

Snohomish-Stillaguamish LIO Executive Committee Meeting Summary

Thursday, April 18, 2019

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Snohomish County Campus, Admin West, 6A04

LIO EC Members

Joan Lee, King County
Gregg Farris, Snohomish County
Allan Giffen, City of Everett
Tom Stiger, Port of Everett
Pat Stevenson, Stillaguamish Tribe

Participants

Erin Murray, Puget Sound Partnership (PSP)
Ann Bylin, Snohomish County
Gretchen Glaub, Snohomish County
Donald “Kit” Crump, Snohomish County
Beth leDoux, King County

LIO Support Staff

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

Introductions

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

Approval of September meeting minutes

The LIO Coordinator asked Executive Committee (EC) members if they would like any changes made to the 9/27/18 meeting notes. No changes were requested and the meeting notes were approved by consensus.

Human Wellbeing Project Update

At the April meeting last year, David Trimbach with OSU 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. Integrating HWB will involve the creation of tools to help inform decision-making. Jessica and David presented the draft scope of work. Overall, last year the EC supported project participation but wanted to check-in on progress as the effort ramped up.

Alexa gave an update on the project activities since then. The region-wide survey results have been analyzed to reflect individual LIO geographies. However, our LIO's results did not largely differ from the region at large. Some initial maps around priority HWB indicators have been created from our LIO results. Again, not much differentiation among the LIOs though. Work has been done to translate Miradi into Decision Analysis for a Sustainable Environment, Economy, and Society (DASEES) language. Miradi is

useful for understanding your system and DASEES can help you make decisions. EnviroAtlas is being explored as a potential tool to spatially represent HWB related data to inform decision-making. Island LIO has piloted some work with DASEES by inputting their Plan's strategies and NTAs to run decision analysis scenarios. Sno-Stilly LIO staff will be meeting with Island LIO's coordinator and David to learn more about their pilot and explore ways to collaborate. OSU is continuing to host meetings/workshops around these tools. OSU will also create and share a report stemming from last year's interviews with LIO coordinators, members, and SI leads.

Meeting Purpose & Goals

Jessica reviewed the meeting's purpose and goals. During this meeting attendees will have:

- Discussed and provided feedback on the Human Well Being project
- Reviewed a gap analysis looking at where gaps exist in NTA funding and NTA development
- Provided guidance for the basin Implementation Committee's on the funding of local NTAs with local NEP funds
- Reviewed documents and discussed the role of the LIO in Action Agenda implementation
- Provided guidance on whether to engage the Ecosystem Coordination Board (ECB) on the role of the LIO in Action Agenda implementation
- Decided what the desired outcome of ECB engagement is and who from the LIO would take the lead (with the Coordinator) on discussing the topic with our representative on the ECB
- Reviewed draft Ecosystem Recovery Plan synthesis product and provided input
- Shared and learned about projects/efforts (from multiple LIO watersheds) related to "collaborative decision making" theme
- Identified post-meeting next steps and ownership

LIO Business

Setting Guidance for NTAs

Jessica presented the background on why this analysis was completed. Three rounds of LIO direct award allocations have gone towards habitat projects of a capital nature. There are stakeholder concerns around whether these types of projects are the best use of such a small funding source as well as the amount of staff and committee member time that goes into the decision making process. In 2017, the Leadership Council issued guidance to prioritize non-capital efforts. If the EC issued similar guidance to the Implementation Committees it could advance a consistent message for prioritization.

Alexa summarized the analysis that was performed. The findings showed that strategies 03.1 Improve Funding for Restoration and 07.1 On-site Sewage System Management have the fewest number of NTAs proposed to advance an expected outcome. The majority of NTAs align with strategy 10.1 & 10.2 Freshwater and Estuarine Protection and Restoration. The majority of those NTAs are focused on achieving restoration site design and implementation. This highlights a pattern of NTAs being developed with a bias towards projects of a capital nature. The analysis also showed that funding is most often directed towards capital NTAs from the Habitat SI. See briefing handout for more details.

