

NRC CAC Meeting
January 14, 2020
Nisqually Natural Resources Office
6:00-8:00pm

Present: Phyllis Farrell, Paula Holroyde, Howard Glastetter, Lois Ward, Ed Kenney, Fred Michelson, Emily McCartan (staff)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Phyllis called the meeting to order at 6:13.

2. Issue Updates

WSDOT I-5 Study – Comments Due 1/30

NRC will send a letter, CAC members are welcome to submit comments individually if they wish. Phyllis suggested copying the NRC's letter to salmon recovery and orca task forces. Howard submitted comments regarding impacts to traffic in the valley if and when the I-5 bridges need to be replaced. Can the state override the county subarea plan for traffic routing? It's not clear, but members hope there would be a way to preserve the protections for the valley in the subarea plan.

Nisqually Salmon Runs Update

Members reviewed a preliminary report on salmon returns provided by Craig Smith at the Nisqually Tribe. Chum returns this year were much lower than expected, likely a record-breaking low. The Tribe's biologists also provided a video from spawning surveys showing several natural origin Chinook in the Nisqually River from early November. Members noted it is concerning that salmon size has been decreasing over time.

Biosolids General Permit – Comments due 1/24

Ed outlined his key reasons for supporting individual permits rather than general permits for biosolids applications around the state. The Sierra Club's stance is that the public should be able to evaluate criteria for an individual permit versus a general permit. There are broad concerns about oversight and untested chemicals that make it into ground and surface waters.

- Highly variable sites, need to be vetted for slope, groundwater conditions, protected species, other highly local conditions
- Old vs. new sites need different treatments
- 5 year permits are too long to keep up with changes in monitoring capability and chemicals of concern.
- Safeguards for current gaps in system allow contamination to spread – if generator doesn't follow proper procedures and applicants aren't required to test the material, it can be contaminated. Inadequate oversight.

WRIA 11 Watershed Planning

The next grant round for projects opens on January 30. Nisqually Planning Unit is preparing several applications. One concern is that because the Nisqually's deadline was so rushed to complete a plan by the earlier deadline set by the Legislature, our projects may be at a long-term disadvantage because we did not have the time or resources to develop them as fully as other watersheds will. There may be a grant application to do some of that work.

3. Legislative Session Preview

Phyllis reported that numerous water bills are planned this year. Priorities for environmental groups include copper antifouling paint, drought response, ban on dredge mining, plastic bag ban, and water trust regulations. There are several environmental organizations that track bills for those interested in following it.

4. For the Good of the Order

CAC meetings will be moved to 6:30pm on the second Tuesday, to avoid conflicting with the Nisqually Fish Commission meeting.