MEETING SUMMARY

**WRIA 15 Watershed Restoration and Enhancement**

**Committee Meeting**

June 4, 2020 | 9:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. | [WRIA 15 Committee Webpage](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias__1962/37327/watershed_restoration_and_enhancement_-_wria_15.aspx)

**Location**

WebEx

**Committee Chair**

Stacy Vynne McKinstry

Svyn461@ecy.wa.gov

(425) 649-7114

**Handouts**

* Agenda
* Discussion guide on project recommendations
* Revised technical memos
* Policy and adaptive management proposals

# Attendance

Committee Representatives and Alternates \*

Joel Purdy (*Kitsap Public Utility District*)

David Winfrey (*Puyallup Tribe)*

StacyVynneMcKinstry *(WA Dept of Ecology)*

GregRabourn *(King County)*

Teresa Smith *(City of Bremerton)*

Dave Ward (*Kitsap County)*

Kathy Peters (*alternate -* *Kitsap County)*

Zach Holt *(alternate - City of* *Port Orchard)*

Alison O’Sullivan (*alternate - Suquamish Tribe)*

JoyGaritone *(Kitsap Conservation District)*

Brittany Gordon *(WA Dept of Fish & Wildlife)*

Nam Siu *(WA Dept of Fish & Wildlife)*

Shawn O’Dell (*Washington Water Service - ex-officio)*

Austin Jennings (*alternate -* *Pierce County*)

Dana Sarff (*alternate -* *Skokomish Tribe*)

Nate Daniel *(Great Peninsula Conservancy)*

Paul Pickett *(alternate - Squaxin Island Tribe)*

Randy Neatherlin *(Mason County)*

David Windom *(alternate – Mason County)*

Russ Shiplet *(Kitsap Building Association)*

Sam Phillips *(Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe)*

Mike Michael *(City of Bainbridge Island)*

Bri Ellis *(City of Gig Harbor)*

Committee Representatives Not in Attendance\*

City of Poulsbo

Mason-Kitsap Farm Bureau (ex-officio)

Other Attendees

Susan Gulick *(Sound Resolutions, Facilitator)*

Angela Pietschmann (*Cascadia, Info Manager*)

Burt Clothier *(Pacific Groundwater Group)*

Bob Montgomery *(Anchor QEA)*

John Covert *(WA Dept of Ecology)*

Stephanie Potts *(WA Dept of Ecology)*

Angela Johnson (*WA Dept of Ecology*)

Paulina Levy (*WA Dept of Ecology*)

Joel Massmann(*Suquamish Tribe)*

Roma Call *(Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe)*

*\*Attendees list is based on roll call and participants signed into WebEx.*

# Meeting Agenda and May Meeting Summary

Susan summarized the last meeting and reviewed the agenda. *No revisions to the agenda.*

Stacy reviewed revisions to the May meeting summary provided by Squaxin Island Tribe and City of Bainbridge Island. Ecology will post the final meeting summary on the committee webpage. *No further refinements to the meeting summary provided.*

# Updates and Announcements

Stacy provided updates from Ecology:

