

Snoqualmie Fish, Farm, Flood 2.0 Implementation Oversight Committee

DRAFT MEETING NOTES

Thursday, April 28, 2022

12:30 pm to 2:30 pm (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* <i>(proxy: Matt Baerwalde - Y)</i>	Y	Bobbi Lindemulder, farmer*	Y	Angela Donaldson, Fall City Community Association*	Y
Denise Krownbell, Snohomish Forum	Y	Lauren Silver, Snoqualmie Valley Preservation Alliance	Y	Lara Thomas, City of Duvall	N
Micah Wait, Wild Fish Conservancy	Y	Meredith Molli, Agriculture Commission	Y		
Daryl Williams, Tulalip Tribes <i>(proxy: Kurt Nelson - N)</i>	Y	Dave Glenn, Sno Valley Tilth	Y		
Rick Shaffer, Snoqualmie Forum	Y	Liz Stockton, King Conservation District	Y		
Ex Officio Members Present (Y/N)					
Gary Bahr, WSDA	Y	Kirk Lakey, WDFW	N		
Josh Baldi, KC DNRP	Y	Tom Buroker, WDOE <i>(proxy: Joe Burcar - N)</i>	Y		

I) Call to Order and Welcome / Updates

Facilitator Tamie Kellogg began the meeting at 12:33 pm.

a) Introduction of Lauren Silver, Snoqualmie Valley Preservation Alliance (SVPA)

Lauren Silver was introduced and welcomed as the new SVPA representative to the IOC.

b) Questions on Packet Updates

There were no questions or comments on this item.

c) Josh Baldi Updates

The King County flood plan is up and running, and the Comprehensive Plan (“comp plan”) process is starting. Some policy objectives for FFF may be captured in the comp plan and other County policy updates. Baldi noted that integrated drainage, including alluvial fans, is very much a part of this process. Baldi added that, as the County shares what updates are advanced to the King County Council (KCC) and the Executive, it wishes to have any objections from the FFF process documented. Commonality on objectives as part of the public process is very valuable. New King County Councilmember Sarah Perry has also voiced interest in this process and has been briefed about the work of FFF.

II) 2D Modeling Project (*Andrea Mojzak, DNRP*)

DNRP’s basin steward for the lower Snoqualmie watershed, Andrea Mojzak, provided an update on the 2D modeling project for the basin. Development of this model is for King County to evaluate flooding impacts to the Snoqualmie Valley. This will aid understanding of local impacts from smaller-scale floods (such as two-, five-, and 10-year events).

The County secured \$320K for the project due to February 2020 floods in the Valley being declared a federal disaster. Former FFF project manager Beth leDoux developed a Scope of Work (SOW) for the project, which includes: data collection, collecting info from Valley gages, contractor and King County collaboration to develop a model, and working with FFF and the affected community to identify priority scenarios to investigate with the model. Other elements include infrastructure analysis (where vulnerabilities are now and under climate change predictions), and outreach, ensuring King County is engaging with the IOC and caucuses as this project continues. A consultant should be hired to start in the fall and come to the IOC around October to provide feedback. The expected timeframe for the project is fall 2022 to fall 2023. Mojzak said it is imagined the IOC might serve as technical or local experts as the contractor looks to fill data gaps, and as the model is calibrated to ensure what’s being seen in the computer model is what people are experiencing out in the Valley. The contractor will ask questions: what floods and timing are impactful and should be investigated with this model? What do we want to do with this project, to get the anticipated value?

Questions and Feedback from IOC Members:

- It's good to have this inclusion of "ground truth," what farmers are seeing on the ground, for calibration of info. This feedback loop will be very important.
- **Q:** Will the 10-year-old SVPA hydro-gage data be used to analyze localized flooding impacts?
A: Some historical data will be incorporated; the County wants to collect all the data it can.
- **Q:** Is this planned to become an iMap layer?
A: It's going to be more dynamic, if there are certain flood flows and timings important to share. Beth leDoux suggested including a story map, some representation of this monumented online.
- **Q:** Would this work address tributary floods/flows, or the mainstem?
A: It's focused on the main Snoqualmie floodplain, though the modeling does include tributary gages and their impacts on how the Snoqualmie floods.
- **Q:** Will this be an open-source tool to be utilized for projects in other areas?
A: I'm not certain about open-source, but the data should be something an engineer would be able to use. The story map will be more telling, in what we identify as the most important floods and info of how we see flooding currently and predicted in the Valley.
- **Q:** So engineers would have access to this data?
A: There are plans to distribute this internally through King County, and we do anticipate sharing the data, though I'm not sure how widely.
- Reiterating that residents and farmers on the river are our best technical experts overall, and they'll add much value to this model. If this model is publicly available, its value will be even greater.

