

Snohomish-Stillaguamish LIO Implementation Committee Meeting Summary

Tuesday, May 26, 2015

1:30– 3:30 p.m.

Snohomish County Campus, Drewel Building, 6th Floor Conference Room 6A04

Attendees

Ann Bylin, Snohomish County Surface Water Management
Bill Blake, City of Arlington, Stillaguamish Watershed Council
Chris Betchley, Stillaguamish River Clean Water District
Chrys Bertolotto, Snohomish-Camano Eco-Net
Daryl Williams, Tulalip Tribes
Denise Di Santo, Snohomish County Surface Water Management/ Snohomish Basin Lead Entity
Erik Gerking, Port of Everett
Glynnis Casey, Tulalip Tribes
Gregg Farris, Snohomish County Surface Water Management
Heather Cole, Puget Sound Partnership Ecosystem Recovery Coordinator
Joan Lee, King County
Josh Kubo, Tulalip Tribes
Karen Stewart, LIO Coordinator, Snohomish County Surface Water Management
Kate Riley, Snohomish Conservation District
Kit Crump, Snohomish County Surface Water Management/ Stillaguamish Basin Co-Lead Entity
Kristin Kelly, Futurewise and Pilchuck Audubon
Mary Cunningham, City of Everett
Mary Hurner, Snohomish County Surface Water Management
Matt Baerwalde, Snoqualmie Tribe
Morgan Ruff, Tulalip Tribes
Perry Falcone, Snoqualmie Watershed Forum/King County
Ralph Svrjcek, Washington State Department of Ecology
Robert Sendrey, Sound Salmon Solutions
Scott Powell, City of Seattle

Introductions, Announcements and Public Comments

Bill Blake, Sno-Stillly Implementation Committee (IC) Chair, opened the meeting and introductions followed.

Members approved the 4/28/15 meeting summary.

Bill asked the group to consider changing the length of the meeting from 2 hours to 3 hours, due to the work that Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) is requesting from the LIOs over a fairly short period of time. The committee discussed the pros and cons of longer meetings. The key desires expressed were: (1) use email more often to keep LIO IC members aware of process and products; (2) form subcommittees of those interested to work on drafting products and sub-products for IC and EC Committee consideration; (3) if longer meetings become necessary, provide a break; and (4) plan the length of the meeting to support the work that the committee needs to accomplish.

Review/Recommend Draft Sno-Stillly “State of the Sound” Report

Karen passed out a draft with a description and pictures of the three projects LIO members submitted for inclusion in PSP's 2015 "State of the Sound" Report. The projects are City of Everett's Green Stormwater Infrastructure Program, King County's Upper Carlson Floodplain Restoration Project and Sound Salmon Solution's Watershed Education for Decision Makers. Each of the three watersheds active in the Snohomish Stillaguamish LIO is represented in this list. Robert Sendry offered to provide a better picture depicting his organization's project. The IC agreed to recommend these projects to the Executive Committee for inclusion in the report.

Draft Process for Letters of Endorsement / Draft Letter Supporting SCD Project

Mary Hurner recapped the need for the LIO to have a process for letters of endorsement, as discussed in the 4/28 meeting, and distributed a draft process for discussion. She noted the draft was based on processes currently used by the watersheds.

The IC discussed the draft, and made the following recommendations before submitting to the EC:

- Simplify the language in the first section, "Policy for Approval," to read,
In order to ensure a fair and transparent process for providing letters of endorsement the Snohomish Stillaguamish LIO adopts the following policy: Projects will be considered for recommendation if they implement, or significantly contribute to implementing, at least one of the Snohomish Stillaguamish LIO NTA's and support the priority strategies outlined in the LIO 5-year strategic plan.
- Add language to the "Steps and Timeline for Completion of Endorsement Letter" as follows:
 - *After receiving the request, the LIO Coordinator will review the submittal for completeness and may request additional information, as needed. If the criteria for approval have been met, the LIO Coordinator will draft a letter of support for Implementation Committee consideration. [Note: If the response for additional information is delayed, this step may take longer.]*
 - *The Implementation Committee will have one week to review and submit comments to the LIO Coordinator. Committee members will "reply all" as they submit comments. The LIO Coordinator will address concerns and incorporate edits as needed.*
 - *The draft letter will be submitted to the Executive Committee for review in all cases. If the Implementation Committee has concerns, those concerns will be noted and forwarded to the Executive Committee as well.*
 - *The Executive Committee will have one week to review and submit comments to the LIO Coordinator. Committee members will "reply all" as they submit comments. The LIO Coordinator will incorporate Executive Committee edits as needed, print a final copy and submit it to the LIO Executive Committee Chair for signature. If the Executive Committee determines that they cannot support the project, the project proponent will be contacted and the reasons for not providing a letter will be provided to the project sponsor.*
 - *"No response" from members of either the Implementation or Executive Committees will be considered a sign of approval.*
 - *The LIO Coordinator will retain a copy of signed letter and send the original to its destination.*
 - *A copy of the final draft will be sent to the LIO-IC and LIO-EC.*
- Add language to the Application under step 3, as follows:
 - Snohomish Stillaguamish LIO near term actions and/or strategies addressed