* The project workgroup met on May 21 and will meet again June 29th and July 16th. Meeting notes are posted on the [Committee webpage](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias__1962/37327/watershed_restoration_and_enhancement_-_wria_15.aspx).
* The competitive streamflow restoration grant round application closed on April 30, 2020. Ecology received [63 applications](https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/summarypages/2011082.html) for approximately $88 million in total. Two applications were received in WRIA 15 (Blackjack feasibility – Port Orchard; Springbrook land acquisition – Bainbridge Island Land Trust). Ecology anticipates announcing $22M in awards in early fall.
* Ecology developed a permit exempt well metering document as a resource for the committee, [available on Box.](https://app.box.com/s/8mqoypgcajlwivi6s2j7wopjiof4xt21)
* Do not respond to “noreplybox” email account. Ecology does not receive these emails. If Stacy is not responding to your emails, please reach out by phone!
* On May 27, 2020, Ecology adopted a rule amendment for chapter 173-501 WAC, which amends the WRIA 1 instream flow rule as directed by the legislature under the Streamflow Restoration law (RCW 90.94.020). Despite tremendous effort by the WRIA 1 planning group, they were unable to complete a watershed plan amendment by the statutory deadline of February 1, 2019. Therefore, as directed by the legislature, Ecology moved forward with rulemaking. The adopted rule, along with many supporting materials, is available on Ecology’s [website](https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Laws-rules-rulemaking/Rulemaking/WAC-173-501).
* An invitation was distributed to groundwater modelers and interested non-modelers (i.e., managers, faculty, or students who need to better understand models and the modeling process) in the Pacific Northwest to join in a regular conversation about groundwater modeling topics. If interested, please contact Kevin Hansen at Thurston County (HansenK@co.**thurston**.wa.us).
* Stacy distributed [WDFW’s letter regarding offset quantification of habitat projects](https://app.box.com/s/pwiv8coxwjn1d5o6vx9tt2hihgjm9fgp). WDFW emphasizes support for inclusion of habitat projects in the plan to meet NEB but does not support accounting for offset values.

# Projects Update

Consultants and committee members provided updates on project research and opportunities. The committee discussed the project workgroup’s recommendations for projects for consultants to develop in more detail or further exploration.

**Reference Materials**

* [Water Rights Assessment Information](https://ecy.box.com/v/WRIA15WRAcquisitionsAssess)
* [Project Inventory](https://ecy.box.com/v/WRIA15ProjectInventory)
* [Discussion guide on project recommendations](https://app.box.com/s/cvris01l76me1rht9ejfl9ul2s8zv82q)
* [Project Resources](https://app.box.com/s/c9m6p0j2jy3hz3orro8su83z59u7tghm)
* [Detailed Project Descriptions](https://app.box.com/s/vachq8cvznt8ewmt4aifoe0xeer0b92q)

