



**Meeting Minutes  
Nisqually River Council  
June 15, 2012  
Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge  
Information: 360.438.8715**

Attendees:

**Council Members**

**Bryan Bowden** – *Mount Rainier National Park*  
**Christopher Ellings** – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*  
**Cindy James** – *WA Dept. of Ecology*

**Sandra Romero** – *Thurston County*  
**David Troutt** – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*

\* **CAC Representatives (2)**

**Citizens Advisory Committee Members**

**Debbie Anderson**  
**Mary Foster\***  
**Fred Michelson**  
**Steve Pruitt**  
**Karelina Resnick**

**Jean Shaffer**  
**Marjorie Smith**  
**Robert Smith\***

**Guests**

**Nick Bond** – *Town of Eatonville*  
**Bob Burkle** – *WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife*  
**Daniel Farber** – *WA State Parks*  
**Nancy Franco** – *Pierce County*

**Randy King** – *Mount Rainier National Park*  
**Chris Schutz** – *Pierce County*  
**Jean Takekawa** -- *NNWR*  
**Cynthia Wilson** – *Thurston County*

**Staff & Associated Nonprofits**

**Justin Hall** – *Nisqually River Foundation*  
**Nicole Hill** – *Nisqually Land Trust*  
**Don Perry** – *Nisqually Indian Tribe*

**Ashley Von Essen** – *Nisqually River Council*  
**Sheila Wilson** – *Nisqually River Ed. Project*

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

**Call to Order** – David called the meeting to order at 9:10am.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes and Agenda** – There was a motion to approve May's meeting minutes as presented. They were approved, as was June's agenda as presented.

**2. Introductions, Reports**

### **Advisory Committee Reports**

- *Citizens Advisory Committee* – Steve Pruitt reported that new officers have been elected, via email, and will be made official at the next CAC meeting. This meeting will be held the Refuge today, following the NRC meeting.
- *Chair Report* – David reported that there was an Executive Committee meeting held Monday, June 11<sup>th</sup> at the tribe's Natural Resources Office in regards to DNR's Community Forest Trust program. A full report later will be given in the latter part of today's agenda.
- *Staff Report* – Ashley reported that she will continue to email the previous month's meeting minutes along with upcoming agenda mailings to give members and associates more time to review the minutes and submit changes.

Ashley also reported that the committee in charge of the Nisqually Watershed Festival met yesterday at the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge. This year's festival will be held on National Public Lands Day, Saturday September 29<sup>th</sup>. The committee is always looking for fresh and new ideas for workshops, exhibitors, and music and main stage acts, as well as people to serve on the committee. Contact Ashley to get involved!

The Nisqually River Notes, spring edition, has been completed and is at the printer. It really will hit the stands in time for the next River Council meeting.

### **Allied Programs**

- *Nisqually Land Trust* – Nicole Hill reported that Joe Kane is out of town attending the annual Weyerhaeuser Family event as the keynote speaker.

The Land Trust has turned in a number of projects to be considered for the SRF Board funding process, which will be discussed in more detail later in today's agenda.

The Land Trust has been working to acquire accreditation throughout the past 18 months, which aims to certify those working to benefit the public at the highest level of consumer trust and satisfaction. Around 200 businesses have made it through this process.

- *Nisqually River Education Project* – Sheila Wilson reported that Summer Teacher Institute will take place June 25, 26, and 27 at the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge. The theme for this year will be "Coming Home: Salmon, Sense of Place, and Time: A time of learning, sharing and renewal while experiencing the outdoors." There will be a number of local speakers, field workshops, and Native American Curriculum and will align with the National Next Generation Science Standards. Project partners include Chehalis Education Consortium and South Sound Green. Sheila took the time to review the rigorous schedule in which teachers will be able to participate.

Sheila has been preparing for Water Quality Monitoring for the 2012-2013 school year. She currently has 51 teachers interested in testing reaches of the Nisqually River and its tributaries. She will be offering 2 added trainings for teachers to attend in August and September.

This spring, Sheila added a new component to her program, partnering with the Nisqually Land Trust. This opportunity aims to carry out survival surveys on natives planted as part of watershed restoration projects. Students are able to visit Land Trust properties to see whether plants are surviving, develop and practice their plant identification skills, and participate in hands-on citizen science.

NatureMapping fieldtrips concluded this week, which allowed over 650 students to experience the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge. This program partners with the Nisqually Reach Nature Center and the Chehalis Education Consortium to teach participants to recognize and identify local plant and animal species using sight, hearing, and evidence.

- *Nisqually River Foundation* – Due to a scheduling conflict, Justin will be late to today’s meeting. In his place, David reported that there are a number of Nisqually Builder’s Guides at the tribe’s Natural Resources Offices, in which the Foundation is looking to circulate throughout the watershed. Interested parties should contact Justin to make arrangements to pick them up.

