



## Meeting Notes

### SLS Steering Committee Meeting

October 6, 2021, 10:00AM – 12:00PM

**Present:** Linda Lyshall, Carol MacIlroy, CK Eidem, Kristin Marshall, Lindsey Desmul, Nicole Barry, Spencer Easton, Kirk Lakey, Daryl Williams, Morgan Ruff, Erik Stockdale, Linda Neunzig,

David Roberts, Facilitator

Sarah Parker, Notetaker

### Action Items:

#### Comp Plan Workgroup:

-Update SC with Comp Plan comment period deadline

#### ITs:

-Update and prioritize workplan items and send to SC before the next meeting

-Create consistent project tracking table format between ITs. Include the table or a link in the workplan

#### Erik:

-Provide update on Harvey Field

-Set up call with Linda N., Linda L., and Daryl to discuss strategy for lobbying legislators to be more inclusive of VSP-like programs

#### David:

-Update workplan list format to table format

-Identify opportunities for SLS SC members to advocate for SLS and create a resource for ITs and others in SLS

-Confirm that the meeting calendar invite reflects a two-hour meeting

### Discussion Topics

#### IT/SC Conversation

1. Short update from ITs on projects/initiatives:

Spencer shared that, at a September meeting, the Snohomish IT Core Team Identified project management capacity as an issue for all their organizations, and this could become a significant bottleneck if there is an influx of stimulus funding.

Snohomish County is working on a grant agreement with Ecology for the 2021-2023 Floodplains by Design grant. Several Snohomish IT members will be subrecipients on the grant. IT members are collaborating on strategic use of funding in the grant for riparian restoration. Snohomish County is also submitting an FCAAP grant application to Ecology to fund a flood and sea level rise vulnerability assessment for the Stillaguamish and Snohomish Rivers and Estuary. If funded,

the assessment will fill remaining data and information gaps concerning vulnerability to flood and sea level rise hazards and their potential impact on the communities in the floodplain. An outreach and strategy plan would also be developed to identify which vulnerable and underrepresented communities are present in the floodplain and develop specific strategies to engage those communities.

Kristin shared that the Stillaguamish IT met virtually in September and discussed upcoming funding opportunities and the associated timelines (including NOAA and Floodplains by Design), an offer of support from WDFW, and some of the ongoing projects and implementation coordination and support. The IT participated in a field tour at Leque Island on September 20th. Additionally, several IT members worked in August and September to investigate the process and requirements for the FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant program as a potential funding source for agricultural resilience, flood risk, and salmon recovery projects. Ultimately, the potential project sponsors decided not to submit proposals during this funding cycle owing to the program requirements and application process. But they learned a lot through the process and should be ready to apply for the hazard mitigation grant program proposal (pre-app due in November).

Linda L., Daryl, and David met with Snohomish IT to discuss roles. They are scheduled to do the same with Stilly IT. There is likely some benefit in cross-IT discussion to talk about lessons learned and bringing that back to the SC.

Snohomish CD and Washington Farmland Trust are working with WDFW to develop a scope of work to use existing NOAA funding (awarded to WDFW) to fund continued consultant support for the Stillaguamish IT. This should be under contract this fall.

The contract that Carol was under is coming to an end at the end of the year. The IT is thinking about capacity moving forward, what the work is, where support is needed, and considering bringing in a consultant.

2. Short update from SC on projects/initiatives:

Over the last 6-12 months, the SC has been working on the SLS organizational design, mission, vision, purpose, and goals. The SC meets every other month and prepares items to be taken to the partners for input.

David and Linda L. joined the last Ag Board meeting and will present about SLS at the next meeting. Working with the Ag Board might be one important step to take in improving SLS ag representation.

The Comp Plan Workgroup took a break in meetings over the summer. They now need to provide comment on county-wide planning documents as they are being considered into final adoption. Forterra already gave their input for county-wide policies. The group will consider if the vision that SLS has set for the County, including a multi-benefit outcome, is reflected in the current Snohomish County Comprehensive Plan. Two representatives from Forterra and Peak are working on this. Once they have assembled their recommendations, they will hold a special topic presentation on this and then request approval from the SC. They plan to start this fall and still need to identify the final deadline for comments. Carol requested that the deadline be passed along to partners as well as a succinct outline of where we see an issue.

Lindsey shared that the Communications Team released a survey asking people why they buy produce where they do. They have received 70 responses so far and are hoping to ramp this up to 300 or 350 responses. The Communications Team is also working on the new SLS website.

The Funding Team has been discussing ways to streamline and better track funding needs and uses. SLS currently has a lot of money, and a new, streamlined County tool may help us coordinate projects and funding strategically.

The SC submitted a letter of concern about the rezone of the Harvey Field Site and the potential impacts to the floodplain. The city of Snohomish is incorporating the site into city limits and the owners of the site want to increase density of development. The site is at a pinch point in the flood plain that is very important. Erik will follow up with an update (the county executive might have already denied this project).

3. Status and discussion of SC workplan actions to assist the ITs (See Workplan attached: Goal 1, Objective 2, numbers 3 and 4):

David shared that in the Topics of Interest section of the SLS Workplan two sections have very specific requests for advancing policy issues in Stilly and Snohomish. The focus of the SC has been on broader policy issues for the last year, so these have not been addressed.

