



**Meeting Minutes**  
**Nisqually River Council Meeting**  
**May 20, 2016**  
**Northwest Trek**  
Information: 360.438.8715

Attendees:

**Council Members**

**JW Foster** – *City of Yelm*  
**Darric Lowery** – *WA Dept of Fish & Wildlife*  
**Amber Martens** – *JBLM*  
**Rene’ Skaggs** – *Peirce Conservation District*

**Stephanie Suter** – *Puget Sound Partnership*  
**Sandra Romero** – *Thurston County*  
**David Troutt** – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*  
**\* CAC Representatives (3)**

**Citizens Advisory Committee Members**

**Phyllis Farrell\***  
**Ed Kenney**  
**Fred Michelson**  
**Steve Pruitt\***

**Karelina Resnick\***  
**Marjorie Smith**  
**Bob Smith**  
**Lois Ward**

**Guests**

**Roger Andrascik** – *NLT/NSS*  
**Chris Ellings** – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*  
**Nikki Foster** – *Nisqually Resident*  
**Kathy Johnstone** – *NREP Teacher*  
**Declan Line** – *NMS Student*  
**Jeff Line** – *Parent*  
**Hanford McCloud** – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*

**Susan McCowan** – *Nisqually Resident*  
**Emily Newton** – *Nisqually Middle School*  
**Chris Schutz** – *Pierce County*  
**Cathy Tran** – *NMS Student*  
**Ashley Tuttle** – *NMS Student*  
**Ashley Von Essen** – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*  
**Kyra Williams** – *NMS Student*

**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** – David called the meeting to order at 9:49 am.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes and Agenda** – There was a motion to approve the April meeting minutes as presented. They were approved, as was the agenda for the day.

**2. Reports**

**Advisory Committee Reports**

- *Citizens Advisory Committee* – The CAC is reviewing member goals and finalizing a mission statement that will be brought before the NRC in June. Fred provided an update on neonicotinoids and the Longview Coal Terminal. He is willing to provide more information to anyone interested.
- *Chair Report* – David has been busy with the North of Falcon process, which lasted an unprecedented amount of time. Negotiations have been difficult due to a lack of fish, but David remains hopeful a deal will be reached soon. He noted that the fish forecasts are the lowest that they’ve been, especially coho populations. In other news, David and Justin are assisting the Wilcox Family Farm, which was recently audited by Amazon regarding their environmental practices. The NRC, Nisqually River Foundation, and Nisqually Tribe wrote letters of support; Morgan will provide a copy of the letter sent on behalf of the NRC.

- *Staff Report*– The Nisqually River Water Trail planning team is currently in discussion with the Nisqually Tribe’s Parks Commission, who expressed concern over some of the recommendations laid out in the draft plan. Additionally, Nisqually Stream Stewards hosted an Earth Day event at Nisqually Tribe’s Community Garden and a tube installation work party in Ohop Valley. On June 2<sup>nd</sup> NSS, along with the Tribe and Nisqually Land Trust, will host a tube removal work party in Ohop Valley from 9-12; RSVP through Morgan. Sheila, Ashley and Morgan held an NSS planning retreat earlier this month; the class will run from July 26-September 24. Sign up through [streamstewards@nisquallyriver.org](mailto:streamstewards@nisquallyriver.org)!

In other news, NRF staff are alternating attendance at Thurston Thrives Climate and Clean Energy Work Group meetings. Yesterday, the meeting focused on funding mechanisms for clean energy programs & the needs to develop an inventory of current climate actions. Sheila noted that the group is not discussing Ecosystem Services as a funding mechanism. Sandra shared that this is a topic of the Environmental Work Group agenda—perhaps there’s a way to connect the groups.

