



Meeting Minutes
Nisqually River Council Meeting
March 15, 2019
Northwest Trek
Information: 360.438.8715

Attendees:

Council Members:

Amber Martens – *JBLM*
Curtis McFeron – *NOAA*

David Troutt, chair – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*

Citizens Advisory Committee Members:

Phyllis Farrell
Karelina Resnick
Bob Smith

Fred Michelson
Marjorie Smith
Lois Ward

Guests:

Roger Andrascik – *NLT/NSS*
Cathy Hamilton-Weissner – *JBLM*
Paula Holroyde – *LWV*
Joe Kalama – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*
Sam Kaviar – *Kayak Nisqually*
Ted Jackson – *Big Tent Coalition*
Jessica Jackelski? (phyllis's daughter)

Becky Kowalski – *JBLM*
Andrew Reed – *DNR*
Jim Reistroffer – *NLT/NSS*
Etsuko Reistroffer – *NLT/NSS*
Craig Smith – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*
Maya Teeple – *Thurston County*
Ashley Von Essen – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*

Staff:

Justin Hall – *NRF*
Sheila Wilson – *NRF*
Chrissy Webb – *NRF*

Brandon Bywater – *NRF*
Emily McCartan – *NRF*

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

The Council recognized the passing of Helen Engle (Tahoma Audubon Society founder). She was a powerhouse in the environmental community and a leading voice in the creation of the Refuge.

Minutes from the February meeting were approved, as was the agenda for the day.

2. Committee Reports and Updates

Advisory Committee Reports:

Citizens Advisory Committee – Phyllis Farrell

CAC members are monitoring the biosolids application in Yelm, awaiting a decision from Ecology about the determination of non-significance. The local citizen's group has made a public disclosure request for all documents related to the applicant (Fire Mountain Farms) and received a huge amount of information to review. CAC members are also monitoring Thurston County planning work, including mineral lands designation, Nisqually Sub-Area

Plan, and Shoreline Master Plan. Justin gave the CAC an expanded version of his travelogue from Ecuador – to be continued at a later date.

Chair Report – David Troutt

David presented to the Audubon Society about I-5 corridor estuary issues last night. They are interested in supporting our effort with elected officials. Serious budget discussions are starting at the Legislature next week. Funds for salmon recovery is behind where advocates would like it to be. David is occupied throughout March and April with pre-season salmon harvest negotiations (North of Falcon).

Staff Report – Emily McCartan

Crosscut Magazine, based in Seattle, published an article this month about NREP's water quality monitoring program. Reporters joined students from teacher Kim Williams' science club at Cougar Mountain Middle School on their field trip in February. The students did a great job explaining and demonstrating and the article is a great write-up for the program. (Article link: <https://crosscut.com/2019/03/can-kid-scientists-fix-washingtons-salmon-streams>)

Emily is continuing to work with the Nisqually Planning Unit on implementation planning for the streamflow restoration projects in the Watershed Plan Addendum. She has also been working, along with the Land Trust, with a group of local Girl Scouts who attended last summer's Stream Stewards course and have adopted an NLT site to restore for their Silver Award project.

Thurston County Subarea Plan Update – Maya Teeple

The RAP environmental review study has been internally reviewed and returned to the consultant for some revisions. Public review, including public comment and meetings, will come next (timeline is not yet established). The RAP is now on a separate track from the Nisqually Sub-Area Plan update, which is going through its own process with the Board of Commissioners and Planning Commission. The first subarea Community Working Group meeting was on March 1. Nine people attended, including two CAC members, and had a good conversation reviewing input from last year's open house and identifying experts and other interested parties to include. It is not yet decided whether the Community Working Group will be a broad advisory group or a smaller group with some decision-making authority. The public process with hearings before the Planning Commission and BOCC will start after the Community Working Group wraps up (early 2020).

Allied Program Reports:

Nisqually Land Trust – Roger Andrascik

The Land Trust's annual Dinner and Auction is tomorrow!

NREP – Sheila Wilson

Student GREEN Congress next week is next week. Fewer Nisqually students will be participating this year because Yelm schools are not taking part in NREP programs. Yelm school district began requiring last year that all 5th grade teachers participate, instead of opting in as in previous years. Water quality monitoring is a significant commitment for

teachers, and not all of them wanted to be involved, so the district withdrew all classes from the program. NREP is working on re-engaging with the district to pursue some less “all-or-nothing” options.

NREP led a group of 20 teachers on CLAMSS trips at the Nisqually Reach, learning about ocean acidification and plankton. Field trips with students are planned for this spring. NREP submitted a proposal to RCO’s No Child Left Inside grant program this week, focused on working with Nisqually tribal youth. Partners have been very supportive. Holding a beach cleanup with Kayak Nisqually, Nisqually Reach Nature Center, and the Nisqually Youth Council on March 30. Volunteers needed for Eye On Nature field trips this spring (training on April 10, fundraiser on May 8).

