



Meeting Summary

WRIA 7 Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Committee Meeting

August 8, 2019 | 1:00 p.m.-3:30p.m. | [WRIA 7 Committee Webpage](#)

Location

Brightwater Facility
22505 State Route 9 SE,
Woodinville

Committee Chair

Ingria Jones
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Handouts

Agenda
June Meeting Summary

Attendance

Committee Representatives and Alternates *

Lindsey Desmul (alternate) (*WA Dept of Fish & Wildlife*)
Brant Wood (*Snohomish PUD*)
Keith Binkley (altnerante) (*Snohomish PUD*)
Brooke Eidem (alternate) (*City of Snohomish*)
Jamie Burrell (*City of North Bend*)
Jordan Ottow (*City of Monroe*)
Matt Baerwalde (*Snoqualmie Indian Tribe*)
Jim Miller (*City of Everett*)
Morgan Ruff (*Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Forum*)
Eric Ferguson (alternate) (*King County*)

Dylan Sluder (*MBA of King & Snohomish Counties*)
Paul Faulds (*City of Seattle*)
Liz Ablow (alternate) (*City of Seattle*)
Daryl Williams (*Tulalip Tribes*)
Matthew Eyer (*City of Marysville*)
Leah Everett (*City of Lake Stevens*)
Michael Remington (*City of Duvall*)
Cynthia Krass (*Snoqualmie Valley WID*)
Emily Dick (alternate) (*Washington Water Trust*)
Bobbi Lindemulder (*Snohomish CD*)
Terri Strandberg (*Snohomish County*)
Ingria Jones (*WA Dept of Ecology*) (*chair*)

Committee Representatives and Alternates in Not Attendance*

Town of Index
City of Gold Bar
City of Snoqualmie

City of Arlington
Snoqualmie Watershed Forum

Other Attendees

Susan O'Neil (*ESA, Facilitator*)
John Covert (*WA Dept of Ecology*)
Ria Berns (*WA Dept of Ecology*)
Kelsey Collins (*WA Dept of Ecology*)
Angela Pietschmann (*Cascadia*) (*info manager*)
Chelsea Jefferson (*WA Dept of Ecology*)
Alexa Ramos (*Snohomish County*)

Beth Liddell (*Snohomish County*)
Kevin Lee (*WA Dept of Fish & Wildlife*)
Bridget August (*GeoEngineers*) (*Tech Consultant*)
Joe Hovenkotter (*King County*)
Anna Greene (*Washington Water Trust*)
Martin Gibbins (*League of Women Voters*)

*Attendees list is based on sign-in sheet.

Welcome

Susan O'Neil welcomed the group and began introductions.

Meeting Agenda and Meeting Summary

Susan reviewed the agenda.

No revisions to the agenda.

Ingria did not receive any corrections to the June meeting summary.

The meeting summary was approved.

Technical Workgroup Update

Ingria and provided updates from the Technical Workgroup Meeting on July 11.

- At the Technical Workgroup meeting, a proposal was put forward to initiate a project subgroup to build off of work that Washington Water Trust started. Washington Water Trust offered the time of an intern they have on staff this summer to compile existing lists and an email was sent to Workgroup members for project lists and ideas. This supplements the resources available to Technical Consultants who would have conducted this inventory.
- Emily Dick provided updates on work WWT and other workgroup members have started.
 - WWT is looking through salmon recovery plans and other existing watershed plans. They have begun to inventory and characterize existing projects in a searchable database.
 - WWT has solicited ideas from Technical Workgroup members and welcomes project ideas from Committee members.
- GeoEngineers' work to support plan development includes helping to identify projects which can still be utilized in addition to the work of of the subgroup as needed. They will also support the Committee and workgroup in screening and evaluating projects, including calculating water offset benefits and where they will likely occur, and describing affects on instream resources.
- GeoEngineers and HDR (technical support for SW WRIAs and WRIA 15) are developing preliminary project criteria.

Discussion:

The committee did not have concerns or questions about the role or work of the subgroup understanding that they will work thorough and report to the Workgroup.

The subgroup will meet this month to share and discuss what has been compiled so far. Contact Ingria if you have questions about the subgroup or the August meeting.

