



Meeting Minutes
Nisqually River Council Meeting
February 19, 2016
Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge
Information: 360.438.8715

Attendees:

Council Members

Rich Carlson – *US Fish & Wildlife Service*
Chris Conklin – *WA Dept of Fish & Wildlife*
Amy Cruver – *Pierce County*
JW Foster – *City of Yelm*
Amber Martens – *JBLM*

Glynnis Nakai – *Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge*
Sandra Romero – *Thurston County*
Stephanie Suter – *Puget Sound Partnership*
Stephanie Zurenko – *WA Dept of Ecology*
*** CAC Representatives (2)**

Citizens Advisory Committee Members

Phyllis Farrell*
Fred Michelson
Steve Pruitt*

Marjorie Smith
Bob Smith
Lois Ward

Guests

Roger Andrascik – *Stream Steward/NLT*
Rusty Burlew – *Native Bee Expert*
Emmett O'Connell – *NWIFC*
Chris Ellings – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*
Bill Grantham – *CNLM*
Scott Groce – *Pierce County*
Sayre Hodgson – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*

Stewart Hauser – *Pierce County citizen*
Martin McCallum – *NLT*
Jed Moore – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*
Troy Ramig – *ICF International*
Chris Schutz – *Pierce County*
Steve Thompson – *citizen*

Staff & Associated Nonprofits

Morgan Greene – *Nisqually River Council*
Justin Hall – *Nisqually River Foundation*
Joe Kane – *Nisqually Land Trust*

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

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

Call to Order – Steve Pruitt called the meeting to order at 9:07 am. Sandra chaired the remainder of the meeting.
Approval of Meeting Minutes and Agenda – There was a motion to approve the January meeting minutes as presented. They were approved, as was the agenda for the day.

2. Reports

Advisory Committee Reports

- *Citizens Advisory Committee* – Phyllis reported that the CAC met on February 9th. The majority of the conversation revolved around the development of a video/PR campaign used to recruit new members. The group also talked about the potential impacts of the proposed methanol plant in Tacoma. Several CAC members also attended the opening of the Nisqually State Park.
- *Chair Report* – David was unable to attend the meeting.
- *Staff Report* – The last community carcass tossing event is tomorrow, from 9:30 to 12:00-ish at Smallwood Park. Gloves are provided, but wear clothes that can get dirty and slimy. The water trail planning team floated the river at the end of last month, and is working to produce a draft plan. The plan will be available at the end of March, and Morgan will request feedback then. Additionally, NRF received a climate

implementation grant through the Model Forest Policy Program to fund portions of NREP's Climate Literacy Grant that begins in April. The final award amount is TBD.

Allied Programs

- *Nisqually Land Trust* – Joe reported that Lloyd Fetterly recently joined the NLT Board, making for 3 new board members in the last 6 months. Additionally, the last hurdle of the carbon credit project was approved. Joe, the brokers of the deal, and other Washington land trusts have been discussing ways to develop more carbon credit projects in the area. The annual dinner is on April 2 at Indian Summer Golf Course; people who register before March 1, get a \$50 voucher; registrations after March 1 receive a \$25 voucher. The voucher can be used for anything for purchase at the dinner.
- *Nisqually River Education Project* – Sheila finished salmon tossing for the year after engaging 11 school groups. Water Quality Monitoring was last week—around 45 teachers monitored 35 sites. The final data is still trickling in. Sheila is considering redesigning fecal coliform testing because NRF staff currently tests all 30+ samples. The idea is to limit testing to sites that yield the most useful data; Sheila welcomes feedback from partners on which sites(s) are most important. Student GREEN Congress will be on March 15th at The Evergreen State College. The Eye on Nature fundraiser last month was hugely successful, with almost \$3,000 raised. The Black Hills Audubon Society also contributed \$2,000 to the cause. Finally, Sheila has submitted applications to the No Child Left Inside and Connecting People with Nature grant programs.
- *Nisqually River Foundation* – Last year, NREP applied for the PPG grant and initially was not successful. However, the applications are being re-reviewed and NREPs application moved up in rank. Justin will update the NRC as more information is available. The Foundation received \$6,000 from the Puyallup Charitable Funds to support water quality monitoring; another application was submitted to Squaxin's Charitable Fund. Justin met with JT Wilcox last week to begin conversations about funding the NRC as well as the community forest. Justin will report on the Community Forest Management Plan next month. Lastly, Justin and Joe are both involved with Pierce Conservation District's strategic planning process, which will take approximately 5 months.
- *Salmon Recovery Update* – Chris reported that the Tribe's Natural Resources Department and NRF have moved out of the trailers and into a new building behind the Tribe's Admin Building. Morgan will send directions to the new office next week. Alliance for a Healthy South Sound (AHSS) has been developing a South Sound Strategy, with the Technical Team taking the lead. This plan will put all South Sound priorities together around stormwater and salmon recovery, complete with measureable indicators designed to help partners move collectively towards recovery. The crew has been planting Ohop Valley intensively over the last several weeks.

