

NRC Citizens Advisory Committee
Meeting Agenda
June 18, 2019, 6:00 – 8:00 PM
Nisqually Tribe Natural Resource Office

Present: Phyllis Farrell, Howard Glastetter, Lois Ward, Marjorie Smith, Ed Kenney, Paula Holroyde, Bob Smith, Matt Sehrsweeney, Emily McCartan

1. Call to order and introductions

Phyllis called the meeting to order at 6:05.

2. Matt Sehrsweeney, master's research in climate adaptation planning

Matt Sehrsweeney, a master's student in environmental policy at the University of Michigan introduced himself and his research project. He is studying climate change adaptation planning in rural, forested regions with mixed ownership landscapes. The 2014 Nisqually Climate Adaptation Plan is one of his case studies. He is studying the preconditions, process of writing, setting priorities, and involving stakeholders, and what has happened in the years since it was created. Also interested in the broader management context. Realize that plans are reference material, not legally binding action plans. Matt is interested in hearing from the CAC and observing the meeting, and would welcome the opportunity to follow up with any individual members who are interested in sharing their institutional knowledge.

Phyllis suggested looking at the Thurston County regional climate adaptation plan. Sea level rise is tangentially relevant for the Nisqually. Our plan is more focused on forests. Water temperature for salmon is one of our biggest challenges as snowpack, tree cutting, irrigation canals, and dam reservoir dynamics impact it. Those who worked on drafting the plan noted that Nisqually was very different than others in the MFPP program (relatively small watershed, fairly well-protected). Matt is interested in how climate adaptation is proceeding in more rural regions and what different models are being applied. What entities are setting the tone for the process, what is the leverage that other stakeholders have, and how are they interacting? Nisqually has an interesting dynamic with the Tribe providing significant leadership and priority setting, compared to other areas where tribes have less standing for various reasons. Thurston Climate Action Team, a grassroots citizen group, put pressure on county and cities to develop plans and coordinate. They host an annual climate convention now. Started with a survey of climate attitudes, collected state data from various sources. There is no top-down state mandate in Washington to do climate planning at a local level. Other recommended contacts would be emergency management services and grassroots organizations.

3. Updates

WRIA 11 – Planning Unit met on Wednesday. Continuing to wrestle with ongoing sustainable funding for planning efforts and project development, which the legislation doesn't provide. Next grant round will be in 2020. Nisqually Land Trust had two grants funded in the last round, and is working with Ecology on getting them realized so they can make the acquisitions.

Biosolids – Ed spoke to Peter Lyon and believes another site near McKenna may be a candidate for biosolids application. Lax enforcement has been a problem in this area. Ed has hired a SEPA lawyer who is still on contract if it's needed. They have been forced out in the short term. Commissioner Edwards has been reaching out for updates regularly. Several bills proposed in the Legislature last year did not get hearings, but may come up again next year. Citizen involvement across the state would be key. Yelm citizens and Eastern Washington people are working on it. Having the CAC and River Council relationships made it powerful when a citizen watchdog made Phyllis aware – we all meet and have networks to call on when something like this comes up.

Nisqually Subarea Planning – Howard reported on two updates. The Subarea Plan community stakeholder group met once, and 7/8 people voted they wanted to be an advisory group (rather than a non-binding stakeholder group). Howard testified before the Commissioners to advocate for an advisory group and they seem to be leaning that way. RAP study by consultant is published. Key issue would be requiring that it be covered and kept dry so that it doesn't leach into groundwater. CAC members have continued to advocate for a ban on RAP due to water quality concerns on lowlying land near the delta, prone to flooding. There is a public informational meeting on the consultant's RAP report this Thursday, June 20 (no public comment).

Other – Phyllis is organizing an outing for the Sierra Club Water Committee at the Refuge on Saturday, June 22, starting at 10am. All are welcome to attend. Audubon society and Melanie Davis will speak. Sierra Club member from around the state are planning to be there.

4. Staff update

Emily reported on upcoming projects involving the River Council: USGS Delta Ecosystem Services Working Group, knotweed infestation, NWSP report. There will be a Community Forest Tour following the NRC meeting this Friday in Ashford.

5. Officers for Upcoming Year

Ed moved that we continue with current officers for the coming year. Howard seconded. The motion was approved. Officers and voting NRC representatives are:

Chair – Phyllis Farrell

Vice Chair – Lois Ward

Voting Representative – Fred Michelson

Alternates – Ed Kenney and Robert Smith

6. For the good of the order

Ed got called by King 5 and Fox News about Mount Rainier climbing problems. Terrain is changing and creating new risks, even for experienced climbers like those who ran into trouble recently.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:51.