

Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Technical Committee Meeting

November 2, 2021 9:00—12:00

Zoom Meeting

Attendees

Emily Davis, Snoqualmie Watershed Forum
Mike Rustay, Snohomish County
Matt Pouley, Tulalip Tribes
Kyle Koch, Sound Salmon Solutions
Amea Bahr, RCO
Andrea Mojzak, King County
Brett Shattuck, Tulalip Tribes
Ashley Kees, WDFW
Carson Moscoso, Snohomish Conservation District
Cory Zyla, Snoqualmie Watershed Forum
Denise Krownbell, Seattle City Light
Diego Holmgren, Tulalip Tribes
Doug Hennick, Wild Fish Conservancy
Gretchen Glaub, Snohomish County
Heather Khan, WA Dept. of Ecology
Elissa Ostergaard, Snoqualmie Watershed Forum
Mindy Rowse, NOAA
Jim Shannon, Hart Crowser for Port/City of Everett
Jonah Keith, Tulalip Tribes
Josh Chamberlain, NOAA
Jen Ford, USFS
Kevin Lee, WDFW
Kirk Lakey, WDFW
Kollin Higgins, King County
Mary Huff, WDFW
Tom O'Brien, WDFW
Micah Wait, Wild Fish Conservancy
Matt Baerwalde, Snoqualmie Tribe
Ryan Lewis, Snoqualmie Tribe
Ryan Bartelheimer, Snohomish Conservation District
Paul Crane, City of Everett
Kurt Nelson, Tulalip Tribes
Stephanie Celt, DNR

Introductions

Mike opened the meeting with introductions and reviewed the agenda.

Impromptu Networking

Attendees were sent to breakout rooms briefly for networking.