NREP presented at the South Sound Sierra Club and Washington Native Plant Society in Olympia and Tacoma – supporters of EON programs. Also presenting at the Thurston Climate Action Convention on April 13.

Nisqually River Foundation/Community Forest – Justin Hall

Justin has been at the Legislature frequently, pursuing a budget proviso to fund the Nisqually River Council (local reps support it, but won’t know final status until the budget is done), and a bill that would set up funding for community forest acquisitions across the state (passed the Senate with bipartisan support, scheduled for hearing in the House next week). Justin also spoke to the Puget Sound Partnership Leadership Council about the Nisqually Community Forest.

Salmon Recovery Program – Ashley Von Essen

Restoration crew planting season has just wrapped up three projects for the season. Lead Entity SRFB grant round letters of intent were due March 1. Nisqually has five potential projects moving forward: 2 barrier removals, 2 acquisitions, 1 knotweed treatment. Project list is due to the state on May 9, site visits on May 30. Funding available will depend on how much the Legislature gives the SRFB.

3. “Love Your Watershed” Photo Contest

Chrissy Webb – NREP AmeriCorps

Chrissy oversaw a photo contest last month as a social media initiative. Participation wasn’t as high as hoped, but learned some good lessons for next time. Members of the public, teachers, and volunteers submitted photos from around the watershed. 10 finalist photos were shared for NRC attendees to vote on:

Shared 10 finalist photos.

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Salmon Excitement | 6. Salmon Bake |
| 2. Mashel River | 7. Chemistry in the Snow |
| 3. Comb Jelly | 8. Full Moon and Rainier |
| 4. Pacific Chorus Frog | 9. Juvenile Salmon |
| 5. Habitat Restoration | 10. Salmon Kiss |

The finalist photos and the winner will be shared on the River Council’s Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. It was agreed that this is a great idea – we’d like to see the contest continue!

4. Salmon Harvest Update and North of Falcon Pre-Season Planning Process

Craig Smith – Harvest Program Manager, Nisqually Indian Tribe

North of Falcon (NOF) is a salmon management process between the State of Washington and Treaty Tribes, to develop and agree to the list of fisheries in the Washington Coast and Puget Sound Region. Passion for salmon drives the project – it is a deeply held subject for people in the Northwest. The name comes from Falcon Point on the Oregon Coast north of Cannon Beach. (Excluding Columbia River, which is mostly its own process at this point). Many regional processes run in parallel.

The Boldt Decision (*US v. Washington*, 1974) – reaffirmed inherent sovereign right of tribes to fish in their usual and accustomed areas (U&A), and established Tribes (20 federally recognized with treaty fishing rights) as a co-manager of salmon fisheries with Washington State. North of Falcon is a necessary co-management process to coordinate across the overlapping jurisdictions between the Tribes and State. Fish also intermingle across state and international lines, so multiple federal, state (OR, WA, CA, AK), and US-Canada processes play into this.

Goals of NOF are to create a forum to negotiate fishing opportunities (WA State) and harvest rights (Treaty Tribes), while also fulfilling Endangered Species Act (ESA) recovery obligations. Every stock has its own management criteria to hit.

Nisqually Chinook management criteria:

- Escapement target (all fish that return to spawn without being caught by commercial, recreational, or tribal fisheries): 53% for ESA goal.
- This leaves 47% as harvestable, half of which (~23%) is Tribal treaty catch. Fisheries happen in jurisdictions across state, tribal, and international lines – coated wire tags from the hatcheries allow tracking of where Nisqually Chinook are harvested.

NOF is one of several regional groups that does pre-season planning. All the processes must be coordinated together by the end. Because it can be a contentious issue, it's vital to have this forum where everyone continues to meet, share their perspectives, and compromise. The result is the List of Agreed-To Fisheries (fishing schedules with associated impacts on listed ESA stocks, and resolution on any other issues). In 1993, the document was 6 pages long. Now, as the process has become more technical, it's 106 pages, including addendums and methodology to confirm that everyone is on the same page. Requires communication and commitment to meet often and reach a final agreement, and significant focus by technical staff to provide information to policy decision-makers. Relies on jointly developed goals and objectives, and on agreed-upon data. Shared data (forecasts) are the most critical building block. Participants try to be as conservative as possible to meet recovery objectives. Ultimate goal is that there can be fisheries into the future. Pre-terminal fisheries, in the ocean, are less immediately connected to outcomes for particular stocks.

