

Cedar River Council Meeting Notes
1/28/20

I) Call to Order – 7:03pm

- Introductions of CRC and guest presenter, Abby Hook. 4 public attendees in audience.

II) General Public Comment

- None

III) Clean Water Healthy Habitat (CWHH) Initiative Presentation by Abby Hook

- In 2018, Executive Dow Constantine asked DNRP how much money would be spent over next 10 years for water quality and habitat?
 - ~ \$4B on wastewater treatment
 - ~ \$1.7B on additional CSO control
 - ~ \$300M on habitat
 - ~ \$75M on reducing ongoing sources of toxics
 - ~ \$73M on toxic cleanup
- Then the Executive said 30-year goals needed to be developed to determine the return-on-investment and the CWHH initiative was born.
- What problems are we solving?
 - No description of desired environmental outcomes
 - Current work is siloed
 - Many long-term plans are not coordinated
 - Projects/programs aren't always focused on multi-benefits
 - Investment return isn't always clear
- Principles
 - Outcome-driven decision making
 - Integrated data, planning and delivery across programs
 - Innovative thinking
 - Systems approach
 - Equitable investments
- Part 1: Strategic Planning
 - Define 30-year water quality and habitat outcomes
 - Create architecture that links plans to outcomes
 - Set 5-year targets
 - Attribute ongoing work to meeting targets
- Part 2: Outcome-based Investments
 - Land Conservation Initiative: targeting 65,000 acres of the last best places in the next 30 years
 - a) Bonded against CFT to triple \$ in next 6 years
 - b) Waived 30% match to address inequity
 - Consider our investments with a system context
 - a) Where is the dirtiest water coming from? Untreated stormwater (118 billion gallons)

- Water quality benefits evaluation tool – results end of 2020
- Next Steps
 - Outreach to external partners
 - Development of internal measurable 30-year goals and strategic plan (end of 2020)
- Questions
 - Who to contact to make recommendations/suggestions? For now, it's Nathan. In the future there will likely be public outreach and there will be a role for the CRC at some point.
- Max asked how the State gets tied in since Maple Valley Hwy is a huge influence on the Cedar River. Abby said the internal operation is being determined first, then they'll leverage partnerships.
- Larry said the money being spent on wastewater treatment/CSO is rate-based so it's a legal and political issue. For years the Legislature has said no to funding untreated stormwater so there's a structural issue/limitation.
- Ecology is going to do a nutrients general permit which costs \$2-\$4 billion. We have an affordability problem. Might be able to do water quality trading.
- Larry said we have the highest water rates but also the best water quality.
- Max suggested a plan that has priorities for getting things done.
- Jay wanted to know the cost of treating untreated stormwater. Abby said it wouldn't necessarily get treated. Can it be kept on site? Can pollutants coming from cars/streets be reduced? Can toxic land be cleaned up?
- Someone asked if temperature will be considered in overall goals? Specifically the temperature load and thermal block from Ship Canal which affects the Cedar River salmon. Seems like this effort could be an opportunity to get things moving.
- How is CWHH linked to CRC? Larry said the CRC is focused on what's happened to fish runs, esp sockeye. If KC is looking at more healthy habitat, water temp is critical now but also in the future. (Abby said they're looking at climate forecasts.)
- Abbey said integrated flood management is a top 4 priority and they want a multi-benefit project approach.

IV) Work Plan Development

Nathan introduced a mingling exercise for the council to do regarding what was accomplished in 2019: "What did the CRC do?" and "What did the CRC not do?" and "The CRC is..."

Exercise report out:

- What the CRC did:
 - Advocated for sockeye recovery; got the wheels started on looking at the adaptive management plan; influenced the test program of releasing older fry into the river, which will provide important data to inform the adaptive management plan; took the tour; provided a forum for the public to engage with agencies (e.g. KC, Flood Control District) about things like the asphalt plant, Riverbend project; engaged with other agencies like SPU, the Tribes, etc. to create conversations.

