AGENDA

**WRIA 15 Watershed Restoration and Enhancement**

**Project Workgroup Meeting**

March 19, 2020 | 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

## **Location**

Webex

**Committee Chair**

Stacy Vynne McKinstry

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**Handouts**

Agenda

Project Inventory

Gravel Pit Review

Subbasin Handout

Water Rights Update

Participants:

Stacy Vynne McKinstry (ECY), Alora McGavin (ECY), Alison O’Sullivan (Suquamish Tribe), Austin Jennings (Pierce Co), Brenda Padham (BILT), Burt Clothier (PGG, consultant to ECY), David Nash (Kitsap Co), Erica Marbet (Squaxin Island Tribe), Erik Steffens (GPC), Greg Rabourn (King Co), Brittany Gordon (DFW), Nate Daniels (GPC), Joel Purdy (KPUD), Jon Turk (Aspect, consultant to Skokomish Tribe), Joel Massman (Keta Waters, consultant to Suquamish Tribe), Kell Rowen (Mason Co), Paul Picket (Squaxin Island Tribe), Rian Skov (DNR), Bob Montgomery (Anchor QEA, consultant to ECY), Sam Phillips (PGST), Teresa Smith (Bremerton), John Covert (Ecology), Nam Siu (DFW)

Links to key documents:

-[Project Inventory](https://ecy.box.com/v/WRIA15ProjectInventory)

-[Gravel Pits Review by Consultants](https://app.box.com/s/p9vquryi9w5g9xv0w5z8vc3ece2un27t)

-[Projects by Subbasin](https://app.box.com/s/afylh86mflhbuy3e1cbwgqf693w8enzu) (from the inventory, but broken out in a different format to focus our conversation)

-[Update on Water Rights Acquisition Assessment](https://app.box.com/s/hgs7pqnqrbfel2iw2toyvk94xywfu1uu)

-[Project List Organization Ideas](https://app.box.com/s/ucouquuxxqj747jxge2jdffagkkf6cyg) (not discussed, but for review if interested)

# Project Updates

* Quick review of project inventory
  + Conceptual and low priority project ideas on separate pages
  + Don’t edit subbasin sheets! Edits on Project inventory will reflect in those tabs.
  + Paul created own version of spreadsheet and saved under different name. Stacy will need to review and work with Paul to incorporate changes as appropriate into master spreadsheet.
* Silverdale Water District Project
  + Check-in postponed due to decreased staff capacity during pandemic.
  + Need to do assessment of available water and water augmentation. Joel will bring to group once it is ready.
* Other Project Ideas
  + Paul used webmap to look at aerial photos to estimate what we can do looking at property owned by Great Peninsula Conservancy (GPC); counties; and also identified City of Belfair reclamation plan run by Mason County. Kell and Squaxin Island Tribe (Paul and Erica) can discuss the Belfair project and bring back to the group.
  + GPC added a number of habitat projects, looking for opportunities to store water for infiltration on existing properties (engineered log jams, beaver analogs); miles of stream frontage owned by logging companies; acquire easement along stream to allow more stream buffer and restoration opportunities on stream miles (Coulter, Bear, Rocky Creeks).
  + There is no limit on the number of projects that we can include in plan, but should focus on those that have the greatest benefit for streamflow. If we have a long list of projects, we can present the list in different ways to reflect priorities, through sequencing or other means.
  + Strong interest in Springbrook Creek project on Bainbridge Island; acquisition completed but there is a lot of other potential work in the area.
  + Need to loop in the conservation districts and get their input on projects. (Stacy will do.)

# Update and Discussion on Water Rights Assessment

* PGG has done initial work on looking for water rights in WRIA 15. They have done initial filtering to help provide some direction in terms of how to limit the search. There are a fair number of irrigation and commercial rights (claims, certificates). Folks were surprised at the amount of potential water, but need to recognize that the rights that are actual real water may not be as high.
* Stockwater and irrigation may provide opportunities for conservation.
* Burt will move forward with the assumption that acquiring surface water rights is a higher priority than groundwater rights.
* There are a lot of water rights on Vashon due to the development on the island.
* The group is wary of looking at claims and recommends excluding them from the search. PGG should focus on surface water certificates.
* There is interest in focusing on the water rights that are closest to, or flowing into, permit exempt well “hotspots”.
* Burt will focus on mapping irrigation rights, surface water rights to identify their proximity to hotspots, and then start to dive into the characteristics (e.g. priority date, size of the water right, real vs paper right).
* PGG hopes to develop the project to where a project sponsor could then pick it up and move forward in further assessing the acquisition opportunity. Extent to which they develop projects will depend on the number of opportunities identified.

