Meeting Summary

Snohomish (WRIA 7)
Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Committee meeting
December 12, 2019 | 12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. WRIA 7 Committee Webpage

Location
Willis Tucker Community Park
Gary Weikel Room,
6705 Puget Park Drive,
Snohomish

Committee Chair
Ingria Jones
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(425) 649-4210

Handouts
- Final subbasin delineation map & memo
- Draft growth projection & consumptive use memos
- Policy & regulatory actions Discussion guide
- Recommendations for water rights analysis
- Project screening criteria update and location priority considerations

Attendance

Committee Representatives and Alternates *

Brant Wood *(Snohomish PUD)*
Mike Wolanek *(City of Arlington)*
Kim Peterson *(Town of Index)*
Gretchen Glaub (alternate) *(Snohomish Salmon Recovery Forum) (ex officio)*
Matt Baerwalde *(Snoqualmie Indian Tribe)*
Julie Lewis (alternate) *(Snoqualmie Indian Tribe)*
Denise Di Santo *(King County)*
Dylan Sluder *(MBA of King & Snohomish Counties)*
Jim Miller *(City of Everett)*
Elissa Ostergaard *(Snoqualmie Watershed Forum) (ex officio)*
Jaime Burrell *(City of North Bend) (phone)*
Steve Nelson *(City of Snoqualmie)*
Rich Norris *(City of Gold Bar) (phone)*
Paul Faulds *(City of Seattle) (ex officio)*
Kirk Lakey *(WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife)*
Lindsey Desmul (alternate) *(WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife)*
Leah Everett *(City of Lake Stevens)*
Daryl Williams *(Tulalip Tribes)*
Matthew Eyer *(City of Marysville)*
Michael Remington *(City of Duvall) (phone)*
Cynthia Krass *(Snoqualmie Valley WID)*
Will Stelle (alternate) *(Washington Water Trust) (phone)*
Bobbi Lindemulder *(Snohomish CD)*
Terri Strandberg *(Snohomish County)*
Brooke Eidem (alternate) *(City of Snohomish)*
Ingria Jones *(WA Dept. of Ecology) (chair)*

Committee Representatives and Alternates in Not Attendance*

City of Monroe
City of Marysville
City of Carnation

Other Attendees

Susan O'Neil *(ESA) (facilitator)*
Angela Pietschmann *(Cascadia) (info manager)*
Cynthia Carlstad *(NHC)*
John Covert *(WA Dept. of Ecology)*
Paulina Levy *(WA Dept. of Ecology)*
Stephanie Potts *(WA Dept. of Ecology)*
Yorik Stevens-Wajda *(Snohomish County Council)*
Eric Ferguson *(King County)*
Beth Lidell *(Snohomish County)*
Kevin Lee *(WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife)*

*Attendees list is based on sign-in sheet.

Welcome, Introductions, and Standing Business

Susan welcomed the group and began introductions.
Susan reviewed the agenda.

No revisions to the agenda.

One correction was made to the meeting summary. The meeting summary was approved without further changes.

Ingria provided updates from Ecology.

- Ecology published the WRIA 1 rule amendment and supporting documentation for chapter 173-501 WAC on November 19. The proposed rule is available on Ecology's website. Ecology is taking public comments online or through the mail until January 17, 2020.
- The 2020 Streamflow Restoration Grant application period opens February 3. See the 2020 Guidance for Project Applicants for more information. Ecology will host an applicant workshop webinar on January 14th. Information is available on Ecology's website.
- Michael Pollack, NOAA, gave a presentation to the WRIA 15 Committee on beaver restoration. The presentation is recorded on webex.
- Draft growth projections memo is posted on box. Committee members please send feedback to Ingria by January 14.
- Draft consumptive use estimates memo is posted on box. Committee members please send feedback to Ingria by January 14.
    - Ecology had our two consultants evaluate the average outdoor watering areas for parcels relying on permit-exempt wells across 8 planning areas (GeoEngineers WRIAs 7, 8 and 9, and HDR for WRIAs 10,12,13,14 and 15) and requested that consultants perform limited cross checking.
    - The technical consultant teams are collaboratively developing a memo outlining their results and conclusions, which we will release to the committees in early 2020.
    - The technical workgroup will review the memo and report to the committee in February.
- Memos are also in December meeting materials on the committee webpage.

The committee decided not to write letters of support for the 2020 Streamflow Restoration grant round. Individual entities can still provide letters of support to applicants.

No additional updates from committee members.