- CRC did not:
 - Put “no fishing” signs on the river nor engage tribes; join the adaptive management workgroup, orchestrated by SPU (includes KC, the Tribes, Fish and Wildlife, Puget Sound anglers) - it would be a good group for CRC to be involved in.
 - It’s an advisory committee for mitigation on taking water out of the Cedar River – a letter or memo could go to SPU asking for placement of a member but there’s a lot of homework/commitment.
 - Engage other agencies like Army Corps of Engineers regarding concerns with Lake WA.
 - Suggestion to invite someone from the Corps to do a presentation regarding Ship Canal temperatures and impact.
 - Solve the problem of public involvement/engagement.
 - In response, gal said she created a Facebook page and said if anyone wants to help with social media they can contact her.
 - Have the iHeart Cedar River event.
- The CRC is:
 - Accommodating to education with presentations.
 - On the cusp of more active public engagement.
 - A place for discussion of topics affecting the Cedar River.
 - A leader.
 - A place to provide constructive input regarding the River.
 - Comprised of many different agencies and citizen involvement.

V) Standing Topics

- WRIA 8 – meeting highlights: Snohomish Co rejoined as a cost share partner, got more money for floodplains, etc. Presentation on study of predation of juvenile salmon in Ship Canal Bridge area. Yellow perch are now a bigger problem than small mouth bass because they are increasing in number. The number of consumed Chinook was higher than the other species. The next step is to get funding to put trackers in the yellow perch to see where they go. Are certain spots hotspots for predation?
- SPU - Water Supply: they’re managing the reservoir for fall and winter storms so it’s been going up and down. Still below normal but hopefully will get full again.
- Sockeye Management – Max hasn’t heard anything from the Governor. Frank said they’re still working on a reply. The Governor directed DFW to take the lead. If enough people gather around the table there will be a first cut and it would be a precursor to a major effort. Discussions are going on with SPU and attorneys are involved due to disagreement over legal responsibilities for mitigation. Governor Inslee is not ready to walk away but isn’t ready to make a huge commitment and hasn’t given marching orders to the Department of Fisheries since it depends on the budget. Larry elaborated and said the CRC does have an impact because many people at the top are aware and considering it. Also, the Department is financially in a world of hurt. They talked of a \$26M shortfall. 2019 was very bad for all fish species so raising license fees doesn’t really make sense.

- Fish Counts – Frank said 17,411 counted at Ballard locks but only 19% made it to the Cedar. Historically 40 – 60% show up in the Cedar. The North Lake Washington run had only 610 fish make it back (4%). Sockeye was 540,000 in 1986. Only 29,000 last year.
- Cedar River Asphalt Plant – Permitting letter is 12 pages and is highly detailed. Shows that permitting has looked at it really carefully. They're asking for additional engineering and work in several areas. Every environmental impact is addressed as well as the bulk of items that the public talked about at the meetings: air quality, wetland repair, culverts, sound barriers, sound wall, etc. The Muckleshoot Tribe weighed in and is concerned about part of the stream having a fish passable culvert. They also asked for an Environmental Impact Statement. It was a strong document that benefited from the public comment. If they enforce everything, there won't be much impact to the River. Many things will add to the cost of the project. Will it no longer be viable? In addition, two properties along the Cedar River have applied to be rezoned to industrial.
- CRC membership and operations
 - Member recruitments for Citizen at Large and Tributary Citizen at Large will be discussed at the next meeting.
 - Nathan will schedule a meeting with the chair and vice chair.

VI) Public comment – Roger Bannock was thankful to be invited and said he realizes the group is knowledgeable and dedicated to help the sockeye come back in numbers that are fishable. He himself has worked with fish for decades and he's dedicated to bringing them back. He has a list of things that can be affordably done to increase the return of sockeye. He'll put something into writing. He'd like the group to weigh in on his recommendations. He's thrilled to see what the CRC does and that it has a mindset similar to his. He'd like to coordinate something in the future.

- Nathan mentioned some new people on the City of Renton and City of Maple Valley.
- Guest suggested that meeting notes be posted to the Nextdoor app or something similar. Nathan said there are limitations so he didn't think they could, but he's exploring doing virtual meetings.

VII) Meeting adjourned.