



King County

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MEETING NOTES

CEDAR RIVER COUNCIL

May 24th, 2016 – 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Maplewood Greens Golf Course
4050 Maple Valley Hwy., Renton, WA 98058

Meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm.

1st Public Comment Period

Martha Parker expressed concern about safety issues arising from several logjams on the Cedar, particularly in the Cedar Rapids vicinity off of Jones Road. She believes there could be a problem with children getting stuck under logs, leading to hypothermia or drowning. Max Prinsen advised that the King County Sheriff has purview over this issue; Ms. Parker replied she would follow up with them. Nathan Brown added the County normally sends out updates on river safety; Tom Allyn noted there is a website to report logjams (spanners).

Presentations: City of Renton – Cedar River Maintenance Dredge; Elliott Channel Inlet Improvement – Ron Straka

Ron Straka overviewed presentations on two Cedar River projects undertaken by the City of Renton:

- Cedar River Maintenance Dredge: This entails dredging the lower 1.25 miles of the Cedar where it flows into Lake Washington near the Boeing facility, as well as adding bank protection. The plan is to dredge four feet deep, tapering upward further upstream. While the primary goal is to maintain flood protection benefits established by the USACE, another impetus is the South Boeing Bridge, which is frequently raised – cutting off Boeing's use of a storage facility – during higher flows. This project should significantly increase the flow level at which the bridge must be raised, therefore decreasing frequency of bridge raising. Mr. Straka said that construction is scheduled to begin June 2016, with the in-water construction period June 15-August 31, which it was noted is very close to salmon outmigration season. He added there is not much schedule flexibility; the goal is to finish the project in one summer. He noted there are additional efforts to prevent overdredging, an issue the last time this area was dredged in the 1990s, and that a press release as well as project information should be available online soon.
- Elliott Channel Inlet Improvement Project: This is meant to improve river flow in the channel and fish spawning habitat. Several improvements will be: changing light levels to improve fish outmigration, adding spawning gravel and a box culvert to improve flow, adding large woody material structures and logs with rootwads, and planting a large amount of trees and vegetation. Mr. Straka said these efforts are modeled after the Royal Hills spawning channel, and while the project is targeted to help sockeye, it's expected other species may use the channel as well. Concern was raised about a large gravel bar in this area of the river, that it may undo these efforts. Mr. Straka also stated that as the river is an unpredictable system, project perpetuity could not be guaranteed, but the city of Renton is obligated to maintain it. Construction is scheduled to begin in July 2016.

Presentation: Ballard Locks Overview – Scott Pozarycki, Biologist, US Army Corps of Engineers

Scott Pozarycki, a biologist with the USACE, gave a presentation overviewing the Ballard Locks. He described



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the basic structure of the Locks, and efforts by Corps staff to mitigate adverse effects the Locks may have on fish passing through them. This includes: replacing of culverts to reduce water velocity, less descaling of fish by removal of barnacles, implementing a temporary structure to reduce adult salmon being trapped in the diffuser well (where they gather due to lower temperatures), smolt flumes to redirect young salmon away from the large locks, and noise deterrents against predators. Mr. Pozarycki admitted there is little if any hard data concerning the total salmon preyed on at the locks, primarily by birds and mammals, but regular predation has been observed.

The second part of the presentation involved a recent study at the locks to determine if increasing the amount of saltwater upstream could lower ship canal water temperatures and increase dissolved oxygen levels in the water, and therefore improve migratory conditions for fish. Results indicated that while temperatures and oxygen near the locks reached desired levels, this was not the case further upstream towards Lake Union; in some cases the temperatures in those areas actually increased. The conclusion was that while water quality at the locks could be slightly improved without detriment to water quality elsewhere, migratory conditions could not be improved by operational changes at the locks. Mr. Pozarycki added that there has been discussion on other possible options to improve conditions, but these would require heavy stakeholder involvement and funding.

Sub-Committee Updates

- CRC Website: Mr. Brown reported the site is online, and that Mr. Allyn bought several potential domain names for the site, which he is willing to donate to the County. The consensus was to use cedarrivercouncil.org; Mr. Allyn will ensure the new domain redirects to the current CRC website.

Other Updates and Announcements

- WRIA 8: Frank Urabeck reported there had been a meeting the previous Thursday. There were some budget approvals, as well as videos praising the success of the Rainbow Bend project, which is showing signs of unusually high redd (fish nest) usage. He noted that he is willing to continue to serve as CRC representative at the WRIA meetings.
- Large Wood Meeting: Mr. Brown advised that the annual King County Large Wood meeting is scheduled for June 8th at the Mercer Island Community Center.

Future Meeting Topics: June 2016

- Knotweed Concerns: Mr. Allyn reported he has been drawing up questions on this issue to submit to the County, and that he has also asked Judy Phillips to give a presentation at the June CRC meeting. Mr. Brown advised he is still coordinating with Seattle Public Utilities to see if there will be space on the meeting agenda for the presentation, as SPU will be presenting as well.
- June Meeting: Mr. Brown gave a reminder of the location and time of the next CRC meeting (see below), and added that dinner will be provided at this meeting.

2nd Public Comment Period

There was no public comment during this period.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:06 pm.

Next Meeting

June 28th, 2016, 6:00 – 8:00 pm, Cedar River Education Center, North Bend