

**Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Forum**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**Thursday, June 4, 2020 • 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**  
**Zoom**

On June 4, 2020 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
Gretchen Glaub	Snohomish County Surface Water Management
Terry Williams	Tulalip Tribes
Jim Miller	City of Everett
Heather Khan	WA Dept. of Ecology
Marty Jacobson	WA Dept. of Ecology
Denise Krownbell	Seattle City Light
Joe Neal	US Forest Service
Paul Crane	City of Everett
Angela Ewert	Snohomish County Council (for Councilmember Jared Mead)
Colin Wahl	Tulalip Tribes
Cory Zyla	Snoqualmie Watershed Forum
Dave Lucas	Snohomish County Surface Water Management
Denise Johns	City of Monroe
Doug Hennick	Wild Fish Conservancy
Eli Tome	Forterra
Elissa Ostergaard	Snoqualmie Watershed Forum
Erin Murray	PSP
Kirk Lakey	WDFW
Linda Lyshall	Snohomish Conservation District
Lindsey Desmul	WDFW
Michael McDonald	WSDOT
Seth Amrhein	King County
Sono Hashisaki	Springwood Associates for Tulalip Tribes
Janne Kaje	King County
Rodney Pond	Sound Salmon Solutions
Jamie Bails	WDFW
Elizabeth Butler	RCO

**Basin Updates**

Staff impacts from Covid-19

Morgan and other Tulalip Tribes staff remain on furlough. Some projects and processes are experiencing less support due to the lack of staff capacity i.e.) WREC.

**Grant Round**

Gretchen reminded the Forum that the recent RCO Lean process resulted in changes to the SRFB grant round deadlines. The schedule was moved up and one review cycle was removed. In the Snohomish, 12 projects were proposed. Site visits were conducted virtually in March. Sponsors handled these unique circumstances well. The Snohomish was the first lead entity in the state to do virtual visits. While the virtual format worked well considering, it doesn't replace real site visits. State technical review members

reviewed the projects. Two projects were cleared for funding, but ten were not cleared (9 were deemed “needs more information” and 1 is a “project of concern”). This is a higher number than usual for uncleared projects. Local reviewers had similar concerns/questions to the state technical reviewers so they haven’t created the local ranked list yet. We will need to schedule a Forum meeting later on in August to make final determination on the ranked list. Between now and then sponsors have a chance to update and finalize their proposals (due June 29<sup>th</sup>), before being reviewed again by the state technical reviewers. At that point, hopefully all will be cleared and then the local reviewers can make their ranked list. Gretchen feels confident that most projects will be able to be cleared, but there is still work to do. We will need Forum approval to hold a special meeting in August to review the projects and vote on the ranked list (likely Aug. 6th). The Forum approved holding an August meeting.

In total, project requests received = \$4.7 M but the basin has around \$2.9 M to allocate (this is bigger year due to PSAR return funds).

### **Floodplains by Design Letters of Support**

All four proposed projects from our basin are moving forward in the application process. A lead entity letter of support is required by the program’s RFP. In Jan/Feb during the pre-proposal phase, sponsors gave presentations to the Tech Comm and have given another presentation since then. The Tech Comm recommends submitting letters of support for all four projects:

1. Hafner-Barfuse Levee Setback: This project seeks to reconnect 145 acres of floodplain, reconnect side channels, install ELJs, realign of Neil Rd, and construct ag. drainage improvement projects. Cost = \$18 M. King County is seeking PSAR large cap funding (\$5 M) and \$10 M from Fbd.
2. Cherry Valley Initiative: The Cherry Creek Ph. 1 project was recently completed. This large proposal includes ag. benefits. Ph. 2 of the Cherry Creek project, levee improvements, replacement of undersize culverts, and solutions for the avulsion site. The sponsors request \$2.2 M from Fbd.
3. North Bend Levee Setback: This project seeks to position a new levee in the ROW, reduce impediments to river flow (2,500 ft. of levee), improve 25 acres of habitat, connected floodplain and 12 acres of newly connected floodplain, and install riparian plantings. The sponsors request \$2 M in this Fbd round and anticipate seeking another \$2 M in the next round.
4. Community Floodplains Solutions Ph 2: This project is mostly focused in the Lower Sky and driven by landowner interest. The project seeks to increase connectivity of 100 acres of off-channel habitat, restore side channel connection, and restore fish habitat. The sponsors request \$8.6 M from Fbd combined with lots of match funding sources.

The Forum approved submitting the letters of support. Gretchen will send out drafts for review via email.

### **Salmon Recovery Plan Update**

The team is working on an estuary synthesis white paper to help with setting new estuary targets. Others are also working on the water quality white paper. A draft is being reviewed currently. A monitoring plan is also in development. Gretchen reviewed the timeline.

### **WREC Update**

The WREC continues working to identify projects for inclusion in the plan. Terry mentioned the subgroup working on a water plan for fish and people. They are trying to capture glacial snow melt and additional rain inputs. They are also looking at how to work with partners to set up wetland storage for habitat.

