



Meeting Minutes
Nisqually River Council
December 16, 2011
UW Pack Forest Conference Center
Information: 360.438.8715

Attendees:

Council Members

Ron Averill – *Lewis County*
Bryan Bowden – *Mt. Rainier National Park*
Christopher Ellings – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*

Fred Michelson – *NRC Forestry Committee*
*** CAC Representatives (2)**

Citizens Advisory Committee Members

Debbie Anderson
Paul Crosetto*
Mary Foster
Steve Pruitt

Jean Shaffer
Marjorie Smith
Robert Smith*

Guests

Otis Bush – *Nisqually Stream Stewards*
Drake Ellison
Pam Hefley – *Tacoma Power*
Diane Klavano – *Pierce Co. Surface Water*

Pat Saunders – *UW Pack Forest*
Chris Schutz – *Pierce County*
Mark Thibo – *WA DNR*
Carla Vincent -- *Pierce Co. Surface Water*

Staff & Associated Nonprofits

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

Ashley Von Essen – *Nisqually River Council*

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

Call to Order – Chris Schutz, standing in for David Troutt, called the meeting to order at 9:12am.

Approval of Minutes, Agenda – There was a motion to approve the November meeting as presented. It was approved, as was the agenda as presented.

2. Introductions, Reports

Advisory Committee Reports

- *Citizens Advisory Committee* – Paul Crosetto reported that the CAC meeting scheduled for 12:30 at the Truly Scrumptious Bakery of Eatonville has been moved to

Cruiser Café, due to an electrical issues. Debbie, who wasn't present at this meeting due to a cold, will be there to run the CAC meeting this afternoon.

- *Forestry Committee* – Fred Michelson reported that there will be a Forestry Committee meeting this Tuesday, December 20th, at 1:30 at the Nisqually Tribe's Department of Natural Resources. An agenda will be sent out this weekend to highlight points to be covered. July's meeting emphasized 9 opportunities developed by the meeting's attendees that outline the group's vision and will make up the bulk of the planning document for the committee. Fred went on to explain that he has drafted 8 sections for the plan and this meeting will establish the intent of further the plan's development, as well as the direction the group will take in 2012. Volunteers are ready to move forward and more will be recruited. Upon completion, the plan will be introduced to many of the forest owners throughout the watershed.
- *Chair Report* – David Troutt was unable to attend to this month's meeting. Chris Ellings reported that David has been voted the chair of the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council. Congratulations, David!!
- *Staff Report* – Ashley Von Essen reported that at the 23rd Annual Nisqually Watershed Festival is in the works. This year's festival will mark the 100-year anniversary of the La Grande Dam project and a celebration of some sorts will be included in the event. The festival committee is looking for new members, with fresh and innovative ideas, who are interested in helping plan future festivals.

Ashley also reported that a new edition of the Nisqually River Notes will be out next month.

Allied Programs

- *Nisqually Land Trust* – Nicole Hill reported that the Nisqually Land Trust has just completed the process of a large tract of land in Eatonville along the Mashel River. This reach of the Middle Mashel has been reported to be the most important piece necessary for the restoration of steelhead trout.

Refer to the website below for more information on this exciting purchase.

<http://www.nisquallylandtrust.org/MiddleMashelAcquisition.htm>

- *Nisqually River Education Project* – Sheila Wilson was unable to attend this month's meeting. Ashley Von Essen reported that the tree planting fieldtrips has been concluded this month. There were a total of 900 students and 150 chaperones that worked hard to see 4,300 plants and trees put into the ground in the name of habitat restoration.

NREP, along with several project partners, are putting together a Wild and Scenic Film Festival that will take place some time in April. The committee is currently in talks to hold the festival in Yelm at the high school auditorium.

- *Nisqually River Foundation* – Justin Hall reported that the Nisqually Indian Tribe held their annual charitable banquet on Wednesday, December 14th. The tribe gave away a total of 1.8 million to a variety of groups and organizations throughout the watershed. The Nisqually River Foundation was awarded \$25,000 for future projects.

Justin also reported that progress is being made towards an event that present the Dan J. Evans Stewardship Award, given out every 5 years, to Norm Dicks for his work towards the establishment of the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge and his amazing generosity towards the Nisqually watershed. Keeping with tradition, a piece of artwork will be commissioned featuring a chinook salmon. The first award was presented to Billy Frank, and featured the chum salmon. The event is scheduled to be held sometime in late March at the Braget farm. The Foundation is looking for donations to supplement funding for the event.

