



**Meeting Minutes  
Nisqually River Council  
July 20, 2012  
Ashford Fire Hall  
Information: 360.438.8715**

Attendees:

**Council Members**

**Ron Averill** – *Lewis County*

**Christopher Ellings** – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*

**JW Foster** – *City of Yelm*

**\* CAC Representatives (1)**

**Citizens Advisory Committee Members**

**Debbie Anderson**

**Steve Pruitt**

**Karelina Resnick\***

**Marjorie Smith**

**Robert Smith**

**Guests**

**Nick Bond** – *Town of Eatonville*

**Nikki Fields** – *WA State Parks*

**Dave Lewis** -- *Miles Sand & Gravel*

**Robert Moore** -- *Miles Sand & Gravel*

**Staff & Associated Nonprofits**

**Justin Hall** – *Nisqually River Foundation*

**Joe Kane** – *Nisqually Land Trust*

**Ashley Von Essen** – *Nisqually River Council*

**Sheila Wilson** – *Nisqually River Ed. Project*

**1. Call to Order, Approval of Minutes and Agenda**

**Call to Order** – Ron called the meeting to order at 9:10am.

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

**2. Introductions, Reports**

**Advisory Committee Reports**

- *Citizens Advisory Committee* – Karelina reported that the CAC is currently pursuing 2 major projects. The first being the formation of a sub-committee for DNR's Community Forest Trust Program. This committee will be meeting July 24<sup>th</sup> at 1pm at the tribe's Natural Resources Office and will look at how to move forward in identifying and maintaining at-risk working forests. The second is the Citizens Conservation Certification, a new program for certifying residents of the watershed in sustainability. A meeting has been established for July 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm at Karelina's home. Once a mission statement and a checklist template have been agreed upon by the committee, it will be presented to the Council for approval.

The CAC is currently reevaluating their presence and role in the watershed. They will be speaking out to other organizations and project partners in hopes of increasing membership and intend to assist the Council in projects of priority. They will be updating the mission statement of the CAC to reflect their role and submitting it to the NRC for approval.

- *Chair Report* – David was unable to make the meeting due to his attendance at the First Stewards Symposium in Washington, D.C. No report was given at this time.
- *Staff Report* – Ashley reported that the Spring 2012 edition of the Nisqually River Notes has hit the stands. She also reported that she would be putting more focus into the NRC's Nisqually Sustainable program, which aims to identify and support local businesses for making sustainable choices and protecting natural resources. She recently added Ashford's Deep Forest Cabins to the list of participating certified local businesses.

### **Allied Programs**

- *Nisqually Land Trust* – Joe Kane reported that the final piece needed to complete the Ohop restoration has recently become available. The deed is ready to be purchased, but required demolition fees must be secured before the deal can be closed, approximately \$60,000. Once a contract has been signed, the NLT has 2 years after the owner leaves the residence to pay these fees. The Land Trust is currently conversing with the landowner to decide whether they will pursue a life estate, to be determined by August 31<sup>st</sup>. Purchase price for this parcel, which is considered the largest and most important for the restoration, is set at \$750,000.

The Land Trust's annual float trips take place July 21<sup>st</sup> and July 29<sup>th</sup>. Both trips have sold out, and a cancellation waitlist exists even after acquiring an extra boat. Joe reported that these events have been more popular this year than in the past. Each boat will be armed with an ambassador to answer questions and inform guests of the ongoings of the watershed, such as restoration projects, as they make their way downstream. Ashley will be joining the July 21<sup>st</sup> event!

- *Nisqually River Education Project* – Sheila reported that this year's Summer Teacher Institute saw 36 teachers in attendance. Attendees were able to participate in yoga, learn about the Canoe Journey, and received updates on salmon recovery in the Nisqually from Chris Ellings.

Sheila and project partners for the Eye on Nature fieldtrips recently held their wrap-up party for the volunteers that participated in the program. This year's trips were incredibly successful and would not have run nearly as smooth without the volunteers that came to help out.

