

SLS PARTNERS MEETING NOTES

SNOHOMISH SUSTAINABLE LANDS STRATEGY MEETING

Wednesday, January 5, 2022 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Zoom videoconference



Attendance: Daryl Williams, Lindsey Desmul, Morgan Ruff, C.K. Eidem, Carol MacIlroy, Linda Lyshall, Linda Neunzig, Dani Driscoll, David Killingstad, Erik Stockdale, Kirk Lakey, Robin Fay, Spencer Easton, Tara Luckie, Kari Quass, Ryan Bartelheimer, Terri Standberg, Cory Archer, Diane Hennessey, Bobbi Lindemulder, Vanessa Hague, Henry Lippek, Beth Liddell, Darcey Hughes, and Jay Krienitz

David Roberts (facilitation) and Sarah Parker (notetaker)

Breakout Rooms for Networking:

The partners spent the first 10 minutes of the meeting discussing something fun they did over the holidays and what they are most looking forward to in 2022.

Review SLS Workplan:

David shared the new format of the SLS workplan. The Steering Committee, ITs, and committee leads will serve as the planning team and will update the existing workplan.

Dani will add the draft workplan to the County website, and Kari will add it to farmfishflood.org. Partners are encouraged to review the workplan and send input to David. David will pass it along to the planning team.

Floodplains by Design (FbD) Grant Timeline:

Spencer reviewed the FbD purpose, timeline, and process.

Ecology's application timeline:

- January 14th: FbD Pre-applications due. The purpose of the pre-app is to determine eligibility.
- February 14th-18th: Applicants and partners provide presentations on proposals
- April 29th: Full applications due

Due to the tight timing (FbD app process reduced by 3 months), the timing of the holidays and similarity of proposals supported by SLS and other partners during the FbD 2021-2023 round, the following process is proposed:

- January 14th: Submitted pre-app provided to SLS partners and SC members at time of submission.
- January 31st: SLS partners and SC members provide concerns/highlight questions or information needs on the pre-app in prep for February presentations
- February 14-18th: Project applicant with IT and broader SLS support present to Ecology. Synthesis of Ecology comments provided to SLS.
- IT members and the project proponent will work individually or in small groups with those who have expressed concern, have questions, or need additional information in order to support an application.

- March 2nd: ITs attend SLS meeting and present package to SLS partners and SC for any final feedback or discussion and to provide any insights provided by Ecology as a result of the presentations in February
- March 30th: IT members and ultimately the project proponent will make final decisions about any remaining issues.
- April 6th: The ITs will seek a letter of support at the April 6th SLS Steering Committee meeting.
- April 15th: SLS and other partner's letters of support for final submittal (if supported).
- April 27th: Submittal of application (early given technology and other challenges)

The ITs are serving as the collaborative structure to build an integrated package. Snohomish County will be the applicant for the Snohomish watershed and the Stillaguamish Tribe will be the applicant for the Stillaguamish watershed application.

The pre-app is the first step and not very detailed, so partners will have the opportunity to offer input even after it is submitted. Carol MacIlroy noted that the only new project that the Stilly IT has added is a project for flood/fish modeling. The application packages will be sent to David to email all Partners.

Update on November Flooding:

Erik shared a summary of the November flood events which was followed by an excellent discussion.