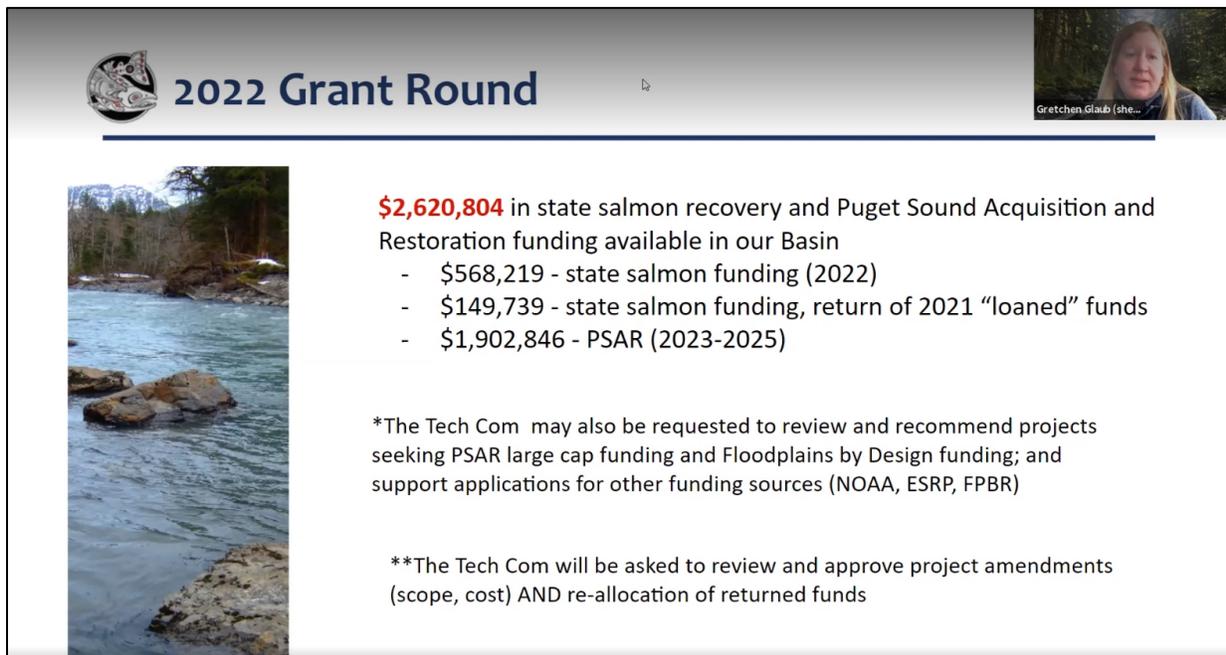
Regional and Basin Updates

2022 SRFB Grant Round

Gretchen shared updates on the 2022 SRFB Grant Round. It is a big grant year so the basin will have around \$2.6M to allocate. See below for details. It is also a Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) large capital project (“large cap”) year, but we haven’t heard of any large capital projects coming forward yet.

Gretchen reminded folks that we have a project review subcommittee of the Tech Comm that reviews and scores the grant round project proposals. They then present their rankings to the Tech Comm for approval and recommendation to bring to the Forum. Also, with all the return funds to reallocate Gretchen will be coming back to the committee for review and approval of those decisions as well.

The request for proposals will be released shortly. There will again be a Notice of Intent requirement. This helps basin staff understand what projects will be coming forward and assist sponsors in ensuring the best alignment for the funding source. Application deadlines are not finalized yet because Gretchen is still waiting to hear when our site visits will be. She shared the Anticipated Timeline with the group.



The slide features a header with a circular logo on the left and the text "2022 Grant Round" in a large, dark blue font. A small video inset in the top right corner shows Gretchen Glaub. Below the header, a vertical photograph of a river with rocks is on the left. To the right of the photo, the text reads: "\$2,620,804 in state salmon recovery and Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration funding available in our Basin". This is followed by a bulleted list: "\$568,219 - state salmon funding (2022)", "\$149,739 - state salmon funding, return of 2021 'loaned' funds", and "\$1,902,846 - PSAR (2023-2025)". Below the list, two paragraphs of text provide additional context: "*The Tech Com may also be requested to review and recommend projects seeking PSAR large cap funding and Floodplains by Design funding; and support applications for other funding sources (NOAA, ESRP, FPBR)" and "**The Tech Com will be asked to review and approve project amendments (scope, cost) AND re-allocation of returned funds".

2022 Grant Round

\$2,620,804 in state salmon recovery and Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration funding available in our Basin

- \$568,219 - state salmon funding (2022)
- \$149,739 - state salmon funding, return of 2021 “loaned” funds
- \$1,902,846 - PSAR (2023-2025)

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Other Funding News

There has been a request from the region for compiling a “Legacy/Mega Project List” for the basin consisting of projects estimated at \$10M or greater. Basin staff aren’t sure where this is going yet but are doing their best to create a robust list that demonstrates our priorities. Gretchen can share the list with anyone interested in learning more. So far it includes reach-scale work like: Drainage District 6 and Spencer Island in the estuary, floodplain reconnection in the Lower Sky and Tualco Valley ag drainage improvements in the Skykomish, Lower Tolt floodplain reconnection, Upper and Lower Frew levee setback to the Lower Raging (footbridge, Camp Gilead, golf course acquisitions, etc) in the Snoqualmie.

The Salmon Recovery Council is discussing new criteria for the PSAR large cap program to create a 10-year strategic plan. There are some concerns around how this could affect our watershed in the future accessing this important fund source. Gretchen and Morgan have been trying to stay engaged with discussions and will keep the basin informed as they learn more.

Fish Passage Barrier Removal Board (FPBRB) grant round is open. One pathway to funds is the priority watershed way. We are a priority watershed for the Board and the Pilchuck seems like it could be a good area of focus. There may be new criteria for alignment with Lead Entities to give sponsors more points on their applications so be in touch with Basin staff if you're planning to apply. Morgan is pulling together a workgroup meeting. Reach out if interested in participating.

