



Clean Water Advisory Committee

February 20, 2025

Committee Members in Attendance: Lynn Bahrych, Jenny DeGroot, Bob Eagan, Vicki Heater, Ann Jarrell, Richard Locke, Judy Meyer, Laura Pitts

Ex-officio, County support staff, and members of public: Raquel Callans, Sophia Cassam, Krista Chavez, Rob Crabtree, Tyler Davis, Kelly Hamilton, Kari McVeigh, Ethan Schmidt, Kendra Smith, Torren Valdez

9:01 AM Convene Surface Water Subcommittee Meeting

Judy Meyer

Kim is off-island, Judy is chairing. Start with introductions around the 'virtual room'

New member Richard, president of Fish Bay water association on Lopez, background in public policy.

9:09 AM Public Comment

none

9:10 AM Business Operations

- Welcome new CWAC member, Richard Locke (District 3, Position 11)
- Approve February 20th (2025) Agenda

Tyler: at the end, there are only two vacancies currently, district 3 position 11 is filled by Richard now

- Approve December 12th (2024) Minutes

-Judy wants to make one change, in the ES report – it says the new rate is \$124 – add *per ESU*

MOTION: Lynn moves to approve the minutes with Judy's change and additional clarification page 4, 'organized by __, maintained' – add missing word. Vicki seconds, the December minutes are approved with those changes

Bob: one more minor change, it should be 'two' instead of 'too' in reference to ADU's. Is this a mandate from state legislature or an option for urban growth areas?

Sophia: regarding two ADU's in urban growth areas, that is a state mandate. Just refers to Eastsound, FH, and Lopez village. Must allow two ADU's per lot; on Orcas that just defines the urban growth area within Eastsound

Judy: clarify in minutes that this is just urban growth areas (under subcommittee updates)

-Minutes are approved with all the changes mentioned above

9:15AM Staff & Agency Updates

- Environmental Stewardship

Kendra Smith

Krista Davis, our stormwater engineering tech, has resigned to pursue other interests. ES hopes to offload stormwater reviews so we can have space to work on stormwater related projects. There are issues needing upgrades in Deer Harbor and Lopez village. Hoping to bring Susan Eshelman back in, mapping assets in the stormwater system (Public works handles everything within road right of way). We are assessing conditions.

-Tyler reviews planting plans with stakes, first third of the total 18 acres of the Zylstra/False Bay project is done.

Kendra: last item to add is that we're monitoring situation at federal level for trickle-down impacts

Judy: what's happening with street-sweepers?

Kendra: the town sweeper keeps breaking – it's a vacuum assisted sweeper which is what we need for that fine grit. We're looking for a grant, we need something maneuverable in small spaces, maybe run on battery.
Jenny: I'm curious whether FEMA funds for Bayhead culvert replacement will still be secured for SJC
Tyler: I've been told there's no direction about pulling those funds, so we're continuing with work.

- Health

Ethan Schmidt

Regarding Hannah Heights, they're looking at a property with a well about 1.25 mile from their system. Well inspection today and then they'll do a pump test and try to decide if it's worth buying that property

- Ecology – Kelly Hamilton

Pump testing and preliminary permitting for Hannah Heights. SJC Land Bank submitted temporary permit for small amount of water from Hummel Lake for dust control for construction. They have a water right but well isn't working, so investigating different options. They'll likely receive a two-year permit for that diversion.

9:31 AM **Subcommittee Updates**

- Neither Surface Water nor Groundwater met in January

9:32AM **New Business**

- WDFW Fish Screening

Torren Valdez

Fish screens prevent fish from entering diversions, young/larval fish, not as able to swim away. Usually salmonids but all fish are included in the law, "facilities that prevent fish from being entrained into diversions" Torren shows photos of a couple different types of fish screens & explains how fish screens work. In a gravity fish screen, an engineered structure sends fish down a bypass pipe to main flow. Don't want fish in diversion dams or irrigation channels that dry up seasonally. Another simpler option is a pump fish screen, can be attached to the intake pipe. Active or passive screens: Active are self-cleaning, require electricity, may blast air or water on the screen. Passive screen not self-cleaning, more common, cheaper, usually upsized, pressure distributed throughout, must maintain/scrub them. Fish screening required by RCW 77.57. Aim for cooperative compliance approach, offer free technical assistance including site assessment and screen selection. May be able to help with financial assistance. Don't provide screens, but help with grant application, coordination, etc.

