



Meeting Minutes
Nisqually River Council
June 21, 2013
Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge
Information: 360.438.8715

Attendees:

Council Members

Bob Burkle – *WA Dept. Fish & Wildlife*
Edna Fund – *Lewis County*
Glynnis Nakai – *Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge*
Rene Skaggs – *Pierce Conservation District*

Sandra Romero – *Thurston County*
David Troutt – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*
*** CAC Representatives (1)**

Citizens Advisory Committee Members

Fred Michelson
Jean Shaffer

Marjorie Smith
Robert Smith*

Guests

Lisa Breckenridge – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*
Roy Carlson – *Nisqually Stream Stewards*
Amy Cruver – *Pierce County*
Chris Ellings – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*
Bob Flores – *USFW Regional Refuge Supervisor*
Kim Gridley – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*
Margaret Homerding – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*
Bruce Hostetter – *Nisqually Stream Stewards*

Cameron Hostetter – *Nisqually Stream Stewards*
Del Price – *Nisqually Stream Stewards*
Chris Schutz – *Pierce County*
Stephanie Suter – *Puget Sound Partnership*
Lea Swearingen – *Nisqually Stream Stewards*
Cindy Wilson – *Thurston County*
Barb Wood – *Thurston County*

Staff & Associated Nonprofits

Justin Hall – *Nisqually River Foundation*
Joe Kane – *Nisqually Land Trust*

Don Perry – *Nisqually Stream Stewards*
Ashley Von Essen – *Nisqually River Council*

1. Call to Order, Approval of Minutes and Agenda

Call to Order – David called the meeting to order at 9:03am.

Approval of Meeting Minutes and Agenda – There was a motion to approve May's meeting minutes as presented. They were approved, as was the agenda for June.

2. Introductions, Reports

Advisory Committee Reports

- *Citizens Advisory Committee* – Ashley reported that Karelina is in the Catskills attending her 50th high school reunion. She shared that the CAC met June 11th at the Tribe's Natural Resource Office. The meeting included updates from Joe Kane and Bryan Bowden on public access on NLT properties, the Nisqually Community Forest, and the Forest Buffer Zone project.

The CAC is also continuing work on the Citizens Conservation Certification.

- *Chair Report* – David reported that he has been working to replace the funds that have recently been cut by the Department of Ecology, which is used to staff the Nisqually River Council. WA Senators Kevin Renker, Randi Becker, and Karen Fraser are very supportive of the NRC and its contributions

and progress made over the last 25 years. However, the State's budget is still up in the air. Contingency plans are in place in the event funds are not replaced.

David recently sat down with Justin and Ashley to work out some of the details pertaining to the National Blueways application. Their goal is to hold a meeting of the Executive Committee before the July NRC meeting, at which time the committee will have the opportunity to review a draft application. Any changes and suggestions will be applied before being presented to the NRC in July. Acceptance to this program could potentially lead to future funding opportunities. Key components of the application include letters of support from elected officials whose districts lie within watershed bounds. Letters are currently being drafted, which will also be up for review very soon. The application should be turned in by the beginning of August.

Sandra recently attended a meeting at the Capitol, which included talks of allowing local watersheds to tax themselves when completing projects. It has been seen that when these taxes are tied into the actual result, successes are increased. Facilitators were taking volunteers to lead the project, which was taken by WRIA-9 in King County. Doug Osterman, Coordinator for WRIA 9, has been a longtime component of developing a watershed investment district as an alternative funding mechanism. Recommendations for this project are to be delivered by the next legislative session.

Sandra also mentioned the biodigester introduced to Snohomish County approximately four years ago as a result of efforts from the County, the Tulalip Tribe, and WSU-Extension. This rather expensive system, which works to turn waste into fertilizer, has proven very successful in turning a profit and saving local dairy farms. Thurston County is beginning talks to organize efforts to bring one here. Grants are currently being sought after to cover costs associated with implementation. Not only do these digesters generate income, but are also effective in protecting wildlife habitat, eliminating on site odors associated with dairy nutrients (a direct benefit for eco-tourism), and utilizing by-products to generate electricity. Lucas Patzek, director of the county WSU-Extension office, is the lead on this program.

- *Staff Report* – Ashley reported that she has been working on the latest edition of the newsletter, which should be making its way to mailboxes very soon.