Saturday, December 10th, the Nisqually River Council, along with 16 project partners, were presented the Coastal America Partnership Award, the highest award given to acknowledge efforts to protect, preserve, and restore the nation's coastal resources and ecosystems. This award from the Obama Administration directly recognized the Nisqually Indian Tribe, Ducks Unlimited, and the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge as the main awardees for their hard work and dedication over the last 15 years.

The new Good Neighbor Handbook is now available.

- *Stream Stewards* – Don Perry was unable to attend this month's meeting due to illness, but Justin Hall informed attendees that the new Yil-Me-Hu newsletter is now available.

The Stream Stewards, along with the Nisqually Tribe, held a salmon carcass toss event last Saturday, December 10th throughout upper watershed.

- *Salmon Recovery Update* – Chris Ellings reported that plans are being made for the Annual Chinook Management Review, a multi-day event that will be held in February. The first day open to public and allows the tribe and projects partners to go over action plan for 2011, taking a look at where it succeed and where it didn't, as well as lessons learned throughout the year. They will be reviewing the ongoings of current research, habitat restoration, stock monitoring, harvest, the installation and goals of the weir. This annual meeting assesses the year's management plan, provides accountability and insight for how to proceed into the next

Chris also reported that he went to his first Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council meeting. The focus of this meeting was to discuss NOAA's recent review of salmon recovery, along with the Tribal Treaty Rights at Risk, the white paper document, demanding accountability for from federal administration on continued decline of salmon population. (Refer to November's meeting minutes for specific details and documents.)

With the recent changes of employment of Jeanette Dorner and the promotion of Chris Ellings, it has been discussed what will be done in order to maintain the level of involvement for the Lead Entity. With Chris's focus being more on scientific research, plans are being made to possibly hire an Involvement Coordinator to guide and organize salmon recovery.

At the latest Lead Entity Advisory Committee Meeting, it was discussed that there may or may not be issues with conflicts of interest among the Salmon Recovery Advisory Board and the assignment of funds to specific projects. Steps will be taken to ensure that this is not the case and each Lead Entity will be asked to explain their particular conflict of interest policies for their organization.

3. Update of Sustainable Forestry at Pack Forest

Pat Saunders, Assistant to the Director

Recently, the University of Washington at Pack Forest has undergone a great deal of change. They have welcomed not only a new president of the college, but a new provost and dean as well. The newly organized academics have placed the College of Forest Resources within the College of the Environment, and under a new name, the School of Forest Resources. Due to shifts and changes, the school's name will change again after the first of the year to the School of Environmental and Forest Sciences. This will represent UW's attempt to strengthen environmental components and focus on current environmental issues. The new dean recognizes the great potential of the Center for Sustainable Forestry and its research, and with her background of forestry, is very much invested in the program. In early 2012, the school will also look to higher a new program director to oversee the 500+ undergraduate and graduate students, the highest enrollment the program has ever seen.

With recent and major budget cuts passed down by the State, UW still looking at how effects will take shape in the future. In order to absorb the decrease of funding, they have installed tuition increases, major staff cuts, larger class sizes, and deferred maintenance of grounds and buildings. One positive has come out of the cuts, student involvement in the program, which has been limited in the past, is now being increased. They are now much more involved with tree planting, inventory management, and a variety of research projects, including collecting

and analyzing data. New summer internships are being developed for students, along with spring break activities, and research. The Center for Sustainable Forestry is attached to 3 million in grants, which helps keep their doors open. Year after year, more students and researchers arrive to do more and more research, which generally comes with funding.

The facility also acquires funding through public use of the Center of Sustainable Forestry. This includes the use of the amenities by state agencies and travelers, weddings, fieldtrips, and day use for hikers and adventurers. Also, they are currently working on upcoming timber sales for financial support.

They are also in the process of establishing the Mount Rainier Institute. Bryan Bowden was able to elaborate on the project and explained that the institute will promote education of Mount Rainier National Park to students K-12. The Center of Sustainable Forestry would serve as a base of operations. When an agreement has been established, funding will be provided to hire a program coordinator to assist in developing a business plan and curriculum. They are looking to have the project running by September of 2013 or 2014.

Pat's PowerPoint presentation has been made available on the slideshare website.

<http://www.slideshare.net/Nisqually/update-for-uw-pack-forest>

You can also find more information about Pack Forest on Facebook!

<http://www.facebook.com/packforest>

4. Pierce Country 2010 Surface Water Report Card

Carla Vincent and Diane Klavano, Pierce County Surface Water Management

Baseline monitoring is done in order to develop an annual water health report card. Freshwater samples are taken from 60 streams all throughout Pierce County and analysis is done on a variety of water quality parameters, that are processed both in house and sent out to other labs. Horn, Ohop, Lacamas, Tanwax, and Muck comprise the streams that are monitored monthly in the Nisqually watershed.