The Technical Assistance Process starts with contacting WDFW, schedule a site visit. WDFW can help with HPA/permitting, help selecting screen, water user maintains screen. Construction de-watering –instream work/diverting water from a project area, fish screening is required. We have a manual about fish screening. ACTION: Torren will provide these slides to the group

QUESTIONS

Judy: Kelly just mentioned the diversion from Hummel Lake, will fish screening be used there?

Kelly: we put a fish screen provision on all water rights use provisions

Judy: one concern is escapement of introduced fish species from ponds, what about screens from pond run off

Torren: fish screens have been used that way. But ensuring that screen is functioning is critical (Torren talks about a few problematic species). If there's a situation like that, please feel free to contact me

Ann: There is the possibility to stock ponds with triploid carp that can't reproduce

Richard: regarding Hummel Lake, there's a landowner there across the road constantly pulling water from the lake. Is that a permit that requires annual renewal? Does anyone look at his gear?

Kelly: I'm unsure whether this person has a water right, but all surface water diversions require a water right. If they don't have one, they need to apply for one. That is in perpetuity if they're continually using it.

ACTION: Richard will pass along that name/parcel number to Kelly offline, kelly.hamilton@ecy.wa.gov

Jenny: A lot of our ag users in county are exempt from fish screens, not aware of many people putting them in. I know WDFW doesn't necessarily have boots on the ground looking, do you have partners like the CD looking?

Torren: I've been working on making connections with the CD. I'm still new to this position

Laura Pitts: We have been talking to WDFW and I'm excited to connect with Torren.

Vicki: about water rights at Hummel Lake. There is an historic claim there that Buck worked on actively, there should be a big file on that. I don't know if that diversion is screened

Kendra: we also have a permission for use from Hummel Lake to the dump facility site, but that's a temporary plan until there can be an agreement made with Fisherman Bay water association.

Currently that line ends just up to the street and we'd like to bring that down to that essential public facility.

9:58 AM **Comp Plan – Water Element**

- Status update

Sophia Cassam

Tyler sent out the latest version in advance of this meeting. The version the planning commission looked at included this committee's comments, we incorporated your edits. Some edits in the storm and surface water section still need to be made, Kendra required some updates about what the utility does and updates from the MSA report. Another update adjacent to this project is that we're working on finalizing contact with a consultant to do our critical ordinance area update. They will look at the Land use and water use elements to ensure there are no additional policy alignments needed. The consultant is Facet, formerly Watershed.

Kendra: we have information for you whenever you're ready

- Review/discussion of draft

Judy Meyer

Ann: clarification, all the changes in red – who made those?

Sophia: includes changes from Kyle Dodd, Kendra, committees, all changes

Jenny: we've repeatedly asked that some of the salmon recovery work we've done be brought up, like our 2022 salmon recovery chapter update. That was a multi-species update and it comes across like a chinook document. We've done a lot of work with instream flows etc. that I'd like to see reflected. I'd like to get together to suggest language for the comp plan that refers more to all the work we've done. For example, trying to avoid building more ponds but these things are contradicted in the ag element. Particularly in section 4.6, I think there needs to be more language reflecting salmon protection work

Judy: Agree. Surface water group can suggest specific language to be incorporated to meet those concerns

Lynn: I sent Tyler two small additions to the paragraph on page two, the planning paragraph. I added a short sentence to the paragraph about the Land Bank to refer to more of the resources that Jenny was concerned about and in the paragraph about VSP, a short phrase, "managed by the Conservation District".

ACTION ITEM: please send individual comments and edits directly to Tyler and he'll compile and send to Sophia

Sophia: March 28th is a great deadline to get stuff in before we go to planning commission, April 15 at very latest

Vicki: I have a couple comments I'll submit in writing. I like the reorganization of the rules and policies. And for the committee at large, moving into working on critical area element. The language is around the entire county being a critical aquifer recharge system. SJG is incredibly diverse in terms of recharge characteristics.

