# Ecology logo. A state of Washington shape separated into three bands of color; light blue, green, and dark blue. a sun sits in the middle of the light blue band.APPROVED MEETING SUMMARY

**WRIA 13 Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Committee**

May 27, 2020 | 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. |[committee website](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias__1962/37326/watershed_restoration_and_enhancement_-_wria_14.aspx)

## Location

Webex**Committee Chair**

Angela Johnson  
angela.johnson@ecy.wa.gov**Handouts**

1. Policy Recommendation Proposals
2. Follow-up Adaptive Management Discussion Guide
3. Follow-up Climate Change Discussion Guide
4. Project Update

## Attendance

### Committee Representatives and Alternates \*

Angela Johnson (*Ecology – Committee Chair)*

Paul Pickett (*Squaxin Island Tribe*)

Adam Peterson (*Thurston Conservation District*)

Kaitlynn Nelson *(Thurston County)*

Brad Murphy (*Thurston County*)

John Kliem (*Lewis County*)

Cynthia Pratt (*City of Lacey*)

Julie Rector (*City of Lacey*)

Amy Hatch-Winecka (*WRIA 13 Lead Entity – Ex Officio)*

Donna Buxton (*City of Olympia*)

Wendy Steffensen (*LOTT-Ex Officio*)

Dan Smith (*City of Tumwater*)

Charlie Schneider (*City of Tumwater*)

Theresa Nation (*WDFW*)

Erin Hall *(Olympia Master Builders)*

Sue Patnude (*Deschutes Estuary Restoration Team*)

Dave Monthie (*Deschutes Estuary Restoration Team*)

### Committee Representatives Not in Attendance\*

Thurston PUD

### Other Attendees\*

Gretchen Muller *(Cascadia Consulting)*

Jimmy Kralj (*ESA*)

Mike Noone (*Ecology*)

Rebecca Brown *(Ecology)*

Tom Culhane (*Ecology*)

Mark Mazeski (*Office of Drinking Water*)

Chad Wiseman (*HDR*)

Kevin Hansen (*Thurston County*)

Esther Kronberg (*League of Women Voters*)

Paula Holroyde (*League of Women Voters*)

\*Attendees list is based WebEx attendance tracking.

## Welcome

Angela and Gretchen kicked off the meeting with WebEx logistics. Gretchen took a roll call of all Committee member on the call. The group reviewed the meeting agenda.

## Approval of April 2020 Meeting Summary

Angela received comments on the following sections of the April 2020 meeting summary:

* Other plan recommendations: WDFW project tracking proposal
* Project Tracking Tool
* HDR Floodplain Screening Tool presentation
* Action Items

*All of the proposed changes were made. The Committee approved April meeting summary.*

## Updates and Announcements

* Meetings will continue to be help over WebEx for the foreseeable future.
* The Streamflow Restoration Grant round closed on April 30th.
  + A total of 63 applications were received amounting to $88 million in funds requested.
  + Up to $22 million of funding is available for this grant round.
* Committee members were advised that Chapters 1-3 of the WRIA 13 Plan will be ready for their review shortly. Angela will provide further guidance when they become available. These chapters cover the background of the planning process, watershed overview, and subbasin delineation.
  + Angela provided a brief review of the plan development process in response to a question from a committee member.

# Potential Plan Recommendation Proposals

This portion of the meeting covered an update on the plan recommendation process, a review the proposals received from Committee members, and a discussion the next steps and a path forward to review and further develop proposals.

Proposals received by Committee members ahead of the meeting were presented by policy leads and discussed with the Committee. Those included:

* South Sound Water Master
  + Proposal Lead: Squaxin Island Tribe
  + Brief Description: This proposal would expand the water master program to include a position in the South Puget Sound region to support implementation, education, and outreach.
  + Discussion:
    - Some committee members expressed concern that these positions are easy to cut and get lost in the bureaucracy.
    - Some committee members would like more clarity on the role of this proposed position, and information on funding sources.
    - Some committee members expressed support for the proposal in concept.
    - Paul Pickett of the Squaxin Island Tribe noted that a Water Master is key to

protecting Tribal and other senior water rights. He also noted that there would be a separate proposal about funding.

