

Meeting Minutes - Nisqually Watershed Planning Unit

August 30, 2018 – 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Nisqually Tribe – Natural Resources Meeting Room

Present:

George Walter, Nisqually Indian Tribe
David Troutt, Nisqually Indian Tribe
Jesse Barham, City of Olympia
Lois Ward, NRC CAC
Phyllis Farrell, NRC CAC
Rance Smith, Pierce County
Tom Kantz, Pierce County
Julie Rector, City of Lacey
Abby Gribi, Town of Eatonville

Russ Olsen, Thurston County PUD
John Weidenfeller, Thurston County PUD
Mike Gallagher, Department of Ecology
Allison Osterberg, Thurston County
Kevin Hansen, Thurston County
Justin Hall, Nisqually River Foundation
Emily McCartan, Nisqually River
Foundation
Lisa Dally Wilson, Dally Environmental

1. Introductions, Agenda, and Minutes

Funding sources for mitigation projects was added to the agenda, which was approved along with the minutes from the 7/24/18 meeting.

2. Planning Unit Working Agreement

The Working Agreement will be an addendum to the standing MOA between Planning Unit governments. It should not require separate ratification. A draft version was distributed prior to the meeting, the majority of which is verbatim text from prior agreements. Lewis and Thurston County have provided several rounds of comments.

Discussion/Outstanding Questions:

- Which entities must be included as Implementing Governments who must adopt the final Plan?
 - Current draft includes all parties involved in both Phase 3 and 4 planning of the original Watershed Management Plan. Phase 4 (the 2007 Implementation Plan) included several other participating governments, including Roy and JBLM. They should be invited to participate this round but may opt not to be involved.
 - Interested parties may join the planning unit through October 2018 in order to be represented with a vote in December/January decision-making.
- Who is authorized to vote/sign off on behalf of their represented governments?
 - Attachment A lists Participating Governments and other participating entities (language TBD that will designate implementing governments and other governmental and non-governmental participants), with official representatives and other participating staff. Member agencies who have not yet designated an official rep should do so by 9/7.
 - One vote per participating entity (designated representatives may vote in abstentia by informing Lisa prior to a decision meeting).

- Private citizens are welcome to attend Planning Unit meetings to share opinions and participate. The voting entity representing private citizens will be the NRC CAC.
- How will public input be solicited and represented?
 - The NRC CAC representative will be the voting entity for the public, consistent with the previous MOA.
 - Public comment will be scheduled on each agenda for Planning Unit meetings. Private citizens are welcome to attend and offer input at any Planning Unit meeting.
 - *Follow up action:* George will attend a CAC meeting in October, open to members of the public, to discuss the Planning Unit process in depth.
 - *Follow up action:* George will develop and circulate a press release to local news outlets about the Planning Unit and public meetings.
 - *Follow up action:* Emily will create a page on the NRC website to publish meeting dates, agendas and materials.
- What is the ratification/adoption process (what will the Department of Ecology accept as “adoption” by the February 1, 2019 deadline)?
 - Adoption goals:
 - Full consensus among all Planning Unit Members
 - If full consensus cannot be reached: 2/3 majority among PU members and full consensus among Tribe and Counties (Implementing Governments)
 - If there is not consensus among Tribe/Counties by 2/1/19, by statute the plan must go to Ecology for rulemaking.
 - Any plans adopted by the Planning Unit are non-binding and up to implementing governments to adopt voluntarily.
 - *Follow up action:* Mike to check with Ecology leadership about what is acceptable as “adoption” by the deadline (ideally, consensus of the Planning Unit representatives – ratification by County/Tribal governments is likely to require additional time).
- The Nisqually Indian Tribe is the lead entity for the purposes of convening the Planning Unit and applying and administering planning funds, not to exclude other entities from applying for project grants/funding.
- Ground rules – emphasize timeliness of communications with colleagues and constituents of participating agencies, so that we are informed early about potential challenges/concerns.
- Lisa will provide a revised version by next week. Comments due by Wednesday.

3. Watershed Plan Addendum

Proposed Outline:

- I. Introduction: background, context, scope
 - a. Planning Unit membership and agreements
 - b. Sub-basins
- II. Forecasting future permit-exempt domestic use wells, 2018-2040

- a. Number of wells, by county/sub-watershed, and methodology for each county
- b. Rural indoor and outdoor domestic use assumptions (per household)
- c. Consumptive vs. non-consumptive assumptions
- III. Mitigation
 - a. Projects, with estimates of streamflow benefit and implementation schedule
 - b. Policies
- IV. Water balance
- V. Implementation: entities, scope, timeline, and funding options
- VI. Adaptive management

Schedule:

- October PU Meeting: PU approval of assumptions and preliminary numbers for forecasting water balance (from Forecast Work Group), PU final approval of Planning Unit Working Agreement
- October 1, 2018: conceptual policies to be proposed for future permit-exempt domestic well use (Counties, possibly cities/towns)
- November 1, 2018: defined policies with language
- November 1, 2018: full summaries of Addendum components due to Lisa (forecasting data and methodology with write-up; natural resources projects from 4-year project list; recommended policies or other strategies)
- December 1, 2018: draft Addendum circulated for review and comment
- **TBD**: Comments due back on draft Addendum
- February 1, 2019: PU votes to approve Addendum and transmit to Ecology and elected bodies of Thurston, Pierce, and Lewis Counties and Nisqually Indian Tribe (**need to verify that this works for Ecology)

