

**SNOHOMISH BASIN SALMON RECOVERY FORUM**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**Thursday, November 1, 2018 • 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**  
**Waltz Building, Snohomish**

On May 3, 2018 the Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Forum (the Forum) met for a regularly scheduled meeting from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon. The following were in attendance:

<b>Attendee</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Alexa Ramos	Snohomish County Surface Water Management
Colin Wahl	Tulalip Tribes
Elissa Ostergaard	Snoqualmie Forum
Gretchen Glaub	Snohomish County Surface Water Management
Jim Miller	City of Everett
Kirk Lakey	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Lindsey Desmul	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Monte Marti	Snohomish Conservation District
Keith Binkley	Snohomish PUD
Heather Khan	Dept. of Ecology
Henry Sladek	Town of Skykomish
Heather Cole	The Nature Conservancy
Scott Moore	Snohomish County Surface Water Management
Terry Williams	Tulalip Tribes
Anita Marrero	City of Monroe
Elizabeth Butler	RCO
Rodney Pond	Sound Salmon Solutions
Denise Johns	City of Snohomish
Doug Hennick	Wild Fish Conservancy
Erin Murray	Puget Sound Partnership
Ingria Jones	Dept. of Ecology
Stacy Vynne	Dept. of Ecology
Kirt Hanson	Snohomish County Surface Water Management

---

**Meeting Summary**

**Introductions and Announcements**

- **Jim Miller called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.**
  - Attendees introduced themselves.
  - The agenda was reviewed and approved.
  - No public comment was made.

**Forum Business**

- **Letters:**
  - **Orca Recovery Task Force:** Gretchen submitted comments on the first and second drafts. The comments appear to have been largely incorporated into their revisions. We

are waiting to see the final recommendations which should be released November 6<sup>th</sup> at their next meeting, Note that the Snohomish basin is a priority area and Terry has been very engaged with this process as well.

- **Governor's Budget:** Gretchen proposed sending a letter to the Governor's office to advocate for funding programs like PSAR, FbD, ESRP, etc. before he releases his budget in mid-December. Then we may want to send a follow-up letter once the final Orca Task Force recommendations are published.
  - Catherine's Creek, a SSS project, ranked highly so should be receiving funding from the Fish Barrier Removal Board. Other partners also have high ranking projects too.
- **Draft Legislative Priorities:** Gretchen walked the Forum through the draft document. She will be working with Elissa to revise and refine it and then bring it back to the Forum in February for another review. Then it will be ready to start sharing with legislators. WRIA 8 and 9 have done the same in recent years. It's proven very helpful to have consistent messaging. Other members advocated for the effectiveness of taking legislators on project tours. There was discussion about Puget Sound Day on the Hill, Salmon Day, and other opportunities to communicate our priorities.

Someone mentioned that Ecology had been seeking to create a permanent program for FbD, but they have since withdrew that request to assess the benefits and constraints of Floodplain Reform rather than putting it in statute.

Also, project sponsors should be hearing back on the FbD ranking next week. There were 3 proposals in our basin.

- **2019 Meeting Schedule:** The Forum reviewed and approved the draft schedule for next year. Gretchen explained that the February meeting may be held in a different location to accommodate a larger group.
- **Project Status Update**
  - **Cherry Creek Ph. 1:** The Forum has already approved previous cost increases for this project related to soil disposal. But this continues to be a challenge. Plans for next steps are being developed. The sponsors were intending to do a farm pad, but that wasn't possible so now their looking into using the soil to stabilize dikes in DD7. This would reduce the cost increase rather than having to pay for disposal.
  - **Snohomish Estuary and River Reach-scale Plan:** The reach-scale plans will be housed on the SLS website. The hope is that they will be helpful in future planning efforts.
  - **Mid-Spencer:** There will be a scope change circulated via email for approval. There is a cost increase of \$120K. We currently don't have the funds, but we can ask RCO for return funds which are distributed on a first come, first serve basis so we will need to move quickly.

**Focus Topic – Riparian Buffer Case Studies:** Morgan opened by presenting the context for exploring this topic at the Forum. We are on target to meet our recovery average goals. But we're also losing acres. So we need to think about how to best handle these challenges (buffer width limitations, temperature and climate change impacts, difficulties with planting trees on private land, etc.)

- **Fish, Farm, Flood Buffer Task Force:** Beth presented an overview of the FFF 1.0 and 2.0 efforts. The buffer task force is exploring the best available science around variable buffer widths.

She demonstrated how requiring 100' buffers on all waterways in the Snoqualmie Valley would greatly impact farmers. There are 3 key deliverables being developed with the grant funding – a best available science report on buffers, an ag. issues paper, and a buffer decision tool. Forum members commented that incorporating social science is vital too. Others noted the connection between buffers, nutrient loading, and a loss of plankton and erosion of the bottom of the food chain.

