



WRIA 6 Salmon Recovery Technical & Citizen Committee Meeting

July 26, 2023

Member Participants: Scott Chaplin (COG), Kristin Marshall (SCD), Kurt Schlimme and Ryan Elting(Land Trust), Eric Mickelson, Todd Zackey (Tulalip, Co-Chair), Paul Williams(SWS), Barbara Brock (Citizen, Co-Chair), Fred Kiga, Kelly Zupich (MRC) Ashley Kees (WDFW), Renee Zavas Silva and Travis Wilmont (ICCAO), James Watson (WICD) **Others:** Clea Barenburg (LE Coordinator), Jessica Reed (Watershed Planner IC DNR), Carlie Miller and Sage Ince(ICDNR), Jen Schmitz (ICDNR manager)

Introductions & Presentations

PSP- No representatives at meeting. Jen and Clea approved for positions on the Salmon Recovery Council and Clea to attend Zoom meeting this week. MOU presented and shared with work in part motivated by ILIO.

LIO - new coordinator Jen Schmitz with update on ILIO Executive Committee that met this morning and had not met for almost 1 year working on Ecosystem Recovery plan.

MRC- Climate Change and Sea level rise white paper to present in October to BOCC. MRC looking for support from SRTCC saying we agree with plans. RFP out for armoring survey. Similar survey to that done by the friends of the San Juans on hard armoring and change over time with percentage of permitted and unpermitted work <https://sanjuans.org/2022/11/17/course-correction-needed-for-rapidly-changing-shorelines/> They have experienced complication with RFP process.

LE coordinator- LE coordinator has been attending monthly meetings the other Whidbey Basin LEs and sharing grant round projects and funding distribution information. LE contract is up for renewal and LE has shared links to BOCC discussions on the contract and links to the snapshot of contract for input and support from SRTCC. LE coordinator contract happening now, it's time for renewal for 23-25. If anyone wants to review contract. <https://secure.rco.wa.gov/prism/search/projectsnapshot.aspx?ProjectNumber=23-1235>

Mini grants: Still working on the last 2, 10k contracts with major delay related to the new IC process. Last two to have been approved and are awaiting sponsor review of new paperwork.

Upcoming outreach at community events input requested. Project planning input requested and time for looking at future projects. Clea will be sending out a survey on meeting location and interest in Hybrid or in person meetings.

Camano Country Club update and Livingston

- Kristin M of Snohomish Conservation District invited to give verbal update on the project. She thanked SRTCC members for helpful input. Country Club board is supportive of moving forward. SCD thankful for the SRTCC subcommittee feedback helpful to final proposal preference. RCO has not given feedback as to comments on if the amount of restoration is salmon friendly enough. They will have to look at other funding if RCO does not think there is enough benefit. The Conservation District needs to hear from some key property holders. SCD is using internal funding to keep moving forward with the project. After we receive RCO comments then present this information again to SRTCC or SRTCC subcommittee. SCD would like input before grant round. Comment that anything that can be done in Port Susan, is important work and we need to get some wins in these communities. It would be good to have a successful pocket estuary project. Kristin will send out information from RCO when she receives it. SCD will attend CCC board meeting. Fred asked about media coverage for salmon recovery in Port Susan. SCD has not had a broader news announcement besides the immediate communities, and they would need to talk to community first. Maybe share information at Camano 101. Question on hydraulics and flow, recommend checking the alternative analysis. Kristin has been sharing information with Nick T in public works.

Alternatives analysis should be reviewed with the preferred project information. The most relevant attachments are named: "CCC Lagoon Preliminary Design BOD June 2023" and "CCC Lagoon Restoration Preliminary Design Plans". The BOD report includes cost estimates in Table 5/page 29. If you would like to review documents associated with this project or watch the presentation that was done for the subcommittee group, then please use this link to the snapshot- Snapshot of Camano CC Tide gate Feasibility and Preliminary Design

<https://secure.rco.wa.gov/prism/search/projectsnapshot.aspx?ProjectNumber=18-1382>

Administrative

The June meeting minutes were approved.

- Membership: Paul Williams is approved. Doug Kelly has left the committee and needs to be replaced. Question and comment that replacement of Citizen would be appropriate to come from Whidbey for balance of Islands representatives. Questions of military replacement representative and LE has reached out to NAVFAC. Question of Jason and Jay being replaced. Request has been made to Watershed/DCG group for member.