Pierce County uses the water quality index in order to set up a standard to maintain beneficial uses, such as recreation, drinking, and habitat. This is based on a model established by the Department of Ecology using the 8 parameters to develop a rating curve (bad, better, best) and mathematically generate and convert the rating to a common scale (1 to 100).

Monitoring benthic aquatic macroinvertebrates are another way to sample a river or stream's biologic integrity. Pierce County samples 21 streams in 8 basins, taking 3 replicates from riffles with culverts placed both up and downstream of the sampling site. Benthic Integrity Biological Index (BIBI) is a widely used method for measuring water quality due to ability of the insects to indicate effects of human impacts according specific species tolerance to

pollution and because of the ease of the sampling method. Insects are collected with a surber sampler from a sampling area of 1 square foot and sent out for identification. The BIBI is then calculated based on a standard scale from 0-50, higher the number, the better the water quality. Results of the BIBI can be found on the Pierce County's website.

<http://www.co.pierce.wa.us/pc/services/home/environ/water/wqws/wqwsMonitoring-BIBI.htm>

The report card grade to individual reaches combine both water quality monitoring and benthic analysis results, and then are adjusted based on Clean Water Act 303(d) list of impaired waters. Currently, 3 years of data can be found at Pierce County's website for 2008, 2009, 2010 at:

<http://www.co.pierce.wa.us/pc/services/home/environ/water/wqws/wqwsMonitoringWatersheds.htm>

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), which is part of the Clean Water Act administered by the Department of Ecology, closely monitors stormwater. These tests look for a variety of materials: conventional, nutrients, metals, and other. The purpose is to characterize the effects of different land uses on stormwater runoff, including low density residential, commercial, and high density residential. Low and high-density residential areas were found to meet many of the standards, though most samples contained pesticides. They are also using these parameters to test the efficiency of stormwater treatment technologies.

Pierce County is also utilizing the Nisqually and Puyallup Tribe's salmon carcass tossing events to measure the effects on stream health through BIBI sampling, above and below placement sites.

The Surface Water Management team is working to establish an online portal in which they will make available all the data that has been collected over the years. This will include basic analysis of the data, showing the current status of specific locations, trends, and plan implementation.

Carla and Diane's PowerPoint presentation has been made available on the slideshare website.

<http://www.slideshare.net/Nisqually/pierce-county-2010-surface-water-report-card>

5. Upper Nisqually Scenic Byway Project

Nicole Hill, Conservation Project Manager

Nisqually Land Trust

The Nisqually Land Trust has taken on the task of making Highway 7/706, from the intersection at Highway 702 to the main gates of Mount Rainier National Park, a national scenic byway. This being the most popular entrance to the park, letting in an average of 1 million visits is known as the main gate to the park. The NLT is not only looking to protect the aesthetics of this highway, but to preserve the sensitive habitat that many owls and the marbled murrelet call home.

The scenic byway program has been around since the 1950s, but stands as it is since 1991. Each year the program makes available between 25 and 50 million dollars, for example, this year the program has 40 million in funding to distribute. This funding goes towards planning, programming, such as signage along the byway, and capitol projects, which include visitor services and restrooms. Each of these items developed under a specific plan for the byway program must first be approved for a “Corridor Management Plan.”

This idea for Highway 7 was first envisioned over 10 years ago and since then many ideas and goals have been established. It’s the goal of the Land Trust is to combine all of the visions and efforts and produce one concrete plan over the next calendar year.

Goals of the project would be to focus on particular aspects of the project. First, to look at intrinsic values, which would include enhancing and/or updating visitor services in a cultural, recreational, and scenic way. An analysis of the transportation corridor must be done in order to decide what needs to be done to get tourists to make vacations longer and more frequent. Do we need better roads, more trails and recreation, and more available transit to these locations? These efforts, along with branding the corridor with proper signage and marketing the byway in order to bring more people to the area, while enhancing their experience.

Nicole’s PowerPoint presentation has been made available on the slideshare website.
<http://www.slideshare.net/Nisqually/upper-nisqually-scenic-byway-project>

You can also visit the Nisqually Land Trust on Facebook!
<http://www.facebook.com/NisquallyLandTrust>

6. For the Good of the Order

Adjourn – Meeting was adjourned at 11:37am.

***Next Meeting: Friday January 20, 2012, 9am – 12pm
Gordon’s Grange of Yelm***