Water Quality Monitoring training will take place August 28, 2012 at Weyerhaeuser Elementary.

Sheila and Ashley have been in talks with Pierce County to aid them in their BIBI sampling in the upcoming fall. This program will reintroduce the Benthics Academy to middle school teachers, which will include macroinvertebrate sampling and identification. Students will be asked to take a number of samples along specific reaches of the Nisqually River to be included in the Surface Water Management's annual Water Quality Report Card.

NREP is still looking to acquire funding for this winter's salmon carcass tossing program.

- *Nisqually River Foundation* – Justin reported that the Ecosystem Services effort has been moving along swiftly, due to time sensitive components. The committee has been working closely with the City of Olympia as a potential buyer for the program to purchase lands and gain property easements. The committee will be holding their first advisory committee meeting Thursday, July 26<sup>th</sup> from 3 to 4pm.

Justin also reported that the Nisqually Community Forest effort, led by the Nisqually Land Trust, met June 27<sup>th</sup> at the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge. The meeting's presenter gave advice to the committee on efficiently funding the program as a non-profit organization.

Justin mentioned that the Dan J. Evans Stewardship Award event is still in the works, but nailing down the honoree, Norm Dicks, has proven to be a bit difficult. The Board will meet in the month of August to further discuss details.

- *Stream Stewards* – Don Perry was unable attend the meeting due the Nisqually Stream Stewards final field trip and graduation ceremony.
- *Salmon Recovery Update* – Chris Ellings reported that the mainstem weir is now in the river and fishing! The tribe has been able to learn from last year's experiences and use them to perfect this year's implementation and operation of the weir. A full crew has been hired, with the first round of training for processing incoming fish held yesterday, July 19<sup>th</sup>. The crew is focused on identifying wild chinook, checking for the adipose fin and coded wire tags. Jaw tags will be put in place and scales and genetic material will be collected. The fish will be allowed to recover and then returned to the river to finish their upstream migration. They have estimated of the number of fish believed to reach to the weir. If enough wild fish aren't finding the weir, an in-season change will be made to allow hatchery fish upstream to ensure there will be enough viable gametes to complete a future brood stock.

Safety has been increased, and the ease of deflating panels will allow people, boats, and large woody debris to pass easily over the structure. A well-marked air horn is available on the side of the river to alert operators of river traffic.

Weirs are regularly used on a number of rivers, and a similar system on a mainstem river of this size has been seen on the Elwha River. However, the set-up and the engineering on the Nisqually project is a fairly new idea and the aggressive hatchery reform program is very new and hardly seen. The spotlight is on Nisqually!

Chris also reported that the Puget Sound Partnership would be putting together a list of restoration projects of importance in the Puget Sound. These projects will then be presented to the Governor, in hopes of each acquiring necessary funds to complete action items. There will also be another large sum of funding that will be applied towards regional Puget Sound Projects.

Chris and his team will be compiling a list of potential projects over the next couple weeks to be presented at the Nisqually River Council's August 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. After approval from the Council, Chris will then submit the list to the Puget Sound Partnership following to meet the Partnership's deadline. Phase 2 of the Ohop Restoration is a potential project for this funding.

### **3. Update of the Nisqually State Park**

*Nikki Fields, WA State Parks*

Washington State has recently undergone a change in funding for its state parks. With significant cuts from the general fund, the introduction of the Discovery Pass was intended to supplement the loss. In its first year of the program, the pass has not yet proven to be as lucrative as originally thought. This could

be because it has not been made available at all proposed locations and lack of marketing. A new website has been launched to increase knowledge of the program, social networking and the enthusiasm amongst state park visitors. They have seen that the \$5 donations made at licensing offices have proven to be more successful than they thought.

State Parks is currently working with the Nisqually Indian Tribe to come to an agreement for the acquisition and management of the park. A partnership between the two organizations will allow park funding and activities to move forward. They have agreed that the establishment of an interpretive center is necessary, however, more land will be needed to complete this project. Nikki has been pursuing grant opportunities to gain funding and is still waiting to hear back.