**Discussion**

* **Water Rights Acquisition Projects**
	+ PGG provided a set of revised water rights location maps and tables, divided by subbasin. HDR will add these layers to the WRIA 15 webmap.
	+ PGG requests the committee review areas of interest and use their local knowledge of individual sites, water rights, and subbasins to provide guidance to PGG on which rights to investigate further.
	+ The committee should further consider criteria to narrow the list to a manageable set of water rights for detailed review.
	+ The project workgroup will discuss water right opportunities in more detail during the June meeting.
* **Anderson Island Projects**
	+ Chuck Hinds (Anderson Island Parks) provided potential project ideas (i.e., salmon recovery work that needs to be advanced) that have good opportunities for funding. Project information is on Box and in the project inventory.
* **McNeil Island Projects**
	+ McNeil Island is 70% owned by WDFW. There are two earthen dams for old reservoirs on the island that are no longer needed. WDFW is exploring options for potential water right acquisitions, streamflow benefit, and habitat improvement (e.g., dam removal and restoration work).
	+ Projects on the island could put water in streams. Though fish aren’t currently in these streams, the dams have been up for 100 years. Potential opportunity to create new fish habitat once streams are flowing again.
	+ Ecology’s Dam Safety and Southwest Regional Office staff support these projects.
* **Great Peninsula Conservancy (GPC) Projects**
	+ GPC has added several projects to the inventory—ranging from conceptual to shovel-ready. Acquisition projects are focused on NEB and range from 100-550 acres.
	+ GPC requests that committee members send additional land acquisition project ideas to GPC for consideration before the project list is finalized.
* **Projects to Further Explore**
	+ *Filucy Bay Floodplain Enhancement (South Sound)*
		- This project is on Pierce County flood acquisition property. Pierce County is looking into more information but expects limited potential given the small site.
	+ *Divide Block Habitat Acquisition and Restoration (490 acres)*
		- GPC requests further exploration by the consultants for this project.
	+ *Gig Harbor Golf Course Water Use/Artondale Package (South Sound)*
		- Joel Purdy (KPUD) volunteered to take the lead on this project. Joel has connections to golf course and has previously discussed transferring water use from direct diversion of stream to a well. Joel and Bob will connect on this project and bring back information at a future meeting to see if the committee would like to move it to detailed development.
	+ *Port Orchard Airport Stormwater Infiltration (South Sound)*
		- Bob, Burt, and Paul have done preliminary exploration to see what’s possible at this location. The committee determined the commercial gravel pit is not worth pursuing but the site has potential for stormwater capture and infiltration.
		- The technical team will continue their research and bring back information to the project workgroup at the end of the month.
	+ *Big Beef Acquisition and Restoration (North Hood Canal)*
		- Sam Phillips (PGST) identified an acquisition project on undeveloped land at Big Beef Creek tributary adjacent to NW Gross Road (north of Leisureland Airpark, north of Wildcat Lake).
		- Alison O’Sullivan (Suquamish Tribe) does not think the landowners are interested in giving up water rights.
		- The project workgroup will discuss this project at the next workgroup meeting.
	+ Additional projects are proposed for further exploration which the committee did not discuss in detail, including the Belfair Wastewater Treatment Plant and Bainbridge Island projects. Anchor QEA will continue to work with project leads to further explore project opportunities and bring information back to the workgroup and committee.
* **Projects to Develop in Detail**
	+ *Big Beef Storage on DNR Property*
		- Sam Phillips (PGST) identified the storage project in the fall and Anchor QEA and PGG have done some preliminary work to look at site potential. Consultants will continue to work with Sam to develop the project in detail.
	+ *KPUD stream augmentation projects*
		- KPUD has identified potential streamflow augmentation projects among satellite water systems positioned near streams that can be augmented in various places (across multiple subbasins in WRIA 15). KPUD will prepare detailed project descriptions.
		- Paul Pickett (Squaxin Island Tribe) expressed a preliminary concern that while streamflow augmentation has local/seasonal benefits, it could also impact streams farther afield (as identified in the Foster pilot groundwater modeling project).
	+ *Silverdale Water District reclaimed water*
		- Silverdale Water District has plans for reclaimed water expansion and potential augmentation in areas where growth is anticipated. Joel Purdy (KPUD) will work with Silverdale Water District to develop the detailed project description.
	+ *Onsite Offset (Mason Co Stormwater Capture and Infiltration)*
		- HDR is working with Mason County on the methodology to estimate offset potential for WRIA 14/15. Once this analysis is complete, the committee can determine if they are interested in moving forward with including the project in the WRIA 15 plan.
* **Habitat Projects**
	+ The committee may choose a suite of habitat projects (primarily for fish and wildlife benefit) to develop in detail. The committee and workgroup will need to discuss how much consultant time to invest in habitat project development compared to offset projects. The committee will also need to discuss how to present the project list – both offset projects and habitat projects. Project list presentation is a focus of the next project workgroup meeting.
	+ Alison O’Sullivan (Suquamish Tribe) does not support beaver dam analogue (BDA) projects.
		- Dave Ward (Kitsap County) noted that while BDAs don’t always work, a substantial body of literature shows that the presence of beaver ponds has a strong and beneficial effect on salmon populations. The committee could consider providing protections for beaver habitat.
		- DFW does not oppose BDAs projects to meet NEB but does not support BDAs as an offset project.
	+ Nate Daniels (GPC) noted that the *Little Anderson Creek Habitat Protection Project (262 acres)* and *Divide Block Habitat Acquisition and Restoration (490 acres)* projects would be good candidates for meeting NEB.

# Plan Development

The committee provided final revisions to the *Subbasin* and *Growth Projections/Consumptive Use* memos (which will form the basis of the plan’s chapters). The committee discussed the timeline for chapter review and plan approval.

