



King County

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MEETING NOTES

CEDAR RIVER COUNCIL

January 22nd 2019 – 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Maplewood Greens Golf Course
4050 Maple Valley Hwy., Renton, WA 98058

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm.

1st Public Comment Period

Local citizen Bob Steele continued his commentary from last month's meeting, about his concerns on the proposed Lakeside Industries asphalt plant on Highway 169 near the Cedar River. He used a 3D model of the site to illustrate hills in that location creating a "choke point" on the river for airborne toxins emitted from the plant. He is worried that fish are far more susceptible than humans to the toxins that would come from the plant, including hydrogen disulfide and sulfuric acid. He cited research from the Center for Health and Environmental Justice (CHEJ).

Mr. Steele reported the permit for the plant is being redone, and a new public comment period is underway until end of January. He believes this is the last chance to submit comment on this issue as individuals. He suggested bringing in environmental engineers, and citizens of the activist group No Asphalt 169, to be involved in this process. He further cited CHEJ research to say in addition to harming fish, toxins may result in brain cancer for children who are more susceptible than adults; that property values may also drop significantly. He said air filters do not remove all toxins.

Mr. Steele suggested contacting Puget Sound Air Quality, stating King County doesn't seem to want to approach this issue due to potential legal conflicts. He said Lakeside Industries is known for "dumping" a lot of data at the last moment, and this case is no different. He offered to continue his commentary in the second public comment period.

2019 CRC Work Planning Session

A) Schedule

- There was discussion at length about rescheduling the annual I Love the Cedar River (ILCR) event. It was a consensus that late September/early October is the best time, to allow for involvement by salmon naturalists and more public engagement, since salmon runs happen during that time. There was some talk on whether to hold it during the week or on a weekend. Nathan Brown noted September 24th is the CRC meeting date scheduled during that time, and suggested holding ILCR at the end of September. There was a consensus of agreement. It was also suggested the CRC have a booth at the event. Mr. Brown agreed to follow up.
- Mr. Brown suggested changing the day/time for regular CRC meetings; there was little support for this idea.
- It was asked if the annual North Bend CRC meeting presents too long a drive for some CRC members. Consensus was to keep the North Bend meeting; Mr. Brown and Jay Mirro offered to arrange carpools.

B) Exercise

Mr. Brown led CRC members and public attendees in a series of group breakout exercises to determine priority issues for the CRC to address in 2019:

- Group 1's priorities: (1) Survival of salmon, establish meeting with government leaders to attack the problem; (2) the asphalt plant, seeking a goal of getting their permit appealed/denied.
- Group 2's priorities: (1) Investigate human/wildlife impacts from asphalt plant, so as to mitigate/prevent them; (2) improve survival of young salmon; (3) Improve water quality by focusing more on tributary streams; (4) Influence large-scale salmon problems such as the hot, toxic waters of the ship canal.
- Group 3's priorities: (1) Fish situation for all salmonids in the Cedar River, improving hatchery operations and Lake Washington/ship canal effects; (2) Landsburg mine and future silica plant; would like updates on these.
- Group 4's priorities: (1) increase fry/smolt survival ratio to save sockeye run, try to find funding to boost hatchery survival ratio; (2) Water quality; continue river advocacy.
- Common goals among the four groups included: (1) fish welfare, (2) the asphalt plant, (3) water quality, and (4) improving community involvement/social media.



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Additional topics/goals suggested included: importance of woody debris to river users/resource managers and improving the balance between safety and habitat; discussing stormwater/pollution issues with homeowner and neighborhood groups; and engaging the community in restoration actions by arranging planting events or touring parcels being actively restored.

After final voting, the top priorities for the year were: (1) Asphalt plant; tied for (2) and (3) were improving fish runs and water quality beyond the mainstem Cedar River. The CRC as a whole agreed to proceed with these topics. It was asked what the “official” position of the CRC is in regards to the asphalt plant. The consensus is opposition, as there are potential negative impacts to people and wildlife. Amy LaBarge asked what would be done with the other topics on the proposed list. Mr. Brown replied he will keep them to inform further CRC agendas for 2019.

Updates and Announcements

- A) **Future Agenda Topics:** Mr. Brown said Ty Peterson with DPER is to attend an upcoming CRC meeting, likely February, to present on the status of the asphalt plant’s permit application with their agency. There was discussion on how to send an official CRC reply to the comment period ending at the end of January. Phil Kitzes offered to contact Fereshteh Dehkordi at DPER to find out how this permit application could get to a hearing, as that is the only way to stop the plant. Mr. Brown agreed to work with Tom Allyn and Max Prinsen to re-submit an earlier drafted CRC letter on this issue; otherwise, individual members are to work on their own.
- B) **WRIA 8:** Charles Ruthford reported there were two main topics of import at last Wednesday’s Salmon Recovery Council (SRC) meeting:
- WRIA 8 had submitted project proposals to state/local/federal governments for funding. The amount being granted is only about half of what was requested; thus, some projects are in jeopardy, including Riverbend.
 - Snohomish County has elected to remove itself from WRIA 8, which will result in a \$62K loss for the WRIA. The departure is due to a \$3 million budget shortfall in Snohomish County. The SRC discussed at length how to fill the \$62K gap; they are unwilling to cut back on 2019-20 proposed funding levels, electing to use “rainy day funds” which may last only 2 years. Mr. Ruthford’s chief concern is long-term viability of the SRC, that Snohomish County may be only the first to leave and Mercer Island may not be far behind.
- C) **Seattle Water Supply:** Tom Allyn reported that while this year’s snowpack and water supply started low, due to recent precipitation events it is now back up to about 94% in the Cascades.
- D) **Fish Counts:** Frank Urabeck reported sockeye counts at the Ballard Locks came in about 39% of their 10-year average. Chinook came in at about 60% of their 10-year average, but with poor returns at the Issaquah hatchery, to the point of taking broodstock from the Green River hatchery. However, he noted, the Cedar River has held its own in terms of natural fish production. Coho are at about 70% of their 10-year average. Steelhead are all but gone. Run forecasts will be available in late February. The Green River also had good runs of chinook and coho. Mr. Urabeck reiterated that the Seattle hatchery is critical to saving the “dismal” sockeye runs.
- E) **Asphalt Plant Sub-committee:** Mr. Brown said this would be addressed at February’s meeting.
- F) **April Fish Summit Meeting:** Mr. Brown requested help coordinating this meeting. Mr. Urabeck stressed a need for key stakeholders to be present to discuss who should be lead entity and what can be done to save the sockeye runs: City of Seattle/SPU, King County, tribes, WDFW, sports groups, etc. He said he would like to see a technical presentation about the hatchery, which was not done last year. Mr. Allyn agreed, adding that if changes are to be made to the original management plan, a hatcheries biologist like Aaron Bosworth of WDFW should be at the meeting. Sub-committees were designated to follow up on these topics: Mr. Urabeck and Mr. Ruthford for fish, and Larry Phillips, Mr. Urabeck, and Mr. Prinsen for talking to City of Seattle.

2nd Public Comment Period

A citizen thanked the CRC for their work in support of the community and the Cedar River. Bob Steele opted for no further commentary on the asphalt plant, as all his concerns were addressed during the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 pm.

Next Meeting

February 26th, 2019, 7 – 9 pm, Maplewood Greens Golf Course, Renton.
