

Meeting #9

Snoqualmie Fish, Farm, Flood Advisory Committee
Preston Community Center
April 9, 2014 at 3:00 p.m.
Meeting Notes

Facilitator: Tamie Kellogg

Committee Members Present: Lawrence Carlson, Jarvis Keller, Scott Powell, David Radabaugh, Lara Thomas, Heather Trim, Daryl Williams, Jason Walker, Josh Monaghan, Bobbi Lindemulder, Cindy Spiry, Siri Erickson-Brown, Micah Wait, Rick Bautista

King County WLRD Staff Present: Janne Kaje, Kollin Higgins, Rick Reinlasoder, Kathy Creahan, Sally King, Clint Loper, Joan Lee, John Taylor, Claire Dyckman, Andrea Plischke, Perry Falcone

Other Attendees: Alan Painter, Jim Haack, Cynthia Krass, Jeff McMorris, Ward Roney, Matt Canfield

Part 1: Welcome, Introductions, and Follow-up (Tamie & Janne)

- a. Introductions
 - Jason Walker is now on the committee, taking Bryan Holloway's spot.
- b. Agenda Review
- c. Meeting Materials
 - Includes table of solutions in draft form

Janne said some have not been discussed yet as a group at all. We need feedback. Are there any missing? An email would be appreciated by early next week. People can also sign up to write up those that haven't been done yet. Heather asked to have it passed around during the meeting. Janne complied. There are 4 broad categories and "other." Don't need to worry about the categories – just a way of sorting them.

- d. Timeline Updates and Public Engagement Strategy
 - April 23 - will cover ag viability and what success looks like for fish and flood risk reduction
 - May 14 - will review potential solutions and make preliminary decisions to move forward
 - May 28 - will continue review of preliminary recommendations and discuss summer public engagement strategy
 - Oct thru Dec - will have 2 or 3 advisory committee meetings to review and revise (if needed) and finalize recommendations.
- e. Follow-up on what we heard at the 1st Public Workshop (Tamie)

Notes from the meeting will be cleaned up and sent out next week. We did hear quite a bit about water rights from people. Janne thanked the committee members for being there.

Tamie asked committee members for feedback/takeaways:

- Jason: Drainage needs to be improved; buffers are the most important consideration for habitat, upper watershed concerns.
- Lawrence: Was surprised by the turnout. Owners in the valley got to speak their minds a little.
- Cindy: There were a lot of landowners there and they wanted to see what was going on and express their concerns.
- Scott: The comment on the Coho was the most interesting.
- Daryl: Keep an eye on recreational use; the idea of dredging the river.
- David: The Coho comment struck him; he liked that a good number of people came out.
- Bobbi: Also thought the Coho comment stood out. In response to the guy questioning recreation on the river, she knows habitat projects are a big deal for rafters, etc. but is not sure how to address that this round. The missing piece is that the audience didn't understand the breadth of what's been covered. They didn't take away the wide variety of things already discussed. All in all she was surprised by how many people came.
- Micah: Most of the feedback was similar to what we've been talking about. The Coho comment was interesting; we didn't choose an indicator species – the ESA was targeting Chinook due to low numbers, plus they are more directly affected by farming.
- Heather: She was heartened by comments regarding drainage of the watershed. She wasn't sure what the recreational issue was. Do they want more recreational opportunities?
- Janne said projects can involve large wood and this is causing the most concern for safety reasons.
- Rick: Why don't we have the City of Snoqualmie represented? It's incumbent on cities to help with some problems.
- Jarvis: It helped him see the bigger picture and he appreciated hearing people's comments and concerns, such as their erosion troubles.
- Siri: Was also glad that erosion was brought up.

Part 2: Flood Risk Reduction (Sally King)

- a. Presentation: "Flood Opportunities/Solutions"
- b. Large group questions

- Bobbi: Where would the repairing revetments and floodgate pieces fit?
- Sally: We do low flow inspections of facilities and identify repair projects that are needed. Some projects that benefit public roads in agricultural land are included in the 6 year capital budget.
- Janne: Claire and Brian have been looking at floodgates as a drainage issue more than a flooding issue.
- Sally: The repairing of revetments on private land – it's not that they are not eligible; they might come out low on the list due to the capital budget rating system so the Advisory Committee can come up with recommendations to change that.
- Bobbi: I think that's a good idea otherwise those projects won't get done.

Clint: It's not that protection of farmland can't be done, it has more to do with how far down the list can we go with available funding.

Siri: What are the impediments to property owners doing work themselves and what are the costs? Maybe there are some situations when the owner has the incentive to do something themselves.

Clint: The state has guidelines for doing repairs to revetments to stay consistent, and we do provide technical assistance to private property owners. There have been cost share programs in the past.

Janne: There is a path and you can get there but it can be expensive. Following the flood in '06 on the Raging River there was a private repair done. We can bring information on that.