**Reference Materials:**

* [Revised technical memos](https://ecy.box.com/v/WRIA15TechnicalMemos)
* [Plan Approval Process](https://app.box.com/s/auioeigiba3usxu2j643haw9g78xdedj) and Timeline
* [Committee Member Plan Approval Process](https://app.box.com/s/jy6iacdzgz6iho4zlfb5hqd99y0yvhi2)
* [Workplan](https://app.box.com/s/bs8f08neukdjr45jsxq1452xstiw0pte)

**Discussion**:

* **WRIA 15 PE Growth and Consumptive Use Technical Memo**
	+ Paul Pickett (Squaxin Island Tribe) requests the following revision to *Section 3.3 USGS Groundwater Model Method*: “Outdoor use was estimated for the outdoor growing season and varied by month from 4 gallons per person per day in May to 97 gallons per person per day in September; a value of 26 gpd per person was used in the calculation.”
	+ Dave Ward (Kitsap County) responded to *Section 2.5 High and Low Growth Scenarios*: “The five percent is based on the approximate typical deviation from the County’s rural growth projections and actual growths.” He clarified that there is no “typical deviation;” the deviation is based on a margin of error for the County’s growth projections overall.
* The committee provided no additional revisions to the subbasin memo.
* **NEB Evaluation**
	+ NEB guidance recommends that committee puts forward their own NEB evaluation. Ecology is giving deference to committee on whether it has met NEB. However, the legislation does not require this evaluation.
	+ If the committee chooses not to include this analysis, it will fall on John Covert (Ecology) and team to complete the evaluation/determination on whether the plan meets NEB.
* **Plan Review and Approval**
	+ Stacy will provide Chapters 1 – 3 to the committee for review by mid June along with a comment tracker and additional instructions. Chapters 1-3 provide an overview of: streamflow restoration law; committee formation; WRIA 15 overview; and a chapter on subbasins (based on Subbasin technical memo).
	+ Chapter 4 provides permit exempt well projections and consumptive use estimates. Ecology anticipates this chapter will be ready for committee review by mid-late July.
	+ Ecology plans to distribute the compiled WRIA 15 plan by mid-August; the draft plan will have gaps (e.g., final consumptive use estimate) but will include all components that have been reviewed to date.
	+ Stacy reviewed the overall committee progress and timeline, noting the February 1, 2021 target date for submission.
* **The committee decided to set a special meeting in July to discuss policy proposals, review of draft chapters, and recommendations from the project workgroup. The special meeting is scheduled for July 14th.**

# Policy & Adaptive Management Proposals

Paul Pickett (Squaxin Island Tribe) presented policy and adaptive management proposals for committee consideration. The committee provided feedback on these proposals and discussed upcoming proposals. Ecology requests that committee members submit any additional proposals at least eight days prior to the next committee meeting for inclusion in the meeting packet.

**Reference Materials**:

* [Policy & Adaptive Management proposal folder](https://app.box.com/s/fi15hj9jhqs978toab057tz5rgkbqacx)

