



King County

Water and Land Resources Division

Department of Natural Resources and Parks
King Street Center
201 South Jackson Street, Suite 600
Seattle, WA 98104-3855
206-477-4800 Fax 206-296-0192
TTY Relay: 711

**King County Agriculture Commission
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 13th, 2017
Snoqualmie Public Library, Snoqualmie**

Commissioners	P	A	Commissioners	P	A	Commissioners	P	A
Leann Krainick, Chair Pro-Tem	X		Siri Erickson-Brown	X		Leigh Newman-Bell	X	
Amy Holmes, Vice Chair Pro-Tem		X	Shelby Jors		X	Larry Pickering		X
Roger Calhoon		X	Meredith Molli	X		Bob Vos	X	
Bruce Elliott	X		Eldon Murray	X				

P=Present; A=Absent

County Staff Present		
Patrice Barrentine, DNRP	Mike Lufkin, DNRP	Alan Painter, DNRP
Lou Beck, DNRP	Richard Martin, DNRP	April Sanders, KCC
Steve Evans, DNRP	Megan Moore, DNRP	John Taylor, DNRP

Guests Present		
Ben Axt, King Conservation District	Erin Ericson, Snoqualmie Valley WID	Adam McCurdy, Oxbow Farm
Liz Clark, KCD	Paul Pink, Enumclaw farmer	

Meeting Action Summary

- **Approval of March 9th Meeting Minutes**
- **Farm Fish Flood (FFF) Update / Commission Letter**
- **Other Updates: ADAP, KC Agriculture Program, Local Food Initiative**

Meeting Called to Order at 2:39 pm

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Eldon Murray made a motion to approve tonight’s agenda. Siri Erickson-Brown seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

Bruce Elliott requested correction to the spelling of two attendees’ names; Leann Krainick noted a correction needed on attendance. Meredith Molli made a motion to approve the minutes with the suggested revisions; Bob Vos seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Farm Fish Flood (FFF) Update – Commissioners; John Taylor, DNRP

John Taylor reported on a recent meeting where a Commission letter approved at a prior meeting, expressing concerns about the FFF report written by County staff, was presented to other FFF participants. He said all parties approved the letter except state Department of Ecology; their agency has expressed concern that signing

off on this letter may mean they would be unable to do their statutory job. Josh Baldi, the new director for DNRP's Water and Land Resources Division (WLRD), will set up a conference call with Ecology to discuss the issue further; Mr. Taylor said Ecology may offer additional language for all participants to review, or sign this letter with an addition of their own letter of qualified support. He noted that Ecology, as a state regulatory agency and not an individual or representative of a non-profit, is in a unique position among all other FFF participants.

Bob Vos stated his approval of the Commission letter, praising Siri Erickson-Brown and Meredith Molli for their efforts representing the Commission in the FFF process. He said he believes the current letter more accurately portrays flood interests, and includes a reasonable list of potential organizations to comprise the main FFF 2.0 committee. He also said the bundling agreement looks a bit "watered down," but still probably adequate. He commended the County for stepping back from referencing the FFF County staff report.

Ms. Erickson-Brown noted that if there had not been stronger agreement on the makeup of the FFF 2.0 committee, there would've been more focus on specific "bundling" language; however, since there was agreement on the 2.0 makeup, more specific bundling language was less of a concern. She motioned to approve the transmittal letter in its current form. Ms. Molli seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Ms. Erickson-Brown inquired about a timeline for any additional letters expressing hopes and concerns for the FFF 2.0 process. Mr. Taylor said the next step is to get Ecology on board with this process, at which point a "final summit" will be scheduled. He said he believes a draft letter could be reviewed by subcommittee and ready for transmittal by next Commission meeting, and that this entire phase of the FFF process should be complete by July. Patrice Barrentine agreed to help coordinate this.

Agriculture Drainage Assistance Program (ADAP) Update – Lou Beck, DNRP; Ben Axt, KCD

Lou Beck from DNRP's Stormwater Services section, and Ben Axt of King Conservation District (KCD)'s drainage program, reviewed a presentation detailing specifics on eight agricultural drainage projects completed on county farms in 2016. These projects involved collaboration between KCD, the County, and landowners, and altogether included just under 13,000 total linear feet of completed drainage work.

Some discussion followed on a change in average costs for implementing drainage projects between 2015 – 2016; these costs overall appear to be decreasing. A steady increase in participating projects, as well as the wait list for implementing projects, was also noted. It was explained that wait list requests are generally prioritized in order of how much of a possible return investment is expected on a potential project. The goal is to complete four to six projects, or 6,000 to 8,000 linear feet, per year. The anticipated funding need to keep pace with ongoing drainage project requests, extrapolated over seven years, is about \$700,000 annually. There were also several questions from Commissioners and public addressing specific aspects of projects, such as: off-site mitigation, the perceived questionable shade benefit of buffer planting, or if the costs spent on fish-related aspects of drainage might be better spent on larger-scale salmon restoration projects that have benefits for both salmon and farmers.