Discussion and Decisions

- Lead Entity Contract that supports the Lead Entity coordinator position. Questions on funding pots. See meeting information from County Commissioners- The agenda for the Wednesday, July 5th work session can be found here: <https://www.islandcountywa.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/07052023-582>; the audio is here: <https://www.islandcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3888/07052023-WS-Audio> County DNR brought a discussion on salmon recovery funding, mark 1:07:38 in the audio. Provide feedback if you have questions concerns or suggestions for LE contract. See Snapshot for details- <https://secure.rco.wa.gov/prism/search/projectsnapshot.aspx?ProjectNumber=23-1235>

Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) fund: This fund supports projects that recover salmon and protect and recover salmon habitat in Puget Sound. The state legislature appropriates money for PSAR every 2 years in the Capital Budget. PSAR is co-managed by the Puget Sound Partnership and the Recreation and Conservation Office, and local entities identify and propose PSAR projects. (Partnership)

Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB): Pronounced "surfboard", this state and federal board provides grants to protect and restore salmon habitat. Administered by a 10-member State Board that includes five governor-appointed citizens and five natural resource agency directors, the board brings together the experiences and viewpoints of citizens and the major state natural resource agencies. Funding for the grant round is distributed using a formula adopted by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board. The formula is based the number of listed and non-listed salmon stocks, number of evolutionarily significant units, number of watershed resource inventory areas, and salmon shoreline miles. The Puget Sound Recovery Region has 15 lead entities and further allocates both its salmon and PSAR funding based on a formula approved by the Puget Sound Leadership Council.

2023 PSP Public Boards Calendar review- Jen and Clea on Salmon Recovery Council now and Jen on ECB. Topics include HEAL Act and EJ criteria with recommendations for incorporating into PSAR work. Are other LE's experiencing push back from elected officials on their work. In the past the State has come to support LE's and the role of PSP in salmon recovery.

2023 SRFB Grant Round -SRFB Funding of projects moving forward with allocation for WRIA 6 at 278,102 and PSAR from last year at 809,000. We were waiting for updates from SRFB review of the 2 POC's (Humphrey Rd culvert, Scenic Heights) and that is why the meeting is on the 26th. Humphrey Road culvert has stayed in POC status so will not be moving forward. Scenic Heights at Penn Cove has been moved to a conditioned project status and Public Works has asked questions related to conditions with concerns that they will not be able to do the extra requests in the time allotted for grant. Ranking to be submitted to RCO in August.

- Scenic Heights – POC higher ranked than Humphrey Rd – If PW can meet conditions, then look to PSAR for funding to cover 290,000. There is no match, which means more time constraints. This project not on normal PW list of projects, this was extra so no County funds available to support project, at this time. May be suited for a success at a later time when there is more confirmation of fish presence, or the project can be looked at more from a climate resiliency approach. Mathew spoke on frustration with RCO concerns with the amount of woody debris in estuary. Mathew asks for support in doing the desired fish analysis conditions. They would need a new sponsor to do eDNA requested. Todd shares from Elger Bay wood study and complications with eDNA and how it does not match up always with fish presence. Tribes could look into this for the future. In estuaries with tides going in and out eDNA can be confusing as to source. Eric's group has data from Grassers Lagoon. How often is the culvert connected to salt water? Rough survey the downstream is just below MHHW and the upstream is above MHHW. The majority of the time it is not tidally connected right now. This project may do better with future climate change and sea level rise, but that design level is more complicated. Maybe look to Federal Fundings with NOAA standards where climate has to be considered in plans. Understand the proportion of time there is connectivity to show fish benefit for fish related grants and funding. Not on TIP or Clean Water Utility plans. PW will check with consultant Herrera to see if they can do the work. There was hope that the Priority Area culvert report would help us with proving more habitat and fish benefit. We are still working on some updates for that report if anyone would like to contribute or review final version. We can't do major changes as the grant has ended. Mathew asks for SRTCC advice on trying to meet new criteria. A future project to look at pocket estuary and water needed. PW focus on the road. Maybe someone could look at habitat more before funding culvert replacement as the culvert is not on the replacement list or a priority. If PW submits a culvert with no bottom it won't get funded. Culvert replacement has been used for SRFB funding here and other places. PW has the list, Clea has shared it with SRTCC with break down and which are related to fish passage. Mathew offers to go over the list. Midvale, they applied for federal funding. Priority list is complex and Swantown was just discussed as needing to be moved to the top of the list by BOCC – see recording link.
- Swantown conversation as how many times we have reviewed and evaluated. There are other interests besides fish at Swantown. Geomorphic challenge with wave energy. Catch basin and tidegate issues. Old reports from CGS. Funding has been looked at before from different grants and SRTCC has been pressured before to review this. Swantown has come up in our sealevel rise and climate change.
- Next meetings we will review future projects. Discussion of report to bring the most salmon benefit projects to 10 %. If we collect information from studies in the 3 geographic priority areas and choose best projects to 10%. ILIO meeting conversations had some focus on mitigation. Our SRTCC grants do not support mitigation work, but help groups find funding from other resources. With integration of climate change in county priorities we may have avenues for project focus. Some hard decisions will have to be made with shoreline infrastructure. When will we hit a limit and start looking at retreat. Tulip tribe is looking at this approach and maybe they could share their plans with us. Edge habitat for the future discussion are starting to happen. Riparian plantings for future conditions as an example. We can start with a SRTCC review of target areas before sending out an RFP. We have done this with Dawn we can review Ecosystem Recovery Summit 2021. SRTCC trying to use funds to implement salmon recovery. We have worked with review with MRC and WRAC. Future projects are where we have tidgates. Scenic Heights has been brought forward two years in a row and if we had a list with projects more likely to be successful that would be the most helpful.
- Scott had thoughts on salmon stuck in ponds and wondered if anyone had ideas for Eco tourism for salmon restoration.
- RCO status- cleared Middle Crescent Harbor Creek:
<https://secure.rco.wa.gov/prism/search/ProjectSnapshot.aspx?ProjectNumber=23-1081>
- RCO status- conditioned Scenic Heights Penn Cove Culvert No. 3345:
<https://secure.rco.wa.gov/prism/search/ProjectSnapshot.aspx?ProjectNumber=23-1086>

