



Meeting Minutes
Nisqually River Council
August 19, 2011
Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge
Information: 360.438.8715

Attendees:

Council Members

Ron Averill – *Lewis County*
Jeanette Dorner – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*
Rich Doenges – *Thurston County*
Cindy James – *WA Dept. of Ecology*

Fred Michelson – *NRC Forestry Committee*
Debbie Young – *Tacoma Power*
David Troutt – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*
*** CAC Representatives (3)**

Citizens Advisory Committee Members

Debbie Anderson
Deborah Crosetto*
Paul Crosetto*
David Hymel

Karelina Resnick
Jean Shaffer
Marjorie Smith
Robert Smith*

Guests

Don Drusser - *Nisqually Delta Association*
Lorrie Fink – *Nisqually Delta Association*
Stewart Helzer – *Citizen*

Don Russel – *Nisqually Delta Association*
Chris Schutz – *Pierce County*
Peter Stoltz – *CalPortland*

Staff & Associated Nonprofits

Justin Hall – *Nisqually River Foundation*
Nicole Hill – *Nisqually Land Trust*

Don Perry – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*
Sara Scott – *Nisqually River Council*

1. Call to Order, Officer Elections, Approval of Minutes and Agenda

Call to Order – David called the meeting to order at 9:07.

Approval of Minutes, Agenda – The minutes were approved as amended. The agenda was approved with the addition of a brief discussion of Murray Creek issues.

2. Introductions, Reports

Advisory Committee Reports

- *Citizens Advisory Committee* – Deborah Crosetto reported that the August CAC meeting was held in Yelm on August 9 and included a presentation from Sara about environmental certifications available to Nisqually region businesses. The Committee discussed the recent forestry meeting and various actions the CAC could be involved with. Karelina is coordinator of the speaker component of the meetings. The Eatonville Self Reliant Community chapter is forming and recent held its first meeting. The next CAC meeting will be on October 11, 7-9 pm, at the Eatonville Library. Steve

Ruff noted that he is working with an agritourism overlay on a current project, which may interest to people working with local food systems and farmers markets.

- *Forestry Committee* – Fred reported that second meeting with forestry stakeholders was held on July 27 at the NNWR Education Center. The essence of this effort is to preserve working forests in the watershed for current and future generation, to facilitate cooperation between forestry owners (industrial and individual) and develop a watershed-wide comprehensive forestry plan. The next step of this process may focus on developing new incentive-based measures to encourage healthy forest management with stakeholder committees developing outlines for major plan elements.
- *Chair Report* –David reported that the NY Times story highlighting the Nisqually published last month, and the PBS program *Saving the Ocean* is interested in filming an episode about restoration and salmon recovery in the Nisqually watershed. The weir is expected to be installed in the river by the tank crossing bridge on September 7, as part of the Tribe’s effort to shift the Chinook fishery to a more selective fishery and enhance the natural run stock.
- *Staff Report* – Sara reported she has been supporting the CAC, the Forestry Committee, and various Foundation projects and programs. Planning is underway for the 22nd Annual Nisqually Watershed Festival, which will take place at the Refuge on Saturday September 24. She requested Council members and others to volunteer to assist with the many tasks necessary to make the large event run smoothly.

Allied Programs

- *Nisqually Land Trust* – Nicole reported that the annual NLT Salmon Bake will take place September 18th at Odd Fellows Park. They are expecting to close on the Van Eaton property very soon, and have received funding from the DOT to do some scenic planning for the junction of Highways 7 and 702, as part of a big committee focused on transportation and preservation planning for the corridor.
- *Nisqually River Education Project* – Justin reported that Sheila is enjoying her summer off and will be back to work when school starts in a few weeks.
- *Nisqually River Foundation* – Justin reported that he worked with Jeanette (Nisqually Tribe), Nick Bond (Town of Eatonville), and David Hymel (Stewardship Partners), to submit a funding request to the Boeing Foundation to install solar panels on Eatonville City Hall and change the asphalt around the building to pervious pavement. Also, the Foundation will apply for funding through Climate Solutions University’s Model Forestry Policy Program to support the development of a watershed climate team.
- *Stream Stewards* – Don reported that 15 new Stream Stewards graduated this year. The volunteers will assist with rain garden work in Eatonville, Labor Day events, and the Watershed Festival. The Salmon Watchers training will be held September 17 at the Refuge at 9am.

- *Salmon Recovery Update* – Jeanette reported that she submitted the approved salmon recovery funding list and received some comments back from the state technical review panel. All the questions have been resolved and the projects are cleared for funding. The knotweed project may change a bit through implementation, with replanting to take place on sites where knotweed has been controlled if it is deemed necessary. The approved Land Trust projects include the Burwash acquisition, the Hamilton acquisition, and the Litzenberger acquisition. Pierce County recently reported that their matching funds may be less than was initially expected. The Braget Marsh Phase III project is nearly complete and DOT is installing log jams.

As Jeanette transitions to her new role with the Puget Sound Partnership, she will continue to work with Eatonville on their updated stormwater management plan, which, upon implementation, would make Eatonville the first jurisdiction in the state to take their stormwater system fully “off-line”.

