

NRC CAC Meeting
April 13, 2021
6:00-8:00pm
Virtual Meeting

Present: Lois Ward, Ed Kenney, Howard Glastetter, Paula Holroyde, Martin McCallum, Emily McCartan (staff)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Lois called the meeting to order at 6:03.

2. Issue Updates

RAP Study – Thurston County staff shared with Emily that there are no current action items about pursuing a study at existing RAP storage sites, as recommended in the NRC's letter. Olympia and Lacey staff have both noted that the cities are interested in following this issue. The next major opportunity may come up during permitting for Lakeside's Nisqually operation, but the NRC should continue to track. Howard can raise it with Commissioner Edwards.

Yelm Prairie Line Trail funding – The trail project coordinator shared today that the Senate budget request would not fully fund this project. Information about the budget and how to contact legislators to request full funding will be circulated after the meeting for those interested.

Billy Frank Jr. Statue – The Legislature passed the bill to put a statue of Billy Frank Jr. in the U.S. Capitol with strong bipartisan support. The bill signing is planned to be held on Wednesday at Wa He Lut Indian School at Frank's Landing, where Billy's canoe is displayed. Members shared excitement over having this statue commissioned.

Neighboring watersheds – Weyerhaeuser has planned improvements in the upper Chehalis that will open up 7 miles of fish habitat due to barrier removal and other flow improvements. Martin visited a conservation site on the Skookumchuck River recently and reported on planned restoration activities. A recent report ranked the Snake River in the top 10 most endangered rivers in the U.S. Ed reported on his fishing trips to the Upper Hoh and Quinault Rivers, where steelhead were running. Observing fish staying near instream wood when the sun was out underscored the importance of log jams and woody debris in healthy rivers for salmon.

Alder Lake – Howard reported on current Alder Reservoir levels. This is one of the highest snowpacks (140% of normal) in last several decades. The lake is being held at 24 feet below capacity, and it appears that inflow and outflow are running at the same rate. Howard believes this would be a good technique to use in the winter during high precipitation.

3. Staff Update

This is Emily's last CAC meeting as staff! She shared a description of her new role as communications manager with Long Live the Kings and thanked the CAC for sharing their dedication and knowledge with the NRC community. Emily will be back to visit.

Members discussed ideas for handling the eventual return to in-person NRC meetings. There is no date set for returning in person, and the decision will be made based on case/vaccine numbers in all watershed counties and the availability of the venues. Staff have discussed ways to keep meetings accessible for those who aren't able to attend in person, including filming presentations and exploring options for hybrid virtual/in-person meetings. Members noted that hybrid meetings would make it easier to attend for folks at the opposite end of the watershed, although internet connections at the venues might be a challenge.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 pm.