Consumptive Use Results

- Objective: Provide committee with overview of consumptive use results

Cynthia Carlstad (NHC) gave a presentation on consumptive use results and introduced the consumptive use calculator spreadsheet.

Reference Materials

- WRIA 7 consumptive use calculator spreadsheet (on box)
- Draft consumptive use estimates memo – see meeting materials
- Consumptive use results – presentation

Committee members had clarifying questions about the technical consultant's methods to estimate average irrigated footprint and consumptive use.

- When a lawn was not irrigated, how was the irrigated area calculated?

    - The irrigated area was calculated as 0 and included in the average.
- When selecting parcels for analysis, did consultants exclude buildings that were currently under construction?
    - Yes. These were excluded from the analysis due to uncertainty of the site's future yard management and irrigation practices.
- Did consultants consider the median lawn size?
    - Consultants used the average irrigated footprint because they believe this is the most representative statistic.
- Did consultants calculate impervious surfaces area?
    - No. This was not included in the analysis.
- How are return flows factored in?
    - They are included in the calculations, which assume 90% return flow for indoor use (10% consumptive; remainder leeching into groundwater through septic tank) and 20% return flow from outdoor use (80% of water applied for irrigation is lost to evaporation and transpiration).

Discussion and Considerations

- For WRIA 7, the average irrigated area is 0.21 acres. The total consumptive use estimate for WRIA 7, assuming 1 house and subbasin average yard size (Scenario 1) is 797.4 acre-feet.
- Subbasins with the most projected growth are not necessarily those with the highest consumptive use estimates due to lawn size differences.
- Consumptive use estimates vary based on amount or rainfall and air temperature. Some subbasins have very small irrigated yard averages – Tulalip, Quilceda-Allen, Sultan, and all of the Skykomish subbasins.
    - Tulalip Tribes mentioned that homes in the Aspen development have high water use in the summer for irrigation. Aspen development is within the Tulalip Reservation boundary and served by Everett Water.
- A few subbasins have notably larger irrigated yard averages – Patterson, Raging, and Pilchuck for example. These results were a big driver for the consumptive use estimates.
- Technical consultants compared the irrigated footprint results to local water purveyor data from Snohomish PUD and Covington Water District. For purposes of comparison, they annualized Snohomish PUD's water data.
    - Snohomish PUD provided detailed data to the committee in June, including summer use and winter use by parcel size. See committee webpage.
    - Covington Water District meters on a 2-month basis. They did not provide a breakdown of use by parcel size.
- The consumptive use calculator includes a summer scenario that shows consumptive use during June, July, and August.
- The withdrawal limit under RCW 90.94.030 for new domestic permit-exempt wells is 950 gallons per day annual average.
    - Scenario 3 in the consumptive use calculator estimates the consumptive portion of use for a new home that withdraws 950 gallons per day.
    - This scenario is theoretical, and assumes 60 gallons per day per person of indoor use and allocates the remainder of use to outdoor irrigation (back-calculating to 950 gpd).
- Committee members would like to see consumptive use estimates at a finer spatial scale than by subbasin (e.g. consumptive use per area or upper vs. lower watershed).
- Committee members would like to see raw numbers from the irrigated footprint analysis to identify the magnitude of homes irrigating over ½ acre in the Patterson, Raging, and Pilchuck subbasins.
- The committee discussed the implications of the consumptive use estimate.
    - The consumptive use estimate of 797.4 acre-feet includes elements of uncertainty in the growth projections and consumptive use estimates.

    - The committee can choose to apply a safety factor to the consumptive use estimate to account for uncertainty.
- The committee discussed the difference between the consumptive use estimate and offset target.
- Consumptive use estimate is based on the 20-year growth projection & associated consumptive use.
    - NEB guidance says that at a minimum, the WRE Plan needs to do more than offset the consumptive use from new permit-exempt domestic groundwater withdrawals over the 20 year planning horizon.
- The Technical Workgroup will begin offset target discussions in January. The committee will discuss offset target throughout the spring as we develop our project list.
- A lower offset target could give the committee more flexibility to focus on habitat projects and NEB.

The chair will prepare a decision memo summarizing the subbasin delineation, growth projection, and consumptive use estimate memos for committee members to share with their entities to prepare for a formal decision on consumptive use estimates by subbasin in March.

Policy and Regulatory Actions

- Objective: Discuss potential policy and regulatory actions to include in the WRE Plan.

The committee has the ability to recommend new or changes to existing regulations or policies, as well as changes the building permit fee and water allocation as authorized in 90.94.030. The committee broke into groups to brainstorm policy changes and regulatory actions that could be considered as recommendations in the WRE Plan.

