

# Snoqualmie Fish, Farm, Flood 2.0 Implementation Oversight Committee

## DRAFT MEETING NOTES

Monday, September 20, 2021 (IOC Fall 2021 Retreat #1 of 3)  
9:00 am to 11:30 am (scheduled)  
Video Conference Call via King County Zoom Account

Committee Members Present (Y/N)					
* = denotes caucus co-chair					
Fish Caucus		Farm Caucus		Flood Caucus	
Cindy Spiry, Snoqualmie Tribe* (proxy: Matt Baerwalde - Y)	Y	Marie Shimada, Snoqualmie Valley Preservation Alliance*	Y	Angela Donaldson, Fall City Community Association*	Y
Denise Krownbell, Snohomish Forum	Y	Bobbi Lindemulder, farmer	Y	Lara Thomas, City of Duvall	N
Mike Remington, Snoqualmie Forum	Y	Meredith Molli, Agriculture Commission	Y		
Micah Wait, Wild Fish Conservancy	Y	Dave Glenn, Sno Valley Tilth	Y		
Daryl Williams, Tulalip Tribes (proxy: Kurt Nelson - N)	Y				
Ex Officio Members Present (Y/N)					
Gary Bahr, WSDA	N	Brendan Brokes, WDFW (proxy: Stewart Reinbold - N)	N		
Josh Baldi, KC DNRP	Y	Tom Buroker, WDOE (proxy: Joe Burcar - N)	Y		

### 1) Welcome (Tamie Kellogg)

- **Call to Order:** Meeting facilitator Tamie Kellogg called the meeting to order at 9:05 am.
- **Icebreaker:** IOC members and other attendees were sent to break-out rooms for a brief conversation.

### 2) Taking Stock in FFF Progress

#### a) Caucus Break-Out Discussions

IOC members were sent into 20-minute breakout rooms with their caucuses to review and discuss updated FFF draft milestones and identify highlights for their co-chair to report out: what's going well, what needs to be accelerated, and what the biggest hurdles are.

#### b) Caucus Co-Chairs' Report Out

- **Flood:** Caucus co-chair Angela Donaldson reported back.
  - What's going well:
    - Action item #3: The goal is to complete 90 home elevations over nine years (10 per year), and there is currently a budget for two years at this rate. The flood caucus also wants to know how the farm caucus feels about this perceived success.
    - Action item #5: Eric Beach, Regulatory Permitting Specialist in DNRP-WLRD's AFI unit, determined there is already adequate farmworker housing available near the Snoqualmie APD, with no additional push needed here.
  - What needs accelerating:
    - The home elevation program team should give an updated presentation on the program to the full IOC so they can all be on the same page going forward, and this presentation should be recorded.
    - The caucus would like a dashboard showing the number of at-risk floodplain structures in the APD and how many are being mitigated or otherwise addressed.
    - Flood-safe roads are a key issue; the caucus is collaborating with partners on modeling, to determine solutions for APD roads and how to advocate for flood-safe roads.
    - Another push sought is for watershed-scale analysis for flood storage, to understand what the APD experiences during flood season and what causes that.
    - The caucus wants support and engagement via a permanent seat from the Flood Control District (FCD), or its DNRP-WLRD Rivers section technical support staff, on the IOC.