4. Sub-Basin Boundaries

The Forecast Work Group distributed a rough draft of sub-basin divisions for review. The Work Group recommends combining some of the miscellaneous basins, maintaining distinctions between Thurston and Pierce county sides of the river, and focusing on larger sub-watersheds to give more flexibility for sub-basin level mitigation projects. Recommended basins are:

- Red Salmon Slough/Misc. 5/Puget Sound (Pierce County side)
- McAllister/Misc. 4/Puget Sound (Thurston County side)
- Thompson/Yelm
- Lackamas/Toboton/Powell/Misc. 8
- Muck/Murray/Brighton/Horn/Tanwax/Kreger/Misc. 1/Misc. 2/Misc. 3
- Ohop/Misc. 6
- Mashel/Misc. 7
- Upper Nisqually (Thurston and Lewis)

The suggested divisions were approved, with the possibility for technical edits with further GIS analysis. The Nisqually Indian Tribe's GIS department will produce a

final map showing UGAs, settlements, and boundaries for the Nisqually Reservation, JBLM, and cities.

5. **Work Group Reports**

Population and Water Forecasting

- Thurston County summarized draft numbers based on 20-year growth assumptions from Thurston Regional Planning Commission (TRPC). The assumptions are conservative to plan for the maximum possible mitigation needs. The base figure is the number of connections (since up to 6 households can be served by a single exempt well).
- Lewis County plans to use the same approach as Thurston (growth potential in the Lewis County areas of the watershed is very small).
- Pierce County is developing assumptions based on historical growth rates using Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) data, with the possibility of breaking out UGAs if needed.
- County estimates are only focused on domestic exempt wells, and will not address other potential major water uses from commercial or other types of development (mineral lands, golf courses, business expansions).
- *Next Steps:*
 - Complete number crunching by October 1. Review data and assumptions with Forecast Work Group by October 15 and circulate to PU.
 - Include George Walter, Thurston PUD, Eatonville, and Roy in upcoming Forecast Work Group meetings.

Natural Resource Projects

- The Salmon Recovery Habitat Work Group has been searching for habitat recovery projects that can address water quantity. The Eatonville Stormwater Plan, which was adopted but not fully implemented, looks like the best source for projects.
- *Next Steps:*
 - NIT Salmon Recovery will work with Eatonville to write a project grant for the October funding round implementing stormwater projects (rain gardens, rerouting catchment basins to improve flows in the Mashel and reduce flooding in Lynch Creek).
 - Report on detailed project suggestions by next PU meeting.

Other Innovative Strategies

- Washington Water Trust study in 2010 found potential mitigation in Nisqually, but not sufficient need. Could hire them (\$4,000) to continue the feasibility study and develop a ranking model to determine highest priority water rights in specific areas of need with highest probability of being transferrable.
- George will circulate USGS reports on prairie tributaries through Tanwax and the potential impacts of deep aquifer drilling and recharge, especially for intermittent streams.
- *Next Steps:*

- George will convene a work group (George, Mike, John, Lois, Kevin, Lisa and county representatives) to discuss further.
- George will reach out to the Water Trust to move forward with their study.
- Other brainstorming items can be sent to George.

6. Mitigation Discussion

Mitigation policies and projects were tabled for a future meeting. The Legislature and Ecology have set aside up to \$150,000 for work that this group might need. We've used less than half of that so far.

7. Schedules for next meetings

Emily and Lisa will coordinate Doodle Polls for future PU and work group meetings. We are exploring alternate locations (Refuge, Yelm Community Center, Lacey Community Center) and teleconference options.

8. Parking Lot and Action Items

Parking Lot for Future Discussion

- Mitigation discussion
- Basis for consumptive use estimates? Should CWAs be changed from the current 3,000 gal/day to 300 or some other figure? Need to consider metering, sliding scales, fee structures? May need a work group with a longer timeframe to evaluate strategies on this.
- Contractor needs for GIS or other technical analysis?
- Future meeting topics:
 - USGS research
 - VELMA model (upper watershed/Community Forest benefits)
 - Washington Water Trust (water banking and water resource opportunities)

Action Items

- Press release to newspapers/outlets - George, by next meeting
- CAC meeting for public involvement - Emily, George, Phyllis, 10/18
- Revised agreement - Lisa, circulate by 8/3, comments due by 9/6
- Check in with Ecology leadership about 2/1/19 deadline and "adopted addendum" – Mike Gallagher, 9/7
- Forecast Work Group – consumptive use per day; how much is CWA certificate (3000, 950, or other) - 9/30
- George to Water Forecast WG – Sept meeting
- Assess GIS needs (Jen Cutler or contractor) (George, Russ, Emily) – 9/4
- TRPC Summary of GIS needs – George, 9/4
- Ecology approval of basin map/basin sizes – Mike, 9/7
- Contact Roy Mayor – George, 8/31
- Forecast WG (Mike, Roy, Eatonville, George, Yelm, Lacey, PUD) – Lisa, 9/4
- Convene Other Strategies work group – George, Emily, 9/4