



**Meeting Minutes  
Nisqually River Council  
June 20, 2014  
Ohop Grange  
Information: 360.438.8715**

Attendees:

**Council Members**

**Roger Andrascik** – *Mount Rainier National Park*  
**Stephanie Suter** – *Puget Sound Partnership*  
**Bob Burkle** – *WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife*

**Amy Cruver** – *Pierce County*  
**\* CAC Representatives (3)**

**Citizens Advisory Committee Member**

**Fred Michelson\***  
**Karelina Resnick\***

**Bob Smith\***  
**Marjorie Smith**

**Guests**

**Chris Ellings** – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*  
**Bryan Bowden** – *NRC Alumni*  
**Chris Schutz** – *Pierce County*  
**Ashley Von Essen** – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*  
**Debby Hyde** – *Pierce County*  
**Martin McCallum** – *Stream Steward Volunteer*

**Ethan Greer** – *Pierce Conservation District*  
**Darek Dabrowski** – *Stream Steward Volunteer*  
**Laura Dabrowski** – *Stream Steward Volunteer*  
**David Thorp** – *Stream Steward Volunteer*  
**Cindy Wilson** – *Thurston County*  
**Darric Lowery** – *WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife*

**Staff & Associated Nonprofits**

**Morgan Greene** – *Nisqually River Foundation*  
**Justin Hall** – *Nisqually River Foundation*

**Sheila Wilson** – *Nisqually River Ed. Project*  
**Joe Kane** – *Nisqually Land Trust*

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

**Call to Order** – In the absence of the NRC chair and vice chair, as well as the absence of the CAC chair, Justin chaired the meeting. It was called to order at 9:35.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes and Agenda** – There was a motion to approve the minutes. They were accepted as written. There were last minute adjustments to the agenda. It was also accepted.

**2. Reports**

**Advisory Committee Reports**

- *Citizens Advisory Committee* – Fred offered the report. At the last meeting, Lisa Breckenridge gave an update on the Nisqually State Park. The biggest news: an MOU was signed between the Nisqually Tribe and the State Parks Department. It will open in the summer of 2015.

In other news, elections were scheduled to take place, but were rescheduled to occur during the July meeting. The meeting also included a short discussion on bees and neonicotinoids, as well as the scheduling of an Executive Committee meeting.

- *Chair Report* – David was unable to attend the meeting.
- *Staff Report* – Morgan has been busy continuing with the climate adaptation planning process. The focus has shifted from forest resources to water resources. Morgan was also gone last week for a grant-writing course in the mountains.

**Allied Programs**

- *Nisqually Land Trust* – Last night, the NLT board voted to incorporate the Nisqually Community Forest and to appoint an initial board. The Nisqually Community Forest will be its own non-profit, housed within the land trust. The founding board includes Joe Kane, Bryan Bowden, Kirk Hanson, George Walter, Justin Hall and Paula Swedeen. The land trust also approved a plan to borrow money to purchase the first two sections of land in the Upper Busywild. The idea is to maintain a working forest, while also enhancing economic, ecological, and recreational objectives. At a minimum, 320 acres will be purchased, but as much as 19,000 acres could become a part of the forest. These sections are due north of sections currently owned and managed by NLT, so this will be a significant amount of land under conservation status. The area is also critical for Steelhead recovery. The sections available for purchase are slated for harvesting this year; the NLT is working quickly to purchase the land prior to the harvesting. The timber company is a willing seller.

The NLT also wants to apply for a grant through the National Forest Foundation that supports projects that work with communities and national forests for ecological enhancement. The Nisqually Community Forest meets that requirement, and an active spotted owl nest was just observed within the area. The NLT is asking for a letter of support from the NRC. There was a motion to write the letter; it was seconded. In light of the owl nest, Bob mentioned that managing for owls is crucial. Joe noted that the Mount Rainier area has a fairly high concentration of owls, and maintaining that is very important.

Karelina wondered if Joe had looked at the Governor's proposed changes to carbon emissions. He had not, but was aware of the changes. Justin added that Paula is an expert in the field of carbon projects.

Lastly, Bob mentioned that WDFW's role in regulating forest management changed at the start of the year. The department no longer approves contracts for hydrologic projects, but instead consults with WDNR. This means that WDNR is now more in charge of regulating salmon enhancement projects, although WDFW still reviews and visits each site.

- *Nisqually River Education Project* – Sheila reported that NREP finished their Eye on Nature trips. There were 6 trips this year! NREP also had a successful kick-off of Nisqually nearshore trips: 200 Nisqually Middle School students learned about nearshore environments. Sheila thinks she has identified a funding source to continue these trips next year.

