



Clean Water Advisory Committee

September 16, 2021

Committee Members in Attendance: Lynn Bahrych, Jenny DeGroot, David Duggins, Bob Eagan, Vicki Heater, Ann Jarrell, Kimbal Sundberg.

Ex-officio, County support staff, and members of public: Paul Andersson, Zoey Chue, Sara Dolan, Erin Halcomb, Lloyd Hill, Jolyn Leslie, Mitchell Lesoing, Trent Lieber, Aaron Rock, Byron Rot, Kendra Smith, Kyle Dodd.

8:32 AM Welcome and Coast Salish Acknowledgement

Let us acknowledge we reside on the ancestral lands and waters of the Coast Salish people who have called this place home since time immemorial and let us honor inherent, aboriginal and treaty rights that have been passed down from generation to generation.

8:33 AM Approval of July 2021 meeting minutes

No changes suggested. MOTION: David moves to approve as is, Jenny seconds. All in favor, minutes are approved

8:34 AM Agency Updates

Jolyn: loan program for water systems, Jolyn can send links for those interested. Webinar today – Governor decreed that water systems couldn't be shut off for lack of payment due to Covid, and that expires today. Also pandemic-related: shortage of some chemicals used in water-treatment systems, notably chlorine.

8:38 AM Public Comments

none

9 AM CIP Budget updates

Kendra Smith

Kendra recently made a presentation to County Council regarding rate adjustment, and it was approved. Brief summary: presentation showed the CIP, capital fee numbers for each island. Rate change coming in April. We're building up CIP projects, big numbers projected for 2022. Finishing up design to get ready to bid by January

QUESTIONS

Bob: Orcas ferry landing seems like it's far down on the list but one of our most intensive contaminated sites

Kendra: we're pursuing grant money to see what we can do there. Location is tricky, end of pipe will need repairs

Kim: Have you given construction contractors and people bidding a heads up on projects coming down the pike?

Kendra: We will be doing that in the next month or so, to let them know bids will be coming out over the winter.

8:51 AM Garrison Creek landowner outreach presentation

Zoey Chue

(Zoey shares screen) – working with Clean Water utility, looking at water quality (dissolved oxygen, nutrients, etc.) to look at native cutthroat habitat. Cutthroat trout have been spotted on both upper and lower parts of creek.

Map of Garrison Watershed: Headwaters in forested National Park Service land. Downstream of West Valley Road on private property, the canopy cover gets close to zero, this creates a lot of heat. Shows creek ditched for agriculture, full of reed canary grass. Trout Lake is an 8-acre manmade lake, the watershed has many other ponds. Lower Garrison was once a wetland famous for duck-hunting, but now we have dammed ponds that have a higher rate of evaporation, they get warm. Map of vegetation in 1895 – duck-hunting club, and trout were plentiful. Garrison creek has been well-researched, we used data from KWIAHT (provided photos), Wild Fish Conservancy, also Jenny DeGroot eDNA surveys, etc.

My work this summer focused on outreach and restoration site design. An introductory letter was sent to 17 shareholders, 10 responded and 9 willing to participate. Green properties on map are ones willing to have work done there. Planting in Reed Canary grass is at our first site in November, varieties like willow, Dogwood, cottonwood. aim for minimum disturbance of creek. Site prep work there begins this month. Trout lake drains into Garrison Creek via a culvert, our plan is to work with WDFW to put in a fish screen to keep largemouth bass in the pond and out of Garrison Creek. Bass prey on cutthroat. Upstream at the old States Inn, there's already a fish barrier (culvert) under their driveway.

Outline plans for next three years, including working upstream through the valley into wider wetland area by year 3. Six-years of funding. By year 5 restore Olson pond, which contains both bass and muskrats. We have various ideas about managing both species. Olson's are a little hesitant about restoration on their property.

QUESTIONS

Erin: how have cutthroat been able to persist?

Zoey: they're very adaptive species, summer refugia like Olson's pond.

Jenny: they are adaptable, spawn up in headwaters, eDNA work in 2018, we observed cutthroat in 2019. They can have anadromous and resident forms, just need to keep some cold water for them.

Zoey: Garrison is very seasonal, dries up every summer, sometime no flows until November.

Jenny: A fish screen on Trout Lake would be great but any talk about changes to large concrete area around outflow?

Zoey: It's a concrete weir, needs attention, controls flow. Hopefully by third year that landowner will be ready.

Mitchell: in dry weather a lot of foliage gets into creek, stays cool, so downstream from county culvert at West Valley Rd., there are always fish there, 8-9". that pond continued to flow through the heat dome. climate change keeps geese here year-round.

Jenny: Mitch could someone go into that pond and sample those fish? I assume those 8-9" fish were cutthroat

ACTION ITEM: Mitchell can ask John Betsy about sampling those fish, he's worked with Russel Barsh before

ACTION ITEM: Zoey will stay in touch with Jenny and Mitchell about that, Zoey@SJICD.org

Zoey: About the geese, with more native flora we can inhibit those geese, we can focus on those ponds

Byron: decades ago WDFW introduced a resident goose into WA for hunters and it bred with migrating geese

Kim: what's water rights and water use situation in Garrison Creek?