The Tribe has begun conversations with Dept. of Transportation around I-5; a pre-concept design meeting will be held in early March. The meeting will enable DOT and the Tribe to collaborate on a bridge design that would support traffic and aid in salmon recovery efforts. The Tribe's goal is to have some rough concepts on display for Canoe Journey. In other news, a paper was recently published in Restoration Ecology, highlighting work on the Delta. Morgan will distribute to the NRC.

Chris received a grant from the BIA for climate change modeling. The grant will provide the capacity to do an ecosystem indicator research and monitoring program, which would include tasks such as zooplankton monitoring and modeling. This will allow the Tribe to forecast salmon and crab populations into the future with climate change as a variable. Chris has also been working with Sandy O'Neil (WDFW) on a toxins study. Nisqually juvenile Chinook act as a control for other Puget Sound juveniles; the study has found that Nisqually juveniles leave with few toxins in their bodies and return with a much higher concentration. Additionally, Nisqually juveniles contain a lot of PBDEs (refrigerants and fire retardants); it's a high priority to determine sources of these toxins.

Finally, David and Harvest Biologists have begun the North of Falcon fishing negotiations. Craig is putting together population forecasts, which will inform the fishing regulations. Because of several factors, including the blob, forecasts are very low again this year.

3. **Ohop Valley Wildlife Surveys** – *Troy Rahmig, ICF International consultant*

The Ohop Valley Restoration Project has been the highest priority for salmon recovery since the Chinook Recovery Plan was produced in 2001. While the Tribe generally studies impacts on salmon, the Salmon Recovery Program was also interested in monitoring impacts to wildlife. The wildlife surveys were funded by a USFWS Tribal Wildlife Grant that focused on culturally important species like elk, deer, and beaver. ICF also added bird surveys to the monitoring program because birds are often a good indicator for restoration projects as they mature.

Before ICF started monitoring, the Land Trust collaborated with NW Trek to conduct surveys multiple times per year using citizen scientists and documenting all species observed. Other baseline data stemmed from hunting/harvest records and local knowledge; beyond that, wildlife use in the area was not well known or documented. The study used several methods, including motion-activated cameras, pedestrian transects, focused transects for beaver, timed area searches (birds), and nest searches (birds).

Nine cameras were placed on site and run continuous. Due to technical issues, an average of 6-7 cameras were running at any given time. In all, over 1,300 images of animals were captured. Pedestrian transects were timed walking transects that recorded all animal sign, and primarily took place in the winter. The focused pedestrian transects for beaver took place along the channel. As a time saving measure, the timed area searches were conducted at the same time as the pedestrian transects. Elk were the most detected terrestrial mammal species, which was corroborated by camera images. The cameras yielded the most consistent form of data collection and showed variable animal use depending on location in the valley.

- Almost 76% of all images were elk; 4% were of deer.
- Cameras 3,4,and 5 captured the most images, primarily because of their close proximity to unfragmented forest on the east side of the valley. This likely serves as a migration pathway for elk.
- Beaver showed increased activity on site—they are moving further downstream each year
- Over 55 species of birds were detected during surveys, including song sparrows, marsh wrens, red-winged blackbirds and American goldfinch. The most common nesting species were song sparrows, common yellowthroat and cedar waxwings.

In all, Ohop Valley supports a high level of diversity, but could benefit from a long-term study, which would illustrate changes that occur as the valley matures. Troy's presentation is here:

<http://www.slideshare.net/Nisqually/ohop-creek-restoration-phases-i-ii-wildlife-surveys>. Morgan will distribute the report to the NRC.

4. **Biodiversity of Native Bees** – *Rusty Burlew, Thurston County Beekeeper*

Rusty started by noting that honeybees are not native to North America. Colonists brought honeybees in 1622 for their honey (a sweetener and preservative) and wax (for candles). It's a myth that colonists brought them over for pollination—pollinating wasn't "discovered" until several decades later. There are roughly 4,000 pollinators in North America, and 200 native species in Washington. Examples include many types of sweat bees, mining bees, and digger bees. In fact, Thurston County is home to 8 different species of bumblebee.