Reference materials

- Policy and Regulatory Actions Discussion Guide – see meeting materials
- Breakout group transcription (end of summary)

Discussion

- See breakout group transcription.

Projects

- Objectives: continue discussions of the project inventory process; committee agreement on path forward for water rights acquisition assessment and project screening

Gretchen Glaub (Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Forum) shared an update on the 4-Year Work Plan Process.

- The Forum identified $17 million in salmon recovery projects.
- 15 projects self-identified as having potential streamflow benefit. These projects were mostly habitat related and were distributed throughout the watershed.

Technical consultants will add new projects to the WRIA 7 Project Inventory and seek out additional information, in coordination with the Project Subgroup and Forum, as needed.

Emily Dick (Washington Water Trust) presented a recommendation for water rights acquisition analysis focus areas.

- WWT identified three priority areas for water rights acquisitions analysis: 1. Quilceda-Allen, 2. Little Pilchuck, and 3. Pilchuck (focus on middle and lower).
- WWT considered the following factors to develop the recommended priority areas:
    - Streams closed to further appropriation in the instream flow rule (WAC 173-507).
    - Committee growth projections.

- Flow limited reaches critical to salmon identified in the Salmon Conservation Plan.
- Notes from committee, technical workgroup, and project subgroup.
- Potential for water right acquisitions.

Reference materials:
- Recommendations for water rights analysis – see meeting materials

Discussion and Considerations
- Committee members would like WWT to consider including Raging and Patterson subbasins as additional focus areas. These areas are important for salmon and include a number of large properties.
- Acquisitions are eligible for streamflow restoration grant funding. Ecology also has funding for strategic water right acquisitions.
- North Bend may have identified opportunities suitable for the WRE Plan in their search for mitigation water.
- Entities have had difficulty finding water rights to purchase in the Snoqualmie Valley.
- Acquisitions do not necessarily include full purchase of a water right; they may include source switches, shortened or shifted season of use, and storage and release.
- The committee discussed the importance of sharing concerns along the way in order to reach full approval of the Plan.
    - Snoqualmie Valley Watershed Improvement District does not support purchase of water rights in the Snoqualmie Valley Agricultural Production District.
    - Snohomish Conservation District supports identifying all potential water right acquisitions opportunities initially, but wants to ensure specific opportunities do not negatively affect food production and loss of opportunities for the agricultural community.

WWT will report preliminary findings to the committee this winter/early spring.

Ingria shared the Project Subgroup's preliminary recommendations for priority subbasins for streamflow benefit (water offset and more): Upper Skykomish; Upper Snoqualmie; Raging River; Snoqualmie South; Tulalip; Quilceda-Allen.

Reference materials:
- Project screening criteria update and location priority considerations – see meeting materials
- WRIA 7 Maps

Discussion and Considerations
- Identifying priority subbasins can help focus project identification and prioritization.
- Priorities could be incorporated into project screening criteria.
- Priority basins for streamflow benefit are different than focus areas for water rights acquisitions, which are opportunistic. (e.g. few opportunities for water rights acquisitions in Tulalip subbasin.)
- The Project Subgroup would like to set different priorities for water offset than for habitat benefits.
- The Committee was interested in why Upper Skykomish was included as a priority subbasin.
    - Project subgroup considered growth projections, but also considered protecting hydrology.
    - In many cases, water offset in subbasins higher in the watershed will benefit subbasins lower in the watershed.

The committee had limited time to discuss the priority subbasin recommendation and will revisit with more information and considerations from the project subgroup.

This winter, Ecology will meet with individual entities to identify and discuss water offset projects. Committee members are still interested in a small group brainstorm to identify out-of-the-box solutions.

Technical consultants will present to the committee in February on challenges and opportunities for calculating the water offset benefit of habitat projects.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Action Items for Committee Members

- Committee members return the local approval process form (on box) by February 7.
- Committee members to send feedback on the Detailed WRE Plan Outline (on box) by February 7.
- Committee members send feedback on the draft growth projections memo (on box) by January 14.
- Committee members send feedback on draft consumptive use memo (on box) by January 14.

Action Items for Technical Consultants and Ecology

- Send draft December meeting summary & update committee webpage.
- Update web map with CU estimates by subbasin.
- Send corrected Subbasin Delineation memo & King County growth projections memo (appendix).
- Send per capita consumptive use estimates for other WRIAs.
- Send NW/SW technical consultants consumptive use methods memo.
- Update Project Inventory based on 4YWP Update.
- Develop a decision memo summarizing the subbasin delineation, growth projection, and consumptive use estimate memos.
- Provide more detailed data for irrigated footprint analysis.
- Incorporate feedback on technical memos.
- Provide examples of water offset projects and reach out to individual entities to develop water offset project ideas.

