

Snohomish-Stillaguamish LIO Implementation Committee (IC) Meeting Summary

*Thursday, January 5, 2017
1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Drewel Building, Public Meeting Room*

LIO-IC Members

Bill Blake, City of Arlington, Stillaguamish Watershed Council
Valerie Streater, Tulalip Tribes
Bob Landles, Stillaguamish Clean Water Advisory Board
Elise Gronewald, Port of Everett
Paul Clampitt, Snohomish County Marine Resources Committee
Perry Falcone, Snoqualmie Forum
Gregg Farris, Snohomish County Surface Water Management
Steve Rice, Snohomish Health District
Monte Marti, Snohomish Conservation District
Karen Stewart, City of Everett
Matthew Baerwalde, Snoqualmie Tribe
Tamara Neuffer, Stillaguamish Tribe
Morgan Ruff, Tulalip Tribes
Bea Covington, King Conservation District

Participants

Emily Sanford, Department of Health
Derek Day, Department of Ecology
Kirsten Feifel, Department of Natural Resources
Erik Stockdale, Snohomish County Surface Water Management
Gretchen Glaub, Snohomish County Surface Water Management
Sean Edwards, Snohomish County Surface Water Management
Lauren Tracy, Snohomish County Surface Water Management

LIO Support Staff

Ann Bylin, Snohomish County Surface Water Management, Supervisor III
Kit Crump, Snohomish County Surface Water Management, Senior Planner II/Stillaguamish Basin Co-Lead Entity
Jessica Hamill, Snohomish County Surface Water Management, Senior Planner II/LIO Coordinator
Alexa Ramos, Snohomish County Surface Water Management, Planner
Beth Liddell, Snohomish County Surface Water Management, Planner

1. Welcome, Introductions, Public Comment, Announcements

Bill opened the meeting, and introductions were postponed until the SI Leads arrived.

2. On-going Business

Approval or changes to the IC meeting notes

Bill asked if anyone would like to request changes to the 11/15 meeting notes. No changes were requested and the notes were approved by consensus.

Activity Calendar Subcommittee In-Lieu of February Meeting

Jessica proposed an Activity Calendar subcommittee virtual meeting in-lieu of the February meeting. The subcommittee will be part of helping the LIO restructuring effort as the activities calendar for the year should be developed with an eye toward the most appropriate LIO structure to accomplish those tasks. An IC member suggested membership should be opened up to the Snohomish Lead Entity (LE) as well.

The IC approved this proposal. Jessica will send out an email to gauge interest for subcommittee membership and more information.

Survey Results

Jessica reviewed the survey results that showed 80% of respondents were “somewhat” to “very” interested in virtual meetings. In regards to alternative meeting locations, some were interested and some were not. For the folks that are not interested in virtual meetings, there will always be a physical space at Snohomish County to meet. The hope is that providing a virtual option will allow more Committee members to attend more regularly if they did not have to pay to park or factor in drive time. Some respondents (over 60%) also expressed an interest in separating the meetings by basin and holding basin specific meetings in that basin. The respondents also had ideas for how to strengthen the LIO which included the following: separating the LIO, funding for current list of NTAs, identifying coverage gaps within the current list of NTAs, and implementing projects/recommendations in the LIO plan.

3. LIO Goals and Priorities

The SI Leads introduced themselves. Jessica reviewed the Ecosystem Recovery Plan brochure with the SI Leads to give them an introduction to the Sno-Still LIO background and priorities. Then the first, second, and third sequence NTAs with accompanying summaries were reviewed with the SI Leads. Next, the IC took turns introducing themselves. The group discovered that they had a combined total of 518+ years of experience related to environmental work.

The topic of tracking progress as it relates to the implementation of the plan in 2017 was raised. The SI Leads reminded the IC that NTA owners only need to report on what is required by the PSP/EPA. They recommended that the IC not lose sight of the fact that NEP funds are meant to support the Action Agenda, but it is just one piece of the puzzle; it will never be enough money to fund the entire Action Agenda.