She also mentioned that NREP and Native Plant Salvage Project held their Eatonville Raingarden kick-off event Saturday, June 1st. The organization hosted a clean-up event at the Town's Napa Auto Parts store. Two of the volunteers, students at Eatonville High School, have signed for the Nisqually Stream Stewards program, which through SPSCC's Running Start Program will allow them to earn college credit for committing to a specific number of community service hours. Volunteers also took time to stencil "Dump No Waste, Drains to Stream" on 40 storm drains along Center Drive and Washington Avenue. NREP and NPSP also participated in the transformation of a large raingarden into a habitat garden at Columbia Crest Elementary with the help of every 2nd through 5th grade student in attendance that day.

The Foundation has submitted their application for bringing on an AmeriCorps Individual Placement and should be hearing back sometime in July.

The planning of the Nisqually Watershed Festival has been coming along quite smoothly. The committee has been meeting each month to finalize details of the event. Flyers at this meeting's sign-in table reflect the 2013 Poster Contest winner, Edrick Weathers, a 4th grader from Idlewood Elementary School. This year's contest was opened up to schools outside of the watershed that had taken fieldtrips to the Refuge, Mount Rainier National Park, and NW Trek.

Allied Programs

- *Nisqually Land Trust* – Joe reported that through a grant received from Thurston and Pierce Conservation Futures, the Land Trust was able to move forward on a conservation easement on the Peterson Farm. This project, which would remove all development rights from the parcel, was ranked number one on Thurston Conservation Futures list of projects to be approved. Total property cost for

the project lies between \$800,000 and \$900,000, with half the land being donated by the Peterson Family. Acquiring this property means an additional 1 mile of permanently mainstem shoreline for the Nisqually Watershed, including protection of Yelm Creek, critical spawning grounds for chum salmon. This is the first stage for a project being implemented for salmon recovery, with possible mitigation opportunities in the future and 5 prairie species on site that may be nominated as threatened or endangered. Joe offered his thanks for the support received from Thurston County Commissioners in moving this project forward.

The NLT is currently awaiting the decision for this year's Pierce Conservations Futures Program. Of the 21 projects submitted for funding, the Land Trust has 3 projects ranked above the funding cut-off line. These projects are ranked as follows:

- #2. Anderson Property on the Mashel River, part of the Shoreline Protection Initiative. This 3.5 acre property includes a 3 mile corridor along the Mashel River and is the last piece in the core vision. Not only does this piece provide continuous protection along the Mashel Shoreline and a buffer from urban sprawl, but is also the missing link for the Eatonville Greenbelt Trail System. The NLT is seeking \$75,000 from PCF, which will be supplemented by \$30,000 from the SRFB.
- #3. A parcel in the Ohop Valley, adjacent to lands already owned by the NIT. Landowners were approached months ago and asked if interested in selling. Originally declined the offer, but it now seems they are interested. 90% of the funding has been required. This land would compliment the neighboring parcel and is an important piece for protecting habitat slated for salmon recovery.
- #5. Upper Ohop Creek Acquisition. This property, currently owned by Hancock, includes the headwaters of Ohop Lake positioned near NW Trek. This property is not only valued for its aesthetics, but for the benefits it could have on salmon recovery. In terms of dollar amount, this is the biggest project on the list, mostly because of its development value and available timber.

Maps of these projects have been added to the NRC's SlideShare website at:
<http://www.slideshare.net/Nisqually/nisqually-land-tr-2013-conservation-futures>.

- *Nisqually River Education Project* – Justin reported that Sheila, Kathy Jacobson of ESD 113, and Stephanie Bishop of SSG are currently facilitating a 3-day training with approximately 35 teachers. Summer Teacher Institute is an annual event that provides teachers with updates on key environmental concerns and methods for relaying these sometimes complicated concepts to their students. This year's theme is based on climate change and ocean acidification.

NREP was recently awarded a grant from ALEA, which will fund tree planting fieldtrips in the Ohop Valley.

Sheila, Kathy, and Stephanie are awaiting results from the Ecology Public Participation Grant. Their application is currently ranked third, however, the outcome greatly depends on the State budget and whether resources should be directed towards toxic clean-ups. This grant would add an AmeriCorps member to implement action projects developed at Student GREEN Congress.

Yelm Schools have renewed and increased their commitment with NREP for the 2013-2014 school year. Teachers will be allowed an additional fieldtrip, meaning they will be able to participate in both water quality monitoring fieldtrips.

Check out the updates to the NREP webpage!

Sheila will be attending a 4-day seminar hosted by the Center for Eco-literacy held in the Bay area next week.

Sheila is now on her summer schedule. "See ya later, gaters!"

Sandra Romero added that the Nisqually Middle School students who presented at the NRC's April meeting repeated their presentation to the Thurston County Commissioners. They did such an amazing job! Their presentation was filmed and is available on request.