Projects and Actions Discussion

The purpose of the session was to understand some of the benefits and limitations of various project types and discuss questions and ideas from Ecology's webinar.

Resources

- [Lower Tolt Project Fact Sheet](#)
- Lower Tolt Monitoring Report Summary
- Snoqualmie Valley WID Handout
- [Streamflow Restoration Projects Webinar](#)
- Streamflow Restoration Projects Presentation Overview

Ingria provided a brief summary of the projects webinar and reviewed the projects some Committee members visited on the site tour.

- Committee members visited the Lower Tolt Floodplain Reconnection Project in Tolt McDonald Park and learned about the levee set back to restore floodplain habitat, how the river is interacting with the adjacent habitat, and how the site may be storing water in the alluvial aquifer.
 - King County removed 2,460 feet of levee on the right bank of the river and built a new setback levee, excavated a new channel outlet in the floodplain, excavated two pilot channels to allow high flows to inundate the floodplain, planted native vegetation and placed large woody debris in the floodplain. King County hopes to remove levee on the left bank of the river to further encourage channel complexity and increase salmon spawning and rearing habitat.
 - Todd Hurley, Geomorphologist with King County provided a rough estimate of water storage benefit and discussed the concept during the site visit, acknowledging this was not the original intent of the project and not his specialty.
 - The Committee discussed how habitat projects such as the Lower Tolt project have ecological benefits, contributing towards Net Ecological Benefit, however the water offset benefits are difficult to quantify.
- Committee members also visited a potential storage site that would capture flow from a small tributary to Ames Creek and have store between 4.6 to 6.9 acre-feet.
 - The Ames Creek site was identified in an assessment of potential small-scale storage sites within the Snoqualmie Valley WID (SVWID) that would capture high flows during winter and spring for release during late summer.
 - A challenge with identifying potential storage sites is closures in the instream flow rule that do not allow for further appropriation.
 - The SVWID is broadening an assessment of potential sites through a Streamflow Restoration Project grant.
 - Committee members can contact Cynthia Krass with questions about the SVWID potential project at Ames Lake, or their Streamflow Restoration Grant project.

Discussion

- Daryl Williams will be visiting a managed aquifer recharge site in the Walla Walla basin September 18 to learn about the scale and operation of their project. Committee members can contact Daryl if you are interested in joining.
- Committee members were particularly interested the fact that reconnection projects could provide storage in critical locations for fish and riparian vegetation, noting that these projects are difficult to quantify in terms of amount stored and timing.
- Committee members discussed monitoring data that may help to characterize water benefits of habitat projects, such as aerial photos, groundwater level data, and streamflow data. While it is challenging to calculate water offset benefits of habitat projects with certainty, there was interest in trying to generate these estimates and dealing with uncertainty by making conservative estimates.
- The WRIA 1 and WRIA 11 planning groups attempted to estimate water benefits from habitat projects, but their estimates were inconclusive and not included as water offsets.
- The Plan needs to demonstrate that it offsets consumptive use in the WRIA and meets NEB. Ingria discussed that water offset above and beyond the consumptive use can help to demonstrate how the Plan meets NEB, for example benefitting stream reaches where the Committee may not identify a water offset project with easily calculable benefits.

- The committee discussed that beaver dams can also create subsurface storage that is slowly released to streamflow.

Project Presentation: Water Rights Acquisitions

The purpose of this session was to understand Ecology's process for water rights acquisitions and to discuss opportunities and information gaps in WRIA 7.

Kelsey Collins provided an introduction to acquiring water rights and Ecology's toolbox.

Reference Materials

- Water right acquisitions handout
- Water right acquisitions presentation

General Considerations

- Kelsey Collins can help the Committee with specific questions about potential water right acquisitions. Kelsey can query Ecology's internal database for trust water rights Ecology holds.
- Ecology's water right purchases are contingent upon a water right change to instream flow to provide certainty.
- Projects that involve a change in behavior, as opposed to a permanent water right, such as a group of farmers coordinating fallowing their fields on opposite years, need to be memorialized to ensure benefits continue permanently, if they can be counted as a water offset.
- There may also be water offset or NEB project opportunities where public purveyors that have capacity with their water rights to serve existing Group A water systems (15 or more connections) or Group B water systems (2 to 14 connections). Where these are associated with serving systems with unmet maintenance needs and/or with water quality concerns or near streams of importance there could be added benefits.
- Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) and Managed Aquifer and Recovery (MAR) projects require a water right; siting these will need to take into consideration closures in the instream flow rule.
- The Committee is interested in exploring reclaimed water. Considerations may need to be made about current discharge locations (Puget Sound or not).