With the grants from the EPA drying up, the tribe will be contributing funds to the River Foundation each year for the next 5 years to support staff and upcoming events. This will greatly help in replacing diminishing funds for the organization.

- *Stream Stewards* – Don Perry proudly reported that this year’s Stream Stewards has 27 students in attendance. Ages for the students range from 13 to 80, making the class very diverse. Their first field tour took them to WSU’s Bio-retention Facility, which is currently testing rain gardens with numerous plant species and soil-type configurations to find the most successful combination for filtering the Puget Sound’s stormwater. While at the facility, the class heard from John Stark, who is conducting research on the neuro-toxic effect of pesticide and chemical combinations on salmonid populations in the Puget Sound. Don has invited John to share his research and findings at a future council meeting.
- *Salmon Recovery Update* – Chris Ellings gave a brief discussion on SRF Board project listings. Each site has visited by SRF Board Technical Review Team to make comments on the potential projects. The Workgroup is awaiting these comments, which will be presented along with project details at July’s River Council Meeting for approval.

The Nisqually Salmon Habitat Workgroup met to review each submission and rank them according to priority as they pertain to strategic planning of salmon restoration in the watershed. Since project selection is guided by strategy previously set forth in the Nisqually Chinook Recovery Plan, the only discussion lies on where potential projects fit into that strategy. This helps limit possible conflicts of interest that may arise when choosing projects.

One issue that may come up in the future is the appropriateness of supporting programs such as the Knotweed Eradication Program, which already receives support from Pierce

Conservation District. It is recognized, however, how important this program is for watershed maintenance and its benefit to the Nisqually River and its inhabitants.

Project ranking for the Nisqually Salmon Habitat Workgroup is as follows:

1. South Ohop Valley Acquisition and Restoration

<http://nisquallyriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/SRFB-2012-LOI-Ohop-Valley-Acq.pdf>

Project Cost: \$235,000

2. McKenna Reach Assessment and Protection

<http://nisquallyriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/SRFB-2012-LOI-McKenna-Assesment.pdf>

Project Cost: \$120,000

3. Knotweed Eradication Program

[http://nisquallyriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/PCD\\_Knotweed\\_SRFBLoI-1.pdf](http://nisquallyriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/PCD_Knotweed_SRFBLoI-1.pdf)

Project Cost: \$33,750

4. Powell Creek Wetland Acquisition

<http://nisquallyriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/SRFB-2012-LOI-Powell-Wetlands-Acq-1.pdf>

Project Cost: \$30,000

5. Stapleton Riparian Restoration

[http://nisquallyriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/SRFB\\_2012-LOI-StapletonRiparian-revised-1.pdf](http://nisquallyriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/SRFB_2012-LOI-StapletonRiparian-revised-1.pdf)

Project Cost: \$47,000

Projects add up to within a \$1,000 of allocation for SRF Board funding.

Chris also reported that monitoring has expanded to include the Nisqually Aquatic Reserve that surrounds Anderson Island. This research proves that salmon id species are riding out the Nisqually plume and rearing in these vital near shore habitats. Because of this, the tribe is looking to expand the boundaries to which SRF Board funding can be used. This boundary currently lies at the mouth of the Nisqually. Monitoring has shown that potential projects locations may exist around McNeil Island and on the southern tip of the Key Peninsula, an area that is also of interest to the Nisqually Land Trust. This idea will be presented a future River Council meeting for approval, in which members will have a chance to share opinions and concern pertaining to this matter.

Another future project in the Nisqually will include transforming I-5 into a pier system rather than continuing the current dike-and-fill system. Though this project will be very expensive, it is a critical piece in the restoration of the Nisqually estuary.

## **5. DNR's Community Forest Trust Program**

At May's council meeting, the possibility of pursuing the DNR's Community Forest Trust (CFT) was briefly discussed. An Executive Committee meeting was held June 11<sup>th</sup> at the tribe's Department of Natural Resources. NRC members and associates unfortunately were not extended an invitation due to the last minute nature of the meeting. This meeting allowed both project ideas and concerns to be expressed among the attendees. It was the recommendation of the committee to form a sub-committee of those who wish to further pursue the objectives of the CFT program. It is believed there may be untapped resources in Pierce County that could be used to support the NRC's involvement in this program.

One potential parcel for this program includes lands adjacent to Boxcar Canyon near the Town of Eatonville. This property is currently owned by Hancock Timber Management and fits the criteria of buffering working forestlands and lands that are developed. Another parcel could be land that lies above Mineral Lake in Lewis County.

Given the July 2<sup>nd</sup> deadline and time constraints to pull together commitments of land and financial support, it seems pursuing this project for this year may be unrealistic. If the deadline cannot be met, which is probable, the appointed sub-committee will begin compiling necessary components for the 2013 Legislative Session.