* Drought Response Program
  + Proposal Lead: Squaxin Island Tribe
  + Brief Description: This proposal would limit water withdrawals from permit exempt wells and establish a system of actions to address droughts including education, compliance encouragement, and enforcement.
  + Discussion:
    - Committee members noted this would likely require a rule making process through Ecology
    - Some members noted that portions of this may be difficult to implement and may require legislative changes.
    - Paul Pickett of the Squaxin Island Tribe explained that the education program would address all PE wells, which would help to address the fairness issue of only new wells having drought water use limits.
  + Support: Support was expressed from committee representatives of the City of Lacey, Thurston County, Deschutes Estuary Restoration Team, City of Olympia, and WDFW
  + Concern: Concern was expressed by the committee representative from Lewis County.
* Rainwater Harvesting Education and Incentives
  + Proposal Lead: Thurston Conservation District
  + Brief Description: This proposal would provide clarification around local rainwater collection guidelines and would support rainwater collection design and provide resources to users about how to implement these systems.
  + Discussion: No committee members expressed concern.
* Update of Irrigation Guide
  + Proposal Lead: Thurston Conservation District
  + Brief Description: This proposal would update the Irrigation Guide with contemporary climate information. Currently, the guide is based upon climate information from the 1980s.
  + Discussion: No committee members expressed concern. Paul Pickett said Aspect Consulting had done an analysis of the Irrigation Guide values for the Skokomish Tribe, which he’d send to Adam.
* Water Conservation and Drought Adaptation Education and Outreach
  + Proposal Lead: Thurston Conservation District
  + Brief Description: This proposal would include the development of education materials and workshops regarding irrigation, dormant summer lands, and water wise gardening.
  + Discussion: Funding can be challenging. Often, drought funding becomes available once a declaration is made, however the most important time to prepare for a drought is before one happens. It might be possible to link or combine this proposal with the drought proposal from the Squaxin Island Tribe.
* Small Water System Satellite Management Systems
  + Proposal Lead: Deschutes Estuary Research Team
  + Brief Description: This proposal would implement System Satellite Management Agencies (SMAs) to monitor all new water systems.
  + Discussion: Committee members noted that Thurston County already engages new water systems under the Coordinated Water System Plan. Others noted the importance of focusing on the benefits of these systems. Mark from WDOH noted that WDOH supports SMAs and he could send more information to the Committee. No concerns were raised, although the need for more details was noted.
* Kaitlynn Nelson said that Thurston County was looking at a number of issues that may be submitted to the Committee as proposals.
* The City of Tumwater is looking to engage the large water right holders in the WRIA 13 plan development process, and is currently developing a proposal.
* Committee members expressed interest in scheduling a subgroup to further discuss these policy proposals:
  + Thurston Conservation District
  + City of Tumwater
  + Deschutes Estuary Restoration Team
  + Lewis County
  + Thurston County
  + City of Lacey
  + City of Olympia
  + Squaxin Island Tribe
  + LOTT
  + WDFW

## Other Potential Plan Recommendations

The committee continued discussions regarding adaptive management in the plan.

* Committee members supported a high-level statement about adaptive management for inclusion in the plan. The language presented is shown below, however this language could change based on Committee input:
  + “The WRIA 13 Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Committee recommends that the legislature provide funding and a structure to monitor plan implementation (including annual tracking of new permit exempt wells and project implementation by subbasin) and develop a process to adaptively manage implementation if Net Ecological Benefit is not being met as envisioned by the Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Plan”.
  + Committee members discussed this as a coordinated plan to include consistent adaptive management language across all WRIAs.
  + The Squaxin Island Tribe expressed support for this proposal and recommended a tiered approach: local government approach, Ecology approach with current authority, policy changes.
  + This concept was also supported by several entities including Thurston Conservation District, Deschutes Estuary Restoration Team, Lewis County, City of Lacey, Thurston County, City of Olympia, LOTT, and City of Tumwater.
  + A more detailed proposal will be needed for Committee agreement on inclusion in the plan.
* The Squaxin Island Tribe shared a proposal for adaptive management response.
  + Key elements are the tracking and reporting of both new PE wells and completed offset projects, comparison of estimated PE well consumptive use to offset benefits, and actions that are triggered by PE well use greatly exceeding offset benefits or offsets exceeding new PE wells.
  + Some members were concerned with tracking requirements, and some expressed discomfort with the idea of a moratorium.
  + Committee members wanted to consider more options, and thought this was a proposal that might be more ripe for consideration later in the Plan development process.
* The Deschutes Estuary Restoration Team presented a proposal regarding the creation of a Deschutes Watershed Council
  + DERT is concerned that this plan development process does not consider water issues besides streamflow.
  + This council would address other water issues like water quality.
  + DERT is concerned that the plan will not be implemented or enforced, and wants the WRIA 13 plan to be unique, implemented, and effective.
  + Discussion: Some Committee members expressed support of the proposal, however other Committee members raised concerns about the scope and costs of this proposal and indicated more information would be needed. The City of Tumwater noted this proposal shares some similarities with their proposal to engage large water users. The Squaxin Island Tribe noted that legislation wasn’t necessarily required, that the Council could be funded by increased PE well fees, and that including water quality helps access additional grant funding.
* Climate change will be discussed at the next meeting and committee members were asked to review the discussion guide and bring proposals to the next meeting. The Squaxin Island Tribe would like a climate resiliency item included in the project template.