Maintenance employees have recently begun reinforcing access gates because of issues of trespassing on park property. Work has also been done on a logging road that runs along the Mashel River to avoid sediment wash out. As a short-term solution, the water bars have been updated, but a long-term solution must be made to keep access open from one side of the park to the other from this location.

State Parks will begin planting native trees and shrubs throughout the park to increase species diversity.

#### **4. SRF Board Project Review**

*Chris Ellings, Salmon Recovery Program Manager*

The SRF Board Technical Review Team has had the opportunity to review the list of projects applying for this round's funding. Projects have been listed in order of priority based the strategy outlined in the Nisqually Chinook Recovery Plan.

1. Lower Ohop Acquisition and Restoration
2. McKenna Reach Assessment and Restoration
3. Nisqually River Knotweed Eradication Project w/ PCD
4. Powell Creek Riparian Acquisition (Powell Creek Management Unit)
5. Middle Nisqually Riparian Restoration

Total Estimated Allocation: 416,803\$

Total Request: 431,554\$

The total request amount will be submitted, and any necessary adjustments to the budget will be made when the allocation is awarded.

There was a motion to approve the projects as prioritized. The motion was unanimously accepted and seconded. The Nisqually River Council has approved the SRF Board Project List for 2012.

Chris' PowerPoint has been made available on the NRC's SlideShare website.

#### **5. Council Priorities Discussion**

*Justin Hall, Nisqually River Foundation*

Justin led meeting attendees through a discussion of how they would like to see the Council proceed in the future and how can the Nisqually Watershed Stewardship (NWSP) plan be used as a guide.

Questions asked included:

- What are the goals of the organization?

- How can the objectives and indicators of the NWSP be used to move the Council forward?
- What are actions should the Council focus on and who should be appointed to complete the desired tasks? Council members or staff?
- How can successes be tracked?
- Are there goals that partners are currently completely as apart of the organization’s regular activities?
- How can the Council move forward while achieving the goals of the NWSP?

Steve Pruitt suggested that the Council take a look at the connections and partnerships currently in place, and develop a strategy to make the most of these relationships. Each agency could look at the NWSP to identify what they are already contributing. Once an inventory can be completed as to objectives in progress, the Council will be able to see what goals are being overlooked. The goals can than be proposed to or assigned to those most able to assist in implementing those specifics pieces of the plan. Karelina Resnick made a similar suggestion as well.

Sheila Wilson suggested that each organization share with the Council what they are doing to further the goals of the NWSP in their introductions at the start of each meeting. Presenters can also share how their work in the watershed aligns with the plan, such as: “My presentation will look to speak to this specific aspect of the plan (economy, environment, community)...” This will allow the connection of the plan to be present at each monthly NRC meeting.

She also proposed that Council staff send out a spreadsheet of NWSP indicators to members and associates to have them identify goals being worked on as a way to contribute to the inventory of achievements. This will allow agencies to communicate with their staff and associates goals of the Council and actions for the future.

In order to increase meeting attendance, when traveling to specific areas of the watershed, sending an additional invitation to those who live nearby could draw more attention to meetings. For example: Sending an email to Ashford residents when meetings are taking place in the Upper Watershed, “We will be in your area—hope to see you there!”

Chris Ellings suggested that since the plan is there for guidance, it should be continue to be utilized and upheld. The NWSP should maintain structure for guidance, but flexible enough to allow for brainstorming and adaptation of new ideas, priorities and actions. He mentioned that the Council could look to follow the lead of the Puget Sound Partnership, by making a list of near-term actions as well as those who could assist with those projects.

Justin mentioned that staff would look to make contact with past Council representatives in hopes of increasing their attendance at the monthly meetings. Karelina also suggested sending meeting notices out to the list of media contacts to promote attendance of the public.

## **6. For the Good of the Order**

Nothing at this time.

**Adjourn** – Meeting was adjourned at 11:10am.

***Next Meeting: Friday, August 17, 2012, 9am – 12pm  
Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge***