

**Nisqually Reach and Henderson Inlet Shellfish Protection Districts
Combined Stakeholder Advisory Committee
DRAFT Meeting Notes July 20, 2021**

Members: Tris Carlson, Emily Watts (City of Lacey), Margaret Homerding (Nisqually Tribe), Mary Catherine McAleer

Guests: Marguerite Abplanalp (Thurston CD), Scott Chernoff (WDOH), Barbara Ann Smolko (Pierce County), Alena Reynolds (Ecology), Erin Ewald (Taylor Shellfish Farms)

Staff: Art Starry (TCEH), Tamara Cowles (TCEH), Andrew Deffobis (CPED)

1. Administrative

- Introductions were made.
- The committee approved the agenda.
- Minutes from the September 16, 2020 Shellfish Protection District meeting were approved.

2. Discussion: Thurston County Shoreline Master Program Update

- Andy Deffobis provided an update on the Shoreline Master Program update. The Planning Commission is close to finalizing their public hearing draft. One item staff is asking them to weigh in on is whether the draft should have specific standards for new mussel raft operations, and whether the proposed net pen aquaculture standards are appropriate. The timing is ripe to also bring this discussion before the SPDAC.
- The Committee discussed whether net pens should be allowed, and discussed different types of floating aquaculture. Erin Ewald stated concerns that new standards could conflict with state requirements, and said more conversation is needed before new regulations are added to the SMP.
- **Action Item:** Andy will send the draft SMP and the Powerpoint presentation used during the discussion to the Committee.

3. Environmental Health Update: Septic System Management Discussion with Board of County Commissioners

- Art Starry provided an update. The Septic System Management Plan, developed around 2008, is a strategy for managing septic systems around the County. It was updated in 2014, based off plans in the Nisqually and Henderson watersheds, and applied countywide.

- The funding mechanism was suspended in 2017 by the then-Board of County Commissioners. Staff are attempting to put those funding pieces back into the plan. There is a new push to implement the plan.
- Staff will provide a septic monitoring/maintenance briefing to the Board on July 29.
- **Action Item:** The Chair asked staff to look into how many septic systems are in the Eld Inlet watershed.

4. Updates

- **Dept. of Health:** Significant rain in June preceded elevated fecal coliform levels for Henderson Inlet. Station 187 was on the threatened list and remains of concern. The prohibited areas remain prohibited. All measured fecal coliform levels were low after the extreme heat event at the end of June.
- No areas are on the threatened list in Nisqually Reach. The only failing station is 235, within the prohibited area. All others were OK, even the other prohibited areas excluding Station 235. The next shoreline survey for Nisqually Reach is approximately 2028-2030 (the last was in 2018).
- DOH will not be sending out Early Warning Reports now this year due to staffing/COVID-19 and that it is being revamped. They are using this time to revamp it and make it a more comprehensive report with the Early Warning component and include a State of Classification component.
- Jean Frost has taken a temporary assignment to oversee the drinking water group through mid-October. Scott Chernoff is taking her place during her absence.
- **Ecology:** Alena has been connecting with landowners in Henderson Inlet to discuss problematic land uses, working in tandem with TCEH and TCD. Landowners are connected to helpful resources. Windshield surveys continue; Alena has not seen any causes for alarm.
- Ecology and Thurston County Public Health and Social Services have established a PIC meeting group and is now expanding it. DOH and CPED staff are new additions to the group.
- **City of Lacey:** There is no direction from the City to return to in-person events, including volunteer events. Planting events this fall are TBD.
- Staff are developing an RFQ for the Woodland Creek Park Capital Improvement Project for invasive plant removal. The hope is to hold volunteer events associated with this project.
- Marine Creature Mondays continue to be a popular event at Boston Harbor.
- Stream Team newsletter continues to be published, and will soon return to physical locations around the community.

- **Thurston Conservation District:** The District has reached out to 53 landowners with SPD dollars, and 34 with other funding. Nine BMPs have been completed through cost share, and 23 have been done by landowners independently.
- Educational courses continue to be held.
- Further details on outreach from TCD:
 - (1) guidance for recommended manure management complete
 - (2) guidance on why timing matters with manure management info sheet (in progress),
 - (3) A pasture management guidance sheet that will contribute to WQ protection through better livestock management practices (in progress)
 - (4) On 8/6/20 TCD held an online workshop on advanced pasture management that included water quality protection practices
 - (5) TCD held a nutrient management presentation 2/20/20.
 - (6) TCD had an informational booth at the County Fair (7/31-8/4/2019)
- **Nisqually Tribe:** Richard Iyall, shellfish farm manager, has been removing gear from the farm, and shifting to less intensive aquaculture methods. The recent heat wave does not seem to have resulted in high mortality. Margaret has been reviewing King County's model for identifying areas with the highest impact for reducing fecal coliform, and will share that model when it is released.
- **Pierce County:** The County and DOH have extended the end date for the South Sound Shellfish grant to September 30, 2022. There are funds in the grant to assist the Pleasant Forest camping club with design and permitting costs. A community water quality report for Thurston County will be created once work is complete on the Mason County report.