

**Nisqually Reach and Henderson Inlet Shellfish Protection Districts
Combined Stakeholder Advisory Committee
Meeting Notes May 19, 2020**

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

Guests: Doug Christenson (City of Lacey), Nicole Warren (Thurston CD), Jean Frost, Scott Chernoff and Anna Frerichs (WDOH), Barbara Ann Smolko (Pierce County), Alena Reynolds (Ecology)

Staff: Jane Mountjoy-Venning (TCEH), Andrew Deffobis (CPED)

1. Administrative

- Introductions were made.
- The committee approved the agenda.
- Minutes from the September 17, 2019 Shellfish Protection District meeting were approved. Minutes from the January 21, 2020 meeting were not approved, because only one committee member attended that meeting. The draft minutes will be posted online with that disclaimer.

2. Overview of City of Lacey Stormwater Comprehensive Plan Update

- Lacey is updating its stormwater comprehensive plan to address NPDES permit compliance and to plan for capital improvement projects.
- Emily provided a brief summary of plan elements. Lacey resident pay \$11.87 per year in stormwater rates; a 4.5% annual increase is planned but may be adjusted given current economic trends.
- Plan includes Capital Improvement Plan; project priorities, costs, schedule. There are over \$6 million in scheduled projects in the next 5 years. Doug provided information on projects with a water quality nexus.
- City will host a webinar on the plan on May 20, 2020.

3. Discussion: Mission and Role of Advisory Committee

- The group discussed origins of the committee. The committee was successful when there was funding to allocate for septic and other water quality improvement projects. This is viewed as a vital component to the committee's work.
- Discussion ensued about how districts are funded in other counties. Barbara Ann said in Pierce County, most funding comes from grants or the general fund. Jean said most counties are like Pierce, only a few have rates directly charged to taxpayers for shellfish protection districts.

- Committee concluded it can continue to monitor water quality, and provide a venue to share information. Many other shellfish protection districts operate in a coordination or advisory capacity. Jane and Margaret expressed appreciation for the value of this function.
- In Pierce County, several committees are largely agency based, and are an opportunity to get updates and talk about sampling results. Community members attend meetings to be informed, or to provide information on activities occurring in the watershed that affect water quality.
- Committee could reach out to the Board of County Commissioners regarding finding more volunteers to serve on the committee.
- Barbara Ann said the committee could advertise for recruitment in the upcoming shellfish community report. Other options include the newspaper, Stream Team literature, Thurston County Connection TV program segment.
- The committee could play a role in advising planned activities on property owned by WSU.
- **Action Item:** Andy will follow up with Sarah Moorehead at Thurston Conservation District regarding options to re-establish the Shellfish Fund.

4. Discussion: Water Quality Monitoring Intervals in Henderson Inlet

- The number of samples collected has decreased based on lab capacity reductions due to COVID-19. The DOH lab can process 60-90 samples per day. Sampling has been reduced in conditionally approved areas, and also in the southern portion of Henderson Inlet.
- Growing areas are sampled at least six times per year. DOH will try to sample Henderson Inlet monthly, but may reduce sampling to six times per year in 2021.
- Monthly sampling is beneficial to better capture trends in water quality improvement that are due to Thurston County Environmental Health Department activities.

5. Dept. of Health Update on Shoreline Surveys

- Shoreline surveys are part of the water quality classification process; they are conducted at least every twelve years. They are a means of locating potential fecal bacteria pollution sources.
- Jean discussed some background of shoreline surveys, the overall process, and data collection methods.
- Surveys were recently performed for Henderson and Budd Inlets, and Nisqually Reach.

6. Updates

- **Committee Chair:** Tris is open to staying on the committee, but wants to see the committee have more direction.
- **Dept. of Health:** Scott provided water quality updates. For Henderson Inlet, fecal coliform concentrations in the prohibited growing areas are trending down. The most recent sampling results from Nisqually Reach were excellent, 235 is the only failing station.

- **City of Lacey:** The city is trying to transition Stream Team outreach to a virtual platform. Research is ongoing for the best platform to continue educational events.
- The city has added a second street sweeper.
- **Ecology:** Alena will be attending meetings. She is grant funded under RCW 90.48, and focused on shellfish protection work. Currently, she is performing watershed assessments remotely.
- **Thurston Conservation District:** Have started no-contact site visits. Are working on three manure storage cost share projects in Henderson Inlet and Nisqually Reach. They are working on guidance materials for managing manure on farms. Assistance is available to landowners via phone and email; virtual site visits are also being performed.
- **Nisqually Tribe:** Shellfish farm manager position is still open. If anyone knows any interested parties, have them contact Margaret. WSU field trips may resume soon.
- **Environmental Health:** Work continues at Pleasant Forest Camping Club. Staff plan to meet once more to discuss before reaching out to the club, as the club was established before zoning and other regulations were in place. Cost sharing is available for design and permitting fees.
- **Pierce County:** Barbara Ann is working on an amendment and extension to a previously received \$1.2 million grant. She has submitted a notice of intent to apply for additional state funds.