



**Nisqually River Council
Citizens Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 7, 2013
Steve Pruitt's House,
41525 Mountain Highway E, Eatonville**

CAC Members Present: *Karelina Resnick, Steve Pruitt, Jean Shaffer, Bob and Marjorie Smith, Deborah Crosetto, Mary Foster, Sunny Thompson, and Karl Rotter*
Staff Present: *Ashley Von Essen*

Welcome, Introductions, and For the Good of the Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm.

The minutes were accepted and approved as written, as was the evening's agenda.

- **NRC Nominations** – Bob and Marjorie have not yet heard from the NRC Nomination Committee, which includes Chris Schutz and Cindy James, nor has Ashley received any nominations for NRC Chair and Vice Chair. Chris should be communicating with the committee very soon to discuss next steps.
- **Nisqually Land Trust Public Access Restrictions** – Carl has been frustrated with the Nisqually Land Trust's lack of access and recreational opportunities on their properties. According to the comprehensive Nisqually River Management Plan, written in 1987, recreation has been a key element of the marching orders developed by the Nisqually River Task Force. Carl believes that the Nisqually Land Trust is not a good fit for the Nisqually River Council because they are not providing access outlined by the Plan. Carl has researched a number of land trusts, each allowing access and including recreation in their mission. The NLT also doesn't have dues-paying members, as other organizations do. It was pointed out that they do have a very large bank of volunteers and holds an annual public meeting for its "members."

Carl's asks that the CAC recommend to the Nisqually Land Trust that they make public access a priority. It is his hope that they will one day embrace public access and recreation on their lands.

There was a movement to open Carl's suggestion up for discussion. Karelina mentioned that the NLT's primary mission is to conserve the land and the river, with recreation as a secondary undertaking. She recently went to an NLT training in which attendees were shown a series of new signs to be posted marking levels of access for the public. She shared that there are only a couple of relatively small areas that are restricted (no access due to protected species). Steve continued that the Land Trust was started at the request of the Council to help preserve and protect the mainstem of the Nisqually and its tributaries. With the introduction of the Nisqually Watershed Stewardship Plan, the NRC approached the NLT to restore the lands along the river to help protect the salmon. As the Land Trust continued to grow, they found funders to conserve lands with the goal of protecting endangered wildlife, such as the northern spotted owls, marbled murrelets, etc.

Because of grantor requirements, access must be limited. There is also an issue of liability associated with having public access to their lands.

The introduction of the National Blueways Program may help increase access to lands of the watershed, as well as the opening of the Nisqually State Park. The Community Forest Planning Committee may decide to allow access to the property acquired, depending on priorities and location. There is also the DNR Community Forest Trust Program, which would allow a community to purchase a piece of property to run as a working forest in conjunction with DNR.

Steve stated that nothing would happen for public access if citizens don't initiate the process. Members of the Council are there to represent their organizations and collaborate with others, not to push forward agendas on behalf of the citizens. With the CAC holding three Council votes, the citizens have the power to advocate for themselves and develop an agenda of their own. This could involve searching for grant funding that prioritizes recreation over conservation.

This item should be brought up at an upcoming Council meeting as a motion to incorporate access opportunities associated with the new Nisqually State Park, connecting trail systems adjacent to Land Trust properties, and allowing the NLT to decide whether they want to work with the Park as a comprehensive approach. This would allow the Land trust to increase recreational access at their own pace and ability.

Mary Foster, who sits on the Board of the Nisqually Land Trust, assured the group that public access and community values are part of their decision-making processes. Much of the upper watershed acquisitions are funded by money for endangered species, which requires restricted access. The committee must understand the obligations to which the NLT must operate under.

The CAC has voted to support Carl's motion to bring this matter to the Nisqually River Council. Ashley has been asked to look to the original NRMP and the updated NWSP to see how recreation has been written into each plan and what goals the NRC has for recreation and public access in the watershed. Karelina will report with the CAC report at the next NRC meeting.

- **Citizen Conservation Certifications –**

The committee would like to embrace a new approach to the CCC Program. This involves choosing one topic of focus amongst the group, brainstorming sustainable practices, sharing and testing ideas, and taking notes on what works/doesn't work. The group will concentrate on the idea for one to two months, before compiling resources and making recommendations to others. This process will be done via email, either through Ashley or to the CCC Committee (those present this evening).

There was a motion to make the first topic to be researched "water." The motion passed unanimously.

The group's assignment for the next meeting is to collect information for residential homes on water conservation and sustainability. Karelina advised everyone to take a look at the Salmon-Safe website for information and ideas. Ashley will send out the web address for this organization.

- **CAC Nominations –**

Due to last year's CAC nominations and elections being held late, the committee is no longer on the same schedule as the NRC. To get back on track, CAC nominations and elections should take place and be announced at the upcoming NRC meeting.

- Jean nominates Mary for Chair. Mary is willing to serve as Vice Chair for the CAC.
- Mary nominates Karelina for chair, which was seconded. Karelina would like a Co-chair with whom she can share the responsibilities.
- Steve nominates Robert as Karelina's Co-chair. Robert accepts the nomination.

There was a motion to accept the three positions listed above and allow each of the elected to hold a voting position on the Nisqually River Council. This "package" was unanimously accepted. Congratulations to Karelina, Bob, and Mary!

- **For the Good of the Order:**

Marilyn Graves, who lives just outside the watershed is interested in joining the CAC, but will need a ride for each meeting. She lives in Puyallup and doesn't drive. Unfortunately, none of the CAC's members live close to her or drive that way to attend meetings. She will need to find a ride of her own, if she wants to attend. Does she have friends that would want to join that could bring her?

The NRC Annual Retreat takes place March 15, 2013 at NW Trek from 9:30am to 3:30pm. Nancy Lee, Founder and President of Social Marketing Services, Inc., will facilitate this year's event. Since the retreat location, the Hellyer Center, is set in the middle of the free-roaming area, attendees will need to be there by 9:30 to catch the shuttle.

The Nisqually Community Forest Committee has just completed Phase 1, the project's planning period. Phase 2 marks the beginning of finding or creating an ownership entity and an investor. Ashley will distribute information pertaining to the public meetings as she hears of them.

Joel Sartore and his "Rare" photographs of endangered species will be appearing at Puyallup High School on March 23rd from 7 to 9pm.

Ashley will send out a doodle poll to establish a meeting time about a month from now. The meeting is to take place at Jean Schaffer's home.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:34pm.