- *Nisqually River Foundation* – Justin reported that he has been continuing work on the Ecosystem Services Project with Earth Economics, as well as the project with Northwest Natural Resource Group, Swedeen Consulting, WA Department of Natural Resources and the Nisqually Land Trust.

The committee has been moving forward with the plans for the upcoming Eatonville Salmon Fest. The Town has been very supportive and involved in the planning process for this brand new event. The committee is working to secure funding from the Tribe's Salmon Recovery Program.

As President of the AHSS Committee, Justin has been working with the group to ready a piece focusing on Strategic Initiatives for the next legislative session. This program would take a look at projects across the Puget Sound region, prioritizing these projects and encouraging collaborative efforts. A letter has been written about these efforts by DNR and will be circulated to the NRC Contact List.

- *Stream Stewards* – Don Perry reported that some this year's Stream Stewards were able to attend today's meeting. This unique class of 30 has just completed their 3rd week of training. The class includes 3 high school students working to achieve college credit and participants traveling as far as Seattle and Tacoma. If everyone makes it to the end of the training, this will be the largest graduating class of Stream Stewards.

Don also shared that the Eatonville Salmon Fest committee has been meeting each month. Participants include members of the NRF, NLT, NIT, the Town and the Chamber of Commerce. The committee is utilizing local entertainment and food to celebrate the natural resources and the community of the Town.

- *Salmon Recovery Update* – This report will be given in conjunction with Kim's presentation later in the meeting.

3. **WDFW Habitat Program Workload Diversification Initiative**

Bob Burkle, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife

The WA Department of Fish and Wildlife Habitat Program will be taking steps to reorganize its structure. Tasks are going to diversify to each biologist, meaning that each biologist will become efficient in all aspects of the department, a.k.a "one stop shopping." Biologists will be organized into teams assigned to specific counties. Ultimately, biologists will become competent in all areas to streamline efforts, making filling in gaps and covering time-off requests easier. This process is set to begin July 1st.

Bob also mentioned that as the State reaches the end of the fiscal cliff, if a decision on the budget cannot be made by July 1st all commercial and recreational fishing will cease.

WDFW is moving to iCloud. They are currently working to establish an online portal for permit applications, the Aquatic Protection Permit Service. This system should be ready for launch by mid-August. The site aims to make turn around for supplying permits for partners much quicker. This sect will also be working in teams, ensuring familiarity of operations for specific types of projects.

These changes mean that Bob will have less time in the field, more time in his office, and more time for NRC meetings!

4. Nisqually 3 Year Workplan and 2013 SRFB/PSAR Project List

Kim Gridley, Nisqually Indian Tribe Lead Entity Coordinator

The Nisqually Tribe's 3-Year Workplan was due at the end of May. Kim worked with the technical work crew throughout April and May to update the plan developed mostly by Cris Ellings in 2012 as a supplementary document to accompany funding requests. This year, the Puget Sound Partnership asked each watershed to pen a similar document for submission. The plan, organized as a tier system, ranks projects in order of priority. This document was mailed to the NRC Contact List for review and is also available at: <http://nisquallyriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/2013Nisqually3yrworkplanfinal.pdf>.

From that list, the committee established that the following efforts were of highest priority for the watershed and should be submitted for SRFB/PSAR Funding.

1. Ohop Valley Restoration Phase 3 (The second project, but third request for funding) –
This will allow for the extension of Phase 1 of the Ohop re-meandering onto the Burwash Property. Entire cost of project is \$3.5 million. The Tribe is asking SRFB/PSAR for \$1.8 million. This project is co-sponsored by SPSSEG. The timeline includes: Complete the design by the end this year or beginning of next year. Construction will run from 2014-2015, with restorative plantings taking place 2015-2016.
2. Nisqually Knotweed Project –
Pierce Conservation District and Pierce Noxious Weed Board began efforts of eradication in 2007. PCD has been able to treat a large portion of the mainstem, only needing to monitor annually for potential maintenance. There is only a small amount in need of initial treatment around Alder Lake and Mineral Creek. By 2014, the entire watershed will be in maintenance and monitoring status. The request of this for this project is \$60,000, which will be used to leverage additional funding, including assistance and aid from AmeriCorps and other watershed agencies.
3. Mashel Protection Phase 3 –
The Nisqually Land Trust is looking to acquire the Anderson Property. Most of the financing from this project has been requested from Thurston Conservation Futures. Asking SRFB for \$30,000 in supplemental funding. The SRFB Team took a tour of the property May 31st and suggested that invasive species control and riparian planning be included. Kim will be speaking with the technical team to inquire about a \$20,000 increase to include these projects.
4. Lower Powell Riparian Restoration (Alternate project) –
This project would include a 90-acre underplanting and a 3-acre wetland planting and weed canary grass eradication. The request for this project is \$60,000, covering plants, staffing, and maintenance.
5. McKenna Reach Ranch Protection Project (Large Capitol Project Request) –
Full acquisition of the entire 250-acre Shorno Property, including 1 mile of mainstem shoreline. Request for this project is \$3.5 million from PSAR. The Nisqually Land Trust is the sponsor for the land acquisition. An assessment of this acquisition is currently in process involving NIT, NLT, and SPSSEG. Restoration of this parcel will be completed in the future, which could cost upwards of \$2 million.