Mary also distributed a draft letter of endorsement for a Snohomish Conservation District project (the Regional Dairy Initiative) Monte Marti brought to the Committee's attention at the 4/28 meeting. It was noted that there was an error in the letter, and the reference to the NEP grant needed to be deleted.

Mary stated that she would make the revisions requested by the IC to the process document and letter of endorsement. These documents will then be forwarded to the EC for their consideration and input.

LIO Products for 2016 Action Agenda

Karen distributed four handouts related to the two products PSP is requesting from the LIOs:

- Revised LIO Work Products for the 2016 Action Agenda
- Draft schematic showing the timeline
- Revised Snohomish Stillaguamish 2015 Work Plan
- PSP document: Proposed Coaching Options for the LIOs

PSP asked each LIO to provide feedback on the draft LIO contract amendment (regarding the timeline, deliverables and expectations – are they doable?). The contract amendment will be supplementing 175,000 of additional funding. PSP requested LIO feedback on the 5/20/15 draft contract by **June 1, 2015**.

The identified timeline and key deliverables are as follows (as outlined in the draft SOW):

- A 5-year Strategic Recovery Plan
 - Initial plans developed for 4-6 high priority vital signs due to PSP by **August 14, 2015**
 - Plans developed for the remaining vital signs due to PSP by September 11, 2016.
 - Required deliverables for each vital sign are:
 - Results chains
 - Short narrative
 - Schematic depicting strategy development and approach
- A 2-year Implementation Plan
 - With updated near term actions (NTAs) developed by November 2015.
 - Required deliverables for each NTA are:
 - Description and location
 - Expected outcomes
 - Owners
 - Estimated cost

Karen explained that the tight timeline is being driven by the National Estuary Program (NEP) budget appropriations. In a PSP/LIO Coordinator meeting that morning, a few other LIO coordinator stated that they would have difficulty meeting the proposed deadline and proposed an alternative October 2015 deadline instead.

Karen noted the Committee will be asked to prioritize 4-6 Vital Signs during this meeting so that we can get started on the required deliverables (results chains, short narrative and schematic). She noted that the EC will be meeting on June 18th and it would be good to have work in progress on at least two vital signs that we can share.

The IC's June meeting will be held on 6/30/15 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. The time could be extended, depending on the agenda. The key topic at this meeting will be identifying the pressures associated with the selected vital signs.

Karen distributed a handout from PSP covering coaching options. She asked if anyone had a preference for a particular option. PSP's purpose in providing coaching options is to support the LIO's in completing the required work. Four coaching options and their associated timelines, costs and impacts to our LIO are outlined in this handout.

The group considered what kind of expertise we have in-house to do this work, and whether or not those staff members have the time. Karen stated that Snohomish County has staff with Miradi expertise. Joan asked if the county had ever tested a Miradi approach with an actual project to know what to put in, its strengths and weaknesses. Kit Crump stated that county staff working in both the Stillaguamish and Snohomish watersheds have now tested this approach and that the LIO effort can benefit from the lessons learned on those earlier approaches. The LIO can also leverage content and expertise from the Snohomish Marine Stewardship Area's results chains that are part of their Conservation Action Plan. Chrys mentioned that she would be in favor of the train the trainer option. Ann Bylin emphasized that the LIO has the opportunity to weigh in on the deadlines PSP proposes. The IC generally indicated support for using the EPA funds to hire a consultant to take the LIO through the planning process to achieve the deliverables, but needed more clarity on what resources were needed.

The LIO-IC made the following suggestions to PSP: 1) They would like to extend the timeline for deliverables to October rather than August 14 and 2) there was uncertainty around the coaching option- no final decision was recommended (depended on the County's capacity with Miradi and there was some support around the "train the trainer" option).