Summer Teacher Institute starts on Monday, with 38 teachers registered. There will be field trips to Wild Time Farm, the Nisqually Reach Nature Center, and to the end of the boardwalk at the refuge. Teachers will also receive the newly created Nisqually Watershed Pledge, which will help engage students in action projects next year.

Sheila's meeting with the Yelm School District was moved back, so in preparation Sheila has outlined how the NREP projects align with the new Next Generation Science Standards.

Also, there is enough funding next year for 40 school groups to help plant trees in the Ohop Valley! Sheila hopes that all these groups come from within the watershed.

- *Nisqually River Foundation* – Last month, Justin worked with Wilcox Farms and Bryan Bowden to begin the process of establishing a walking trail on the property. The goal is to increase public involvement and highlight sustainable farming methods among other things. Bryan added that this is a very initial phase; they are simply helping the Wilcox Family put together their planning vision. Justin and Bryan are not designing the project, but merely helping the Wilcox family move onto the next steps. Chris mentioned that the project should be added to the Nisqually 3 Year Work Plan next year. This might help free up some funding sources, and would aid in regulations. Ideally, the trail would be opened by the 2015 spawning season, although 2016 might be more realistic.

Justin also reported on the recent Norm Dicks Visitors Center building dedication at the NNWR earlier in the month. It was a very nice event; Secretary Sally Jewell, Representative Kilmer, Representative Heck and several others were able to attend. After the dedication, Secretary Jewell visited the tribe to discuss

several things, including the Natural Resources department and a bridge across the I-5 corridor. The tribe will be following up with legislatures soon.

Last weekends, EETAC held the P.S. I Love You festival in Olympia, with the NRF acting as the fiscal agent. Around 400 people visited, enjoyed hands-on booths and learned about stormwater runoff and Puget Sound.

- *Stream Stewards* – Don was unable to attend, but asked Morgan to share that there are 16 people enrolled in the class this year. Chris spoke at the class on Wednesday, and there are several field trips yet to come. The NRC was lucky enough to have several past and current Stream Stewards at the meeting.
- *Salmon Recovery Update* – Ashley shared that Karelina's suggestion of having an Ohop Groundbreaking was a great idea; on July 12<sup>th</sup>, there will be one! It will take place from 10:00-2:00 at the Burwash Farm. Parking will be at the Ohop Grange, and shuttles will take guests to and from the ceremony. The day's events will include a salmon BBQ and shovel ceremony. The land trust, tribe and South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group will host, among other partners. Construction for the next phase will be starting soon – potentially as soon as next week – so visitors will be able to see the progress in action.

Ashley also shared two documents. The first was a request from the NLT seeking support to acquire a parcel of land. Since the original discussions, more land was added to the plan, so an additional \$39,100 is need to purchase it all. Ashley is asking for approval from the NRC. A motion was approved. She also shared details on the SRF Board site visit earlier in the month. They were able to visit 4 of 5 different sites. Ashley received comments yesterday. The local technical review team will be meeting July 2 to rank each project. She will bring the results to the July meeting for NRC approval.

In other news, the first Eatonville Salmon Fest meeting is taking place today at the grange directly after the NRC meeting. The festival will be held on October 18<sup>th</sup> in Eatonville. Finn has been secured for the festival!

Chris shared that the annual program review took place at the end of May, sharing details on the Chinook and Steelhead recovery planning efforts from 2013. There was a public meeting in the morning, and co-manager meetings for the next two days. They discussed weir operations, stock management, and more. It's been a successful process to annually review everything relating to salmon enhancement, focusing on both successes and failures in order to learn from them. The hope the review will help foster a sense of perpetual learning. This next year, there have been requests to iron out a lot of details with co-managers prior to the public area, so that lessons learned and future plans can be discussed. There was also a guest presenter from the NOAA science center who discussed Puget Sound Steelhead survival.

Nisqually Steelhead currently tagged with transmitters are moving. Normally, Steelhead leave the river the first few weeks of June. Chris will soon start to gather data, which he will the share with the NRC. One of the cool things about tagging surveys is that data is in relatively "real time."

Chris also discussed marine survival surveys. The Nisqually has long been the baseline for analyzing Puget Sound contaminates studies, sacrificing some Chinook in order to analyze local contaminates. Some examples include cocaine, nicotine, and more. It will be a wake up call.