Judy: noted that several CWAC members have expressed appreciation for the way our suggested changes have been incorporated into this draft. We want to keep water on the land to recharge groundwater. What are "improved drainage systems"?

Sophia: I'm reading, "appropriate drainage systems are needed in response to climate change"

Judy: it's the last paragraph in storm and surface water management

Sophia: we may have a duplication problem here

Judy: well, I think you need to clarify what you mean by improved, we don't want more wetland drainage

Kendra: I'll run through that and makes sure that language is correct

Judy: additional language change: add "implement" so that it becomes "develop and implement policy". In paragraph about the VSP – there could be something about assessing the effectiveness of that program

Laura: we have a monitoring plan in place within VSP, hope to use that to get metrics we need to address that

ACTION: it would be great to have a presentation about VSP in a future meeting, also assessing effectiveness

Vicki: there's a paragraph added early in the element that implies it's a larger program that addresses more issues than it really does. I'd suggest clear parameters in defining the extent of VSP

Judy: We each have comments on specific sections, we'll send those to Tyler who will compile them. Tyler will send compiled version back to all of us and if we have concerns address by March subcommittee meetings

Tyler: I won't send anything on until there's some consensus

Kendra: once we go through subcommittee you can get thumbs up from CWAC via email given deadline

Bob: question for Vicki, from previous work, there's discussion in the element that talks about 10% recharge. What does that mean, volume wise? Where could we put in discussion of numbers?

-Vicki discusses some specific work from past hydrogeologist data, we've been hoping for the updated USGS report to give better numbers. May be better to remove that number since it's largely anecdotal. It's a budget. How much water is there and how much do we use? We have meters and data. But it's a complex situation, measuring what's there is about timing and location.

Lynn: is there consensus about the average usage and how do we square that with influx of tourist season?

Bob: I sit solid on 20-30gallons/day. Back to that 10%, I'd like to have a starting place for our growth to emphasize what Vicki said, it's so varied where there is and isn't water. Recharge differences between fractured bedrock and sandy soils. But if areas with lots of water it should be available to everyone

Judy: Groundwater subcommittee should meet in March to decide about that 10%.

Kendra: Tyler, we'll meet with Ethan & Kyle, ensure that committee meets before submit next to the element

Judy: same for the Surface Water subcommittee. Back to Jenny's point about incorporating more about salmon recovery stuff. Jenny you and I can work on a strawman to bring to the Surface water subcommittee meeting

Jenny: thanks, I welcome that and I think Kim will want to be included

ACTION: Groundwater and Surfacewater subcommittees will meet in March, Richard would like to serve on a subcommittee

10:41 AM **Housekeeping**

Discussion of in-person meetings, Judy not in favor – hard to travel from Lopez

- what about meeting on the interisland? some serious discussion of how that would work

Kendra: what about quarterly or at least once a year? For the main meeting, or figure out some site visits

Bob: it's not a big problem. The perception to the community of having these meetings is great

Kelly: Just an FYI, the State is currently under a travel freeze.

-Introduce Rob Crabtree, moved back to SJI after being a hydrologist in Yellowstone. He has experience in water resources management. up for the new seat (see below)

Rob: My pertinent experience deals with a program I started called Rivernet, I'm semi-retired now

Vicki: back to annual or biannual meeting, there are boat services that could transport all of us, bypass ferries

Jenny: Many of us are not retired, if we want to continue recruitment, nice to be able to attend meetings virtually

10:49 AM June 19th regular meeting – reschedule?

Tyler: That's a county holiday. In the past, when we have a conflict, we usually meet the week earlier.

Judy: so how about June 12? That works for everyone – done

Judy: when should we get comments to Tyler for work plan?

Tyler: two weeks from today, March 6th

ACTION: Tyler will send reminders

Vacant Seats remaining include District 1 (San Juan) Position 1 and District 3 (Lopez/Shaw) Position 12

10:52 AM **Adjourn meeting**