Next Steps

- Next WRIA 7 Committee meeting: Thursday, February 13, Everett Public Library
- Next Project Subgroup meeting: January 6, 1:00-2:30 pm, Department of Ecology, Bellevue Office
- Next Technical Workgroup meeting: January 23, 1:00-2:30 pm, Everett Public Library

Flip Chart Transcriptions

Group 1 (Paulina Levy, facilitator)

- Outreach and education
    - Realtors, well drillers, builders to engage in outreach & education
    - Education for homeowners to understand $500 fee
    - Additional outreach & education by water providers
- Instream Flow Rule
    - Open closure to allow for projects that retime high flows to benefit streamflow
- Building permit fee
    - Tiered fee based on property value or lawn size
    - Tiered fee to incentivize reduced irrigation, low impact development, or salmon-friendly landscaping
    - Ask counties for $150 of the $500 fee to fund projects or adaptive management
- Annual irrigation fee for domestic permit-exempt wells

- Additional funding for tracking plan implementation & adaptive management
- Building permits
    - Follow-up after building permit issued to enforce low-impact development, tree retention, impervious surface limits, etc.
- Enforcement of half acre irrigated area and existing water use limitations
- Adopt and/or update existing water conservation codes
- Requirements for water service connection and well decommissioning
- Incentives for water service connection and well decommissioning
    - PUD and purveyor program and/or fund
    - Hookup without permit-exempt well consolidation under RCW 90.44.105

Group 2 (Stephanie Potts, facilitator)

- Metering
    - Require metering for domestic permit-exempt wells
- Instream Flow Rule
    - Pilot to open closure to allow for projects that retime high flows to benefit streamflow
- Water use limitations
    - Restrictions on water use in specific subbasins with low flow streams
    - Restrictions on water use in subbasins with no water offset projects
- Building permit fee
    - Increase fee
    - Tiered fee based on lawn size
    - Waive $500 fee if someone joins an educational program, plants native plants, reduces outdoor water use, etc.
- Reduce grey area in "timely and reasonable" requirements for connecting to water service
- Provide incentives to connect to water service
- Provide incentives for well decommissioning
- Incentivize rain catchment and storage for outdoor irrigation
- Education and outreach
    - Landscaping and outdoor water use
    - Native plants
    - Local precipitation
- Planting technical assistance for new homeowners
- Projects that benefit streamflow and other users (e.g., ag) – not prohibiting multi-purpose
- Funding for adaptive management
- Source switching for irrigators
    - Reduce burden of beneficial use
    - Different requirements than for water right change
- More funding for projects-request to legislature
- Flexibility with water right acquisitions regarding inchoate rights and municipal rights
    - Allow temporary donations
- PSRC Vision 2050 – cut rural growth target
- Enforcement of half acre irrigated area and existing water use limitations
- Acknowledge foreign flows
- Well pumps that limit usage

Group 3 (Susan O'Neil, facilitator)

- Building Permit Fee
    - Considerations: Cover portion of mitigation. State funds via capitol budget. Permit-exempt well may be cheaper than connection (Everett - $3,000 - $4,000). Even if raised – would it cover project costs? Certainty needed to approve the plan. The stick with this plan exceeds that of salmon plans.

- Model ordinances
    - Quantify benefits of the model ordinances if certain jurisdictions are entrusted
- Instream Flow Rule
    - Pilot to open closure to allow for projects that retime high flows to benefit streamflow
    - Considerations: would this allow more projects? WRIA 1 rule – opens certain sub-basins open in winter for storage. This would trigger rulemaking. Could include projects in closed basins, but identify uncertainty.
- Fee (triggers rulemaking):
    - Standard mitigation bank considers stewardship and maintenance cost
    - This will be a difficult yes for some reps
    - Considering phasing in. State cap budget subsidizing this now.
    - Projects still have to compete for getting projects done.
- Consider strategies in Snohomish Basin Protection Plan
- Incentives for builders:
    - Requirements for maintenance
    - Ban lawns or reduce lot size
    - Drought tolerant plants
    - Pervious pavement
    - Efficient irrigation systems
- Education
    - Change requirements and/or enforcement for tree retention
- Credit septic return from foreign flows
    - Identify water moving between basins if customers are on septic
    - Calculate foreign flow portion of return flow from septic