**Discussion**:

* **County Policies to Promote Connections to Group A systems**
	+ Dave Windom (Mason County) supports promotion of connections to Group A systems but noted that feasibility depends on whether connections are available. Group A systems require a water right (Mason County sees more Group Bs, 2-party, and single wells).
	+ Dave Ward (Kitsap County) noted that the proposal identifies counties as implementors. For Kitsap County, the implementor would be the health district, not county.
		- Austin Jennings (Pierce County) noted this applies for Pierce County as well.
		- Mike Michael (City of Bainbridge Island) noted this applies to cities in Kitsap County as well (especially on Bainbridge Island).
	+ Randy Neatherlin (Mason County) does not support giving authority to create codes/regulation outside of the County itself.
	+ Joel Purdy (Kitsap County) noted that some water systems have large service area boundaries but don’t have water mains (i.e., there is a chance that permit exempt wells would go in within service area boundaries). He noted that there also must be a public water system in place (or someone willing to create a Group A/B water system) as well as sufficient capacity. He agrees with the concept of promoting connections to public water systems but notes there is already a lot of emphasis on this from Ecology and others. Joel would want to see further vetting to determine what parts of this proposal already exist and who has influence on whether a parcel gets hooked up to a public water system.
	+ Next steps: This proposal needs refinement before inclusion as a draft plan recommendation.
* **South Sound Water Master**
	+ Greg Rabourn (King County) is supportive of this proposal.
	+ Zach Holt (City of Port Orchard) noted this work would be a large undertaking (spatially) for one person, requiring a lot of dynamic expertise.
		- Dave Ward (Kitsap County) noted that Water Masters in other states are composed of entire organizations, not just one person. The proposal should be specific about which path it recommends.
	+ Stacy Vynne McKinstry (Ecology) noted that this proposal would require a new funding request for FTE (cannot use new positions funded through Southern Resident Orca recovery as their focus watersheds are already assigned). Number of additional FTE and funding source should be specified in proposal.
	+ Next steps: This proposal needs refinement before inclusion as a draft plan recommendation.
* **Study of County Planning Streamflow Restoration Effectiveness**
	+ Dave Ward (Kitsap County) noted that new development in Kitsap County is required to address water onsite under the WA stormwater permit/manual. Roof water typically goes into an infiltration pit on property. Runoff from pollution generating surfaces is typically infiltrated on sites where big enough to have vegetated flow path (according to manual). The bigger challenge is retrofitting legacy development where there isn’t a mechanism to retroactively bring older development up to new standards.
	+ Greg Rabourn (King County) is supportive of this proposal.
	+ Dana Sarff (Skokomish Tribe) is supportive of this proposal.
	+ Dave Windom (Mason County) noted the benefits of this proposal would be limited and would like to focus efforts on proposals with greatest benefit to watershed.
		- Shawn O’Dell (Washington Water Service) agrees with Mason County.
	+ Next steps: There is some support for this proposal but questions about whether it should be a priority. This proposal will be revisited once all the proposals are submitted so that the committee can prioritize, if necessary.
* **Drought response program**
	+ Dana Sarff (Skokomish Tribe) is supportive of this proposal.
	+ Sam Phillips (Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe) is supportive of this proposal.
	+ Brittany Gordon (WDFW) is generally supportive of this concept.
	+ Randy Neatherlin (Mason County) proposed simplifying this proposal to “stop landscape watering and reduce outdoor water use during drought.”
	+ Stacy Vynne McKinstry (Ecology) noted that RCW 90.94 already requires limiting use to 350 gpd during drought declarations. Further, if the committee wants to recommend rulemaking to further clarify or make the law more specific, there is no guarantee what the end result of this process will be (i.e., it may result in a rule the committee didn’t intend).
	+ Austin Jennings (Pierce County) noted the only change he sees in this proposal is lessening restrictions around food growth. He does not feel it is worthwhile to change the language of RCW 90.94 for an exemption that small.
	+ Next steps: The committee is supportive of addressing drought but there may be better ways to do it. This will be revisited.
* **Adaptive Management Proposals**
	+ *Squaxin Island Tribe Proposal*
		- Dana Sarff (Skokomish Tribe) supports this proposal.
		- Dave Windom (Mason County) is concerned that a moratorium on permit exempt wells would penalize property owners for building new homes. However, Dave supports an adaptive management approach similar to the Chehalis Basin Partnership (standing committee that works in perpetuity).
	+ Susan Gulick (facilitator) also noted that based on interest expressed by multiple committees, the facilitation team is working on a common recommendation for legislative action (funding/resources) to support ongoing adaptive management. The team will work with the committee to further shape the proposal.
	+ Zack Holt (City of Port Orchard) sent a notification to committee members interested in the monitoring component of adaptive management. This group has developed a draft outline that addresses some of the main components of monitoring. Zack will present his proposal at a future meeting.
	+ Next steps: Adaptive management will be added to a future agenda for more discussion. There is general interest from the committee to include an adaptive management recommendation in the plan.
* **Water Supply Data for Comprehensive Water Planning**
	+ Upcoming proposal from Squaxin Island Tribe (will be discussed in detail at future meeting).
* **Updates / Improvements to ECY wells database**
	+ Erica Marbet (Squaxin Island Tribe) and Ecology are working on this proposal (will be discussed in detail at a future meeting). There is interest from the Snoqualmie Tribe and WDFW.
	+ Next steps: There is broad support for this effort. Squaxin Island Tribe will work with others on a joint proposal for multiple WRIAs.
* **Next Steps**: Proponents of policy proposals will work with committee members to refine proposals and build consensus. In general, proposals will not be brought to the committee again until there is broad support and interest in refining the recommendation.