Kurt commented on prioritizing the culverts in the Pilchuck and whether that aligns with our recovery plan. Gretchen replied that she isn't concerned that they aren't broadly in alignment. The detail to focus on is ensuring that any projects coming forward are on our 4-year work plan, Projected Project Forecast List (PPFL), and securing a letter of support from the Forum.

Action Agenda Update

The Partnership is updating the Action Agenda and hosting workshops for public input broken down by strategy topic. Gretchen shared the workshop list and noted that it would be good to have some partners from the basin participating in relevant workshops of interest (such as Marine Habitat, Freshwater Habitat, and Water Quality). Gretchen will be trying to attend a few. Our feedback is important because this will impact where National Estuary Partnership funding is distributed over the next 5 years.

Salmon Safe Pledge

Gretchen shared that the Snohomish County Exec. released a [press release](#) committing \$2 million to advancing the DD6 project as part of the Salmon Safe Certification. So more to come.

Project Working Group

Cory and Morgan shared they're convening a work group at the end of November to discuss upcoming grant opportunities and the basin's project pipeline. Stay tuned for information and materials.

2022 CWM Grant Round

The grant round this year opens Nov 15. The four categories will be monitoring and assessment, restoration and protection, education and outreach, and riparian projects. There will be new criteria. Contact Cory if planning to apply.

Plan Update

The team has taken a hiatus due to capacity constraints. Gretchen will keep the group updated.

Public Comment Open: Puget Sound Chinook Salmon Document

Matt shared that WDFW released this guiding document which describes the state's current programs and approaches to Chinook management and recovery. They are accepting comments through Nov 5. Tulalip Tribes are currently drafting comments to submit. He noted that there is a section referring to the NOAA and NMFS PRA (population recovery approach). In 2011, the Tech Comm submitted a comment letter detailing some issues on the science that was used in developing the PRA so from a technical standpoint that is relevant to this group.

WDFW Priority Habitats and Species Riparian Ecosystems

Mary Huff, Tom O'Brien, George Wilhere, & Tim Quinn presented on WDFW's Vol 2 Priority Habitat & Species (PHS) riparian ecosystems management recommendations. Mary explained that Vol 1 was a science synthesis whereas Vol 2 provides policy-based recommendations for how to apply the science in

Vol 1. Vol 1 looked at the five key riparian functions and included a review of watershed-scale processes. She gave a brief overview of the key scientific findings in Vol 1 related to riparian ecosystems.

WDFW's policy is that they want full riparian function to meet the needs of fish and wildlife. Ultimately, their recommendation is: "within the context of wise watershed management, preserve, protect and – where possible- restore the full extent of the riparian ecosystem".

Management Recommendations:

- Where trees are the native riparian vegetation, we recommend the width of the Riparian Management Zone (RMZ) be at least one site potential tree height (SPTH₂₀₀)
- Delineate RMZ by identifying the RMZ inner edge, determine RMZ width, then set the RMZ outer edge using the wider of A or B

WDFW also created an online mapping tool to help figure out SPTH for your local area based on soils data, in response to feedback received from Vol 1. Next steps include: developing a Q&A document and meeting with other state agencies to promote the document and learn about their uses for it.

Kurt Nelson asked: how is stream size considered? Mary responded that, historically, our state has treated fish bearing and nonbearing streams differently when it comes to buffer recommendations. But the science doesn't support treating them differently when it comes the benefits buffers provide in and of themselves to support the needs of fish and aquatic wildlife.

Denise Krownbell asked: the examples shown in the online mapping tool recommended different buffer sizes so which one would a project manager follow? Mary said that the forest productivity data in the buffer tool sometimes includes multiple species which impacts the output. And sometimes the data isn't up to date. It's intended to be a guide and isn't the best on a parcel scale. So, if the guidelines the buffer tool gives don't seem right for your site, you can go out on-site to see what the current species composition and use that to inform decisions.

Jen Ford asked: what about intermittent streams? George reiterated that the policymakers decided the goal was full ecological riparian function for all streams and they didn't make any distinctions between large, small, or intermittent streams.

