



**Nisqually River Council
Citizens Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 11, 2016, 6:00 – 8:00 PM
Nisqually Tribe's Natural Resources Office**

CAC Members Present: *Phyllis Farrell, Steve Pruitt, and Ed Kenney*

Guests: *Bill Van Buskirk*

Staff Present: *Morgan Greene*

Welcome and Introductions

Steve called the meeting to order at 6:07pm. There was a motion to approve the July meeting minutes; minutes are not available for the August meeting (cancelled) or September meeting (hosted in conjunction with Nisqually Stream Stewards class). They were approved, as was the agenda for the evening.

Yelm Wastewater Plant – Bill Van Buskirk, Plant Manager

Bill began managing the Yelm Wastewater Plant in early June, but his wastewater experience extends to 1989. He is from the Nisqually Watershed originally. Currently, the wastewater plant has 6 employees. He shared updates on some of the programs and retrofitting occurring at the plant:

- Bill has 2.5 FTE employees in the field conducting “FOG” control. “FOG” stands for fats, oils and grease; the program works with industrial/commercial businesses to reduce the amount of FOG waste going down the drain. One of Bill’s current initiatives is to retrofit Yelm’s FOG program to more closely mimic those of Olympia and Lacey. He is developing recommendations at this time, and will contact Morgan when a plan is available so that interested CAC members are aware. FOG waste goes directly to the wastewater plant, which upsets the balance of the whole system and increase the work necessary to purify the water. Instead, FOG should go into a waste container.
- The City of Yelm is currently upgrading the wastewater plant, which includes upgrades that will be completed by 2020 and by 2025. The plant currently is capable of processing 500,000 gallons per day; it will be retrofitted to ideally process up to 1.2 million maximum gallons per day. Bill noted that this is not an estimate for the amount that will be processed daily in the future, but represents the total maximum amount it will need to process.
- Bill hopes to install new fans in the plant to increase efficiency, and to move away from the use of gas chlorine. He is also updating the plant’s computer system and reducing nitrate/ammonia loads, among other things.
- There is a new edition of the Wastewater Management Plan, which is currently under review by the Department of Ecology. Once approved, it will be available online.
- The wastewater plant tries to reuse treated wastewater to increase the amount of water available for irrigation and other non-potable uses. Whatever water isn’t sold for use gets discharged into the Centralia Diversion Canal or the Nisqually River. The discharged water is treated to a high standard and may help improve water quantity during dry months.

The group made the distinction between stormwater runoff and wastewater management. Bill is not involved with stormwater/surface water management at all. However, he would be happy to return to a future meeting if further questions come up, or to give a tour of the plant.

Steve's Updates – Steve Pruitt

- *Meeting with Dan Wrye/Surface Water Management Permitting:* Steve met with Dan Wrye and Jeff Barney (who replaced Chris Schutz) last week to follow-up on the Pierce County report card. As background, the Department of Ecology has guidelines for how much pollution can be in a waterbody at any given time, called Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs). Jurisdictions are issued permits authorizing allowable runoffs, known as Phase I or Phase II permits. Many entities within the Nisqually Watershed lack a permit; Pierce County, however, operates under a Phase I permit, which is the highest standard. In jurisdictions without permits, stormwater runoff enters directly into water bodies. Steve's meeting revolved around the fact that the TMDL process is being updated, and in the summer of 2018, Ecology will release by their recommendations for changes. Dan suggested that the Nisqually Watershed develop watershed-wide standards for water quality, so that all jurisdictions would work towards similar goals. Ecology could potentially issues permits based upon WRIA boundaries. Steve plans to go to Ecology to determine the best way to provide comment on the issue, and will continue conversations with the NRC Executive Committee.
- *Hackney Proposal:* Clint Hackney is a consultant that has worked with local tribes/businesses for years. Together with Steve, he proposed a systems management approach to watershed management to the Executive Committee. To start, this proposal would focus on water management – and the above section may play into this proposal. The Executive Committee agreed that Steve and Clint should move forward with searching for grant funding, before starting on the actual project. This project will work in tandem with the NRF, and will not compete for grants/funding sources that may cover other programs already in play.

CAC Member Goals:

- Watershed Trails/River Access & Hikes: Tomorrow may be the last great day at Mount Rainier, according to Ed. Today, he almost had to use crampons to get on the trail! There's a lot of wildlife, including elk and bear, in the meadows of Mount Rainier. Ed also found his first fox scat this morning. Marmots are hibernating already; pikas have their winter meals tucked under the rocks. Salmon are beginning to spawn, and hunting season begins on October 15th. Chains are required in all vehicles traveling to the mountain now.
- Current Issues: N/A
- Water Quality: N/A
- Systems Management: N/A

For the Good of the Order

Important dates:

- October NRC meeting is CANCELLED
- NRF Strategic Planning meeting is on Thursday, November 3 at the Nisqually Tribe's Youth and Community Center. RSVP is required.
- Next CAC meeting is scheduled to be on Tuesday, November 8 from 6-8 pm. Because this is election day, Morgan will send a Doodle Poll requesting the meeting be shifted to a different Tuesday evening.

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 pm.