# Tribal Perspectives Presentation

Squaxin Island Tribe representatives Jeff Dickison and Sharon Hensley provided an overview of the Tribe’s federal reserved rights and reason for engagement in the watershed planning process.

**Reference Materials**:

* [Presentation Outline](https://app.box.com/s/qzedmh6fgi25mcvpronmas37g4gbd8tm)
* [Water & Growth Management](https://app.box.com/s/kpwlf9h8kr3d49t6lea58wfvxymzn08h) Article [The Water Report; Dickison/Haensly; 2017]

**Discussion**:

* David Windom (Mason County) asked how tribes look at salmon losses outside stream areas (i.e., in the ocean) to predation and other issues not predicated on streams?
	+ Jeff Dickison (Squaxin Island Tribe) noted there are many sources of salmon mortality and we need to do our best to address all of them to support healthy fish runs that benefit tribes and residents of Washington. Tribes actively support marine water quality and are fighting the EPA over relaxing of water quality standards. The Tribe is fully engaged and pressuring the state and federal government to address overpopulation of certain species of marine mammals that eat large amounts of salmon and compete with other marine mammals (like Southern Resident orcas). We need to preserve and improve the survival rate at each increment of the salmon lifecycle.
* Brittany Gordon (WDFW) asked for the Tribe’s perspective on prioritizing streams for wild fish recovery vs prioritizing systems for hatcheries and tribal fisheries.
	+ Jeff noted the Tribe does not want to prioritize one over the other. The South Sound has been under a hatchery management regime since the late 1970s and early 1980s, largely dictated by WDFW. Prior to that, all management in the South Sound was based on wild fish production. If we only managed for wild fish now, there would be no fisheries anywhere (runs are too suppressed). The vast majority of salmon are hatchery produced.

# Public Comment

No public comment.

# Action Items for Committee Members

* Contact Stacy if you do not have the project workgroup meetings on your calendar and would like to join on June 29th or July 13th.
* Project leads should continue to work with consultants to further explore project ideas or develop projects in detail.
* Committee will meet on July 14th for a short meeting to discuss review of Chapters 1-3, recommendations from the project workgroup, and new policy recommendations.
* Policy recommendation leads should consider the feedback provided during the meeting and refine proposals as appropriate.
* Policy recommendation leads should send new recommendations to Angela (angela@cascadiaconsulting.com) eight days in advance of the next committee meeting for inclusion in the meeting packet. (Send by July 6).
* Committee members should hold time in mid-late June to review Chapters 1-3 of the WRIA 15 plan.

# Action Items for Ecology and Consultants

* Stacy will provide contact information for Kevin Hanson (Thurston County) from WRIA 13 and USGS.
* Stacy and Bob will finalize the technical memos.
* Technical consultants will update the “offset estimate” column of the project inventory to capture estimated offset potential and/or benefit to fish.
* Technical consultants will develop a subset of projects in detail.
* Technical consultants will continue to work with project leads to explore a subset of projects for their offset and feasibility potential.

# Upcoming Meetings

* Next Project Workgroup meetings: Monday, June 29 and Monday July 13, 2020, WebEx.
* Next committee meeting: Tuesday, July 14, 2020, 10:00 a.m., WebEx.