- **Woods Creek:** Cindy presented on what's happened in the Woods Creek project area since Ecology adopted the NMFS buffer requirements for funding per EPA and NOAA guidance. This changed buffer requirements from 35' to 100' widths. Six years ago, the Woods Creek Assessment was conducted which identified limiting factors in the area. From there, the Woods Creek Collaborative was formed to include the SCD, AASF, WFC, and NRCS. Twenty-one projects on private land were completed in 5 years to achieve 39 acres of the 45 acre goal, funded with DOE and CREP dollars. And NEP easement funding has gotten landowners onboard with larger buffers too.

After, there was discussion around whether length/continuity is more important than width, whether there is enough funding for 100' buffers on every waterway, and whether smaller is better than none. Some mentioned that the tribes are most concerned with the Mainstem and large tributaries. However, most of the priority areas are in small, nameless tributaries. In which case, perhaps the tribe could consider being flexible about buffer widths in these areas. The decision tool that the buffer task force is developing could be helpful in these situations.

Heather asked if the tribe would be interested in approving less than 100' buffer widths on a case by case basis. If so, that could be the push for Ecology to reevaluate requirements.

Elissa mentioned that there could be opportunity to provide feedback on the Streamflow Restoration Grant funding guidance regarding buffer requirements. Gretchen will work on a letter to Ecology on the new Streamflow Grant to advocate for buffer width flexibility.

## Regional Updates

- **2018 Action Agenda:** The comment period closed on October 15<sup>th</sup> and responses are being prepared now. The draft has a "Vision" page now to show values and goals more broadly. There is also a section dedicated to defining the problem. More work is being done to highlight partner contributions to recovery. There was significant feedback received around the importance of aligning with salmon recovery and the need for more funding. Hopefully, the document will be finalized December 5<sup>th</sup>.
- **PSP Mobilizing Funding Initiative:** PSP is working with consultants to explore creating a non-profit to help fully fund NTAs. Susan O'Neill and Abby Hook are part of this team too.
- **ESSB 6091 Implementation Update:** Ingria gave a brief overview of the Streamflow Restoration Act. The Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Committees (WRE) and planning effort is focused on offsetting impacts of the 20-year projections to meet Net Ecological Benefit (NEB). The rulemaking process is underway. As for the first round of Streamflow Restoration Grant funding, there were a few applications submitted from WRIA 7 (the full list will be published shortly):
  - Snohomish Conservation District: *Community-based water storage restoration in the Snohomish River watershed*
  - City of Monroe: *East Monroe Heritage Site – Land Acquisition*
  - Adopt-a-Stream Foundation: *Jones Creek Stream Flow Enhancement Project*
  - Snoqualmie Valley Watershed Improvement District: *Snoqualmie Natural Storage Enhancement and Comprehensive Storage Study*

- Stewardship Partners: *Snoqualmie River: Livestock Exclusion and Riparian Habitat Improvement*

The WRE Committee roster was also distributed for review. Their first meeting was held on October 25<sup>th</sup>. It was a successful meeting with good attendance. The topics included explaining the project grant funding priorities and next steps for the committee. They will be spending some time at the onset getting everyone up to speed, then establishing growth projection estimates, and ultimately developing a list of projects. Also, a webpage has been set up to post meeting materials and other resources. You can also sign up for updates too.

Ecology staff posed some questions for the Forum:

- How would the Forum like to stay engaged? Would you like to continue briefings from Ecology staff? From County staff e.g. Gretchen?
- Some Committee members have suggested alignment of work groups, such as the Project Review Group or the Technical Committee. Does the Forum have an interest in a formal relationship with the Committee?
- The Committee may consider adding an ex-officio (non-voting) member. Would the Forum be interested in that level of participation on the Committee?
- Do you have a vision for how other groups might also fit into the picture? E.g. Snoqualmie Watershed Forum, LIO, others?
- Where do you see overlap in the Committee's efforts and ongoing Salmon Recovery work?

Some members commented that it would be most efficient to utilize our existing Technical Committee to review any proposed projects. There wasn't time for much discussion so the Forum will consider these questions and then formulate a response.

- **SRC:** At their last meeting, it was largely focused on the orca recovery discussion. They also approved the final ranked project list.

### **Partner Updates**

- **Snoqualmie Report:** The Snoqualmie Forum's next meeting will be on November 14<sup>th</sup>. There will be an estuary presentation by Morgan. Josh Baldi will be presenting on the SWM fee increase proposal. There will also be discussion of the new fish passage barrier removal program at King County.
- **Snohomish County:** The Snohomish County SWM fee increase proposal will not be brought forward by the Executive this year. In the meantime, SWM will work on marketing their services to hopefully propose the increase in the future. The Forum agreed that they wanted to draft a letter in support of the Snohomish County SWM fee increase.

### **Adjourn**

- The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m. The next Forum meeting will be held on February 7, 2018.

### **Key Decisions**

- Approved refining the legislative priorities document and Governor's budget letter.
- Approved the 2019 meeting schedule.
- Gretchen will work on a letter to Ecology on the new Streamflow Grant to advocate for buffer width flexibility.
- Gretchen will circulate Ingria's questions for feedback.

- Approved sending a letter of support for the Snohomish County SWM fee increase proposal.

**Upcoming Meetings**

- Technical Committee meeting: November 6th
- PDC meeting: November 15th

DRAFT