Crescent Creek restoration- cleared look to SRFB to cover 277,038 requested. They are providing match. Fits well with SRFB 278,102. SRFB for more Chinook specific and salmon recovery and PSAR can be used for other species recovery.

Whidbey Basin group all had some level of PSAR from last year. Over 8 million to all the Whidbey Basin groups and close to enough to cover all of the request. There is hope with the addition of riparian funding all request will be covered.

Riparian funding discussion at the state level being discussed at this time. Will the Riparian funding be available in competition for all of us to go after competing against each other or will they distribute an amount to each LE. More discussion on this next month.

Cost overrun for Keystone interested in PSAR and Whidbey Basin groups interested in extra PSAR.

We do not have enough to cover all of Keystone needs. Kurt shares provides information on the 1,135 million. regarding where money would go to for overrun. Cost Increase Request for our Keystone project through the Island County lead entity total cost increase request is for \$1,135,000. The full amount of this request is not available through the LE, so they will submit a supplemental request to the Puget Sound Partnership later this summer to cover the remainder of the costs. Keystone Navy funding did not come in as expected. The Navy funds many projects. If this was a planned project rather than the quick 5 week timeline this acquisition was under.

Cost Overruns Update -Keystone

<https://secure.rco.wa.gov/prism/search/ProjectSnapshot.aspx?ProjectNumber=22-1157>

Ryan and Kurt from Land Trust give an update on the Keystone acquisition and restoration project. The house was deemed historic, and the permitting is exceeding expected spending. The property was an emergency purchase and 6 million in Bridge loans had to be taken out. Requesting funding for cost overrun through RCO was recommended first to go through LE and SRTCC before requesting other PSAR funds. Requested number is 1.135 million. Keystone received PSAR Large Cap, SRFB, and ESRP funds. Projects that have already ranked and are in progress are eligible for our roll over PSAR. PSAR for 23-25 needs to be distributed. Whidbey Basin does not have salty projects. We can only to distribute to projects we have approved.

- Rank list is Middle Crescent Creek as 1 and assigned SRFB funds, Scenic Heights as 2 with good chance it will not go forward. We can not save for other work, so choice is to distribute remaining funds from this grant round, to Keystone rather than return to RCO.

Humphrey Road project will remain on Public Works lists and they will look for other funding and grants. With stream mouth project of no interest to property owners so hard get RCO salmon funds for anything upstream. SRTCC will share information on other grants as we see them come open.

Information we will look at more carefully in August-

- Input on recruiting members as well as input on predicting future projects and 4 year plans, SRTCC committee members please send input for future meetings. Lessons learned from this grant round and why projects did not make it through and why others were successful. Review project development recruitment approach and acquisition priorities. Outreach and Education future focus. Salmon Recovery Portal tool for helping sponsors. Umbrella project examples. Website updates. Look for Cognito Pole before next meeting. Carp Creek drainage project.
- Meeting adjourned after 4:30
- Next Meetings August 16th and September 20th