Biological data collection uses coated wire tags implanted in X% of hatchery Chinook. All fisheries sample their catch with CWT detection wands, and heads of those with tags

are removed and sent to WDFW for sampling. Managers also collect scales, genetics, otoliths, and other information on the spawning ground.

- Scales: sample for age of fish. Count age by rings, like a tree.
- Otolith is a small bone in the fish's head, which can be chemically analyzed to determine life history of the fish, specifically where they were rearing (based on water chemistry). Helps guide restoration of those particular areas where they spend time and show the most growth.

Questions

- What determines escapement goal? It is specific to the species and the stock. Every watershed has its specific goals.
- Why use CWTs instead of PIT tags? PIT tags are much bigger and don't last as well in the ocean environment. CWTs allow tagging of 100,000 fish at the hatchery – cheaper and easier to do.
- Are there concerns about GMO or Atlantic salmon? Two Atlantic salmon from the 2017 net pen escape showed up in Nisqually fishery. Curtis noted that they are very locationally restricted.
- Are all hatchery fish tagged? No. All hatchery fish are marked by clipping the adipose fin. Almost all the fish in the Nisqually Chinook stock are hatchery. Genetic sampling can give more information about hatchery vs. wild stocks but it's expensive and time-consuming on large scale. CWT samples from ocean harvest are used to construct the maps of migration routes.
- What is the forecast for Nisqually this year?
 - Chinook – hatchery survival doesn't look great, but not terrible. 20,000 forecast to come back (800 wild), which could fluctuate a lot.
 - Coho - 7,000-8,000 hatchery, 6,000 wild
 - Chum – haven't agreed to forecast yet. Lot of passionate opinions involved. Chum have been declining in slow downward trend, especially late fall Chum like Nisqually. Nisqually Fish Commission has been very proactive and conservative about managing this fishery for last few years, using in-season update tools as fish move into the river when forecasts have been too high.
- Will there be any changes to harvest responsive to the orca issue? The biggest challenge for orcas is that Nisqually and most of Puget Sound is producing Green River-stock hatchery Chinook. They all come back in a very narrow window in August, meaning there is plenty for the orcas in the summer (100,000 uncaught, uneaten Chinook in South Puget Sound). Historic spring runs of Chinook are depleted or extinct, which would address the February-April time of year when the orcas are starving. Salmon recovery and orca recovery experts are debating how to increase prey at the right time. Producing additional fall/summer fish, even at a place like Deschutes where there is no listed stock, still takes up ecosystem resources available for other listed stocks, like Nisqually. Hatchery management may need a different strategy that disperses the run timing in a different way.
- How are international fisheries tracked? Based on CWT data, 8-9% of Nisqually catch is Canadian. It's not clear how far out to sea salmon go, and if there is other international catch happening over 200 miles from shore, it's probably assumed as part of natural ocean mortality. Steelhead tend to be more long-distance migrators.

- What is coho harvest likely to be this year? Restricted by Chinook impacts – can't open up Coho harvest if it will impact Chinook escapement too much. Same for Pink (very hard to forecast, but set conservative harvest limits to protect Chinook).
- Are Pack Forest tracker dogs used to track orcas? Not sure. Weather and space are challenges for tracking orcas for scat analysis.
- Would restoring the Deschutes Estuary help? It would, especially if they are going to increase the number of fish coming from the hatcheries on the river.

5. Kayak Nisqually

Sam Kaviar, Kayak Nisqually (www.kayaknisqually.com)

Sam founded Kayak Nisqually in 2017. He chose to start his business in the Nisqually because of the amazing conservation story and many great partnerships and collaborations here. Sam has a background in biology (worked as a field tech for USGS in the Nisqually Delta among other sites), which drew him to sea kayak guiding. Kayak Nisqually's goal is to connect people with important ecological issues (orca and salmon recovery) through recreation and tourism. Ecological and social responsibility are important values. Tours include natural history, human history, conservation, and fun. Sam partners with BFJNWR to reach out to kayaking community on sanctuary area and Marine Mammal Protection Act requirements. Seals and sea lions are the most common wildlife kayakers see in the Reach, and Sam encourages guests to take a long view on how species interact. Other marine mammals include harbor porpoises (pods are returning after local extinction), dolphins (migrate long distances) and increasingly grey whales and humpbacks. It's not clear how much changing whale and dolphin migrations are due to climate change.

Kayaking with a guide is important in the Estuary because of changing tide levels and other hazards. It's a great way to see a different perspective of the estuary restoration from the water. Kayakers can observe plant communities, bird behavior, and bioluminescent plankton on night paddles. Kayak Nisqually offers group tours, team building activities (3-5 hours for best experience) for up to 10 at a time (minimum of 2). They can partner on education outreach to their audience, and are interested in collaborating on research projects. Sam hopes to expand, but needs real estate to store more boats to serve the market. They can offer non-profit rates for community groups – the Nisqually Land Trust did a sponsored trip on a bioluminescence paddle that participants really enjoyed.

