# WRIA 15 Project Workgroup

# Meeting Notes

October 30, 10am – 12:30pm

## Participation

* Bob Montgomery, *Anchor QEA,* *Consultant*
* Susan Gulick, *Facilitator*
* Stacy Vynne McKinstry, *Ecology*
* Paul Pickett, *Squaxin Island Tribe*
* Nam Siu, *WDFW*
* Alison O’Sullivan, *Suquamish Tribe*
* Brittany Gordon, *WDFW*
* Teresa Smith, *City of Bremerton*
* Sam Phillips, *Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe*
* Nathan Daniel, *Great Peninsula Conversancy*
* David Nash, *Kitsap County*
* Austin Jennings, *Pierce County*
* Burt Clothier, *Pacific Groundwater* *Group*, *Consultant*
* John Covert, *Ecology*
* Paulina Levy, *Ecology*
* Greg Rabourn, *King County*
* John Turk, *Aspect Consulting / Skokomish Tribe*

## Roles and Responsibilities

* Stacy reviewed the proposed roles of the Project Subgroups, Project Workgroup, Committee and Consultants. (See Project Workgroup Overview document.)
* WDFW raised concern that prioritizing certain streams and reaches, and that prioritizing in-kind in-place projects may lead to conflicting priorities and not align with potential growth areas. However, the workgroup and committee can define priorities throughout the process and develop them to best fit the watershed needs.
* Suquamish Tribe raised concern that finding projects in the headwaters may be a challenge.
* The workgroup is comfortable with the roles and responsibilities as outlined in the document.
* Stacy will recirculate the document and share with committee.

## Updates from Subgroups

* Paul provided a briefing on the South Sound Subgroup discussions:
	+ Rocky and Coulter Creek are high priority (may raise issue about being lower in the basin; even though that may be where most of the growth will happen).
	+ GPC has a lot of sites where projects may occur; WDFW has project ideas as well.
		- Conceptual examples: acquiring gravel pit water rights; reaching out to Coulter headwaters land owners who are already involved with conservation; Tacoma Narrows (by airport) has a forest ideas for projects (e.g. rotating timber stands).
		- ACTION ITEM: Nate, Austin and Paul will share maps of project locations and public lands on Box (as appropriate).
	+ John Covert clarified that projects do not need to be staggered throughout the 20 years; if it is ready if may be implemented right away. Austin shared that WRIA 11 put out a RFQ for consultants to actually sequence project implementation and find funding – maybe this could be part of our adaptive management.
* Brittany provided a briefing on the Hood Canal Subgroup discussions:
	+ The group discussed ditch/wetland opportunities in the lower watershed.
		- Morgan Marshland is a good topographic location and already in public ownership; other areas are on private timber land and there are some groundwater model questions.
	+ WDFW shared that because WRIA 15 does not have the right landscape for beaver relocation, beaver dam analogues are expensive, and past beaver projects have had a low success rate, the group should re-focus its effort. WDFW proposed the group assess conflict sites remove conflict so that the beavers already within the watershed can relocate themselves.
		- Stacy has set up a presentation on beaver projects and quantifying stream benefits from habitat projects for the December committee meeting (WDFW and NOAA).
* Nam provided a briefing on the North Kitsap Subgroup discussions:
	+ A few ideas have been generated for habitat projects, but possible support needed to look for water right acquisition opportunities.
	+ No priority streams formally discussed amongst the subgroup members.
	+ WDFW raised concern that some projects may raise groundwater levels and destabilize slopes. However, this effect mainly happens around marine shorelines but should be considered as part of a risk assessment.

## Project Identification and Focus

* Nate raised concern about meeting the offset number given the abundance of habitat projects and lack of quantifiable projects.
* Brittany would like to encourage land acquisitions to protect habitat.
* Paul is concerned about quantifying “natural” water storage projects. He suggested creating a calculator that all WRIAs can use.
* John Covert raised concerns over reliability of projects. For example, a project based on a flood event is not offsetting the consumption that happens year-round or every-year. However, if we look at an average over the years, then the offset is occurring. Despite uncertainty, John would like to continue discussion on this topic.
* Austin asked about involving salmon groups.
	+ Stacy has been working with the salmon recovery lead entities, but they are less engaged in this WRIA. Stacy is meeting with all the Puget Sound lead entities in a few weeks and hopes to reengage those involved in WRIA 15.
* Paul would like to include the consultants in the next South Sound subgroup call and Paul will reach out to Stacy or directly to Bob to coordinate.

## Project Development for Water Rights Acquisition Searching

* PGG is under contract to support project identification and development for WRIA 15, and has some additional capacity to look at water rights acquisition opportunities.
* Priority areas for PGG to consider looking for opportunities are identified below -the group will continue to further discuss and develop this list:
	+ Golf courses
	+ Misty Isle Farm
	+ Gravel Pits
	+ Nurseries
	+ Olalla ball fields
	+ City owned watershed properties
	+ Rocky, coulter, burley, little minter?
	+ Whiteman Cove/Camp Coleman
	+ North and East Kitsap –Dogfish, Gorst, Chico, Kinman, Martha John, Gamble, surface water rights for farm properties near Port Gamble/Poulsbo
	+ Upper Judd Creek on Vashon- lots of farms
	+ Tahuya, Union, Dewatto, Big Beef

## Project Criteria

* “Already required by regulatory obligation (i.e. double counting)”
	+ Austin recommends a bulleted list of what would constitute a regulatory obligation to avoid grey area.
		- Need specifics about what is regulatory obligation (e.g. culverts- state vs county)
			* WDFW wants all culverts to be excluded
	+ Paul requested Ecology make a list/clarify this language and interpretation.
	+ Bob and Stacy will come back with some limited and explicit examples.
* Nam suggested analyzing a risk factor when considering projects (i.e. community support, geological impacts).
* Members would like to be able to designate a project a “deal breaker” at any point of the review.
* Members would like to add “unknown” as a possible answer to the fatal flaw questions.
* Members would like to be able to designate a project as containing a “potential fatal flaw” for projects that they want to continue to move through the process but flag for concern.

## Next steps

* Next Project Workgroup meeting is November 18, morning. The group will revisit the screening criteria for revisions and run through 1-2 sample projects (offset project and habitat project).
* Stacy and Bob will set up meetings with individuals groups that may have project ideas (e.g. KPUD, KCD).
* Stacy and Bob will identify some regulatory obligation categories.