



# LOWER SATSOP RIVER COMMUNITY MEETING NOTES

**Meeting Date and Time:** January 16, 2019 | 6:30 – 8:00 PM

**Meeting Location:** Brady Fire Hall

**Attendees:** 22 community members (see sign in sheet attached)

**Presenters / Public Agency Representatives:**

Vickie Raines, Grays Harbor County Commissioner

Rob Wilson, Grays Harbor County

Scott Boettcher, staff to the Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority

Tom Kollasch, Grays Harbor Conservation District

Anthony Waldrop, Grays Harbor Conservation District

Michelle Cramer, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife

Allen Lebovitz, Washington State Department of Natural Resources

**Maul Foster & Alongi**

Kathy Lombardi

Michael Stringer

Lauren Wirtis

---

On January 16, 2019, the Lower Satsop River Planning Project held a community meeting at Brady Fire Hall. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the November 2018 avulsion and review the draft Satsop River Investment Plan, project funding, timeline for implementation, and how to stay involved. This was the final meeting of this process. The draft Investment Plan is the outcome of the two previous community meetings that explored potential solutions for the Satsop River and then prioritized the various options. Commissioner Raines opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and introducing the agenda for the meeting.

## NOVEMBER 2018 AVULSION

M. Stringer began the conversation about the November 2018 avulsion by asking property owners to share their experience. Terry Willis shared that the avulsion is approximately 700-800 feet long and 200 feet wide. The river is now running about 40 steps from her front door. She is now working with the Conservation District to obtain an emergency permit to get a small relief channel to provide temporary relief from the erosion to then allow for this plan to take effect.

## THE INVESTMENT PLAN

The project team reviewed the investment plan, which works with natural river processes while respecting the importance of protecting agricultural land and infrastructure that supports the community and the local economy. The plan includes the following elements:

- Lower Satsop: Approach to this part of the river includes a complex system of ELJs and bioengineered bank protection measures that will protect farmland and Keys Road on both sides of the river. This work will require funding in 2019-20 from state and local budgets to support design and construction of pilot project. The public agencies are looking at multiple potential funding sources to provide resources to support this effort as soon as possible. These ELJ projects will create an opportunity to conduct targeted gravel management. Plan for long-term changes to Keys Road will occur on a 30- to 40-year time horizon.
- Upper Watershed: This section includes planning and implementation of a series of small scale LWD projects to promote floodplain connectivity, reduce erosion, and decrease downstream impacts over time.
- East Fork: This part of the watershed will be addressed through implementation of the ASRP pilot project.

Additionally, the project team and community reviewed the implementation timeline for the emergency response, design for the Lower Satsop ELJ project, the WDFW gravel ponds project, and upper watershed strategy.

### Comments from the Community

- Something needs to happen in the near-term to address the avulsion and make sure that such an event doesn't soon recur.
  - Response: Agreed, the public agencies are coordinating to expedite projects.
- The planning process has been going on for a long time and the community is ready for action. Additionally, there is frustration with the current regulatory framework and the length of time it takes to get projects permitted and constructed.
  - Response: Agreed, with the plan in place, the project can be funded and built. The Advisory Group that this project has convened has allowed the various regulatory agencies to work together and attend these community meetings to better understand the dire needs of the community.
- Why can't WDFW remove the revetments so that the river can reconnect to its historic migration zone? The revetments were put in as a response to an individual interest to protect property.
  - The revetments have not been removed because that would increase risk of erosion of Keys Road. With the proposed approach of multiple ELJs and bank protection of Keys Road, the potential for removing the revetments will be reviewed again.

- Would prefer that the WDFW revetments were removed and the banks of Keys Road were protected.
- Want the project team to “be bold” in their approach to addressing erosion and flooding issues on the Satsop River.

## **ONGOING ENGAGEMENT**

The project team told the community that the Advisory Group is committed to continuing their effort to work together to ensure that projects can move forward on the Satsop River. The Conservation District is going to lead the effort of keeping the community informed by holding update meetings twice per year, in the fall and spring.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The project team is wrapping up the final report which will be completed mid-February. The County, Conservation District, and agency partners are all working on bringing together funding to support the Investment Plan.