## Projects

The Committee continued their discussion of projects for inclusion in the WRE Plan. Several specific projects were discussed, along with a discussion on WDFW’s position regarding quantifying offsets from habitat projects.

Amy Hatch-Winecka and Thurston County reviewed various project opportunities along the Deschutes River.

* WRIA 13 partners have been working with willing landowners in the area.
* Lower Deschutes Major Streamflow Restoration Project
  + This project would involve the construction of a new channel for floodplain reconnection to store and filter water, reduce flood risk, and promote connectivity.
  + HDR will evaluate this project and consider possible funding through the Floodplains by Design Grant Program.
  + A question was raised by Angela as to whether or not this project would be a water offset quantification of a habitat project, and WDFW would have concerns with that given their position to focus on water for water offset projects.
    - Committee members noted this is more so an off channel storage project, and not entirely habitat focused, and clarified that this concern is not applicable.
  + HDR will work with Amy Hatch-Winecka and Thurston County evaluate the project and attempt to quantify water offset quantity.
* WDFW clarified their position on quantifying offsets from habitat projects, and that they believe the offset quantitation of projects should be focused on water for water projects and not habitat projects. WDFW will issue a formal letter detailing their concerns soon, which Angela will distribute.
* Angela briefly reviewed that she has refined the project spreadsheet, and has added a folder for supplemental information of projects.
* HDR provided an update of their estimated workload for developing projects.

## Other Technical Issues

* HDR will develop a floodplain screening tool for Committee members to use to identify potential projects. Angela will distribute this tool to the Committee when it is ready for us, and the project workgroup will review at their next meeting.
* The committee will further discuss quantification of water benefits from habitat projects at a later meeting after members have time to review the letter from WDFW.
* PGG is continuing their work on MAR and water rights analyses. Angela has sent out revised information from PGG on the water rights analysis, and has asked for Committee feedback.
* The committee also discussed an issue with the Silver Hawk Subdivision, which is a Group A system but was included in the PE well consumptive use calculation. There was a discussion of whether this reduces the PE well growth total or reallocates growth to other locations. The technical workgroup will continue this discussion and will provide recommended next steps to the Committee at the next meeting.

## Public Comment

No public comment was made.

## Action Items for Committee Members

* The next full committee meeting is June 24th, 2020 from 9 am – 1:00 pm.
* A new workgroup will be established to further policy discussions.
* Policy leads continue to work draft recommendations to present to the Committee at upcoming meetings.
  + Including Thurston County, City of Tumwater, and the Squaxin Island Tribe.
* Review the climate change discussion guide before the next meeting and submit any proposals for an approach to address climate change in the plan.
* Mark Mazeski and Angela will work together to distribute information from the Department of Health
* WDFW memo on quantifying water offsets for habitat projects will be circulated to the committee, once available.
* Review draft plan chapters 1-3 when distributed by Angela.

## Action Items for Ecology

* Angela will keep committee members updated on the status of in-person meetings.
* Angela will distribute draft plan chapters 1-3 and will keep the Committee updated on technical memos for review.
  + Angela will be aware to stagger review periods given Committee member workload.
* Angela will schedule the June 2020 project subgroup meeting.
* Angela will distribute the WDFW letter regarding water offset quantification of habitat projects when it is ready for distribution.
* Angela will continue to coordinate with HDR and PGG to provide technical support to the Committee.

## Action Items for Technical Consultants

* PGG will continue work on the water right evaluation and MAR site identification analysis for WRIA 13 and will provide an update for the June 24, 2020 WREC meeting. PGG may attend the next WRIA 13 project subgroup meeting to review the refined list of water rights for analysis.
* HDR will continue their work on further analysis of projects. HDR will work with the project subgroup to identify projects in each subbasin, identify gaps, and reach out to committee members if support for particular projects becomes necessary.
* HDR will advance their floodplain screening tool work and provide an hour estimate for project analysis.