# Update and Discussion on Gravel Pits

* Bob and Burt have completed an initial assessment of gravel pit infiltration projects.
* Specific feedback on some of the proposed sites include:
  + Project near Port Orchard Airport, multiple CFS flowing from airport into neighborhood during wet season; major flooding issues; possible to divert water?
  + Site at 12-25-1E has proposal to change to mixed residential use; 20 acres closest to airport can’t be used for residential- possibly could be used as an infiltration pond?
  + Site SE of Kitsap Lake is primarily basalt and fractured; this may be a limited opportunity.
  + Final site doesn’t flow to north, flows to the east; upper head waters; believe it flows to Ross.
  + First site-Morrison pit- Burley Creek is across the road, not sure about distance;
    - Good potential if moved East in order to move culverts.
    - Site of interest for getting water back into Burley; elevation of gravel pit compared to creek is of concern- pumping needed; yet could be a solution to flooding and summer low flow problems.
* Rian (DNR) discussed reclamation for some of the sites, with most of them using backfill that will prevent much infiltration opportunities. Bob will follow up with Rian to discuss specifics of the gravel pit sites that may have potential. There is the opportunity to change the reclamation plan to allow for infiltration (no issue for DNR) but need to recognize economic incentive for backfill.
* Squaxin Island Tribe was interested in exploring some of the Pierce Co owned mines (which may be for road maintenance). Austin will look into who at the county to connect with on these sites.
* There is potential interest in another site at Asbury Top Soil (near Newbury Hill Road) that is at the headwaters of Anderson. Bob will look into this site, as well as keep exploring the Port Orchard site.

# Projects by Subbasin

* Stacy walked the group through the current list of projects by subbasin seeking feedback on current projects and gaps. Stacy asked the project subgroup leads (subbasin experts) to be prepared to help engage the committee in conversation on projects during the next committee meeting.
* The Big Beef area does not appear to have stability issues, but hard to tell without some of the other layers. Likely a low landslide risk but may experience overflow due to lack of infiltration.
* Land acquisition projects that take away the need for individual wells will need to be evaluated on a case by case basis for their offset value. Will depend on if those homes will never be built, or maybe moving to another area that isn’t near a fish critical stream…very dependent on the site specific details and will need to explore with the committee and technical staff.
* South Hood Canal
  + - Pope Headwaters $5 mil project- Possibly conservation easement and stripping development rights; project w/o sponsor or much activity- should this be on the list? Will bring question back to the full committee.
    - Limited number of projects in this subbasin- is this a problem for the project list?
      * Projects not yet quantified; looking at watershed overall- up to committee to determine if projects are sufficient by subbasin
    - Tahuya needs a lot of habitat work and there is opportunity for projects.
  + North Hood Canal
    - Might need more Kingston area projects? MAR?
      * Alison believes there is a DNR parcel off 104 that may have potential and will provide a map to Sam.
    - Big Beef DNR Parcel- Sam will look into rainfall runoff modeling and more info at next meeting
      * Recharge at Big Beef -concern about altering hydrology downstream .
      * Not MAR project, unclear about timing, and should just require a HPA.
    - Gaps
      * Look for land acquisition projects and open space available for preservation.
      * GPC identified acquisition areas; open to more ideas; not sure if habitat project ideas are best for grant funding projects.
  + Bainbridge Island
    - Culvert removal project at basin of Springbrook creek is a high priority project.
    - Two properties for BDA/ floodplain restoration.
  + Vashon/Maury
    - Lots of conceptual projects, not further developed; may have some water rights available that are owned by King County. Stacy will follow up with Greg.
  + South Sound
    - Interest in bundling ideas into categorical project.
      * There are a few golf courses on the list that should be evaluated for water rights.
    - There is no interest in expanding wetlands for MAR if they are natural wetlands.
    - Some interest in looking at stand rotations if EPA will estimate offset benefits.
  + West Sound
    - Very long list - how do we refine list, identify key priorities, and identify gaps?
    - Projects on Blackjack are of interest.
    - Headwater wetland areas/ gravel mines in these areas are priority.

# Action Items and Next Steps

* Stacy will schedule a late May/early June day long workshop on projects, with timeslots allocated for subbasin specific conversations.
* Stacy will touch base with Greg/King Co re: project ideas for Vashon-Maury.
* Kell and Squaxin Island Tribe (Paul and Erica) can discuss the Belfair project and bring back to the group.
* Bob will work with Kitsap Co to add county owned layers to webmap.
* Stacy will connect with Mason, Pierce and Kitsap conservation districts for feedback on project list.
* PGG will continue further filtering and mapping of potential water right opportunities and bring back for discussion in a few weeks.
* Bob will follow up with Rian to discuss specifics of the gravel pit sites that may have potential.
* Squaxin Island Tribe was interested in exploring some of the Pierce Co owned mines (which may be for road maintenance). Austin will look into who at the county to connect with on these sites.
* There is potential interest in another site at Asbury Top Soil (near Newbury Hill Road) that is at the headwaters of Anderson. Bob will look into this site, as well as keep exploring the Port Orchard site.
* Alison will follow up with Sam about a potential project on DNR land in North Hood Canal (off 104).
* Sam will do some more modeling on the Big Beef project and provide more information as available.
* All – Look for habitat opportunities in Tahuya, acquisition opportunities in North Hood Canal.
* Stacy will ask PGG to look at any of the water rights associated with golf courses, especially in South Sound.
* Project subgroups should prepare to speak out at the committee discussion focused in on projects by subbasins.