

Island Local Integrating Organization Technical Committee Meeting Notes			
Meeting Information			
Meeting Date:	December 12, 2023		
Meeting Time:	1:00pm-3:00pm		
Meeting Location:	Zoom		
Meeting Attendees:	Clea Barenburg (IC DNR)	Krista Loercher (Whidbey Kayaking)	Nolan Grunska (City of Oak Harbor)
	PaulBen McElwain (Sound Water Stewards)	Barbara Bennett (MRC)	Heather McCoy (WICD)
	Carlie Miller (IC DNR)	Jason Lim (Puget Sound Partnership)	Jen Schmitz (IC DNR)
	Jessica Reed (IC DNR)	Brian Tyhuis (NAVFAC NW)	Lea Shields (WADOH)
	Lauren Burch (IC Public Works)		
Meeting Objectives:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approval of Minutes &amp; Agenda</li> <li>2. Provide overview and updates on all ICDNR programs and recent meetings</li> <li>3. Update regarding MRC Sea Level Rise white paper</li> <li>4. Discuss ways to engage new set of elected officials for Executive Committee in 2024</li> <li>5. Roundtable discussion including updates from partners, grant pursuits, and other projects occurring around Puget Sound</li> </ol>		
			Total Time: 90 minutes
Minutes			
1:00-1:05	<b>Introductions and updates – see attendee list. No partner updates.</b> The group reviewed the proposed agenda. No additions to the agenda as stated.		
1:05-1:30	<b>Update from all ICDNR programs/Roundtable.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clea Barenburg – Salmon Recovery LE Coordinator. Salmon funding RFP was released today in the newspapers and on the website. This is a BIG funding year – SRFB, PSAR, riparian, PSAR large cap (over \$800k – Keystone Preserve is an example), etc. funding. Clea is already getting questions and inquiries from prospective applicants. Clea will be attending Salmon Recovery Council on December 16<sup>th</sup> where up to five voting matters; she will give an update at the next meeting.</li> <li>• Barbara Bennett – MRC. They will be presenting their sea level rise white paper at a BOCC work session December 20<sup>th</sup>, including a PPT presentation that provides an overview of all the great things MRC does/has done throughout the year. Also circulating a “make a difference” article in the Whidbey Weekly; focusing on armoring as the current topic. MRC will be providing comment/attending the public hearing on the SMP whenever it does occur. They believe that if any part of the plan is opened for revision, the entire plan must be reopened. We are all unsure how the revision/comment/finalization process is going to work with this plan. As we understand it, Planning just received formal review of the document from WDFW in November, so there are still incoming and anticipated</li> </ul>		

	<p>changes. Nobody has seen a 'final' version of a document with all comments included. Barbara notes that the Comprehensive Plan is meant to precede the SMP! She also shares that everyone believed that her term with the MRC was ending, and they had a celebratory goodbye cake! But she actually has 1-2 additional years to serve! 😊</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jessica Reed – Watershed Planner. Sparse attendance at this month's AMAT meeting. Surface Water Quality team recently completed reconnaissance near Dugualla Bay; found some water coming through that area unexpectedly, may add that site as a sampling location. Working on year-end reporting for the SWQ monitoring year. Carlie Miller – added that the team will soon be presenting their formal assessment of R-card vs laboratory fecal coliform/E.coli analytical comparison. Hoping to hear about our PIC program grant funding request very soon.</li> <li>• Jen Schmitz – LIO Update/Puget Sound Partnership. Leadership Council meeting coming up Thursday with several large conversations, including legislative priority decisions for the next legislative session. PSP is also launching a new target-setting pilot project for Onsite Septic issues in 2024; LIOs and their local health departments will be able to participate. More to come as this unfolds. There will also be a discussion regarding the strategic visioning approach to determining how the LIOs and the PSP (and other partners) can/should/will work together moving forward. This has been a years-long conversation that has come to a pitch over the last several months. Additional guided discussion will continue in 2024. Jen also gave an update on recent discussions at the MRC and the BOCC meetings regarding revisions to the SMP language that Commissioner Bacon and some members of the public have requested, including the addition of 'tidal influence' to the shoreline characteristics that allow for hard armoring. Jen also gave an update on the Conservation Futures Fund program; we will be on next week's work session as well to bring forward the CFF Community Advisory Board's recommendation to pause the 2024 cycle, and seek approval to do so.</li> <li>• DNR – discovered a weeks-long issue with emails not being received when sent from DNR staff. If you haven't heard from us- give us a call!</li> <li>• Heather McCoy – WICD is hiring a new Stewardship Forester/Wildfire position. Spread the word!</li> </ul>
1:30-2:10	<p><b>Discussion on How to Engage the Elected Officials/Committee.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jen would like to discuss/get feedback from the group on this topic. At least two of the EC will change due to local elections. Jen met with them in November where the interest was much higher; they asked Jen to set up bimonthly meetings instead of quarterly, which is a great sign. This Technical Committee is meant to advise the EC on various matters; is there anything we want to take on? Jason Lim (PSP) notes that sometimes the EC forgets that they are the LIO as well, not external to it. Jen asks if there is a topic the TC would want to focus on in 2024 that may produce a report, white paper, presentation, etc. similar to what the MRC has done.</li> <li>• Barbara asks who all is on the EC. Jen responds: three BOCC members, mayors of each of the three municipalities (Coupeville, OH, Langley), several Port commissioners (Coupeville, South Whidbey), and a tribal representative.</li> <li>• Krista – she indicates it is hard for her to think about how to advise or inform the EC when she's not even clear what the LIO is supposed to be doing in the absence of funding or projects for which to provide recommendations. She is not paid for this work/to attend these meetings. She attends simply to keep abreast but sees very little action. Therefore, not sure how to relate to the EC when in this position. Jen indicates this is exactly the strife between the LIOs and the PSP right now, and that the sentiment and frustration is</li> </ul>

