCAP, and more.

Carol MacIlroy and Robin Fay are looking at the FEMA Flood Mitigation Assistance and BRIC funding that will soon be available. It is a competitive and time-intensive endeavor. (BRIC - Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) is a FEMA funding source run through WA state EMD and has a nature-based lens to it). They are looking to see which projects are looking might qualify and seeking support and feedback on their projects to determine on which projects they move forward. Carol added that they are still working on the same list of projects they brought forward to the full SLS group. Mix and match and leverage is the goal. Snohomish and Stilly ITs are looking to make their lists similar for consistency purposes.

The Stilly IT will be meeting with Daryl, Linda, and David will be in September, although no date has been set. Time spent getting funding packages together may take precedence. They are looking for tangible places where we can collaborate and overlap in the SC work.

Kristin noted that Molly Bogeberg of TNC reached out to the Stilly Flood Control District regarding their letter to the SLS Executive Committee and they have responded to the letter and are scheduling a conversation. David clarified that this is about a project involving blasting at TNC's Port Susan property. The District is concerned about harm to species and inflicting unacceptable risk to people and property. Molly has agreed to discuss this with concerned parties. Carol suggested a special topic discussion about the technique could be helpful. David noted an earlier session on the project proposal was recorded and available on the SLS webpage.

David suggested we schedule another special topic session to delve into the details. He will coordinate with Molly Bogeberg and send out an invite to anyone at SLS about this. Linda L said she could get the message out to the Stillaguamish Watershed Council.

Improving participation

While SLS has met on Thursdays for the past ten years, Thursdays have become very busy days for many on the SC. *We decided that the SC and SLS Partners meetings would now be held on the first Wednesday of each month from 10:00AM to approximately 11:30AM.*

Engaging more people discussion: We want more people to be informed of our activities. David said the SC notes go out to ITs and partners. We've been including a report from the ITs on the agenda as an opportunity to learn more and promote discussion. This discussion could also include specific sessions once a year where project progress and updates on their work could be presented by the ITs. David suggested that standing committees may need input from the ITs as well. *David asked Kristin to share ideas about how we can improve this engagement.* Carol suggested the SC actively think across activities that they are involved in and capture important aspects of SC work that impact project implementation. Any concerns should be noted and shared with appropriate parties.

Funding discussion: There are a lot of funding efforts coming up. The FbD application from last round could be a case study for a process to coordinate and collaborate on funding opportunities.

3. Adoption of new SLS Mission, Vision, Purpose and Goals (David)

We reached agreement on final wording and discussed how the message is conveyed to SLS and the public. We've done the creative and outreach work with SLS members, and we have a solid package now. This process demonstrates our ability to coordinate on this great outcome.

We should revisit the broad goals as part of the multi-benefit monitoring process which will integrate the metrics with SLS goals. We will make sure these broad messages get integrated into the website as well as the work of the Comp Plan group and other outward facing processes.

4. Discussion about density and development around the airfield

Eric noted that the City of Snohomish plans to annex and rezone the Harvey Field and the former Seattle-Snohomish Mill site. They received a letter of support for the decision from the Snohomish County Tomorrow Advisory Committee. Changing political boundaries is antithetical to floodplain management and it doesn't make any sense to allow intensification of development in the floodway. The proposal would allow the City to skirt County floodplain regulations.

The proposal is concerning farmers and the Ag Board, and sending a wrong message to flood control districts. The Flood Districts sometimes wonder what support they have. This is an opportunity to affirm this. It's the wrong kind of development and this doesn't protect resource lands as required by the GMA. If the mill site and adjacent property were to be annexed and FEMA regulations allowed it, then there is something seriously wrong.

We agreed this issue requires an official response from our group. A letter on behalf of SLS would signal opposition to the project and support of others opposed to it. *Daryl and Linda will draft a*

letter for the SC review before sending it out. The letter will be sent to the County Executive, the County Council, and the chair of the Snohomish County Tomorrow Advisory Committee.

5. Progress Report (David)

Goal: Learn about activities of standing committees (Comp Plan, Communications, Monitoring and Funding) and progress on the SLS Workplan.

