

SLS PARTNERS MEETING NOTES

SNOHOMISH SUSTAINABLE LANDS STRATEGY MEETING

Wednesday, November 3, 2021 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Zoom videoconference



Attendance: Bennett LaFonde, Daryl Williams, Heather Khan, Kristin Marshall, Kurt Nelson, Laurel Jennings, Lindsey Desmul, Matthew Siddons, Morgan Ruff, Paul Cereghino, Anna Santo, C.K. Eidem, Carol MacIlroy, Heather Cole, Joe Sambataro, Kristi Hedges, Linda Lyshall, Linda Neunzig, Dani Driscoll, David Killingstad, Erik Stockdale, Kirk Lakey, Rachel Alder, Robin Fay, Spencer Easton, Tara Luckie, Jessica Hamill, Kari Quass, Valerie Normand, Kurt Nelson, Ann Bylin

David Roberts (facilitation) and Sarah Parker (notetaker)

Announcements:

- Bennett is leaving the Snohomish Conservation District at the end of the month.
- The steering committee has invited committee leads to join their regular meetings as relevant.

Multi-Benefit Monitoring program

Linda L. gave a presentation on the status and direction of the new Multi-Benefit Monitoring Program currently under development. The purpose of the program is to create a framework that allows SLS to identify and prioritize multi-benefit recovery projects that support farms, floods, and fish. It will also be used as an index of floodplain health to monitor progress toward the SLS goals. The project is considering other models including the [Pierce County Floodplains for the Future](#) program and the [Skagit Delta Hydrodynamic Model](#) project. The Multi-Benefit Monitoring team is seeking input from stakeholders now. The first summit will occur towards the end of the year.

One aspect of the project will include development of a weighted decision matrix encompassing various indicators. ITs, salmon recovery groups and the agriculture community will be central to identifying indicators.

The group had the following questions/input:

- Have we identified a list of specific capabilities that will be different because we have this tool? What do we hope to be able to do because we have invested in this tool? It sounds like there are internal coherence goals. How will this help external relationships: funding justification, advocacy work, regulatory coordination?
- Pierce County tracks progress and impact to land use. This is powerful and might be an indicator for the SLS tool.
- Is the plan to characterize the overall health of the system, or is the focus on the benefits of SLS projects? Linda L. noted that intent is to look at the overall health of the system while at the same time building trust.

Linda L. added that the group is identifying the correct data to use and identifying what new data needs to be collected. Paul C. shared that some partners might want to collect data, as well.

The group split into three breakout rooms (Farm, Fish, Flood) selected by the participants. Each group was asked the following questions:

- What is important to you?
- What are your goals and objectives for floodplain health?

The following are the notes collected gathered by note takers for each of the three groups.

Farm:

What is important?

- Farmland preservation. Farmland is under unprecedented pressure for conversion. Many new farmers are moving to the area, but there is not necessarily the farmland for them to farm.
- Agricultural infrastructure is key. Processing and drying facilities, equipment sales/rentals /maintenance, large animal vets, etc.
- Waterfowl utilize large-scale commercial agricultural land for habitat.
- Drainage is important, but not as much as preservation.
- Identifying multi-benefit projects that are inclusive of agricultural viability.

What are your goals?

- Reduce damage to agricultural infrastructure from floods.
- Increase value of agriculture, potentially through changing commodities or diversifying large scale single farms to multiple smaller farms on the same land.
- Assess potential climate change impacts to ascertain future farmland viability.
- Identify new agricultural areas outside of the floodplain.

Kristi H. asked what the tipping point is for when we can no longer maintain farmland.

Fish:

What is important?