shared across many organizations. She would like the PSP to give the LIO clear work, tasks, focus, action and/or strategies. Jen reiterates that for the moment the base purpose of the LIO is to convene, to bring groups together that generally don't have access to each other or to local elected officials and would like more back and forth from the group rather than just updates from DNR/guest speakers TO the group.

- PaulBen – sees an impetus to try to build more collaboration among groups on the ground, particularly banding together around things like climate change. He sees a similar opportunity with the ILIO and the TC/EC.
- Barbara – one item to consider may be the carrying capacity of the County; related to water availability, quality/quantity, permitting and development, etc. Right now, the plan says Island County will absorb 15,000 new residents in the next 20 years. The Planning group has adopted a mid-range growth projection for the Comp Plan.
- Lauren – A lot of the grants that are available now have an emphasis on supporting disadvantaged communities, of which Island County has few. The Commissioners have the ability to deny/return grants that the County staff have successfully won, because people didn't want to use the funding for what it was meant for. These were loud voices from the community, etc. that want IC to stay rural and therefore they don't think we "need" to do the work that the grants would fund because they don't want people to move here – however, that doesn't actually stop people from moving here/development anyway. She states that the County also just had the RTPO funding reduced by \$1M, when formerly the budget was \$1.1M. She states we also don't have many critical areas that qualify for the types of funding out there right now. The main funding source for Island County projects and work is property tax – and the BOCC does not want to raise taxes.
- Jen – this is a great reminder that the BOCC, along with the other local elected officials on the EC, have the power to say 'no' to even already secured grant funds, and make decisions like that every day!
- Clea – two of the SRTCC members are also on the ILIO EC. She indicated that in the past the EC had noted that they don't like to meet or get updates unless there was something for them to take action on, and without the NTAs/actions it is hard to engage them. One thing they discussed was the Sound Choices Checklist which should help inform various Comprehensive Plans. Jen added it to the meeting chat.
- Nolan – added some insight about growth planning and the decision to go with the medium growth projection allocation from the County-wide planning group, of which he is a member. The City of OH indirectly looks at issues like shorelines, wells, etc. so the County planning has a big impact on that. The Planning Commission was not unanimous about which growth projection to recommend forward. The projections (low/medium/high) come from the Office of Financial Management at the state, so they are not produced by the County, just analyzed and one is adopted. The medium projection made the most sense at the moment.
- Barbara – Believes the current Comp Plan only refers to 'rural character' to describe the County, rather than the marine element/island environment and other natural characteristics. It's missing what makes the County unique.
- Krista – if those characteristics and elements are missing, it will overlook the majority of the reasons why those 15,000 new residents would choose to move to Whidbey/Camano, as well as the economics (tourism, etc.) that are driven primarily by the island environment. Jen shares that the Local Forum held by San Juan LIO earlier this year focused a lot on the economic and ecosystem impacts of a potential oil spill in the Sound or Strait, which would decimate Island County.

<b>2:10</b>	• Meeting adjourned at 2:10
	Next Meeting January 8 <sup>th</sup>