ITs developed these lists two years ago with the last round of Flood Plain by Design. ITs will update/add to the lists and make more of a prioritized to-do list in the next two months. They will aim to send it to the SC for discussion and prioritization before the December Steering Committee meeting. Then, the SC can think about where they can be most impactful.

David proposed to convert the workplan list to a spreadsheet with space to update the timeframe, status, workgroup, and lead person on a project. The spreadsheet can either include a second sheet with a list of projects (within a two-year timeframe) or link to another tracking system that the ITs are already using to track projects. Snohomish IT is working on their project tracking system right now and are open to input on how they should shape that to best fit into the spreadsheet.

Morgan suggested that SC defines what project implementation means to them and what types of information they want on projects. David suggested that a smaller group get together to brainstorm what IT folks need to tell their story. This will also be helpful for the Communication Team.

Carol suggested that some items from the IT might already have a regional connection to other programs that SLS could plug into. She suggested that ITs flag those items. We can use SLS connections to tap into those structures.

We are currently underutilizing resources and the connections that we have within SLS. The group should think through where SC has connections that could help advance the group work. For example, Linda L. is plugged into Floodplain by Design policy discussions and Daryl is on the Conservation Commission. David will develop a list or some other way to communicate what other roles SLS members have and in what other venues they can advocate for SLS. Kristin noted we need to also consider when/where it is inappropriate to advocate on the part of the SC.

Linda L. noted it might be helpful to know specifically what the permitting issues are, for example, and details of action that we're looking for. Linda N. noted that having a conduit to put projects and issues in as they come along would be helpful.

Linda N. noted that some farmers are reluctant to sign long-term farmland preservation agreements with Forterra because the Department of Ecology is the beneficiary. Many farmers distrust the DOE. Could the Conservation District be the beneficiary because there is more trust there? Carol mentioned that TNC might have grappled with this. Heather Cole is a good contact.

Linda N. also shared that the County is working on the 5G Resiliency Project involving farm data and soil sensors. This approach has reduced water usage by 75% on one farm. Incorporating technology and funding to support these practices becoming common place would make a large difference. Can SLS expand policies around supporting this?

CK suggested creating a small, curated project list that can help people understand the work that SLS is doing. Spencer recommended that ITs could propose a strategy and present it to the SC for feedback. Morgan shared a link to Snohomish County's project maps and asked how this might relate to the work of SLS: <https://mplshdrshared.com/SnoCoCFS/map/>

Daryl suggested that SLS might try to get legislators to be more inclusive of counties that don't have a Voluntary Stewardship Program so SLS could qualify. This could start with a policy paper to outline the request. Erik and Linda N. might work with County partners to lobby legislators to include programs that are not doing VSP program but are doing something that works better for their counties. SLS may include this in lobbying plan for year. Erik will set up separate call for Daryl, Linda L., and Linda N. to discuss this further.

Erik shared that, in a draft budget, Council has allocated funds to enhance fish culverts and to support a land conservation initiative. Council should finalize the budget by November 10<sup>th</sup>. Erik will update the group on the outcomes after that point. He also shared that Seattle City Council's Land Use and Neighborhoods Committee recently voted 5-0 in favor of an ordinance that would open the city's TDR program to credits from Snohomish County. The measure went to full council on October 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Summary:** ITs will develop a specific process to link projects back to the workplan; David will reformat workplan; the SC will consider connections they outside of SLS and how these can be used to accelerate or promote SLS work; Erik, Linda L., Linda N., and Daryl talk about VSP funding

#### Seeking input from the Snohomish County Ag Board

Linda N. is lead staff for the County Ag Board. Linda L. suggested that the Ag Board be included in conversations that go to the Ag Caucus and that the Ag Board could offer input on decisions. They would not have a formal role in SLS but rather serve an advisory position. The Ag Board enhances the opportunity for communication with ag interests and represents industry in both the Stilly and Snohomish basins. The individuals on the Ag Board will be interested in working together. The next Ag Board meeting is scheduled for November. Linda L. and David plan to present an overview of SLS.

Presentations to the Ag Board should be coordinated through Linda N., Linda L., and Daryl. David will help coordinate. Carol highlighted the need for coordinated and collaborated sequencing. David and Linda will coordinate on how to stage this.

The multi-benefit analysis is moving forward. Linda L. will send out communication about it in the next 2-3 weeks to get things started. Kristin suggested that the flood perspective be included in the analysis.

#### Should leads from work groups join future meetings?

SC members voiced mixed feelings about including more people in the meetings.

- Benefits to including workgroup leads: The more we work together, the better. The Communication Team needs to know what is happening within the SC to share a comprehensive story about it (they cannot tell stories if they do not hear them).
- Challenges: More people might add to confusion about the role of the SC meeting and the partners meeting. Having a separate SC allows things to happen that would not happen in a bigger group
- Proposal: if something pertinent to a work group is on the agenda, the work group lead can opt to join in. This does not mean adding more people to the SC, but rather offering an opportunity for overlap. Most updates can still be shared via the newsletter.

#### Evaluate the meeting What would you like to see changed?

David will make sure the calendar invite reflects the two-hour meeting time.

#### Future Meeting Dates

December 1

All meetings will be 10:00-12:00 unless otherwise notified.

**Adjourned at 11:59 am.**