Discussion

- The Committee discussed projects and opportunities surrounding irrigation efficiency upgrades, crop changes, and temporarily fallowing a field in agricultural production.
 - Port Gamble Resource Recovery Facility
 - Skagit Walking Wetlands
 - Dungeness irrigation efficiency projects
 - Walla Walla temporary fallowing
- Projects on existing lists that WWT has compiled do not include many water acquisition projects. They are mostly salmon habitat projects.
- Committee members were interested in identifying acquisitions opportunities, especially those associated with reclaimed water, source switches, or irrigation efficiency upgrades. The technical workgroup will develop specific goals regarding acquisitions information we think will support our planning. Ecology will help refine this into a short work plan that we will use to provide contractual support.
- While permit-exempt uses represent water rights, because they are not permitted Ecology cannot acquire them through the trust water rights program. However, RCW 90.94 provides more flexibility in what can be considered a water offset and there may be water offset or NEB opportunities associated with extending service to areas currently on permit-exempt wells.

However, doing so should consider whether the water use of past wells would necessarily offset future wells.

- There is a specific concern about purchases in the Lower Snoqualmie Valley Agricultural Production District, where the SVWID anticipates existing supply will not be able to meet demands in 2-5 years.
- There was a general concern with purchasing irrigation water rights for the trust water rights program. Overlaying priority areas from the Snohomish CD [Agriculture Resilience Plan](#) with project ideas and locations might provide an alternative and identify multi-benefit project ideas.
- Committee members are interested in opportunities to encourage homeowners to decommission their wells once they hook up to public water to ensure a benefit is generated through the hookups. The City of Monroe and City of Marysville have experience with some lots hooking up to water service and keeping their permit-exempt well for irrigation purposes.

The technical workgroup will develop specific goals regarding the acquisitions information we want and think will be useful in our planning. Ecology will help refine this into a short work plan that we will use to provide contractual support.

Growth Projection and Consumptive Use Updates

Ingria provided an update from the July 11 Technical Workgroup meeting, the consumptive use work plan, and status on growth projections.

Consumptive Use

- HDR and GeoEngineers are investigating the feasibility, cost, and accuracy of using remote sensing to identify irrigated area, instead of hand-drawing polygons around lawns for the outdoor use estimates. We will have updates at the next Technical Workgroup meeting and we plan to have a recommended approach for our September Committee meeting.
- GeoEngineers will calculate consumptive water use estimates based on the recommended methods and they will develop a spreadsheet where we can plug and play with consumptive use scenarios. The Committee can still decide to have an offset target based on assuming 950 gpd and ½ acre lawn.

Growth Projections

- The workgroup discussed King County and Snohomish County's draft growth projections, the methods used, the assumptions the Counties are making to estimate what homes are likely to be served by a permit-exempt well, as opposed to hook up to public water. The workgroup is getting more comfortable with these assumptions, and will develop recommendations for how to deal with uncertainties.
- Tulalip Tribes is estimating future domestic permit-exempt uses on the Tulalip Reservation's tribal owned and tribal member lands.
- To understand where permit-exempt wells are likely to go and the upper limit for domestic permit exempt uses in the watershed, Snohomish County has completed a rural capacity analysis (developable lands analysis). King County is doing a similar analysis, but they are still working on the analysis and their plan to share with the Committee.
- Both counties are preparing a write-up of their methods and GeoEngineers is developing a supplement write-up.

Resources:

- [King County draft growth forecasts](#)
- [King County historic building permits map](#)

- [King County historic growth map](#)
- [Snohomish County draft growth forecasts](#)
- [Snohomish County historical residential dwellings map](#)
- [Snohomish County rural capacity map](#)

Eric Ferguson provided an overview of King County’s 20-year growth projection for WRIA 7.