Pollination is the transfer of genetic material between plants; without pollination, seeds don't form. Pollen can be carried by the wind, water, and gravity, but 80% of all flowering plants need animal help for moving pollen. Over time, plants developed ways to attract animals, like visual cues, aromas, and more. Bees account for 85% of all animal pollination, but other pollinators include hummingbirds, bats, amphibians, butterflies, and moths. Prior to the evolution of bees, Earth was covered with evergreen trees and fern. Flowering plants evolved 140 million years ago and bees evolved 125 million years ago. Since then, bees and flowers have coevolved: the plants that survive are those with the most colorful flowers, most fragrant aromas, and the sweetest nectar. Bees evolved hairy bodies to capture pollen.

Native bees are in trouble, with insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides as some of the largest causes of decline. Invasive plants are also harmful, because they tend to create a monoculture, which limits the flowering period during the season. Other causes of harm include climate change, habitat destruction, and disease.

People can protect bees by planting food and providing habitat, like white clover, native species, herbs, and blue colored flowers. Bees also need a water source, and it's important to use fewer pesticides and to increase public awareness. Rusty's website is: www.honeybeesuite.com

5. Pierce County Surface Water Management Plan – Dan Wrye, Pierce County Water Quality Manager

Dan handed out 2 handouts, the new Earth Matters Newsletter and the 2016 Stormwater Management Program Plan Outline. The Earth Matters Newsletter will alternate topics quarterly this year, which is different than normal. The Plan Outline is a short overview of the Pierce County 2016 Stormwater Management Plan; the full plan is available on the website (<https://goo.gl/pAaJeb>). Pierce County is a Phase I Stormwater Permit jurisdiction, under the same permit as Seattle, Snohomish County, Tacoma, and King County. The permit has over 100 permit requirements; Pierce County's portions apply to all unincorporated county lands. Annual costs necessary to meet the permit requirements is around \$7 million.

2016 Goals:

- 1) Continue in full compliance with the permit (the County has been in full compliance since 2010).
- 2) Work with federal and state agencies to prioritize stormwater program funding. (Puget Sound Partnership estimated in 2010 that full stormwater retrofits could cost \$16 billion; some funds are at risk due to falling gas prices)
- 3) Continue successful programs and enhance other programs
- 4) Continue to use parts of the combined NPDES Phase I Municipal Stormwater/State Waste Discharge Permit to further Pierce County's watershed health improvement goals.

Other components of the plan include:

- The County will use mapping through the County View GIS System, which stores drainage layer data and overlays to body waters. The mapping is used on the ground to ground truth all data.
- Inter/Intragovernmental coordination will be fulfilled.
- Continued public involvement
- Control of runoff from new development/redevelopment and construction sites
- Structural stormwater controls (capital improvement projects)
 - Drywell retrofit phase II, Tacoma Narrows Airport, Brookdale retrofit, Spanaway Park Retrofit, Sprinkler Recreation Facility Retrofit
- Source control program for existing development
- Illicit discharge detection and elimination program
- Operations and maintenance program
- Education and Outreach Program
 - Including participation in the "don't drip and drive" program—a regional outreach program to make sure cars don't drip fluids/oil/etc.
- Water Clean-up Plans (TMDL)
- Monitoring Program
- Raise the Grande
- Spanaway Lake Management

6. For the Good of the Order

Amber reported that JBLM is hosting a homebrew competition/festival on April 26th. The Hymar Rocket tests will be over a 3-day period, March 14-18. Up to 27 rockets will be fired, 3 in the morning, afternoon, and evening. The actual firing schedule will be announced publicly, and Amber will share more details on an upcoming open house.

Justin announced that NREP has an upcoming Eye on Nature volunteer training on March 17th from 9-12 or from 1-4 at the Refuge. The NRF has also increased its social media presence on the website, Facebook and Instagram. Please like our pages!

Sandra noted Thurston County Commissioners have narrowed candidates for Director of the Environmental Program down to two. Sandra has also been working with JBLM and the new South Sound Militaries Communities to put some highlight on Thurston County.

Adjourn – Meeting was adjourned at 12:20pm.

*Next Meeting: Friday, March 18th, 2016
Northwest Trek, 9:30-12:30
NWSP Topic: Community Wellness*