6. South Pierce County Historical Society

Bob Walter and Dixie Walter

SPCHS's mission is to preserve history of this area (Eatonville and beyond). A current major project is restoring the Tofu House in Eatonville. Originally part of the old lumber mill complex, this building was the spring house for a small Japanese-American community behind the mill in the early 20th century. The Historical Society hopes to make it into a permanent home for exhibits about the history of this community and the impact of Japanese internment during WWII. Japanese-American attended Eatonville schools and were an integrated part of the community prior to the war. After Pearl Harbor, the federal government interned all Japanese-Americans living within 100 miles of the West Coast, including U.S. citizens, in concentration camps. Eatonville residents were bussed out of town in May to Camp Harmony, at Puyallup Fairgrounds, where they were held while 10 inland

concentration camps were built. Most Eatonville families ended up in Minidoka in Southeastern Idaho a few months later.

Dixie Walter was the Eatonville Dispatch editor in 1970s, and discovered letters the paper had published in 1942 from Chet Sakura, a Japanese-American Eatonville citizen. Eugene Larin, the owner of the paper, chose to print them, in an unusual and brave show of support from the white community. Dixie wrote an article and began researching the history of Eatonville's Japanese community. Chet returned to visit Eatonville shortly before he died, and his son David (who was interned with the family at age 5) has been a participant in telling the story. The Sakura family had deep roots in Eatonville (one of the brothers was recruited to play baseball for the mill team). The children were raised with the understanding that they were Americans and would support the US in a war with Japan. Chet and all his brothers enlisted in the US armed services. The Japanese-American community was disrupted forever. Anti-Japanese hostility prevented most Eatonville families from coming back after the war was over. Some kept in touch with old school classmates, and have visited over the years. Bill Akiyoshi, a camp survivor, was a VIP in Eatonville's centennial parade, and David Sakura has visited to hold storytelling workshops, including stories about the Tofu House from his childhood.

The Tofu House is the only remaining structure connected to Eatonville's Japanese community. In 2016, after a lot of fundraising work, the Tofu House was moved to Mill Pond Park. The SPCHS hopes to use it to share a message that we don't want this to happen anyone ever again, and to honor what internees went through in World War II. Grants and support have come from the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation, the Greater Tacoma Community Foundation, and a GoFundMe page (still ongoing: <https://www.gofundme.com/2m9d9rzu>). Numerous objects have been donated to display. Next steps include restoration and creating exhibits. Fundraising goal of \$12-14,000 to complete exhibits and hold tours and events. The Tofu House is on the Heritage Capital Projects Fund list for state capital funding (to match local fundraising), but it is low-ranked and would not be funded at the current level provided by the Legislature. These sites bring a lot of funds to communities from tourism.

Discussion:

- The NRC offered its consensus to support the fundraising with letters whenever helpful.
- The Historical Society might also consider applying for the Nisqually Tribe's 2% Fund.
- The articles by Chet Sakura are not yet digitized, but they are working with the State Archives to update them. They are powerful and sobering reading. Dixie and Bob shared archival copies with the Council.
- Fred shared his memories of being a child during Pearl Harbor and the aftermath. Thank you for sharing this little-known story of how it affected our local community.
- The Historical Society did a video oral history with David Sakura a few years ago. As the generation who experienced the war ages and passes on, we are losing some of these personal stories, and it can be difficult to reach out to descendants.
- Noted that Chet's letters don't always reflect the trauma that internment inflicted on people. He worked hard not to be bitter. Several people noted that it's upsetting just to

hear stories from internment survivors – it's remarkable that the people who went through it can be calm and reflective about it.

- Kayak Nisqually would be interested in holding a kayaking fundraiser if desired.

7. For the Good of the Order

The Puyallup Tribe is restoring disappearing native plant species. Does Nisqually have anything like that? The crew is considering cultivating native plants.

The Thurston County League of Women Voters' Rural Water Issues Forum is on March 19 at the Yelm Community Center. Flyers available.

Updated River Council location schedule for 2019 is available at the meeting and online.

Thurston Conservation District elections need to be requested via the Thurston County Auditor's office or in person by March 26. Please vote. Ballots must be turned in at the Auditor's office or on the 26th out at the Conservation District. There is one candidate on the ballot, but may be an organized write-in campaign. Application process for appointed positions is open.

Photo contest results: Winners are Karelina (for the full moon photo) and Roger (for the salmon bake photo). Congrats and thanks to all participants!

There will be a small gathering to honor Helen Engle on Sunday at the Refuge at 10:00.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05pm.

Next meeting: April 19, BFJNNWR.