There was a motion to pass this program and the development of a sub-committee to the NRC's Citizens Advisory Committee, which was unanimously accepted and seconded. Nicole Hill has offered to attend the CAC meeting today to answer questions associated with policy and procedures for pursuing this program. She will also work with the committee to evaluate potential parcels and to ensure these parcels and funding sources are not being sought by the Nisqually Land Trust. David has also offered support from the tribe through the GIS Shop.

Minutes for the Executive Committee Meeting can be accessed by visiting the following site:  
<http://nisquallyriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/NRC-Executive-Committee-June-2012.pdf>

## **3. Summer Activities Update for Mount Rainier National Park**

*Randy King, Superintendent Mount Rainier National Park*

Randy King became the park's Superintendent in October 2011 and is proud to have the opportunity to work with local organizations such as the Nisqually River Council, the Nisqually Land Trust, the Nisqually River Foundation, and the Nisqually Indian Tribe. It has been a tough year at Mount Rainier National Park, one filled with unfortunate loss and tragedy of missing hikers and law enforcement ranger, Margaret Anderson. These events have become a part of the park's history and will have a lasting impact on the watershed, the community, and the park itself.

Randy reported that there would be continued road construction on Stevens Canyon Road throughout the summer months. After Labor Day, parts of the road will be closed due to major repairs. This

construction is expected to last until 2013. Following the conclusion of maintenance on Stevens Canyon Road, repairs will commence on the Nisqually entrance road, beginning at the park entrance and ending at Paradise. Some work includes installing larger culverts, as well as other changes to reflect the anticipation of increased flooding. There may also be some work done by the county to strengthen the dike currently protecting the Nisqually entrance, which may include the use of engineered logjams. These logjams will also be used to control floodplains at the White River as well.

There are also planning efforts to update shelters and restrooms at Camp Muir. This location is the primary climbing route for the 10,000 people who attempt to climb Mount Rainier each year. These buildings date as far back as 1916 and great care needs to be taken when applying any renovations. Public hearings will be held later this summer to discuss these efforts.

The people at Mount Rainier have been gradually implementing public access plans to the Carbon River over the past two years. However, the dynamics of this river system have made this route highly unreliable. The plan is to invest \$150,000 into trail work and reinforcements to ensure safety on this amazing bike trail.

Congress has authorized a boundary expansion of Mount Rainier National Park. The National Park Service is currently looking for willing sellers in the area, as well as funders that are willing to contribute. Interested parties include Forterra and Pierce County. Property has been acquired at the Carbon Ranch, owned by long-time residents, the Thompsons. Their home will be converted into the new Carbon River Ranger Station, allowing the old one to be torn down.

Mount Rainier National Park has taken over a half of a million dollars in budget cuts over the last 2 years. Anticipating an additional 8% cut, the Park Service will be completing a planning exercise to prepare them for the decreased funding.

Mount Rainier National Park has been working with the University of Washington to form the Mount Rainier Institute, which will aim to provide environmental education to students of all ages. Funding has been acquired and a position has been filled to help complete the initial phases of planning and to begin developing curriculum. Classes will be held at UW's Pack Forest.

#### **4. Future of WA State Parks**

*Daniel Farber, Policy Director for WA State Parks*

There are over 116 hundred state parks in WA state, which means almost everyone lives an hour or less away from one of them. These parks provide outdoor recreation and education, preserve and celebrate heritage, and bring sustaining economic vitality to communities.

In the upcoming years, tax support that has been used to support our state parks will no longer be available. In order to generate income to replace funds lost, the Park Service has started a donation program through WA licensing offices and has begun to initiate the Discover Pass, a one-time payment

that allows access to all 116 state parks. The Discover Pass is expected to become the single largest source of funds.

By August 2, 2012, State Parks must submit a report to the Office of Financial Management detailing progress towards becoming a completely self-supported system. A strategic plan and goals must be set to show how and what will be achieved in the upcoming years. Three thematic alternatives have been established to explore the possibilities of meeting the legislature's request. These include: Parks as an Enterprise, Parks as a Community Non-Profit, and Parks as a Public Asset. State Parks are currently accepting comments and suggestions from the public. These documents and information on how to get involved can be found by visiting [www.parks.wa.gov/Beyond2013](http://www.parks.wa.gov/Beyond2013).

Daniel's PowerPoint has been made available on the Nisqually River Council's SlideShare website. Visit: <http://www.slideshare.net/Nisqually/washington-state-parks-beyond-2013>

#### **5. For the Good of the Order**

Lynn Scroggins, Vision Planning Consultant for the Nisqually Indian Tribe, has been selected as the new point person for the Nisqually State Park.

In order to conserve resources, the Pierce County Water Quality Report Cards will not be printed in high numbers this year. Electronic versions are available on the web or by contacting Chris Schutz. Pierce County Stormwater Management is also looking to include more water quality monitoring sites this year due to a partnership with the Nisqually River Foundation and the Nisqually River Education Project.

**Adjourn** – Meeting was adjourned at 12:13pm.

*Next Meeting: Friday, July 20, 2012, 9am – 12pm  
Ashford Fire Hall*