Zoey: pretty much everyone is on a private well, a lot of properties source from the creek

Vicki: I have experience with wells in that area and almost all development there is on shallow wells. The regulations used when many of those were built were lax. A lot of drinking water is fairly shallow ground water

Jenny: I wonder if you have any temperature gauges as things move on at restoration sites?

Zoey: a couple properties are involved in VSP program in Conservation District, that's all for water monitoring

Byron: no temperature gauges in there but it's an interesting idea to put some in, no flow monitoring at this time

Lloyd: I work with SJI National Park, researching Garrison Creek as its headwaters flow through Mitchell Hill area. Writing a project proposal now to do stream surveys and looking into installing stream level/temperature gauges. I would love to stay in touch and learn more about how the NPS could help.

Lloyd_hill@nps.gov

9:27 AM Stormwater facilities update Lopez Island

Kendra Smith on behalf of Krista Davis

Kendra: Street-sweeping has been delayed, didn't happen in August/September because town street-sweeper has been broken. We're on them to get it fixed. Next week and first week of October we have catch-basin cleaning, going through our drainage network, picking up a lot of material there that's not getting into the Sea. Byron: Krista is in the field in south end of Lopez, she'll do an update at the November meeting.

9:34 AM Groundwater subcommittee August meeting report

Kyle Dodd

Note: discussion on overlapping meeting times between the groundwater and surface water subcommittees. Starting on October 21st, the groundwater meeting will be 8:30-9:30, surface water is 9:30-10:30.

Bob, Jolyn, and I met. I reported the due to Covid resurgence, my time may be dominated again by emergency response.

We discussed USGS water balance study. Joint funding agreement with USGS being finalized, expect that soon. We discussed existing public water systems, source approval, groundwater, existing unapproved water systems (particularly group B), the process to run connections to them and looking at policy work to streamline them.

Kendra: we're doing some stewardship update and planning to incorporate water use into education/outreach

Vicki: on increase in water use I think agricultural use would be biggest impact because of how dry it's been. I propose we request USGS retest seawater intrusion model, re-running model for Lopez would be appropriate

ACTION ITEM: great idea, Kyle will add that request for USGS as a discussion item

ACTION ITEM: as soon as the USGS project agreement is executed Kyle will share it with the Committee

Kendra: we're doing hydrological analysis looking at last 10-years in rainfall intensity and costs associated with Lopez village –shunting stormwater off that area, mostly shallow groundwater. could we capture that?

ACTION ITEM: Lynn will look for Skagit county study, treating run-off from residential areas, forward to the group

9:51 AM Surface water subcommittee August meeting report

Kim Sundberg

Land Bank – Doug McCutcheon gave updated on status of the dam. Installed a new siphon in August, water primarily being used to irrigate 80 acres cattle pasture. Land Bank supports operation due to history of water use, disagreement about ownership of water rights -likely to be resolved in next year. New water right grant program with Ecology, addresses water disputes to arrive at clear resolutions. Lincoln plans to apply when RFP comes out.

Presentation from Wendel and Brooke from FHL, teaching a class on watershed ecology in False Bay preserve, 12 students, monitoring in the watershed at various locations, Kim will help teach this first class, if anyone has ideas for undergrad projects this is a good opportunity. Had heat dome caused mortality in False Bay? no report of that, but big blooms of ulva, seems like most nutrients are from marine environment rather than fresh water

Wayne Haefele, city engineer, gave an overview of Trout Lake (False Bay Creek watershed). Had a problem with sand filtration system due to high demand of water in FH, had to do a backwashing of the sand filter this summer, planning to tear it down after tourist season and rebuild filters. Backwashing meant more freshwater going into Zylstra lake system. Town is steadily growing but water system not projected to be a problem in next decade. Wayne discussed plans for Trout Lake dam, 95 years old, needs repairs to concrete, not a major restoration because don't need it for supply.

Zylstra has some issues with cyanobacteria, closed to water contact. Moving ahead with fencing this fall along Red Mill farm. Developing a system of watering cattle from a well rather than directly in creek

- Timing of next subcommittee meetings will be back-to-back (8:30am and 9:30am) on October 21

Erin H: What about surfactants?

Kim: KWIAHT found high levels in creek (like detergent). Still a mystery where that came from. Surfactants are used with herbicides sometimes, but it wasn't from town Water Plant.

10:03 AM Other News

Kendra: one thing I forgot to mention regarding covid vaccination – I need a copy or photo of your vaccination card. County is taking it seriously, ensure all volunteers are protected. Call Kendra or send email with photo.

COMMITTEE ACTION ITEM: Kendra needs to get list into HR by end of October

10:07 AM Adjourn