### **Allied Programs**

- *Nisqually Land Trust* – JW reported that the Board met last night for an update on a communications assessment conducted by NLT staff; the assessment concluded that the NLT should expand their suite of communications tools and social media presence. Additionally, the Land Trust will begin connecting with partners in Pierce County and further north—JW welcomes suggestions on people/groups to connect with. September 18<sup>th</sup> is the NLT Annual Meeting at Oddfellows Park, which will include a special presentation. Karelina noted that Joe presented to the Eatonville Chamber of Commerce yesterday about the NLT public access policy.
- *Nisqually River Education Project* – Sheila is excited to welcome Nisqually Middle School students and Kathy Johnstone! There have been three more Eye on Nature field trips at BFJNNWR. Sheila also worked with Amber Martens to host the first ever NREP prairie field investigation comparing biodiversity in burned vs. unburned plots. Sheila also met with Krestin Bahr from Eatonville School District: the District is hosting a community forum to understand local visions for Burwash Farm and the STEM campus. The last three nearshore field trips are next week—please let Sheila know if you’d like to come help out.
- *Nisqually River Foundation* – Justin’s year is mostly about the Community Forest. The management plan has been submitted to RCO, but the group is still waiting for the green light from Hancock Timber to buy the property. That should happen this year. Justin and Joe went to a community forest forum in Portland as an opportunity to meet and learn from other folks in the business. The Nisqually Community Forest did not receive the US Endowment Grant, which would have funded staffing of the forest for 2 years. In other news, Pierce Conservation District has been conducting a strategic planning process and Justin is on the Advisory Committee. There are two more planning meetings.
- *Salmon Recovery Update* – Chris shared videos from the Salmon Recovery Program’s recent trip along the Mashel River. The goal was to look at the impacts of Engineered Log Jam (ELJ) installation projects. The ELJs are making immediate benefits, including the formation of pools that provide habitat and protect for juvenile salmon. However, the ELJs haven’t recruited additional wood from the system. Chris also noted that this has been one of the most productive steelhead seasons since the population crashed; a factor in this may be the high quality freshwater habitat as well as the impact of transient orcas on marine mammal behavior. The Tribe and WA Department of Fish and Wildlife are conducting a study to determine marine mammal predation rates on steelhead. One of the videos can be seen here: <https://goo.gl/MBtKQ2>.

### **3. Water Quality Monitoring: Nisqually River at 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue – Emily Newton; Kyra Williams, Declan Line, Cathy Tran, Ashley Tuttle**

Emily Newton teaches at Nisqually Middle School, and has partnered with NREP for two years. Kyra, Declan, Cathy and Ashley are in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and presented their water quality monitoring results from 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. According to the students, their site had obvious signs of human activity including a train bridge, dumpster and trash. However, the water appeared to be healthy.

On their fall water quality monitoring day, no fecal coliform colonies were detected. In the winter, there were 14 colonies detected; the students believe this is due to a spike in rainfall during the winter months. In the winter, dissolved oxygen was higher than optimal, and turbidity levels were low. According to the students, the large numbers of trees nearby reduced erosion.

In the fall, hotspots were dissolved oxygen and turbidity. In the winter, nitrates and B.O.D were hotspots. This may be because of fertilizers carried into the water by rain. There is also too much bacteria in the water, which is using up the oxygen. The group also noticed that trains go over the testing site, which may have impacts on their results.

Most of the students had monitored water quality in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and all of them presented at Student GREEN Congress this year. Before testing water these students didn't have much experience thinking about the health of the river. Now they are really interested in science, especially in figuring out ways to fix it!

#### **4. Leschi Heritage Foundation – Hanford McCloud, Nisqually Indian Tribe**

Hanford was recently elected to the Nisqually Tribal Council, and has been a part of Canoe Journey for 15 years. Although the Nisqually people have always travelled in canoes, the Canoe Journey celebration began in the 1980s as a way to promote cultural connections, especially to youth. The event is not a race, but a journey. A large component of the journey is asking for permission to land at each stopping point.

The Leschi Heritage Foundation, where Hanford is Executive Director, perpetuates the heritage of the Tribe, and the importance of Canoe Journey. This year's theme is "Don't forget the water," or *teqwumá?*, which is the Nisqually word for Mount Rainier. The theme is an important concept for the Nisqually because it ties them to their heritage. During Canoe Journey, the pullers travel along an ancient highways, and this year will end at Nisqually.

Youth are the focus of the event because they keep the culture going. Family is another key component, especially because families often follow their pullers through the journey. Additionally, the event is a celebration of sobriety and a drug free environment. Canoe Journey is a way to share cultures, dances and traditions between tribes: each night, all participating tribes gather for cultural sharing. This can take 6 to 7 days, because each Tribe performs for as long as desired.