Stephanie Celt asked: how do you see these recommendations intersecting with things like state lands and forest practices and other things set at the federal level? Are these conversations already happening with DNR? Tom said he doesn't think that these recommendations are going to undo those political or regulatory frameworks already in place. This document is only reflective of WDFW's mandate. But they are optimistic that it could influence the conversations at other organizations. Hopefully, as jurisdictions are updating their comprehensive plans, for example, they will think about incorporating these recommendations.

Kollin Higgins asked if they could speak about the all or nothing approach to buffers that Volume II seems to be promoting, and how that contrasts to the message of "something being better than nothing", which is the message of Volume I and has also been said by Tim Quinn in previous presentations. Tom responded that he hopes funders will look at these recommendations and the feedback from practitioners to see there is an opportunity to offer more flexibility. But with the large goals around salmon recovery and habitat outcomes these will be challenging, dynamic conversations to have.

Riparian Forest Health Strategy (AKA Knotweed Strategy)

Susan and Gretchen gave an update on the project's progress. Gretchen shared a map of Shinglebolt Slough and reminded the group that Snohomish County has a current Floodplains by Design (FbD) grant that in part focuses on acquisition and design for a restoration project in this area. It also includes funding to do some knotweed control. We have previously taken a piecemeal approach to invasive species control, so we are leveraging the Fbd funding to develop a riparian forest health strategy or knotweed management strategy for the basin. There's a basin wide approach and a Lower Sky approach. We hired Susan and Spencer from ESA to help develop it along with our basin partners to inform those strategies.

Susan explained the purpose, deliverables, and status of the project. She requested 4-8 volunteers from the committee to review their basin-wide approach and offer feedback on the recommendations for knotweed projects to be considered for salmon funding. The project timeline is to reach completion in February. Stephanie volunteered and mentioned it would be good to have someone from DNR on the knotweed working group if there isn't already. For now, Stephanie volunteered along with Matt Baerwalde, Beth Liddell, and Gretchen.

Riparian Forest Health Strategy

- **Project purpose**
 - Provide high level strategy for integrating riparian health/invasives removal with salmon recovery:
 - Describe desired future condition and role of invasives mgmt. in salmon recovery
 - Incorporate and advance the efforts of the knotweed working group
 - Provide funding direction and alternatives
 - Serve as communication tool between project sponsors and TC/Forum
 - Synthesize best available science
 - Draft a Lower Skykomish strategy
 - Document treatment approach and priorities
 - Develop outreach strategy
 - Direct available resources
- **Project deliverables**
 - Literature review (draft available)
 - Basin-wide document
 - Lower Skykomish strategy
- **Coordination underway**
 - Knotweed Working Group
 - Floodplains by Design/Snohomish IT
 - Interviews with implementers in Basin

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Roundtable Updates

- Mike mentioned the committee is updating the workplan for the coming year so please send ideas to the co-chairs.
- Kyle announced SSS is again in a leadership transition with Kathryn leaving her director role. More to come.
- Stephanie shared that DNR finished a \$300K landscape-scale grant application in partnership with Tulalip Tribes, Mountains to Sound, and Emerald Alliance that is focused on restoration and knotweed treatment in key areas of WRIA 7. Also, the salmon action planning effort, with a

focus on the Snohomish, has been reframed as a Watershed Resilience Plan focused on salmon recovery. The executive summary and outline were first shared with tribes for tribal review on 10/25. Later this week they will be shared more broadly. DNR is also trying to hire a watershed steward to support this work.

- Cory shared that ~\$2 M in funding anticipated for 2022 CWM grant round. Details will be posted on Forum website. Eligible project types: Restoration and Protection, Riparian Restoration, Monitoring and Assessments, Education and Outreach. Contact: Cory Zyla, Forum Project Coordinator (czyla@kingcounty.gov).

Meeting adjourned.