

LOWER SATSOP RIVER PROJECT

COMMUNITY MEETING SUMMARY

On September 5, 2018 a community meeting was held at Montesano City Hall to discuss potential solutions to erosion and flooding issues on the Satsop River.

WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE RIVER?

The community discussed a number of important dynamics happening on the Satsop River:

- **Bank Erosion:** The Satsop River channel has been migrating, causing significant bank erosion. In some places the river has moved 40-80 feet in a year and taken out mature stands of trees.
- **Sediment Deposition:** The geology of the Satsop River watershed is very rich in gravel. The steep slopes of the upper watershed feed large amounts of gravel into the river system. The gravel is transported downstream and is deposited in the lower reaches of the river where the topography flattens and stream velocity decreases. Gravel is deposited in large bars in the inside of bends. Erosion occurs on the outside of bends.
- **Reduction of Forest Cover:** The history of extensive logging in the watershed may be contributing to flooding and channel migration. It was discussed that current forest practices laws are more protective than in the past, but that impacts from past practices are still affecting the dynamics of the river.
- **Flooding from the Chehalis River:** When high flows on the Chehalis River coincide with flood events on the Satsop River, the drainage of the Satsop River is limited and water elevations rise and remain in flood stage for extended periods.

Property owners who attended the meeting indicated that while flooding is a nuisance, the substantial erosion of private property is their greatest concern. Property owners expressed an appreciation for managing the river as natural habitat. Solutions discussed focused on natural approaches and bioengineering.

HOW DO WE ADDRESS THESE ISSUES?

On September 5, 2018 the Lower Satsop River project team met with members of the community at Montesano City Hall to discuss potential solutions to the erosion and flooding issues they’ve been experiencing on the Satsop River for many years.

The project team recognizes that the community has been engaged in this discussion for a long time. The purpose of this project is not to do another study of the river, but to work with the community and regulatory agencies to identify feasible solutions, establish priorities, and develop an action plan that will help the community start implementing projects that have agency support and a clear path forward.

During the September meeting the attendees identified the following as potential ways to address the issues on the Satsop River.

- 1. Woody debris in river (upstream)
- 2. Flood storage
- 3. Land conservation (whole watershed)
- 4. Engineered log jams
- 5. Pilot channels
- 6. In-stream gravel management



1. Woody Debris in River

Placing large wood pieces in the river in the upper watershed can increase floodplain connectivity, cumulatively decrease flood elevations and velocity downstream while increasing habitat diversity.



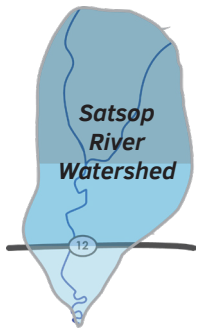
2. Flood Storage

Flood waters could be diverted to areas of land meant to store water during a flood event. These would be constructed upstream in order to mitigate flooding downstream. These facilities would need to be carefully sited and designed to avoid stranding fish and to provide flood benefit.

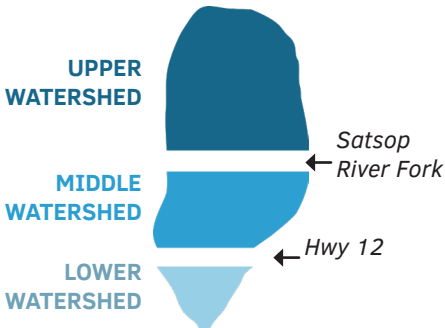
WHAT IS A WATERSHED?



The Satsop River Watershed spans the border of Grays Harbor and Mason Counties.



The watershed includes the area of land where all of the water drains to and collects in the Satsop River.



Potential solutions in Satsop River Watershed can be divided into three separate areas: the upper, middle, and lower watershed.



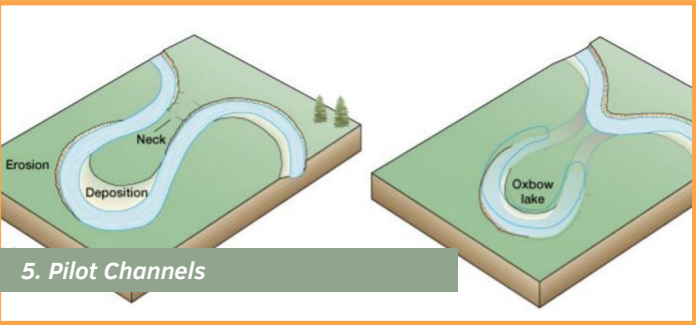
3. Land Conservation (whole watershed)

Where possible, natural riparian habitat and open space along the river should be conserved so that it can continue to stabilize river banks and store floodwaters.



4. Engineered Log Jams

Engineered log jams (ELJs) are piles of woody debris that are connected to fixed logs that have been drilled down into the river bed. ELJs help direct the river in a desired direction, protecting against erosion using natural processes.