Heather: It seems to me we don't have a map of where we need to do revetments.

Siri: There's a map that shows all revetments in the county inventory.

Heather: If the entire system can be mapped maybe we can get a better understanding of priority needs. That was a fancy elevated platform for \$61/sq ft. Is there an alternative that's not so expensive?

Sally: It's definitely a "Cadillac" example. We are trying to work with several other farmers to build less expensive platforms. One issue is that the pilings have to go deep in order to bear weight in alluvial soils.

Siri: How about floating pads?

David: When elevated on piles there's potential to buy more floodway capacity.

Lara: We have to agree with a public/private approach. Facilities on the main stem of the river are not getting a lot of funding so they are deteriorating and going to fail.

Clint: They are being inspected every 1-2 years, and being repaired so they don't fail.

Lara: It needs to be timely.

Micah: Considering the geology of the basin, do we have a real problem or are we making a bigger deal than what it is?

Clint: There are some localized places with damage to facilities that we're keeping an eye on.

Lara: It's not about failure, but maintenance before they fail.

Heather: Can do a map and identify places that are at risk of failing
(Siri said she already suggested something like that and it's on the solution list.)

Sally: The most damages and repairs are in alluvial fan reaches, but we are doing inspections and repairs throughout the valley.

Kollin: Regarding maintenance, there's no maintenance needed until there is a failure. There might be a misconception of what maintenance means.

Clint: Maintenance is in fact repairs. If there's a flood event that causes damage, the revetment/levee will need to be repaired since another flood event could make it worse.

Siri: Maybe we need some well-defined terminology for maintenance vs repairs, etc.

Lawrence: The county hasn't repaired SE 19th Way.

Sally: That repair is now in the 6 year capital budget (due to a county road being impacted). There is a map that shows where revetments and levees are, but they are not graded/rated.

Tamie: That's a solution we can recommend.

Heather: Can also rate how fish friendly they are.

Lara: Bank stabilization projects need to be addressed as well. So far there's not a lot of money for that; it'll probably cost \$1mil to address the problem in Duvall.

Siri: How easy would it be to figure out how many farms/parcels don't have housing?

Sally: We can use reverse 911 data to figure out how many have a house.

David: Looking at the 200 houses outside the floodplain, where are those as well? A housing trust for affordable farmer housing in Carnation or Fall City could be linked to farms in the floodplain.

Heather: Do we know the difference in cost between building a new elevated house vs. elevating an existing farm house?

Sally: We don't know since the county has only funded retrofits of existing houses.

Scott: Regarding the farm pad idea and elevating houses, I'm confused about zero rise criteria. What are the limits?

Clint: Zero rise criteria are related to upstream impacts, and compensatory storage is related to downstream impacts due to possible loss of flood storage. Most hydraulic models only evaluate the upstream impacts, but in the lower Snoqualmie, the current model is an "unsteady state" one that routes a flood flow through the valley and can look at both upstream and downstream effects. The downstream effects are related to any changes in the amount of flood storage related to fill. For the farm pad program, we've modified the standard to allow fill without compensatory excavation so long as the fill creates a negligible loss of flood storage, essentially no measurable (modeled) increase in water surface elevations downstream. Since the program started in 2008, new proposed farm pads are added to the model each year so that we can evaluate the cumulative effects of all the farm pads to date. When Sally talks about constrained reaches, those are areas where the cumulative effects model indicates we are close to the limit relative to zero-rise.

Sally: The phasing is more about which farmers come to the county and say they want a farm pad. It is variable and depends on who's ready to take a project on.

Lara: Does the county help provide the farm pad service to agriculture? In the city it costs \$30k to do a hydraulic model.

Clint: Yes there's a huge amount of technical assistance. County pays for and does the modeling and assistance with design/orientation of the farm pads.

Josh: How many houses have been lifted total?

Sally: Fifteen with county support.

Rick B: These regulations about housing in the floodway are all driven by FEMA but do we have a good feel of what FEMA is looking for? Is it concern around compensatory storage, or a life and safety issue? If life and safety, they shouldn't be allowing houses to be put back up in the floodway. If it's compensatory storage, we can tell people we require all new housing to be elevated from the start.

Dave: A little of all of the above. No new residences in the floodway is a state law. The zero rise rule has to do with overall flood height and ensuring no impacts on neighbors. But the FEMA floodway also tends to be the part of the floodplain with higher velocity flows and potentially greater risk, so the state's code restricts new housing there to protect life safety.

Sally: When we do elevations, we ask, is house in area of high velocity? If yes, we'll talk about moving the structure, or building the foundation thicker on the upstream side. We take human safety into account, and sometimes do buyouts when the area is too risky.

David: What do people think about the look of elevated houses?

Jarvis: Ours is well disguised with lattice. Many ways to make it look just fine.