In 2014, the Nisqually Canoe Family journeyed to Bella Bella, which took 28 days by water. It drew participants from around the world. This year, approximately 120 boats are expected to travel to Nisqually. The landing is on July 30<sup>th</sup> in downtown Olympia. On July 31, there will be a Medicine Creek Treaty event at Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge. To learn more, visit [www.paddletonisqually.com](http://www.paddletonisqually.com). The website has volunteer forms, maps, news, contact information, and other details. A video developed by the Nisqually Tribe is available here: <https://goo.gl/frCWBM>.

Volunteers are needed to make gifts that will be shared at the event. Gift making sessions occur Tuesday through Thursday beginning at 12:00 at the Billy Frank Jr. Community Services Center. Morgan will circulate any information about Canoe Journey to the NRC.

#### **5. Farewell Kathy Johnstone! – Sheila Wilson, NREP**

Kathy Johnston has been an NREP teacher for 17 years and has exceeded expectations on all accounts. She has conducted fecal coliform testing that entire time, raises salmon in her classroom, installed a raingarden at Columbia Crest, and has tossed thousands of pounds of carcasses in her time.

Kathy noted that for salmon populations to thrive, having salmon eggs isn't enough: high quality habitat, marine derived nutrients, and large woody debris are all necessary components needed to maintain a healthy populations. In the same way, students must have quality learning environments, strong learning habitats, and more so that they can thrive. She feels that NREP has contributed to that environment, and is excited to have students who are the children of people who went water quality monitoring.

She shared several of her favorite memories:

- Building a trail from Columbia Crest to the testing site.
- Examining benthic macroinvertebrates in the classroom.
- Raising salmon in the classroom, including 20 albino salmon.
- Planting trees in dozens of locations throughout the watershed, from Mount Rainier to the delta.

- Salmon tossing, controlling invasive species, and installing a raingarden.
- Summer Teachers Institute, especially learning to test pH in the air.
- Salmon summit, Student GREEN Congress

Kathy ended by saying “thanks for the “NREP-derived nutrients” that have been given to the students over the years! For those who were wondering, Kathy reached her goal of collecting 1 million bread tabs!

**6. PSP Action Agenda – Stephanie Suter, Ecosystem Recovery Regional Manager**

Puget Sound Partnership has a very serious budget deficit, and are letting go about 20% of their staff, including Jeanette Dorner, who is the Regional Director for Salmon Recovery. Stephanie will be learning more on Tuesday about the future of the Partnership and Salmon Recovery, along with changes to her responsibilities. Jeanette will be at the Partnership until August 30<sup>th</sup>, and will continue to help with the transition. Stephanie noted that the Partnership remains committed and dedicated to salmon recovery.

The Action Agenda – the roadmap to recovery – is on a trajectory to be adopted by June. Comments are in review right now, after which all comments will go to the Science Panel. After all review panels have agreed on the action agenda, it will go to the Leadership Council on June 29<sup>th</sup> for final approval. There is no information yet on funding for the Near Term Actions; that is up to EPA to decide. The Partnership is applying for funding from EPA to work with local folks on the 2018 Action Agenda; Stephanie is hopeful that local priorities will be well represented in this agenda. More information will be available in fall or winter.

**7. For the Good of the Order**

Steve noted that the Greater Eatonville Heritage Forum met on May 17<sup>th</sup>. There is enthusiasm to get trail users connected to trail builders.

The News Tribune had an article on the 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of Eatonville High School: <http://goo.gl/0S9MVh>.

Pierce Conservation District received a grant to host a Rural Energy Assistance Program (REAP) that will help agricultural producers/rural small businesses apply for renewable energy projects. The program is eligible to people in Pierce, Thurston and King County.

Yelm Farmer’s Market opens this Sunday.

**Adjourn** – Meeting was adjourned at 12:47am.

***Next Meeting: Friday, June 17, 2016***  
***BFJNNWR, 9:00-12:00***  
***NWSP Topic: Economic Viability of Natural Resources***