If funding comes through, there are plans to install a fish counter and camera at the Centralia Dam diversion area. The goal is get real time data on fish movement in the river, too, not just in the Sound. It will enable managers to quickly view the species and number of fish passing. Chris will then be able to present data frequently. Bob wondered if it would be feasible to installing a fish diversion facility at the Centralia Dam. Chris said the counter is the first step in that; ideally, they could install a fish trapper on the counter. Bob suggested this as a way to remove more hatchery fish that escape from the weir.

The weir is starting to go in. It should be finished by the first or second week of July. Last year, there was a fall storm that blew the weir out; if things go well this year, it will stay in through the end of October. Last September's flood was very rare, according to the tribe's historical flow rate data.

Chris also mentioned the Steelhead Recovery Plan should be done today. It will be reviewed by several entities but once it has been approved, it will be an official ESA recovery plan. Chris is going to speak with NOAA next Friday to give a presentation on the plan. It is the first one in the region, and could end up serving as a template for many other organizations. It has not resulted in additional money yet, but will likely help aid in funding in the future.

In regards to the Nisqually State Park, the MOU is a first step that establishes a collaborative effort between the Tribe and WA State Parks to develop the park. The original plan is outdated; for example, Steelhead are now listed as endangered. If the original plan moves forward, it will result in degradation to areas that have been restored. The tribe is entering the MOU knowing that public access is important, but so is habitat protection. They are starting their first work group on Monday, which will aid in developing Resource Protection Plans and more.

Karelina wondered about the Salish Sea Recovery Program. It is a salmon recover program involving entities in Washington and British Columbia. Biannually, Chris meets with the group to ensure science aligns. Chris also shared that they will have standardized zooplankton surveys after this year from Dana Passage all the way up through Georgia Strait.

### **3. Pierce County Comprehensive Plan Update**

*Debby Hyde – Pierce County Planning and Land Services Special Project Coordinator*

Debby joined the NRC to discuss the Pierce County Comprehensive Update, Realize 2030. Pierce County, like all jurisdictions in the state, is required to complete an update. Pierce County's deadline is in June 2015. Currently, the county has a valid plan in place, but the state has made a few changes, so the county is taking the position of "review and update if necessary." Debby's presentation can be found here: <http://www.slideshare.net/Nisqually/pierce-county-comprehensive-plan-update>.

As a baseline, growth management started to become an issue in the 1970s. The Growth Management Act is a framework by which all jurisdictions create policies that direct regulations, plans and sub-plans. There are 14 priorities to consider, all of which are equally important. They include affordable housing, transportation, economic development, natural resource industries, open space and recreation, environment and shoreline. The GMA also designated lands as urban or rural. In both urban and rural areas, resource areas – like timber or agriculture – have to be identified. There is also the option to establish community plans, of which there are currently eleven. The Upper Nisqually Community Plan was the first of these plans.

The required elements of a comprehensive plan are land use, housing, capital facilities, utilities, transportation, rural, and economic development. Pierce County also addresses historic preservation, parks and recreation, and environment.

To decide what must be updated, the County is examining change in the last 20 years. They also established target populations: 200,000 more people between now and 2030. Of that, a great number of people will likely live in rural or unincorporated areas. In fact, for every five people here today, there will be one more in the future—a total of 75,000 more people in rural areas. In Pierce County, there are a number of places that may potentially become urban, although it all depends on zoning regulations and maximum density rules.

It is important to note that there are a number of local or regional Councils that play a role too. Pierce, King, Snohomish and Kitsap Counties are a part of an organization that works together to receive federal transportation money. There is also the Pierce County Regional Council that also passes rules and regulations.

The County has been hosting open houses throughout the region and has Land Use Advisory Committees that meet about once a month. The Upper Nisqually does not have such a committee, but Graham does. Comments may also be submitted online.

Debby walked the NRC through the website, which has five boxes on the right hand side. Visitors can choose between the question of the week, finding public events, staying informed via email, understanding background

information, or applying for amendments. There is also a review tab that identifies gaps in knowledge. As a side note, there is a public meeting on July 1 in Graham. People stay informed by liking the County on Facebook.

One update in the Plan will revolve around forestlands, agricultural lands and mineral lands. When agricultural lands were first mapped, there was a data error, which depicted more agricultural land than in reality. This error will be fixed in the new Plan, although Debby pointed out the original criteria is not changing, simply the map. Debby noted that these changes do not preclude people from farming or conserving land, but does change zoning designations. However, residents who do not meet the zoning criteria must prove there was an error in the original data. Also as of June 1, Pierce County adopted agritourism rules that allows for commercial activity on agricultural lands.