It was suggested that in the fall, once the model is more developed, the IOC have a conversation along with the consultant on how to share the model and tee up new questions for it. It was agreed this could be scheduled by Mojzak once the consultant is brought on board.

III) Update on Capital Habitat Restoration Projects (*Andrea Mojzak, DNRP*)

Andrea Mojzak spoke on the ongoing Fall City restoration project. This project focuses on increasing habitat in this reach of the Snoqualmie River for endangered Chinook salmon. This will include removal of the Barfuse levy and part of the Haffner revetment, reconnecting 145 acres of floodplain, moving part of Neal Rd., creating a side channel in the right-bank floodplain, and revegetation of the site with native trees and shrubs.

Construction will begin this summer and span two years, one year for each side of the river. Construction will be July to September and is being timed to fall within the "fish window" to minimize fish impacts. In fall/winter, the disturbed ground will be planted. The plan is to salvage as much material on-site as possible, including healthy soil and trees for use elsewhere. Other materials will be hauled off-site. Construction should not impact traffic or access to Highway 202, but there will be an increase in construction traffic and flaggers. Construction vehicles will enter through the old Rainier Wood Recyclers driveway. Across the river on the right bank, this summer will – if there is capacity – see construction of the new stretch of Neal Rd. The existing road will remain open until the new stretch is fully usable; all residents on the road have been notified. Seeding for erosion control is also planned.

The King County Sheriff's Office has been notified and signs are being installed nearby and upstream to warn recreational river floaters of the construction. A mailout will be sent in May to advise locals of the construction. Anyone with concerns about impacts to events in Fall City is advised to contact Andrea Mojzak. Interest was expressed in an IOC tour of the construction site. Mojzak said one or two such trips for each river side of the project may be possible this summer, and will reach out on this.

Other salmon habitat projects in the works for the Snoqualmie watershed include:

- Fish Hatchery Rd. SE (also known as Plum Upper): This is a King County Roads decommissioned bridge and involves investigating connectivity to an adjacent floodplain.
- Snoqualmie River Farm (also known as Beyers): This is the only new APD project being considered at this time. The project team will engage regularly with King County's Agriculture team during their investigation.
- Camp Gilead Feasibility Study: This involves investigating the possibility to remove part of a revetment.
- Kutz: This is a private revetment removal outside the APD.
- Lower Frew Levee Setback, Preliminary Design: This is also outside the APD. DNRP's River and Floodplain Management Section has taken over design of this. WLRD will not direct but will engage in ensuring habitat interests are addressed. This is a few years from construction.
- A sixth project outside the immediate Snoqualmie that may be of interest to the IOC is in Skykomish on the lower Miller River. Denise Di Santo is the basin steward and contact for that project.

Some concern was voiced on if the \$320K in funding mentioned earlier will be enough for these projects as well as the 2D modeling. Mojzak said if they stay on task, this should be sufficient funding for the modeling project. The first

three additional salmon projects are studies funded through Surface Water Management (SWM) fees, and Kutz has SWM funding slated to complete this summer. Lower Frew has some SWM and grant funding but is now being fully funded by the Flood Control District (FCD). Any feasibility studies that look viable will have funding for further development sought. It was also noted that while today's talk focused on capital projects, there are other companion efforts in the watershed that the County can give a presentation on later if desired. It was agreed that Mojzak would come back to the IOC in the fall to present on milestones and anything else requested.

IV) King County Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee Update (Michael Murphy, DNRP; Angela Donaldson)

The Comprehensive ("comp") Plan is the County's main policy document, governing everything, and with policies directly related to FFF. Michael Murphy serves as DNRP's primary liaison with the King County Executive's Office regarding the comp plan. Angela Donaldson leads the IOC's comp plan subcommittee, which has met several times. Murphy said things were on track to get policy updates that reflect where the IOC has been, wants to go, what shall occur, and what should occur.

Murphy explained the timeline for the current comp plan revision. The plan is a set of proposed policy updates at the Executive Branch level. Then, KCC will have it for a while, followed by periods for environmental/SEPA review and public comment. Murphy noted several planned milestones:

- August 2022: 65% of proposed language completed.
- End of October 2022: 80% completed drafts due from departments.
- April 10, 2023: Hard deadline for 95% completed language for public review.
- End of 2024: KCC adopts plan.

Angela Donaldson noted the IOC comp plan subcommittee will meet again on May 13 to review Murphy's draft policy language. From there, this will be shared with caucuses and return to the IOC on June 22. Tamie Kellogg reminded caucus liaisons to schedule meetings with their members in June to review the draft language. Donaldson discussed potential language to include in the cover letter to DNRP Director Christie True to transmit to the Executive: to identify key priorities, and what should be kept in mind as the letter is transmitted upwards, such as advocating any needed funding or code changes.

