



**NRC Citizens Advisory Committee
Meeting Agenda
June 12, 2018 6:00 – 8:00 PM
Nisqually Tribe Natural Resource Office**

Present:

Ben Dennis
Phyllis Farrell
Howard Glastetter
Carlos Herrera
Fred Michelson
Ed Kenney
Bob Smith
Marjorie Smith
Lois Ward
Emily McCartan, staff

1 Welcome and Introductions

Phyllis called the meeting to order at 6:09pm.

2 Elections for 2018 officers

Nominations from the previous meeting were:

Chair – Phyllis

Vice Chair – Lois

Voting Reps – Fred, Lois, Bob (alternate) and Ed (alternate)

Fred moved to elect the whole slate of nominees. Howard seconded. The officers were approved unanimously. Phyllis stated that she would continue to draw on the expertise and support from around the table.

3 Member Issues

The issues below are topics brought by the CAC membership that we are following or researching, potentially to raise to the NRC for action if necessary.

Industrial Aquaculture Issues

Phyllis sent David and others some recent background on litigation on industrial aquaculture in Puget Sound and the Olympic Peninsula. She would like the Council to weigh in on possible effects that this has on salmon recovery, ecosystem function, and plastic pollution. The local Sierra Club group feels it appropriate to regulate industrial aquaculture – currently businesses are not required to have hydraulic permits for shellfish cultivation. Emily advised that David has not weighed in on this so far, but can tee this up for future discussion. Thurston County is behind on the Shoreline Master

Plan, but the Sierra Club and other environmental groups are encouraging them not to forego public comment in spite of schedule pressure.

Fred offered an update on Zangle Cove near Boston Harbor, where Pacific Northwest Aquaculture (commercial venture based in Seattle) wants to put a large geoduck operation. Three community groups (Protect Zangle Cove, Coalition to Protect Puget Sound, and Wild Fish Conservancy) have filed a suit against WDFW arguing that petitioners are adversely affected by the fact that these can go forward without environmental studies/HPA. Phyllis has previously sent the complaint around to the group to read. Fred spoke with the lawyer in charge of the case today and was impressed with the science and documentation presented. The mudflats they plan to introduce geoduck into are smaller than at the Nisqually Delta, but not natural geoduck habitat and have native eelgrass beds. There has not been a hearing date set. The attorney said that Taylor Shellfish has filed to be a party to the case, and that will be decided at a hearing this Friday. Fred noted that there is nothing for us really to do at this point except update and know what's going on. The attorney offered to update Fred each time there is a development in the suit, and he will report back. Significant expansion of commercial aquaculture in Puget Sound creates major concerns about salmon habitat, forage fish, and lost biodiversity throughout the food chain, which is relevant to River Council's interests.

Thurston Mineral Lands/Gravel Mining

Phyllis and Howard have both attended meetings on Thurston County's update to mineral land designations through the Sierra Club and Board of County Commissioners. Thurston is mineral rich from glacial deposits (186,000 acres have mineral resources). Ed noted that Holroyd Gravel Mine and Nisqually/Steilacoom area were among the richest areas. Due to a Weyerhaeuser lawsuit, the County has to relist its current mineral lands designations. County staff had prepared three options for the BOCC/planning commissioners to consider. Two of the County Commissioners (Hutchins and Edwards) disagree with the practice of having a 1000 ft buffer between schools, parks, critical areas, and wants to shrink it to 50 ft (Hutchins and Edwards). The Planning Commission has recommended co-designating mineral and agricultural lands, which the environmental coalition does not want. Several hearings have gone forward with public comments opposing reduction of the buffer. Ed noted that writing individual letters might be a good move here. Howard stated that the window was closed earlier this month, but the planning commission did receive over 90 letters, which seems to have gotten their attention. League of Women Voters and Audubon have weighed in as well. Phyllis noted that the commissioners are very aware that mineral resources are an important economic engine for the county (mining is the #1 commodity resource in WA state, driven by Thurston/Pierce County). Phyllis believes, however, we need to be really vigilant about protecting water and land resources. Howard is concerned about digging

below the water table to reclaim mines – Holroyd wants to go 20ft below the water table. Phyllis noted mining requires a lot of water in the process. Our water availability in the Nisqually is not as dire an issue as it is in the Deschutes, but it could potentially affect Nisqually Subarea aquifer and city water.