- Snohomish County made out much better than watersheds to the north. During the November 13th event, the Skykomish River was just a couple of feet above flood level. No flood districts within the County reported damage.
- The [Northwest River Forecast Center](#) is an important resource for many in the floodplain. For example, farmers use the forecast to decide when to evacuate livestock.
- Erik shared several resources including an article about the [Sumas Pumping Station](#) in Abbotsford, B.C. and a blog about how [water interacts with the landscape](#).
- The Conservation District has some funding to support flood recovery if it is needed. The County's Flood Damage Reduction Grant Program has \$100,000-200,000 available each year for special purpose districts to repair damage.
- FEMA flood maps are outdated. Carol MacIlroy pointed out there is a significant difference between what the updated models show and what the regulatory framework considers. The group will address this in another meeting.
- The County updated plans on the Skykomish River that brought Sultan and several other areas into the floodplain. Many residents were not happy about this. Being in the floodplain decreases the value of land and ability to put up more structures—it can make it more difficult for landowners to do what they want on their land. However, it is important for planning and avoiding the worst outcome in a flood event.
- The County received funding from the Flood Control Assistant Account Program (FCAAP) for a vulnerability assessment. The assessment will consider the impacts of climate change on overburdened and underserved communities. The County is in the process of hiring a consultant. Dani will share more at a future meeting.
- The comment period for how FEMA can improve its mapping and other services closes on January 27th. The County has a draft comment letter.

Next Steps in Comp Plan Update Process:

The Comp Plan Workgroup and Steering Committee were able to prepare comments for the SEPA scoping process before the end of the year.

David Killingstad's team is leading the County through the Comp Plan visioning process. The updated 20-year vision will help inform the work they are doing on policies and priorities.

- A visioning exercise has been circulating around the County. The Comp Plan vision has not been updated since the Plan was adopted in 1995.
- The briefing process for the Planning Committee will start a year from now. The Comp Plan updates need to be completed by 2024.
- Public review of different parts of the Plan and related policy amendments will be staggered so that the public is not confronted with all of the amendments at once.
- SLS work falls into the environment, land use, and new climate change elements. SLS can also interface with the infrastructure and capital facilities elements, the parks and recreation plan, and the transportation element (ex: regarding culvert replacements). Partners can sign onto the email list to receive newsletter updates and visit the [website](#).
- SLS groups can file initial comments early to help guide the process and more substantial comments after the amendments are proposed.
- There are some legislative items relating to climate change and salmon recovery that we will not know if they pass or not until March. This might make the update timeline compliance challenging. Some jurisdictions might ask for a one-year delay for updating Comp Plans considering all the changes.
- Several additional topics that relate to SLS include:
 - A County urban tree canopy proposal. We should know the fate of this proposal by the end of February.
 - Water code that will go back to the Planning Commission later this spring. Hopefully Council will adopt it later this year.

If anyone wants to be a part of the Comp Plan workgroup, they should let David R. know. There is a lot of work to do to incorporate farm fish and flood recommendations into the plan.

Special Topic Sessions:

- The next Special Topic Session, “Community Floodplain Solutions (CFS) Program Overview and Review of Flood Hazard Studies along the Lower Skykomish River”, is scheduled for January 19th from 1:30-3:30 PM.
- We are seeking additional sessions for 2022. Please email Sarah Parker at sarah@peaksustainability.com with session ideas.
- Sarah created a new planning form for presenters to fill out before a calendar invite is sent out for their session. This will help clarify session purpose and structure.

Announcements:

- Lindsey Desmul shared that SLS has been accepted into a panel at the [Salish Sea Conference](#).
- The Communications Group is seeking five or six participants for [digital storytelling](#). They are looking for more representation, especially from the Stilly fish world. Participants will be asked to attend five 2-hour sessions. They will be featured in a 2-3 minute video during which they tell their story. The purpose for this project is to help tell the story about life and work in the floodplain, and how the challenges and benefits of different groups are very similar. Refer any potential participants to Lindsey D. or Kari Q.
- David shared that a SLS Handbook should be ready by Fall 2022.
- With the start of the legislative session next week, Daryl (Chair of Conservation Commission) will be very busy and might not be available for all SLS sessions.
- Brandon at American Rivers is coordinating a [response](#) to NFIP request for FbD partners for input on their Management Standards. Feel free to review, use or participate in this.

Meeting adjourned at 11:26 AM.

Next meeting: March 2

Agenda items:

- Floodplains by Design package review
- First draft update of SLS Workplan