The Nisqually River Council members, partners, and staff extended their gratitude to Jeanette for her dedication and success in leading salmon recovery efforts in the Nisqually for the past 11 years. She noted that the decision to accept the position with the Puget Sound Partnership was a very difficult one, but it is the next obvious step in her path, as the health of the greater Puget Sound basin plays a key role in supporting the health of the Nisqually region. Jeanette has accepted an invitation to join the Board of Directors of the Nisqually River Foundation.

3. Sequalitchew Creek Settlement Agreement Update

Tom Skjervold, Nisqually Delta Association

Tom provided some background on the Nisqually Delta Association, which organized in 1970 to resist a proposal from the City of Seattle to establish a landfill in the delta and then helped acquire the first funding for the establishment of the Wildlife Refuge. The organization is focused on preserving the shorelines of Puget Sound and the delta. Nisqually Reach was called out as one of five “shorelines of significance” in the Shoreline Management Plan.

In 2007, it was learned that Cal Portland was proposing an expansion of the gravel mine. A call for mediation was issued in 2009, and recently a new settlement agreement has been presented for public review.

The new agreement does not:

- Allow any mine-related activity within the Sequalitchew Creek ravine,
- Remove or alter any rights and responsibilities of the 1994 settle agreement,
- Guarantee any new mining will be permitted,
- Change any regulatory requirements, or
- Change any public rights to review, comment, or appeal permit applications or decisions.

The agreement does:

- Establish a process and specific conditions under which parties agree to support each others' interests,
- Require CalPortland to restart the permit process with preparation of Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for mining the south and north parcels,
- Prohibit dewatering and mining in the south parcel unless specific monitoring, creek restoration, and funding requirements are approved by the Environmental Caucus and permitted,
- Build in \$200,000 for stakeholder input and restoration planning processes,
- Require CalPortland to set aside a 45-acre Open Space Area which includes nearly a mile of Puget Sound shoreline,
- Require CalPortland to grant a pedestrian trail easement in the 45-acre Open Space Area,
- Preserve all regulatory authority, processes and requirements, and
- Allow CalPortland to suspend restoration funding if a permit is appealed, denied, or cancelled.

Don Russell noted that the Chambers-Clover group is feeling left out of the discussion, and provided a letter addressing concerns to the DuPont City Council. He also provided a copy David Troutt.

David noted that the Nisqually Indian Tribe has two major concerns: they want to see fish back in the creek, and note that increased flows in the Sequelitchew Creek pocket estuary could reduce critical habitat for Chinook. Tom is scheduled to meet with the Tribal Council on the August 23.

For more information, contact Tom Skjervold at tsjhervikd@gmail.com or 360.485.9470 or visit the Nisqually Delta Association website at www.nisquallydelta.org.

4. Nisqually Estuary Restoration Monitoring - Scientific Findings

Kelley Turner, USGS and Chris Ellings, Nisqually Indian Tribe

Kelley Turner highlighted the significant loss (>80%) of historic estuary habitats in Puget Sound, one of the most productive habitats on earth. The study she is working on focuses on ecosystem processes within the estuary restoration area, specifically considering *water, sediment, elevation, and vegetation*: change detection, onshore to offshore gradient, restoration trajectories by age, food webs (esp. for juvenile Chinook), research methods comparison (rapid vs. intensive monitoring), and land management techniques for salt marsh colonization. The study is also monitoring bird abundance by foraging guild.

Kelley's presentation can be viewed at the NRC SlideShare site, <http://www.slideshare.net/Nisqually/monitoring-the-nisqually-delta>.

Chris Ellings noted that the listing of Chinook salmon through the Endangered Species Act was a major driver to this major restoration project. He introduced his study, which focuses on the response of Chinook salmon to the estuary restoration, and summarized the data collected and

analyzed to date, which is organized around the hypothesis *post-restoration Nisqually delta rearing Chinook will reside longer and grow larger than the pre-restoration delta rearing Chinook (capacity restraint lifted)*.

The study is looking at spatial and temporal distribution of fish populations across habitat zones, the feeding behavior of Chinook across habitat zones within the delta, and otolith analysis to determine life-history diversity, residency, and growth of juvenile Chinook.

Chris' presentation can be viewed on the NRC SlideShare site, <http://www.slideshare.net/Nisqually/nisqually-chinook-population-response-to-largescale-estuary-restoration>.

Additional restoration information can be found on a website hosted by partner organizations, <http://nisquallydeltarestoration.org/>.

5. Murray Creek Concerns

Stewart Halzer registered a concern about the health of Murray Creek and associated fish stocks and asked for assistance identifying potential threats. Jeanette noted that Salmon Recovery staff would be interested in exploring the situation and conducting some monitoring of the site in question. David suggested that Stewart speak to Tribal staff about his concerns.

6. For the Good of the Order

There will be a NatureMapping event at Powell Pasture on October 1.
The Morse Wildlife Reserve in Graham is open to the public one day a month.

7. Adjourn – The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:13.

***Next Meeting: Friday October 21, 2011, 9am – 12pm
Roy City Library, Roy WA***