King County Agriculture Program Update – Richard Martin, DNRP

Patrice Barrentine reported on a series of County-sponsored livestock workshops. The first series in Enumclaw focused on marketing and processing opportunities, costs, and USDA slaughter standards. The next is scheduled for April 22nd at Carnation Farm. This series will have four workshops and feature a mobile livestock processing unit. Research is being done to gauge demand to possibly bring this unit to King County one to two days per week. Demand for a refrigerated delivery truck is also being researched.

Richard Martin reported two finalists have been selected for the program's new regulatory permitting specialist position, with the final choice expected by end of May. The program is also seeking two to three people to update land use cover maps for the County this summer. The primary impetus is to find new potential farmland to help the County achieve its goal of 400 new acres in production each year. Leann Krainick relayed a concern about the County reporting its findings to the Assessor's office; Mr. Martin said this would not occur.

Mr. Martin noted USDA's five-year census is this year, and most existing participants should get notification from USDA soon to file their reports by end of the year. He said there is concern about newer participants possibly not being contacted by USDA, and that the County is developing an outreach strategy to ensure their participation and better representation of actual production in King County.

He then provided a brief overview of several ongoing County agriculture issues. The Remlinger property near Carnation is now being appraised with a goal of sale by end of 2017; the County will retain an FPP easement requiring farming on the land, and in the meantime will lease it to keep it in production. Steve Evans' 2016 farmers' market survey results show a 5% increase in sales over 2015, a total of \$20 million, with roughly \$15 million more estimated at unreported markets; the 65 King County farms that participate in County markets represent about ¼ of the total participants. There is an ongoing effort between King and Snohomish County staff to address drainage problems at the Van Ness property located near the King-Snohomish County line. King County staff are also working with the City of Woodinville to identify possible land parcels to add back into the Sammamish Valley APD after the City removed half an acre to construct a traffic roundabout.

BREAK

Local Food Initiative (LFI) 2016 Annual Report – Mike Lufkin, DNRP

Mike Lufkin, Food Economy Program Manager for DNRP, presented the 2016 annual progress report for the County's Local Food Initiative. The LFI's primary goals are to increase access to affordable healthy food options for low-income and underserved areas, and to grow the local food economy. Mr. Lufkin presented a 15-minute video overviewing specific indicators and data on the initiative's current progress, and distributed printed copies of the full report. The full video and report are available on King County's LFI website at:

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/initiatives/local-food-initiative.aspx>

Several questions and comments followed the video. Bob Vos asked about possible bias against animal products in the report and video; Mr. Lufkin replied the lack of animal-related visuals here was due to time constraints and available footage/imagery, not intentional bias. Leann Krainick noted that when she spoke to the County's Kitchen Cabinet stakeholders group, which developed the LFI, she stressed the key importance of proteins as well as vegetables in healthy diets. She also spoke on a need to respect that large agriculture as well as small is important to the local food economy, and that the LFI should address needs for current as well as new farmers. Liz Clark of KCD added that education of those in all stages of the farming process should be an important part of LFI goals. Eldon Murray asked about access to funding/capital; Mr. Lufkin answered this is an issue he intends to explore more deeply in 2017, but he believes the County probably needs to focus more on private capital sources, as well non-profit/community-based sources. Adam McCurdy of Oxbow Farm commented on the importance of addressing the high cost of farm labor and housing, that it is prohibitive to many farmers in scaling up their operations to meet increased demands for local produce.

Old Business: Updates – Commissioners, KC/KCD Staff

- **Commission Details (Patrice Barrentine, DNRP):** Ms. Barrentine reported the recruitment process will officially begin soon to fill the five to six slots opening on the Commission. She advised that the May Commission meeting will again be held at the Snoqualmie library, from 3:00 to 6:00 pm on meeting day, with no meeting to be held in June. There will also be a public meeting about a hydrologic study of the Snoqualmie River on April 18th.
- **KC Councilmember von Reichbauer's Town Hall Meeting (Leann Krainick):** Ms. Krainick gave a brief summary of the meeting, where she spoke as part of a panel that included representatives from several agencies and organizations. Roughly 75 people attended, many from 4H/FFA. A significant concern voiced at the meeting was the need for farmers to better educate public consumers as well as other farmers about the importance of farming. She added that educating the general public on this should also be a goal of the Commission itself.
- **King Conservation District (KCD Staff):** Liz Clark advised anyone involved with government and/or non-profit entities to contact her for information about partnering with KCD as vendors at the upcoming King County Fair, July 13th through July 16th. She said vendor space for non-profits is \$150 for four days.
- **Farm Bureau (Bruce Elliott):** Mr. Elliott reported that the most recent county Farm Bureau meeting discussed their budget for the coming year, which includes several available scholarships.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:18 pm

Next Meeting

May 11th, 2017, 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm, at Snoqualmie Public Library, Snoqualmie