Four Vital Signs for Strategic Planning

Karen stated that one of the purposes of our meeting today was to work together as a committee to identify 4-6 Vital Signs that our LIO wants to begin working on. She provided a draft handout with examples of Vital Signs the LIO could focus on for strategic planning (estuaries, floodplains, freshwater quality, chinook salmon, and shellfish beds) and selection criteria (supports a broad geography/high priority in one or both basins, leverages but does not duplicate other work, is responsive to NTAs, aligns with Strategic Initiatives, and progress is measurable).

Discussion followed, in regard to the 21 Vital Signs PSP identified and those highlighted in the handout:

- Chrys Bertolotto pointed out that education and outreach can stimulate progress but is always outranked in evaluations by capital projects. She thought the LIO could better support education and outreach by considering the "number of people engaged" as part of the "progress is measurable" criteria.
- Morgan Ruff stated that the Vital Signs are focused more on restoration and less on protection. They do not always reflect all that needs to happen. Protection is vital in order to make progress towards the restoration targets.
- Bill stated that the reality in the Puget Sound area is that we are losing faster than we are gaining in regard to salmon.
- Ann reminded everyone that we will have to address all the Vital Signs as part of the 5 year recovery plan, some of these (Vital Signs noted in handout) might be easier to start with than others.
- Kristin Kelly suggested that we add "land development and cover" as a Vital Sign to consider first, as it has a big impact on the other categories of consideration.
- Mary Cunningham recommended adding "summer stream flow" as a critical category to address first, due to climate change and the current drought.

Two additional handouts from previous meetings were distributed to support the discussion: (1) "Step 1 in NTA Development" and (2) a copy of slide #30 from Scott Redman's 4/28 presentation on the Pressure Assessment that showed the highest rated stressors to Vital Sign endpoints in the Snohomish and Stillaguamish watersheds combined.

Discussion continued, focusing on the selection criteria provided. Chrys asked that we add criteria to cover "impact" and "irreversibility". Heather suggested adding "readiness"

Using the example of the estuaries Vital Sign, Kit went over the selection criteria in the handout and those additional criteria suggested.

The group decided that they would like to take a vote on the vital signs that they would like to start with, raising their hands to indicate priorities for the LIO. The result of this exercise was as follows:

- Estuaries – 12 votes
- Freshwater quality – 8 votes
- Chinook salmon – 7 votes
- Land development and cover – 7 votes
- Floodplains – 6 votes
- Summer stream flow – 5 votes
- Shellfish beds – 1 vote
- All other vital signs received “0 votes”, indicating they were not regarded as a priority starting point

The Implementation Committee agreed to recommend to the Executive Committee that the LIO would work on developing 2 year work plans and associated Near Term Actions for the following Vital Signs: Estuaries, Freshwater quality, Chinook salmon and Land development and cover. After the vote, concern was raised that not all members of the committee were informed that a vote was going to take place at the meeting and that not areas of the LIO were adequately represented.

Addendum: After reviewing the top four Vital Signs most supported during the meeting (Estuaries, Freshwater quality, Chinook salmon and Land development), LIO support staff recommended that the LIO - IC include floodplains in the recommendation to the LIO-EC and the initial deliverable to PSP for the following reasons:

- Reconnection of floodplain habitat is a key strategy for Chinook Recovery as identified in both the Stillaguamish and Snohomish Recovery Plans.
- Floodplains are a priority of our region and in our legislature for the past few years.
- Selection of Floodplains would also align with the concurrent work happening with Floodplains by Design and developing a 10 year strategic vision.
- Floodplains were the highest ranking sub-strategy (A 5.3) in Appendix E of the 2014 Action Agenda for all of Puget Sound.
- Support for floodplains (6 votes) was closely tied with Chinook and land development (7 votes). Floodplains would likely have received even more support had more people been able to make the IC 5/26 meeting.
- PSP has asked for results chains, short narrative and a schematic for 4 – 6 Vital Signs as part of the first deliverable, so this course of action is consistent with what we have been asked to do.

Next Steps

A Doodle Poll will be sent out to all IC members to provide the opportunity to work on a subcommittee to develop results chains for the five prioritized Vital Signs. If you, or a member of your organization, are interested in participating, please respond to the Doodle poll and chose the date/time most convenient for you. We will send out a meeting invitation the week of June 1st based on the best date/time for everyone.

The next meeting of the Implementation Committee will be held on **Tuesday, June 30th, from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.**, in the Snohomish County Drewel Building, Room 6A04.