One of the goals is to make Pierce County more farmer-friendly. In the last year, a new staff position was developed to act as a liaison between the county and farmers. One of the results: Farm Fresh, which is an app that locates local farms, harvest times, recipes, and events. Debby thinks this is a great example of how policy, regulations and programs all fit together.

Sheila was curious about mineral land designation. Debby shared that gravel is the main mineral in the county. In fact, there are no coalmines in the county. Sheila also wondered about origins of the incoming population. Debby did not have specific details, but this can include births or migrations from other places.

Roger was curious about proposals to shoreline management. Pierce County is overdue in updating its Shoreline Management Plan; they still operate on one written in 1975. One of the most significant changes is the new regulations allow for no net degradation in ecological functions. This doesn't mean that areas need to be improved, but they cannot get worse. Debby was not sure when the new regulations will be in place, although she guesses sometime next year. There will be three more public meetings, potentially held in July.

Joe wondered if there was anything specific to the Nisqually watershed that should be of interest to the NRC. Debby shared that most people are happy. People can still use their properties as intended, but without the ability to divide their land.

Debby encouraged all of these comments be added to the website.

#### **4. NWSP Discussion – Economic Viability of Natural Resources; Update – Recreation**

Today's topic is the Economic Viability of Natural Resources. The indicators revolve around the economic success of forestry, agricultural and fisheries, along with the ability to process local products. There's also an emphasis on non-traditional uses of natural resources. Morgan has been continuing her research on NWSP topics.

To start, there are a number of opportunities to market sustainable resource use. Examples include Sustainable Forest Certification and Food Alliance Certifications. A number of areas within the Nisqually have these certifications, including JBLM and the State Forests. The Community Forest could be a new example. The Climate Adaptation Planning Team has been trying to identify ways to engage with JBLM and educate landowners on the long-term profits available through sustainable certification. Other things of note: agritourism is taking off in Thurston and Pierce County.

Morgan was unable to find information regarding other non-traditional NR uses, including ethnobotany. Additionally, the Nisqually Watershed is lacking in local processing, although there is one traveling meat plant. During the CAC meeting, an example was provided of tribes who have fish processing plants where local people can bring in fish and have it canned. This allows for branding opportunities.

Bob mentioned it is important to not include only consumptive uses, but also the pure joy of being in nature. However, he feels more communication needed between different users. He suggested talking Hardings Greens of Yelm which buys native plants – perhaps it's a good place to learn about brush pickers?

It is also time for an update on the recreation NWSP indicator. Justin and Bryan already reported on the Wilcox river access trail. There was a call in the January meeting to apply to the Rivers Trails Conservation Assistance for a staff person to assist us in establishing a river trail. The goal is to increase public access but also protect species. The application is due July 31<sup>st</sup>, and Justin will pass it around to the NRC soon. Bryan is putting together a rough plan

for different entities to adopt, starting below La Grande dam all the way to Puget Sound. A sub-committee of NRC should be established to help with the plan. Information will be circulated next week.

Fred mentioned that there are many people who want increased access to the river. Bob Smith also mentioned a road on his property that could be used as an emergency take-out for those who cannot make it to Wilcox Farm.

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

Martin shared a 1982 Nisqually Delta Association brochure that he found. He gave it to Morgan to display in the NRC office.

Karelina mentioned a new non-profit in Pierce County that provides minimum wage jobs for people with developmental disabilities. Perhaps this groups could be included in tree planting activities.

Fred shared that tomorrow Sandra Romero will be having her monthly coffee chats. This month's topic is on bees and neonicotinoids. Mark Emrich, president of the WA Beekeepers Association, will be there.

Sheila mentioned a fun run next week to benefit the Oregon Spotted Frog. It starts at Yelm Middle School.

Karelina also mentioned a Native Plant Salvage fundraiser tonight.

Details regarding next month's retreat will be shared soon.

Stephanie shared that at the end of last month the Action Agenda was adopted for the Puget Sound region. It is under review by the EPA, so soon it will be the federally approved regional conservation plan. In the new agenda, the South Puget Sound area has 18 near term action agendas. She noted that Chris has been including adaptive management updates for the past year. The Nisqually and South Sound both turned in the results a few weeks ago, which is under review. The Nisqually is one of only three regions in Puget Sound that had an adaptive management plan framework in place; it is now a requirement for the whole area.

The Alliance for Healthy South Sound Council will be hosting a July 17<sup>th</sup> meeting from 9-12 at LOTT.

**Adjourn** – Meeting was adjourned at 12:20pm.

***Next Meeting: Friday, July 18, 2014, 9:30am – 12:30pm TBD – Annual Retreat!***