The IC pointed out that the EPA mandates reporting on all NTAs even when they are not funded. This requirement serves as a deterrent for submitting NTAs.

On that note, IC members asked the SI Leads if they could clarify what the incentive was for being an NTA in the Action Agenda. The SI Leads responded by asking what the committee thought the incentive *should* be.

One member suggested that NTA owners should be given added points for being in the Action Agenda when applying for other grants. The SI Leads responded that the system is set-up to work in that way. Dan mentioned that the PSP is working on making the Action Agenda more relevant in that way.

Another participant noted that in addition to rewarding participation, perhaps there should be a penalization for *not* participating which in itself could serve as an incentive (the incentive being not getting penalized).

An IC member mentioned a need for elected officials' support.

Another member noted the need for NTA owners to understand the SI Leads criteria. If potential project sponsors better understood the criteria, then there would be less wasted efforts submitting projects that are not likely to fare well.

One participant mentioned the issue of Skagit receiving a large amount of funding without participating in the LIO process. This turn of events sends a contradictory message.

Another participant commented on the need for more alignment between local and regional funding priorities. To which the SI Leads responded that they want our feedback for improvement on this.

4. NEP Funding Model 2016

Jessica reviewed committee survey results with the SI Leads. They informed the group that 2017 allocations should be released in June, but it's dependent on EPA. The Leads mentioned that EPA requested feedback on allocations, but they haven't heard word since. They also noted that the SIATs, which consists of numerous subject matter experts (SMEs), only funded 2% of habitat NTAs. Accordingly, the SIATs are concerned about the worth of the team's time, particularly if the allocations are less than \$2 million as it may not be worth the time/effort to assemble those SMEs.

A participant stated that a direct fund award of greater than \$100K per LIO would be an incentive for LIOs to participate in the process.

Another member suggested going beyond a flat allocation. Something like the SRFB formula could be more acceptable and incentivize participation.

An IC member stressed that clear communication between the PSP, SI Leads, and LIOs is essential. It was also pointed out that multi-benefit projects which crosscut the 3 Strategic Initiatives slipped through the cracks on the regional level this round. The SI Leads agreed and want to work towards improving that. It was suggested that a crosscutting conference be held to mitigate for this in the future.

One member emphasized that the IC must remember we're partaking in a *planning* process with no funding attached. We work to generate good ideas and *then* look for ways to fund them. We need to manage expectations.

A participant recommended creating a Fund Development Strategy. Jessica reminded the group that the LIO staff is working on a funding strategy. Another IC member suggested that we need to look for new funding sources, not just existing sources.

A member suggested we think of potential funding sources as a pyramid. Looking at stormwater, NEP money would be at the top (only \$4 million), state funding makes up the middle section (\$60 million), and local funding is the base of the pyramid (\$200-\$500 million). We shouldn't rely on federal funding. We shouldn't ignore the larger portions of money available at the more local scales.

The committee asked the SI Leads what happens to 2016 NTAs when 2017 funding comes. They responded that they are unsure at the moment, but that the Implementation Strategies are being revised. They will also have to discuss it with the SIATs. They noted that a focused solicitation to address gaps is on the table for consideration.

The SI Leads also stated that documents (like the LIO's brochure and/or the Ecosystem Recovery Plan) with prioritized NTAs mapped is valuable for regional priority setting and selection.

Dan mentioned that an LIO plan synthesis is coming.

The committee asked the Leads for suggestions on how our LIO plan can integrate better with the region? The Leads agreed that our plan hits the local-regional interface on the head. Adding ways the local actions relate to the Implementation Strategies would be useful.

It was reiterated that the goal is for the LIO Plans to inform the Implementation Strategies, but with the non-concurrent planning timelines we will see what happens.

5. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m. The next IC meeting is scheduled for April 20, 2017.

Action Items

1. Jessica will send an email to gauge interest in the LIO 2017 Activities Calendar/Structure subcommittee. A Doodle poll to schedule a virtual meeting date will be sent out shortly thereafter.
2. Jessica will work with GIS experts to map the LIO NTAs as part of LIO Funding Strategy development.