

Snohomish-Stillaguamish LIO Executive Committee Meeting Summary

Thursday, April 26, 2018

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Snohomish County Campus, Admin West, 3358

LIO EC Members

Joan Lee (for Christie True), King County
Gregg Farris, Snohomish County
Allan Giffen, City of Everett
Terry Williams, Tulalip Tribes
Tom Stiger, Port of Everett
Jason Walker, City of Duvall

Participants

David Trimbach, Oregon State University
Erin Murray, Puget Sound Partnership (PSP)
Perry Falcone, Snoqualmie Watershed Forum
Elissa Ostergaard, Snoqualmie Watershed Forum
Cindy Dittbrenner, Snohomish Conservation District
Paul Crane, City of Everett
Scott Powell, Seattle City Light
Heather Khan Ecology
Ann Savory, Tulalip Tribes
Ann Bylin, Snohomish County
Keith Binkley, Snohomish PUD
Ria Berns, Ecology
Erik Stockdale, Snohomish County
Gretchen Glaub, Snohomish County

LIO Support Staff

Jessica Hamill, LIO Coordinator, Snohomish County
Alexa Ramos-Cummings, Snohomish County

Introductions and Announcements

Co-Chair Joan Lee opened the meeting, introductions followed, and the agenda was reviewed. There were no members of the public present and no public comments.

Gregg announced that the next steps of the business plan include preparing a rate increase ordinance for County Council consideration.

On-going Business & Updates

Approval of December meeting minutes

The LIO Coordinator asked Executive Committee (EC) members if they would like any changes made to the 12/7/17 meeting notes. No changes were requested and the meeting notes were approved by consensus.

Regional Updates

Erin Murray was introduced as the new PSP Ecosystem Recovery Coordinator. She provided an update on the NTA solicitation. 635 NTAs were submitted region wide. 391 of those selected CHIN 7.1 as their regional priority. Counties and nonprofits made up the largest contributors of NTA proposals. Local reviews are due to the region by May 12th. That is also the deadline for tribal entities and LIOs to red flag any proposals.

Ron Wesen, serves on the Ecosystem Coordination Board, but his term end is coming up so next steps are being figured out to fill that representation role.

Puget Sound Day on the Hill will take place May 23rd. Representatives are attending to advocate for the importance of continuing to fund the National Estuary Program.

Stream Flow Protection in the LIO

Jessica provided an overview of the LIO's work so far related to SSLIO 09.1 Stream Flow Protection. In 2016, the Snoqualmie Tribe submitted an NTA aligned with that strategy, but it was not selected for funding. At this time, there is no progress being made on this strategy and recovery target by the LIO (caveat: this only relates to implementation of NTAs as we are not closely tracking other efforts that accelerate implementation).

Dept. of Ecology staff gave a presentation on ESSB 6091. The high-level overview highlighted that there will be \$300 million in funding over 15 years to distribute among 15 watersheds. The main intent of the funds will be for supporting projects that mitigate water withdrawals. The presentation covered how the decision will affect WRIAs 5, 7, and 8. WRIA 5 has an instream flow rule that addresses permit exempt wells so will not need to complete a watershed restoration and enhancement plan. Although not a priority basin under the new legislation, WRIA 5 will be eligible for project funding. WRIAs 7 and 8 will need to develop a watershed restoration and enhancement plan by 2021.

There was much discussion about how Snohomish County Planning and Development Services is implementing the law since its January 9th ratification. The Dept. of Ecology presenter also fielded many questions about the watershed restoration and enhancement planning Committees that will be tasked with developing the plans. Ecology is currently recruiting staff to lead these Committees so the timeline for convening the committees is likely late summer/early fall. There will be capacity funding available to tribes and/or local governments serving on the Committees. Development of the watershed restoration and enhancement plans could trigger rule making processes around instream flows. The Dungeness and Little Spokane are the jurisdictions that have most recently implemented instream flow rules so they would be good to refer to as examples. There will also be a "Net Ecological Benefit" guidance document released in June as that definition is finalized. Ecology will be working on project criteria for funding projects that mitigate for water withdrawals.

The group agreed to convene a joint Snohomish Forum-LIO meeting in the Fall to 1) get into the granular details of the planning/project component of ESSB 6091, and 2) to meet the new Ecology staff charged with coordinating the WRIA 7 Committee. These next steps were supported by the group.

Integrating Human Well-Being and Ecosystem Services

Review Draft Scope of Work

Jessica reminded the EC that the LIO prioritized six Human Well-Being (HWB)/Quality of Life indicator targets.

David Trimbach with Oregon State University provided an overview of their work to support LIOs in integrating HWB into NTA development and decision-making processes. The focus is on integrating social science into ecosystem recovery. One component will include defining air quality and other vital signs that currently don't have definitions. An EC member noted that environmental justice and racial equity are growing concerns in our local jurisdictions and advocated that those elements should be incorporated into this exercise as well. Integrating HWB will involve the creation of tools to help inform decision-making. Some of those tools could include map overlays to highlight HWB priorities geographically. Others commented on the agency silos and conflicting rules that feeds a need to ensure consistency. This study will examine best practices being used by LIOs to then share with others. Currently, 3 other LIOs in the region have signed up to participate.

Jessica and David presented the draft scope of work. The activities would include participant-observer sessions, interviews, implementation of tools, re-interviewing subjects and assessing the responses to the tools. There was much discussion about what the LIO could stand to gain from participation. Some potential tool discussed were: map overlays, ways to prioritize water storage projects that would affect communities not just individuals, prioritization of agriculture and development, and tools to communicate with to decision makers. There were concerns by other EC members that HWB integration could sway prioritization of projects from biological priorities to human priorities. Overall, the EC supported participation but wanted to check-in on progress as the project ramps up.

2018 Implementation Update

LIO Operating Principles and Bylaw Revisions

The operating principles provided guidance in defining the creation of LIOs and mandate for integration with the Lead Entities. The bylaws have been revised to align with the operating principles guidance as well as reflect the new Stillaguamish watershed Council (SWC) implementing body structure.

LIO Structure Update

The SWC taking over implementation functions in the Stillaguamish offered more subject matter experts as resources for NTA development and review. Redundancy has been reduced and meeting efficiencies have been realized but still more work to do to streamline coordination. The new structure has provided more robust membership and it has proven to be complementary of the overlap between the two entities. The EC will review the changes and discuss it again at September's meeting.

2018 NTA Development and Review Update

103 NTAs are being reviewed (local and regional). On May 11th review recommendations will be sent to the region. Then regional review will take place in June on a 2 day retreat. Final approval will follow. There were 22 reviewers, many from our committees. Funding should become available in February 2019. Not many Cities submitted NTAs so we'd like to explore how to better engage those partners. Members were curious about how much total money was requested. Jessica will run the numbers and send out the results.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Action Items and Next Steps

1. Jessica will send out a high-level roll-up of the NTA review process.
2. Jessica will send out materials from the EC meeting to all participants.