The committee then considered whether to provide funding guidance to the Snohomish IC to prioritize programmatic actions for FY 2019. Some committee members commented that while on-the-ground projects are critical, they have other numerous funding sources they can tap into. Programmatic, non-capital actions on the other hand have limited funding sources available. Some members advocated for

following the regional guidance and prioritizing non-capital efforts. Other members felt that since Chinook declines in our basins are continuing it is right to prioritize capital actions because big capital projects move the needle on recovery. There was discussion about how little funding the LIOs are given to directly allocate and what the best use of such limited funds is. One member suggested that the Snohomish IC give their \$100K allocation to the Stillaguamish basin instead since their Chinook populations are in dire straits. The Island LIO Coordinator commented that they have discussed giving their allocation to the Stillaguamish as well since this level of funding isn't well-matched to the level of staff time that is being directed towards the decision, but pooling funds could make more sense and be more effective.

A member added that there is also a heavy Habitat bias in the committee membership and project proposals. This demonstrates that we should focus on engaging our stormwater and shellfish partners more. Jessica responded by explaining that LIO staff and Snohomish IC co-chairs are working on renewing committee membership and recruiting new members to fill gaps as needed.

Collaborative Decision Making

LIO Role in Action Agenda Implementation

Jessica explained that in 2014 the LIOs joined together to request a 70/30 split of the NEP funding. At the time, the request was denied to the absence of LIO ecosystem recovery plans. However, the LIOs have since adopted recovery plans yet the funding formula has not been brought back up for discussion until now. The Puget Sound partnership recently asked for feedback on the Action Agenda and NTA process. All of the LIO coordinators agreed that the funding model is inadequate. See briefing document for more details.

LIOs feel isolated and want to find better ways to integrate with the region through groups like the Ecosystem Coordination Board (ECB). LIOs want to make a greater contribution to Action Agenda (AA) implementation in various ways, such as having more say in the allocation of funding.

An EC member asked how engaging with the ECB would help us integrate and implement the AA better. Jessica and the Island LIO coordinator explained that providing our representative Ron Wesen with a better understanding of LIOs and the what they offer to the recovery effort can better equip him to advocate for our priorities.

Another member added that it would also be beneficial to increase engagement with the Salmon Recovery Council (SRC) since they review many of the same projects that are submitted as Habitat NTAs.

The EC supported engaging the ECB through representative Ron Wesen. The group agreed that the following key members should be at the initial meeting with Skagit Commissioner Wesen: Sno-Stilly LIO coordinator, Island LIO coordinator, Skagit CD director, and Sno-Stilly EC co-chair. Jessica also reminded the group that there are two vacancies on the ECB and having a seat could offer more opportunities for engagement. Members were encouraged to reach out to Jessica if interested in nominating someone to the board.

Ecosystem Recovery Plans, Implementation Strategies, and Engagement Opportunities

Erin, our Ecosystem Recovery Coordinator, presented information on the PSP Ecosystem Recovery Plan synthesis and Miradi Data Stewardship Project. She explained the potential benefits of these efforts for LIOs. She asked the group what the main conclusions from the Plan are that they'd like to share and

what does our LIO envision communicating from our plan and with whom. There was much discussion about these questions and how these tools could benefit our LIO. There was agreement that a brief and easily accessible executive summary document would be helpful for communicating an overview of our plan. Ultimately, our LIO has limited capacity to engage with this effort and can't make it a priority until we know more about the region's larger plan.

Cross-Watershed Sharing

Joan presented an update on the Fish, Farm, and Flood effort in King County. The area is facing climate change impacts and it's a very challenging problem. In the first phase of the project, the group agreed on a set of bundled actions that would need to move forward together. Three task forces were formed: buffer, agriculture, and regulatory. An Implementation Oversight Committee also convenes to ensure accountability on progress. Currently, all priority actions are underway. Some of the overarching lessons learned are that building trust is important and that relationships matter.

Beth presented an update on the Fish, Farm, and Flood Buffer Task Force. Buffers are a wicked problem in the Snoqualmie Valley. This task force sought to synthesize the best available science on buffer widths and their impacts on salmon habitat in order to answer how much APD land is truly needed for salmon recovery. The report, "Riparian Buffers in an Agricultural Setting", will be released April 30th. The task force is also working on developing a logic framework to help make decisions about buffer projects. This effort has required an incredible level of collaboration between all of the stakeholders and the project team is impressed by the commitment to working together.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Action Items and Next Steps

1. Jessica will continue to gather comments on the decision of delivering NTA prioritization guidance to the IC.
2. Jessica will set-up a meeting with Ron Wesen and key committee members.