- Biggest hurdles:
  - Funding is the most significant hurdle to projects.
  - It was asked how the flood caucus's work could support other caucuses.
- Follow-up discussion:
  - Funding is a major issue for all caucuses. Josh Baldi, DNRP-WLRD Division Director, explained there may be money available at the state level thanks to the Hirst decision, as well as FEMA grant funding.
  - Cross-benefits of 2D modeling were clarified. Such analysis would benefit not only the APD but allow understanding of lower Valley road flood impacts, drainage areas in sub-basins, and assess how flood storage impacts in the watershed have changed over time. This includes how fast the water comes down from headwaters to where it stays, and places it might stay longer to alleviate pressures elsewhere. The analysis is also key for farmers, for whom frequent low-intensity floods and correlating drainage impact their planting season. The Snoqualmie Valley Watershed Improvement District (WID) has completed their analysis of water storage potential in the watershed and are working with landowners to narrow down sites, and are willing to share more information on this.
  - It was agreed more engagement from the FCD is needed, via an IOC representative as well as pushing for more multi-benefit projects. DNRP has brought on a project manager for the County's flood hazard plan update, in partnership with the FCD. An Interlocal Agreement has also been signed for Rivers section staff to continue another five years as the FCD's service provider. The farm caucus also agreed to support what needs to be done to get the FCD more active in FFF.
- **Farm:** Caucus co-chair Marie Shimada reported back.
  - What's going well:
    - The streamlined Agricultural Drainage Assistance Program (ADAP) is seeing swifter movement than before, but is still a question mark.
    - Responsiveness to questions in the FFF process is favorable.
    - The formation of the WID and their participation has been key, along with collaboration of other community partners and tribes.
  - What needs accelerating:
    - The permanency of the Comprehensive Drainage program is still in question.
    - Many milestones for both the Farm and Fish caucuses have not been completed or even started; it would be within bounds to write a letter to DNRP's director on this.
    - Outside of the IOC discussion table, it is unclear who is aware of or cares about FFF.
    - This caucus is still missing a representative from the King Conservation District (KCD).
    - There has been no update since 2019 on the requirement for a WID fish biologist; while there is one in place now, it is important the WID continues to be funded for this position.
    - There is no committed drainage tile funding for 2022.
    - The permitting process through King County remains unresolved.
    - This caucus has not been presented to on code language addressing alluvial fans; specific deliverables and timelines are needed.
    - Timelines/processes should be clearly established for Tucker Creek and Basin 1 pump projects.
  - Biggest hurdles:
    - It is uncertain how progress should occur at higher levels; often a listed responsible individual has done all they can but a project remains behind due to circumstances beyond their control.
    - It would be good for King County Department of Local Services (DLS)' Permitting Division or even DLS director John Taylor to attend an IOC meeting.
    - There should be more push to the FCD about involving them in FFF.
    - Another possible hurdle is tension between the caucuses and the County; time and space are needed to discuss this.
  - Follow-up discussion:
    - It was suggested more meetings be held between caucuses without a full IOC gathering, such as brief monthly co-chair meetings on progress, with areas of overlap or solutions brought back to the County or full IOC.
    - Josh Baldi said the County has an Executive and a DNRP director who care about FFF, but FFF needs to hang together as a voice to push for those needed five King County Council (KCC) votes to advance sought-after solutions.

- It was asked when a meeting could occur to work on the County’s Comprehensive Plan update. DNRP and DLS have worked for a while on a joint work program, but Baldi noted it was smart to queue this in context of the Comprehensive Plan. Ways to make the County’s rigorous code more efficient are also sought; a high-level approach to this should be brought to the IOC next month.
- Concern was voiced that the County continues to make decisions “in a vacuum” and the IOC should be able to give feedback at an appropriate time in the decision process. Baldi assured that the County wants to be more responsive and transparent and engage the IOC in strategic decisions, and that progress won’t happen without FFF support.
- **Fish:** Caucus co-chair Cindy Spiry reported back.
  - What’s going well:
    - The Fall City Floodplain Restoration Project is moving forward.
    - The buffers task force’s phase 1 completed successfully.
  - What needs accelerating:
    - The pace of project completion inside and outside the APD needs acceleration, as well as smoothing the County’s internal process. This includes improving multi-benefit project focus in DNRP’s Rivers section, and having someone in the FCD involved in FFF. More communication is needed on the next major queued projects in the APD.
    - Phase 2 of the buffers task force should be pushed, in terms of implementing their recommendations: farmers need to want to put buffers in the ground, and minimum sizes should be established as well as the currently-established maximums.
    - There is talk of large wood involved in the Fall City project moving forward.
  - Biggest hurdles:
    - More funding is needed, specifically for capital projects staff, technical staff, and basin stewards.
  - Follow-up discussion:
    - The Farmland Protection Program (FPP)’s restriction on enlarging buffer sizes on their properties is a priority issue in the lower Snoqualmie basin.
    - Janne Kaje of DNRP-WLRD’s Regional Partnerships Unit clarified that while it would be good to have more Snoqualmie basin stewards, the big hurdle to project progress is footprint opportunities for project sites, which can be unpredictable. There are, however, a number of small-scale projects in the works in the basin, including on the Tolt. Erin Ericson of the WID said there are many chances to engage landowners on conservation, and the WID would be glad to help others work with landowners to implement these projects.
    - It was suggested that due to the pandemic, FFF has dropped as a County priority, including acting on items like incentivizing buffer planting for farmers.
    - The FCD is a special-purpose district and very limited in its charge and funding. Therefore, specific intent and “ask” regarding an FCD or Rivers section staff representative to the IOC should be discussed, including a motion and a vote from the full IOC. This may be something for co-chairs to work on.