10 MINUTE BREAK

Part 3: *Big Bold Ideas* for Flood Risk Reduction Opportunities Beyond Large CIP's (Tamie)

The committee members separated into three discussion groups to talk about flood solutions and come up with what should be moved forward: one with David Radabaugh, one with Clint Loper, and one with Sally King as technical experts.

Report back from groups (note ** indicates highest priority solutions)

Clint's Group

- Take soil from levee setback project sites and put it on low spots on farms. However, much land that needs to be higher could be wetland; new EPA proposed regulation could make the wetland fill allowable **

- More emphasis on maintaining existing levees, floodgates, etc; make new gates more friendly to fish; develop a schedule for maintenance.**
- Look at constrained reaches and how to create mitigation for fill placed in those reaches. E.g. excavate places (e.g., parks in Carnation and Duvall, or removing cross-valley road segments) so more farm pads can be built in constrained reaches.**
- Create loan program for farm pads, etc. Elevation of ag buildings is too expensive. May be less expensive to tear down and build a new one in the same footprint.
- Use Flood District funding to expand home elevation, farm pad program. What funds are available?

David's Group (no priorities indicated on flip chart; may be all priorities?)

- 100% of structures in floodplain elevated and flood platforms paid for by the county; no new farm pads.
- Hydraulic model to understand how cross-valley infrastructure impacts flooding and assess alternatives.
- Provide flood fencing for farms along the mainstem where it makes sense and is desired by the farmer.
- Storage of stormwater up the watershed or take advantage of old manure lagoons to store water.
- Scientific analysis of plants (buffers) in the watershed and their ecological benefits, with a focus on those that farmers are ok with.

Sally's Group

- Do a housing/needs assessment of farm structures.**
 - Is there a need for farm pad or elevated platform? Elevated barn?
 - How many farms have houses, or could be linked with houses that exist nearby (current vs future farms)?
- Map the existing revetments and levees; figure out where they are protecting ag land and infrastructure, what condition they are in, if they should be priority for repair; also determine where removal of a facility would reconnect most valuable habitat areas. Use this to guide future repairs, removals, etc**
- Create farmer ombuds person to help with challenges related to agriculture, including permitting and technical and financial assistance for bank stabilization projects, farm pad construction, structure elevations, etc.
- Flood improvements don't necessarily work against agriculture
- Levees and revetments are less important than elevations and drainage.
- Drainage district could be focused on by FCD.
- Channel Migration is concern
- KC logistical support for permitting – facility repairs and other activities.
- Snoqualmie farm property owners guide.
- Housing – substandard housing because of challenges or permitting/construction.
- Some operations require staff onsite, even during flooding.
- What are the concerns/reasons for not allowing new farm houses in the floodway.

- Programmatic review.
- Local office of US ACOE permit updates – contribute assigned standardized practices integrated with multiple agencies.
 - Resources for farmers/new landowners
- Salmon plans recommend “armoring” removal – adding new would require removal of more.
- Integration of public investment (FPP, house elevation, habitat benefit, etc.)
- Invasive plants compromise river facilities.
- Transit and large scale public infrastructure.
- Residential prices for houses in APD vs. farm prices – can’t buy and attach to farms.

Part 4: Follow-up Actions and Next Steps

- a. Updates on progress with sub-committees, Ag viability discussion, etc.

Buffer and drainage will start this week. Brian and Claire have been doing some work and will be meeting with Joan. Jean White will be convening the buffer group.

People on sub-committees will be contacted soon regarding a conference call. We might also want to have a sub-committee for flood risk reduction.

Kollin is working on the update of what is working for fish recovery.

Josh M is working on the idea of agricultural viability. Claire added that they’ll be talking about it with the Agriculture Commission.

- b. April 23 Advisory Committee Agenda

Sample guiding principles will be addressed at the next meeting, as well as what does success look like for farm, fish and flood. When viability and success statements are done, they will be sent out.

Scott wanted to know how we will prioritize all the great ideas. Janne said they don’t all need to be prioritized, but we need to pick out a subset that we agree we want to move forward on (Tamie added that the two May meetings will involve this).

Lara wants to know if there will be a financial commitment at the end of the day. She said the committee needs to have an idea of the resources available.

Janne said some things may already fit into a funding pot, some may need other funding, but there is interest in pursuing multiple avenues to get funding.

Tamie said we’ll bring back information on that.

Bobbi added that we need to think about work already done, and work that still needs to be done. Snohomish county has a similar group that’s been meeting since 2010 but not much has been solved yet.

Janne said the county is committed to a new way of doing business. We can also have a recommendation that the county gets “checked in on” every so many years to see how effort is being demonstrated and money is being spent in all three areas.

Tamie asked people to think of ways the county can demonstrate their commitment.

MEETING ADJOURNED