- Keep scale and timing in mind when discussing salmon recovery goals, metrics, and indicators; specifically, think about the scale (and time lag) of habitat restoration that is needed to see a measurable change in salmon production, as well as the time it can take to implement some salmon recovery projects any salmon recovery projects (10 years or more for some projects that require property acquisition, design, complex permitting, and securing funding).
- Look beyond habitat restoration/capital projects to include all the other impacts/threats/pressures that impact our ability to achieve salmon recovery goals (land use decisions and regulatory processes; examples may include Comp plan, GMA, SMA, FEMA Biological Opinion)
- Snohomish County is one of the fastest growing in the country. Development is a pressure and threat to salmon recovery and other interests
- Use metrics that are meaningful and ecologically real
- Look at metrics and data sets that already exist to tell our story, provide context, and show trends to inform partners (examples include WDFW High Resolution Change Detection data, side channel length, shoreline armoring). Think about and be clear about the tools we are going to create and/or use
- Think carefully about the process for this work and what SCD and project partners communicate as models or examples for SLS's and SCD's work: the Puyallup and 3FI/HDM processes are very different from each other. HDM was a very specific solution for a very specific landscape.

What are your goals?

- Keep development out of floodplain.

- Recover salmon populations (achieve salmon recovery goals in the WRIA 5 and WRIA 7 salmon recovery plans).
- Ensure the work is bringing us together and not creating divisions.
- We are damaging fish habitat faster than we are recovering it. We need to turn that around and drastically slow down deterioration of fish habitat.
- Achieve water quality improvements for humans and salmon recovery so we can de-list impaired streams and rivers.
- Assist with funding opportunities to support multi-benefit projects that bring us closer to clean water.
- Ensure our streams and rivers have adequate streamflows during the summer months to support salmon and other aquatic life

Flood:

What is important?

- Safety and security of the people in the floodplain.
- Utilizing the JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion) approach to ensure that we are engaging everyone in these conversations.
- Undoing ill-conceived ideas and damage to control rivers to lessen risk and allow for the natural processes of the floodplain.
- Resilience - planning for the future.
- (Key) Diversity of use in floodplain, businesses, and communities.
- Weighing the priorities of all the interests and users
- Help agriculture move away from current systems of controlling rivers and giving opportunity to protect livelihoods.
- Reach scale community interest rather than a single focus.
- Reduce transference of risk.
- Is there new development in the floodplain? Are these creating more risk?

What are your goals?

- Do not transfer risk.
- People need to understand what floodplain management means in relation to the watershed.
- Agree to definitions - resilient, doesn't transfer risk, considers others, voices.
- People need to understand the role they play in the floodplain
- Give the river some room, floodplain reconnections, look for places that are isolated (reach scale).
- Community-based reach-scaled solutions
- Pay attention to FEMA flood regulations and look at mapping carefully to make sure we are not missing anything.

The project team will meet with the Snohomish County Agricultural Board on November 9th and the Agriculture Resilience Plan Steering Committee later in the month. They also plan to attend a Flood Control District meeting.

The group had the following questions/input:

- The Stilly and Snohomish watersheds have different priorities. Will there be different priorities for each watershed or overall indicators for the County? Linda L. replied that this will be part of the continuing conversation. Part of the answer will depend on how data is collected (by watershed or not).

- What decisions does the decision matrix apply to and who will make those decisions? Linda L. replied that the decision is how we rank out the multi-benefit process. ITs will be key in determining this. Carol noted that the Stillaguamish Tribe should be engaged in this conversation.
- We might want to reconsider presenting the decision matrix to the Ag. Board at this time. A higher priority might be an index that addresses a variety of needs (programmatic and other components). The restoration piece is a secondary conversation that will take more time to customize. The two watersheds have a lot of differences. Aspects of this conversation could be more polarizing than uniting. Linda L. responded that if the group decides that the weighted decision matrix is not the most effective tool, then we do not need to use it.
- It would be worthwhile to articulate the trust building aspect explicitly in the purpose statement.