### c) Questions & Discussion

After a short break, Tamie Kellogg prefaced a further follow-up discussion by asking IOC members to confirm that: (1) they still support the agreed-on FFF milestones, (2) not enough progress has been made, and (3) they support a specific list of accelerated action items. Consensus was unanimous on these three points. It was suggested that looking at milestone prioritization would be helpful, as well as digging into the funding barrier, to ask if there are items that should be moved ahead over others.

Follow-up discussion was siloed into responses to three different questions:

- **How to actively support each other’s caucus priorities and milestones – do you have a new way to support what people are asking for?**

Responses centered on the IOC sending a funding request letter to the County Executive via DNRP Director Christie True. The request should include a specific list of priorities and be consistent with original “bundling” language for collective action item progress. It was suggested the priorities be derived from today’s caucus report-out sessions, and for co-chairs to work on a first draft of this letter to be available to discuss before the mid-October IOC meetings. Abby Hook, DNRP’s Environmental Affairs Officer, advised that such a letter would be best sent after the November elections, to better align with budget requests coming in from DNRP and get more attention.

- **How do we ensure accountability for our milestones?**

It was generally agreed that more discussion is needed to determine what true accountability means. Some suggestions included: supporting current work, better communication and prioritization, more frequent reviews of milestone deadlines, and co-chairs being more proactive in ways such as meeting regularly to note items in need of addressing. It was stressed that each caucus should confirm how to interpret their intended meaning of progress and accountability.

- **When reflecting on these milestones, are any common needs being expressed?**

It was agreed that FCD representation on the IOC is sought on the levels of both technical/advisory staff and policy direction. This is sought for better communication, coordination, and understanding of FCD projects and studies. Technical support staff for the FCD come from DNRP-WLRD's Rivers section; Josh Baldi advised asking their involvement will be a different request from the policy direction, which would be handled by the FCD Board. Rivers staff, including Baldi, cannot speak on behalf of the FCD Board.

It was suggested KCD Board Executive Committee member Dave Upthegrove be requested to work with the IOC for periodic check-ins on FCD policy direction. Asking Rivers staff to participate regularly with the IOC, with project details and how their work can be leveraged with FFF priorities, will be a separate request. Work is needed to determine how to help the FCD Board understand FFF priorities. Angela Donaldson will review a 2018 IOC letter that asked for FCD participation, and stressed a need to be clear on what priorities the IOC is asking the FCD to collaborate on. Co-chairs will work on these requests.

**3) Next Steps & Follow-Up/Retreat Focus for October 12-13 (*Beth leDoux, Tamie Kellogg*)**

Caucus co-chairs will meet to help develop the agenda for the two mid-October retreat meetings, as well as help put together timelines and plans. It was suggested that co-chairs' roles shift a bit as FFF moves into its next implementation phase; operating guidelines for the IOC will be reviewed. Caucuses may want to decide if they wish to discuss action item prioritization more internally. Beth leDoux is also looking at ways to efficiently share today's large meeting recording file with all present.

**4) Wrap-Up/Adjourn (*Tamie Kellogg*)**

Tamie Kellogg adjourned the meeting at 11:29 am.

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*Next IOC Meeting(s): October 12-13, 2021, 8:00 am to 10:30 am (Zoom video conference call)*