The only way all of these projects will be funded is if the budget is funded at the >\$60 million level. Kim is requesting approval from the NRC for the suggested prioritized list. There was a motion to approve the list as written. The list is unanimously passed by the NRC. It is almost certain that Kim will come next month to inquire about the \$20,000 increase for the Mashel Protection Project.

Kim is also looking for approval the 3-Year Workplan. There was a motion to approve this plan as written and it was unanimously accepted.

Kim's presentation has been made on the NRC's SlideShare website. To view, visit: <http://nisquallyriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/2013Nisqually3yrworkplanfinal1.pdf>.

5. Local Shellfish Growing Area Upgrades

Margaret Homderding, Nisqually Indian Tribe Shellfish Program Manager

In WA State, shellfish can only be harvested in certain areas, especially if done commercially. There are many concerns, including bacteria loads in meats being harvested and the waters it comes from, as well as concentrations of pollutants in each area. Areas are classified in three stages: harvesting allowed year-round, harvesting is conditional, and harvesting not allowed.

The Tribe acquired a large shellfish farm in the Henderson Inlet Watershed in 2009, putting seed out in 2010. This is one of the most unique and vulnerable of all the inlets in the Puget Sound. Status of this area has been considered both conditional, meaning that certain species can be harvested if proven to be chilled immediately after harvest, and unable to harvest. Through efforts led by Thurston County, nearby septic systems have been repaired and education and outreach programs have been established, encouraging local residents to “scoop the poo” and install raingardens. Also, residents were invited to take part in a community shellfish farm, allowing locals to benefit from their hard work. Because of these tactics, improvements were seen rather quickly and over the past years, the farm has been upgraded to year-round harvest status.

The Tribe is now focusing their attention to the JBLM Chambers Creek Area Upgrade. This urban and densely populated area, running from Solo Point to Sunset Beach, is filled with sewer outfalls and potential heavy metal pollution from industry and roadways. Beginning in October of 2010, the Tribe, Department of Health and the Department of Ecology began working to evaluate shellfish resources and their potential effect on human health.

The study includes:

- Qualitative Intertidal Surveys: Walking along beaches at low-tide and counting all shellfish present. Only a small amount of shellfish were recorded, possibly due to habitat loss and armoring of shoreline.
- Underwater Video Surveys: Findings were much more promising. A lot of potential for Geoduck and horseclam beds, as well as eel grass beds.
- Sub-tidal SCUBA Surveys: Found large tracts of Geoduck beds, relatively few horseclams, and several crabs.
- Human Health Assessment: Collected and analyzed sediment and geoduck samples for likely contaminants. Contact and/or ingestion of sediment and geoduck were both deemed safe.
- Circulation and dilution studies: Drogue study to follow and verify the time of the tide change. Fluorometers are installed to inject dye at the wastewater treatment facilities. The dye is injected for 24.8 hours and tracked until gone. Concentration levels of dye, as well as the discharge at the well, must be constantly monitored. Tracking starts immediately after injection by boat, riding 1 to 2 knots per hour for three days.

The next steps for the Tribe include a complete dye injection at the JBLM Sewage Treatment Plant. The test will take place in approximately 30 days. All findings will be submitted to the State for suggestions of closure areas. The Tribe is taking part in this study to ensure closure zones reflect the best available science. If areas can be harvested, this could mean increased revenue for the Tribe and the State, valued anywhere between \$20 and \$40 million.

Margaret’s presentation has been made on the NRC’s SlideShare website. To view, visit:

<http://www.slideshare.net/Nisqually/nisqually>.

6. For the Good of the Order

Nothing at this time.

Adjourn – Meeting was adjourned at 12:06pm.

*Next Meeting: Friday, July 19, 2013, 9:30am – 12:30pm
UW Pack Forest, Eatonville*