- For all building permits, King County looked at parcel information from the Assessor’s office, which lists the water source as public or private (private water sources are wells), and then used this information to come up with a percent of buildings that rely on wells.
- In some cases, the building permit data and parcel attribute data did not match up or the parcel information had “unknown” listed for water source (likely vacant land). King County categorized this data in an “other” category to create an error of 6%.
- From 2000-2017, there were a total of 1,864 building permits in the WRIA 7 portion of rural unincorporated King County; 44.7% of these were served by a private well.
- King County used the average number of building permits per year in WRIA 7 (104) for the 18 year period (2000-2017) multiplied by the historic percent of homes using permit-exempt wells (44.7%) to come up with the estimate of 46 new permit-exempt wells per year.
- To estimate new permit-exempt wells over the next 20 years, they multiplied the wells per year (46) by 20 years for a total of 982.
- The total number of wells (982) plus the 6% error equals 982 new permit-exempt wells over the 20-year planning horizon.
- King County developed maps that shows historic building permits by stream basin and historic growth by stream basins.
- King County is still working on the developable lands/rural capacity analysis and expects to have something to share with the workgroup in September.

Terri Strandberg provided an overview of Snohomish County’s 20-year growth projection and rural capacity analysis for WRIA 7.

- Snohomish County developed growth projections by looking at past development trends (using year-built data from 2008-2018) in permit-exempt wells areas for each HUC 12 within its portion of WRIA 7, using those trends as well as population projections to estimate the number and location of new homes (housing units or HUs) relying on wells over the planning horizon, and comparing the estimated number of new homes to the rural capacity in each HUC 12.
- Based on past trends, Snohomish County estimates 2,058 permit-exempt well connections over the 20-year planning horizon in their portion of WRIA 7.
- Snohomish County also estimated growth based on the growth rate from their 2015 comprehensive plan. This scenario estimates 1,461 new permit-exempt wells over the 20-year planning horizon in their portion of WRIA 7.

Discussion

- Committee members discussed that King County and Snohomish County growth projections are for the 20-year planning horizon, but there are a number of existing permit-exempt wells constructed prior to January 19, 2018.
- Some committee members are interested in evaluating the impacts of permit-exempt wells constructed prior to January 19, 2018. There were recommendations to identify baseline

conditions by overlaying existing withdrawals, growth projections, closed streams, and stream conditions to help identify priority project locations.

- There was a concern that the Committee may lose sight of its task by focusing on past permit-exempt wells in addition to the planning horizon.
- There may be opportunities for public purveyors to expand water service to areas with existing permit-exempt wells and/or areas with higher potential for permit-exempt wells as a water offset project.

Updates and Announcements

Ingria provided updates from Ecology.

- GeoEngineers developed a draft Data Acquisition Plan that outlines desired data, its purpose for the WRE technical analyses, and anticipated sources of that data. Ingria did not receive feedback and GeoEngineers and Ecology did not identify any critical data gaps for completing the minimum requirements of the planning process.
- The [draft streamflow restoration project grant guidance](#) was issued August 7th for public comment. The comment period closes on September 6th. [Submit comments online](#). We plan to issue the final grant guidance around October and hold statewide technical assistance workshops. We plan to begin accepting grant applications in February and March of 2020.
- Ecology published the [Final NEB guidance](#) for planning groups to use when evaluating watershed plans completed under the streamflow restoration law. The Committee will discuss the final guidance at the September 12 meeting.
- Ecology published the final [Streamflow Restoration Policy and Interpretive Statement](#) that provides Ecology's interpretation on the law and information on how we're implementing it.
- Ecology is developing a list of acronyms, terms, and a few water rights resources that will be ready this fall. We wanted to include terms identified in the final NEB guidance.

No additional updates from Committee members.

Public Comment

No comments.

Action Items for Committee Members

- Next meeting: September 12 at Brightwater Facility.
- Next Technical Workgroup meeting: August 26 at Brightwater Facility.

Action Items for Ecology

- Post meeting materials to the Committee webpage.
- Share monitoring report from the Lower Tolt Floodplain Reconnection Project.
- Bring hard copies of the Final NEB Guidance to the September 12 Committee meeting.