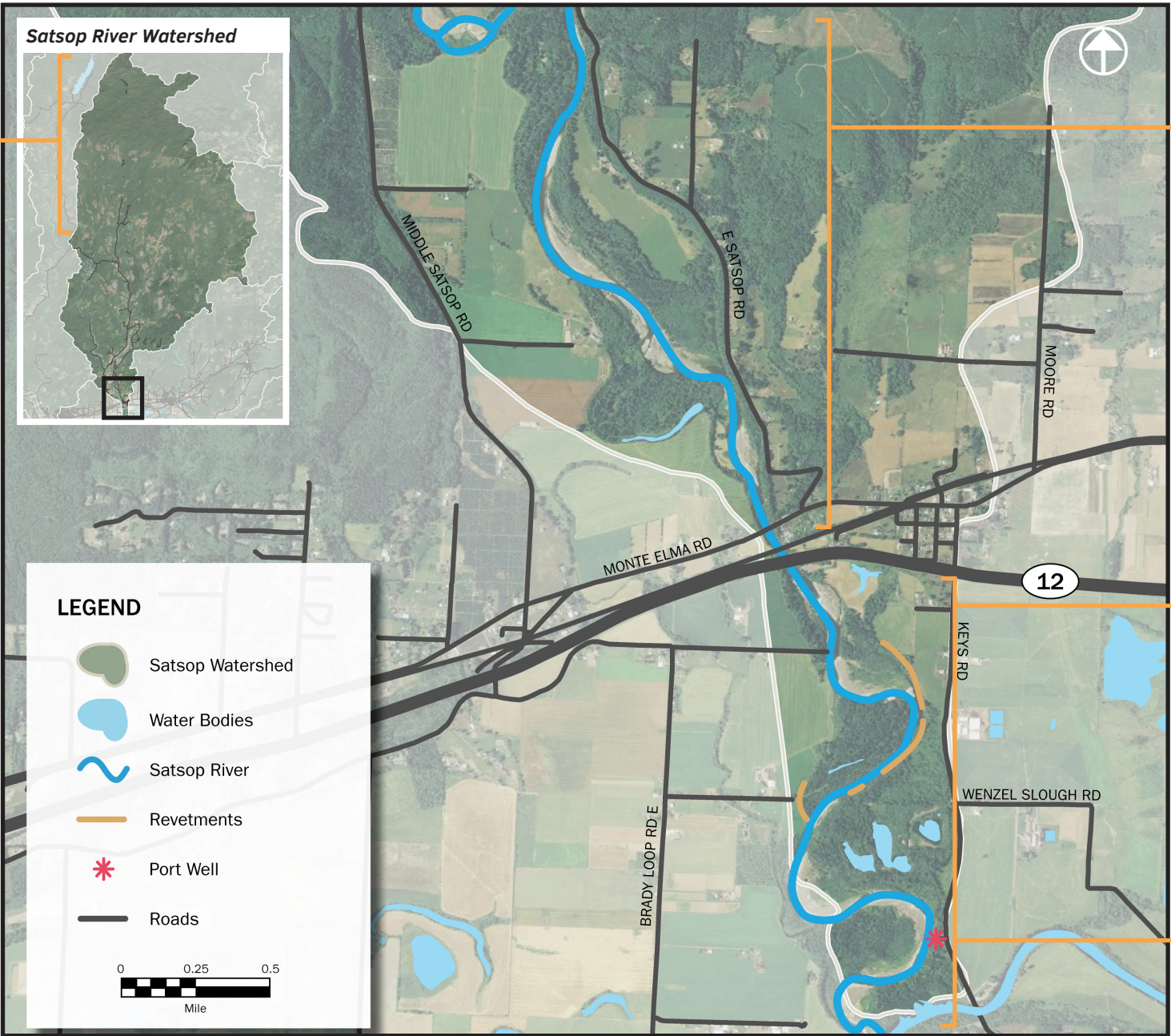
5. Pilot Channels

Pilot channels accelerate the eventual direction of the river by creating a connector channel between two bends in the river, leaving an oxbow for riparian habitat.



6. In-Stream Gravel Management

Where possible, gravel may be relocated in support of other natural remedies (ELJs, bank stabilization, etc.) that work in tandem to reduce erosion.



PROJECT TIMELINE

TASK	QUESTION	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	OUTCOMES
Build a Shared Understanding	What is the narrative behind this process? How do different stakeholders' narratives align or differ? What is the shared narrative?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interviews with Agencies and Property Owners• Advisory Committee Meeting	Challenges and Opportunities Map
Explore Opportunities	What is the universe of possible solutions? Which solutions are the most equitable? What set of projects would address the widest range of issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Workshop• Advisory Committee Meeting	Set of Potential Programs and Projects
Action Plan	What is the prioritized list of projects? How do we fund and plan for them? Who is responsible?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Workshop• Advisory Committee Meeting	Lower Satsop Action Plan

JOIN US AT THE NEXT COMMUNITY MEETING

COMMUNITY MEETING #2

November 13, 2018 | 6:30 - 8:30 PM
Brady Fire Hall
8 Firestation Rd. Montesano, WA 98563

A second community workshop will be held to prioritize the list of projects. We will engage the community in an exercise where they have a budget and get to decide which projects to fund. This provides an opportunity to articulate where they think the County should focus their financial resources and appreciate the limits of the County budget. This collaborative setting allows community members to hear a variety of perspectives.

ONLINE OPEN HOUSE

November 13, 2018 - November 25, 2018
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/satsopriverr>

For those who cannot attend the second community meeting in person, all of the information and the prioritization exercise will be available online at the link above. Grays Harbor Conservation District staff will also be available if you have any question about the information or how to fill out the survey. You can visit their office at 330 Pioneer Avenue West in Montesano give them a call at (360) 249-8532.

WANT TO LEARN MORE NOW?

You can find additional information or reach out to the project team in any of the following ways:

- Learn more about the project and other previous efforts at the project website:
https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias__1973/37259/lower-satsop-planning-process.aspx
- Reach out to the project team through email: ghcdwater@gmail.com
- Give the project team a call: **(360) 249-8532**