Linda L. thanked everyone for their input. She will summarize the conversation and share the results out at the next meeting. She mentioned that the project team will host a Special Topic Session on November 17th at 10:00 AM to continue the conversation and to brainstorm indicators. [Link to meeting.](#)

Report from Communications Group (Kari Quaas)

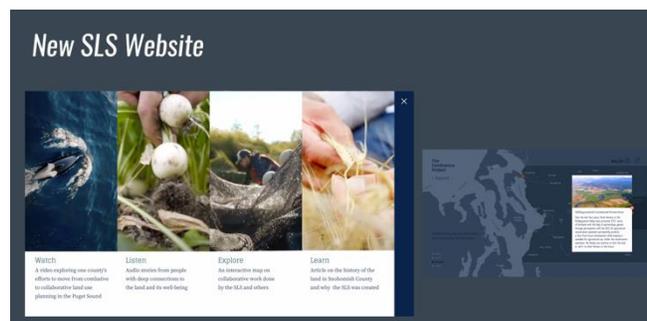
Kari Quaas presented an overview of the numerous projects the Communication group has underway. She is looking for input and participation on the following of the SLS Partners:

- Remember communications in funding every time you apply for a grant so that the Communication Group can keep the website up and running and continue working on other projects.
- Support and engagement for the communication plan
- Names of people you believe to be champions of SLS and representative voices for fish, farm and floodplain
- Utilization of the tools we create
- Early communication of things that seem pertinent to SLS
 - Farmland up for sale
 - Fall flood damage
 - Salmon projects
 - Grants
- Who needs to hear these stories?
- FarmFishFlood.org – spread the word

Kari reported that the Communication Group’s timeline has shifted around a bit but good progress is being made on their workplan actions. Funding through Floodplain by Design is about \$60,000 and Near-term Action (NTA) money is about \$175,000. Most of this is going to the multi-media website and the SLS website.

Kari showed a snapshot of the new SLS website created by Caravan Lab. There will be opportunities for feedback on website content.

Participants are needed for digital storytelling for the new website. Creative Narrations helped with photo voice process. Kurt will pass along a contact who can connect Kari and



Lindsey with UW groups who can work on digital storytelling.

The consumer choice survey is up and running. Anna Santo (PhD student at UBC) and Allison Roberts helped to put the survey together. The target audience for the survey includes people who are buying local and is intended to gather information on their price points and types of products they tend to buy locally.

Sometime in 2022, the Communication Group will host an event to bring all the different groups together. They have also put in a proposal to speak at the Salish Sea Conference in April 2022.

The Communication Group put out an RFP recently for floodplain videos. The videos will be approximately five minutes each. Kari asked for recommendations for videography.

Partners should share updates and information with Kari and Lindsey to be included in the quarterly newsletter. They are encouraged to forward the newsletter along to colleagues.

Lastly, Kari announced that the Snohomish Conservation District has been working on carbon crushers, a program to help the community better understand how we can help slow climate change. The next meeting is Tuesday, November 9th.

Overview of the 2022 SLS Workplan and Update Process (David Roberts)

The workplan format has been updated to a more useable form that includes space for tracking. The steering committee and leads from each other group will update the objectives in the workplan.

Announcements

- Rachel Alger from DelBene's office thanked the group for their work.
- David R. will send out a survey asking how we are doing carrying out work relative to ground rules.
- FbD NOFO is out. Ecology released their [RFP](#) yesterday (Nov 1). This FbD timeline is 3-4 months shorter than last round.
 - Pre-application:
 - Monday Nov 1, 2021: Pre-app opens
 - Friday Jan 14, 2022: Pre-app deadline
 - Friday Jan 28, 2022: Results of Pre-app decisions. Invitation to apply to Full Proposal.
 - Presentations: Monday Feb 14-Friday Feb 18
 - Full Application:
 - Tuesday Mar 15: Full proposal opens
 - Friday Apr 29: Full proposal deadline

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM.

Next meeting: January 5th

Agenda items:

- Floodplain by Design
- Draft of the workplan