### **Fish in, fish out Presentation**

Colin gave the annual presentation reviewing this year's salmon numbers for escapements, forecasts, and traps in the Snohomish.

Last year's Chinook forecast predicted 3,500 fish but the reality came in well below that number. He noted there is inherent error in forecasts and error in estimates. Last year's total escapement estimate was 1,600 - the worst on record. The forecast for 2020 is 3,400 fish (similar to last year). Outmigration numbers for Chinook have looked pretty good for the past 3 years so there is hope.

Colin reminded the group that the recovery goals are based on productivity. The target is 14,000 returning spawners per year as indicative of good productivity; low productivity would be 64,000. The majority of fish are spawning in the Skykomish basin.

Coho estimates were close to the conservative forecast (38,000 - 39,000). They are still in critical status though. The goal is 50,000 fish.

Chum escapement was well below the forecast – the worst on record. This is consistent throughout Puget Sound for other species as well. He noted the closed fishery on chum last year.

Steelhead also declined last year.

Colin mentioned that due to the Covid pandemic impacting field work and monitoring there will be gaps in next year's data.

He noted the temperature anomaly in the north pacific recorded by NOAA buoys from northern California to the coast of Washington and the Strait of Juan de Fuca measurements.

Coho: Last year 38,000 returned. Forecast was 50,000. So under performed.

### **Regional Updates**

Alexa and Erin provided some regional updates. The Puget Sound Partnership has released a 2018-2022 Action Agenda After Action Review [report](#). The Puget Sound [Vital Signs](#) have recently been updated. Now PSP is gearing up to launch the development of the next 2022-2026 Action Agenda.

Several NTAs from our watershed were recommended for funding by the SI Leads this year. Many more received funding in 2018 and 2019 as well. See PowerPoint for details.

### **Snoqualmie Forum Update**

Cory reported the recent economic uncertainties, but the King County flood control district doubled funding for CWM grant program. This year there was \$2.5 M in requests with \$1.9 M to allocate. A map of the projects was shared.

Elissa commented that that the Fish, Farm, Flood advisory board is resuming meetings and making progress. Monitoring Coho NTA with Tulalip Tribes was recommended for full funding.

### **Snohomish Basin Acquisition Strategy**

The strategy is based on a decision support tool to acquire priority properties for restoration and conservation. This adds flexibility to proactively pursue funding. The Stilly has developed and implemented a similar strategy and GIS tool successfully. The tool allows us to compare parcels. TC approved its use.

### **Roundtable Updates**

Brett shared that the Pilchuck dam removal project is moving forward. Webcam available for viewing. Hopefully finished by August. Will send link.

Denise mentioned the Stossel Creek property planting.

Heather spoke about the Pilchuck TMDL work that is ongoing. Internal review is in progress.

Linda noted the SCD is excited to likely receive funding for their monitoring work. As soon as they get under contract they will come back to the Forum for an in depth discussion. They plan to provide an overview of the group and get input on the rollout. This work is being modeled after Pierce County area's work and is one way to merge our interests across fish, farm, and flood.

Sono commented that one of Tulalip's NTAs received funding. The team is working on a SOW. The project focuses on forest management for water storage. They will work with the university to map storage potential for wetlands and using the DHSVM for potential to store snow melt water using the EMDS platform. Their harmonization NTA seeks to develop pilot projects with King and Snohomish County. In King County it would inform prioritization for culvert upgrades. In Snohomish County there is potential to aggregate restoration projects in the lower Skykomish.

Erin added that the most recent SRC meeting presented the new vision for the 2022-2026 Action Agenda largely based on the After Action Review report. In the next iteration, PSP will potentially eliminate the NTA solicitation based on feedback from partners. Rodney noted that members were asked to compile basin challenges to bring forward and send to Amber Moore. He encouraged people to send ideas and he will pass them along. So far he is planning to talk about funding, match, and buffers.

Erin also spoke to the Vital Signs Revision sunseting which Ross Strategic was the consultant on. They will be presenting the final package to LC next week. Now 36 indicators recommended. 2 new Vital Signs (marine fish and zooplankton) proposed. Changing Chinook VS to Salmon to include other salmonids.

Puget Sound Day on the Hill was cancelled due to Covid. But the sessions have been moved to online format every Friday in June and July. Pre-registration is required.

She noted that state agencies were asked to reduce their budgets by 15% due to Covid financial impacts. Gretchen added that the Lead Entity was informed by RCO to anticipate future capacity grants may be subject to some amount of reduced funding.

Lastly, Erin announced that PSAR large cap. projects are under review and will hopefully have a final list by end of the month.

## **Adjourn**

- The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m. The next Forum meeting will be held on August 6<sup>th</sup>.

## **Upcoming Meetings**

- PDC meeting: June 18
- Technical Committee meeting: July 7 (tentative)
- Forum meeting: August 6