- The Communications Group is creating a new website for SLS with the help of Caravan Labs. They are also doing a survey of local farm food consumers to see what the community is looking for in locally grown food.
- The Comprehensive Plan Workgroup met with County PDS staff to discuss next steps. All recommendations for county-wide planning policies were accepted Snohomish Tomorrow Advisory Committee. These will be the basis of some of the recommendations for changes to the Comp Plan. The Workgroup sought guidance from the PDS staff on where to the SLS review. In addition, we discussed timelines for moving forward. The County intends to go out for scoping in October. Todd Eastman from Peak Sustainability Group is doing some analysis and a volunteer through Forterra is working on it as well.
- The Multi-Benefit Monitoring Project led by Snohomish CD staff will be an important tool to show progress over time. Meetings are being planned in September. *Linda will connect with David with the schedule.*
- A recent session on funding coordination was led by Darcy Hughes (Snohomish County) and Paul Cereghino (NOAA). It was very informative. Darcy is developing a tracking tool using a spreadsheet GANNT chart to show timelines and deliverables for various grant funding cycles. She suggested this could be a tool could be expanded to include information on grants of interest to SLS Partners. Paul shared efforts pertaining to streamlining the grant processes so that it looks more like the JARPA application. We agreed that a standing group would be a good thing if they can help coordinate these processes and provide greater access to grants for everyone. Another meeting to carry this conversation forward is planned for August 19.
- Linda Lyshall wants to identify a site to implement a ~\$40K project to put in a manure management facility, a composting facility, or fencing project in place with a direct benefit to water quality in the Stillaguamish. Linda Neunzig knows of a site on the Stillaguamish with new farmers. *Linda N. and Linda L. will talk off-line about this possibility.*
- Linda N. indicated they have \$2.5 million for the first phase of the farm center. There is a lot in the works for additional funding.
- David sent out the Work Plan to everyone. Progress is being made on several fronts. One challenge is that some aspects of the plan are more specific than others.

6. SC Communications (All)

David wants to clarify how and when the SC communicates with the SLS Partners and community. While he hasn't done this consistently yet, David wants to share SC meeting notes with the Partners. *David will send an email with a link that takes people to the County SLS website where notes are public.*

7. Ag Caucus discussion

We discussed and agreed with Jessica Hamill's observation that the Ag Board could provide SLS with a farmer perspective as an extension of the Ag Caucus. This Ag Board is very engaged and intelligent

group of good farmers. They represent a wide range of farming businesses. Brian Bookey used to keep the Ag Caucus board apprised of SLS actions, but we lost that representation when he left.

Daryl doesn't want to lose the connections to the SLS Ag Caucus. To have the Caucus and Ag Board working together with just one ag-focused meeting a month has many efficiency and coordination benefits.

Linda N. chairs the Ag Board. *She will ask the Board if they are willing to serve in this capacity to better engage farmers with SLS. She will seek their feedback before proceeding and work with them on how to operationalize it.* Their next meeting is 2nd Tuesday of the Month at 1 pm on September 14.

8. Agenda for September 9th Partner meeting

David asked for suggestions for the upcoming Partners meeting. CK suggested we do a map exercise to consolidate existing information - County Reach scale, farm plans, GIS integrating tools - into a simple 2-pager Reach-scale policy and/or visioning statement about projects we support. Linda Lyshall suggested we ask for feedback from the group about this.

We agreed a formal SLS work session should be planned to define collaboration. The SLS letter of support for the Food and Farming Center is an example of successful collaboration. Money is coming in for regenerative ag which will engage us collaboratively.

We could also discuss what we want to accomplish during the last quarter of the year. David reminded members about the handbook that will hold all of the things we've worked on. We're doing really well, so the collaboration piece could be done by the end of the year.

David will coordinate with Linda L and Daryl on an agenda to move forward.

9. Miscellaneous news and views

Andy Werkhoven is now on the Board of Ag Farmland Services.

Regarding the Delta variant in relation to in-person meetings, Daryl shared that 40% of active cases on Tulalip are breakthrough cases. The vaccinations were in January 2021, so they are considering the data that indicates the Moderna immunity might be wearing off. Daryl hasn't heard about booster shot. Good to note as we go into the fall and winter.

John Postema shared concerns in a letter to SLS participants and others about new health regulations pertaining to farm labor and the challenge it presents to farmers. *David will share the letter with the SC.*

Linda Neunzig suggested we need to seed the bank for TDRs and secure seed money to buy more development rights. It could require and garner anywhere from \$2 to \$7 million dollars. The more funds we generate, the faster we can buy development rights. The Exec is already having discussions about this.

10. Future meetings

All SLS SC and Partner meetings will now be on the **1st Wednesday** of the month from 10:00-11:30 starting in October. David will update the calendar invites that have gone out. SC meetings will be on:

October 6 (instead of the 14th)

December 1 (instead of the 9th)