V) House Elevation Program Update (Ken Zweig, DNRP)

Ken Zweig with DNRP's River and Floodplain Management section spoke on the County's House Elevation Program. The program, which the County has been involved with for 23 years, is intended to reduce flood risks to people and property. The program has been involved with 80 such projects, many in the Snoqualmie basin. Individual cities such as Snoqualmie also undertake such projects, mostly with FEMA funding. The website for the program is [here](#).

Program funding is through the King County FCD, though has also come through FEMA and HUD. Due to budget constraints, the program is only available in the Snoqualmie basin. Interested homeowners reach out to program staff and are put on a waiting list, to be addressed in date order. Seven projects are underway now with 28 on a waiting list. Zweig noted the "first come, first serve" order is not a process easily changed, but there may be a possibility in the future of looking at prioritizing some landowners based on criteria such as flood elevations.

Zweig said the program is not right for everyone, and reviewed its qualifications and enrollment requirements.

Program Qualifications include:

- First level of home must be below base flood elevation during a 100-year event, as documented by elevation certificate.
- Must be permissible by County law.
- Not appropriate in high-velocity areas where flow can tear out a foundation; sometimes home buyouts are a solution here.
- Ensure there's no other mitigation project underway where these flood concerns are being addressed.
- Landowner must have capacity to take on job.

Enrollment requirements include:

- Area below ground floor must allow for groundwater flow (most people opt for enclosed storage space).
- Water heaters and other damageable appliances need to be three feet above base flood elevation.
- Water-resistant materials must be used.
- Funding for this is only for safe elevation of the home, not other home deficiencies.

Zweig explained the homeowner's role in the process is to hire/manage consultants, handle permits, and oversee the project. The program cost must be paid up front, with the program reimbursing monthly up to a point. In the lower Snoqualmie, this can be up to 95% of about \$227K. This amount is set by FEMA and is adjusted annually. Three

construction bids are required, with award based on the lowest bid. Zweig noted that while the program doesn't have capacity to provide financing for those unable to pay the up-front cost, there are resources they can refer people to, such as loans through banks or lenders.

The County's role is to prep pre-construction and construction legal agreements, which lay out roles, responsibilities, and eligible costs. The County provides technical assistance, reviews architecture plans, and has materials to guide homeowners through the process, as well as names of those who've completed these projects before. Projects can take as long as three years. However, it's an increasing challenge to find willing consultants, contractors, and architects.

VI) WA State FFF Ex Officio Member Updates (*Tamie Kellogg*)

- Daryl Williams reported the WA State Conservation Commission (WSCC) was approved two sessions ago for funding to develop a supplement to their grant program. The [Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program](#) (CREP) requires a 180-foot buffer planting, but the program is not funding farmers at a level to incentivize their participation. There are hopes a similar buffer pilot project in the lower Skagit will offer lessons for King County.
- Gary Bahr reported that state agencies are trying to capitalize on federal/state funding. WSDA partners with WSCC when possible. WSDA has a new soil health initiative, in collaboration with the King County Agriculture Commission, Washington State University, and others. Other efforts include the [Sustainable Farms and Fields](#) carbon farming program, and [USDA Climate-Smart Commodities](#) applications.
- Tom Buroker reported that DOE has been engaged with Whatcom County on recent flooding on the Nooksack River. The towns of Everson and Sumas are largely vacant due to flood destruction, with complications affecting Canada as well. Whatcom County has an FFF-parallel process called [Floodplain Integrated Planning](#) (FLIP) which may offer some lessons for FFF. Flooding is a problem in many basins in WA now.

VII) King County Councilmember Sarah Perry Introduction (*Sarah Perry, KCC*)

Sarah Perry, recently-elected member of the King County Council representing District 3, was introduced and spoke to the IOC. District 3 has nearly half of the County's square mileage, and one-third of its constituents are in unincorporated King County. Councilmember Perry's work in District 3 intersects in many ways with FFF efforts. Perry's office is working with the King County Agriculture Commission, salmon recovery program staff, and others. Perry voiced the importance of ensuring economic vitality for farms while not overpowering our environment and limited space, and determining how best their office can partner with FFF efforts.

Perry meets regularly with various Commissions, committees, tribes, and other entities to ensure close dialogue, and will also meet with farmers soon on the issue of beavers. Libby Hollingshead, Perry's chief of [staff](#), also offered themselves as a resource for Perry's office. Perry looks forward to continued work with FFF. IOC members welcomed Perry and look forward to engaging with the Councilmember in the future.

VIII) Wrap Up/Adjourn (*Tamie Kellogg*)

The next IOC meeting is scheduled for June 22. Tamie Kellogg asked if there is any interest in an in-person field trip, meeting somewhere in the Snoqualmie Valley, and advised anyone with thoughts on this to reach out. June's meeting may also include an update on Integrated Drainage.

The meeting ended at 2:19 pm.