Alder Dam

Emily advised the CAC that the TPU presentation will not take place this week at the NRC due to scheduling conflicts. It will be rescheduled for a later meeting. Howard noted that he has been told that TPU has an unwritten rule that they try to keep the reservoir at 3 feet below capacity if the weather is expected to be nice. Howard distributed a table showing further data from his remarks last month, on the last major flood on Dec. 9, 2015. He calculated the net flow of 10,000cfs, which raised the reservoir 6 feet in one day, to the 1,197' level, which then went up to 1,205' (the max) the next day. Howard draws two conclusions from this: If they hadn't started the event at 1,197', the flood could have been much worse. If they were aiming at 1,197' on the 7th, Howard believes they should have been taking more aggressive evasive action earlier, which could have prevented it from destroying the property and the house. Phyllis noted, for new participants, that TPU isn't legally required to manage for flood control, but as a member of the River Council, we have asked them to be mindful of it. They have been good partners in salmon recovery efforts and are required to keep water levels up for fish habitats. Fred stated that citizens who were flooded in 1996 met with TPU leadership several years later but were not able to see their models for predicting storms. Ed and Bob noted that it's very unusual for TPU to have to spill, and a warning goes out to residents when that happens (most recently were probably 2015 and 2006). Ed noted there can be a risk with glacial outbursts in the summer – although the cold outflow can and has also saved salmon. Florian would know what their contingency plans are on that. Emily will keep the CAC posted on the schedule for discussing this at the NRC.

Plastics

Last month, Lois brought up the National Geographic article on volume of plastic in our oceans and environment. She distributed a handout of facts from the article illustrating the magnitude of this problem. It's timely to address it now because there is widespread interest, even among folks who are not generally concerned with conservation. The issue is not just what do we do with it once it's existing, but how can we encourage industry to stop producing so much. 50% of plastics produced now are for packaging. Molly Carmody at last NRC meeting discussed a proposal to ban plastic bags and other items in Yelm. Articles have stated that we don't know if plastic bags ever fully

disintegrate. We still don't have a lot of information about impacts on wildlife, human health, and ecosystems. Ben stated that the gyre in the Pacific is equal to twice the area of Texas – takes up the area of 6 western states. Lois noted that it speaks to the aquaculture issue, because geoduck is a plastic intensive-crop. Ben distributed an article about a company that is working on converting ocean plastics to fuel, using solar energy, which was tested on the East Coast last year. Ben would like to see the Sierra Club or another large organization take on a regional test of this article. Ed and Ben noted that there have been air and water pollution concerns with similar efforts in the past. Carlos asked about the plastics issue in the Nisqually. Ed noted that his work outdoors shows tons of plastic waste, particularly with fishing line and equipment being left behind. The Nisqually River Cleanup this spring brought in about 2,080 pounds of trash, much of it plastic. Lois noted that tidal currents sweep things out from the Delta across to Anderson Island, so the reach looks pristine, but the trash is just going elsewhere. Ed has observed a huge increase in the Sound over the last 20 years. Volunteer cleanups in Edmonds and elsewhere have done great work, bringing back eelgrass habitat.

Water Planning for WRIAs (Water Resource Inventory Area)

Last year's "Hirst fix" law (ESSB 6091) instructed WRIAs would establish commissions to determine water availability on each watershed. One provision in the bill is for an environmental representative on each WRIA. There is not an environmental rep on Nisqually's currently (Nisqually and Nooksack are moving on a slightly different track than other WRIAs, because it has an existing water planning body recognized in the law). Phyllis would like to nominate Lois via David to sit on the council, as a watershed resident, Sierra club participant, and CAC vice chair. Ed agreed that Sierra or Audubon should be on the committee. Emily and Phyllis will contact David and convey this desire. Ben also highlighted an Olympia article on the culvert case. Phyllis noted that Thurston has shown some good leadership on culvert replacement in Nisqually and Deschutes, which has helped a lot. Ed stated that SPSSEG has done a lot of great work providing grants, which helped him replace the culvert on his property, and 3 nearby on Land Trust property. Salmon can now get up close to his house again.

4 Framing Future Agendas – who would we like to hear from/learn more about?

Members brainstormed the beginning of a list of issues they would like to address or hear from at future CAC meetings:

Salmon Recovery

Community Forest

Water Planning

Raising of I-5

Orca Recovery Task Force

Carbon sequestration in forests

Tribal representative to the CAC

Tribal programs – entrepreneurial program for shellfish (Margaret)

Nisqually fishermen on new sustainable fishing practices, cooperation on saving of steelhead

Tribal history and culture

More presentations from Ed about the Mountain

Steelhead redds/recovery

Status of endangered species in watershed

6 For the Good of the Order

Members arranged carpools for the NRC meeting in Ashford on Friday.

7 Adjourned at 8:05pm.