



COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Cathy Wolfe
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District Three

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Michael Welter
Director

Nisqually Reach and Henderson Inlet Shellfish Protection Districts Combined Oversight Committee Meeting Notes September 13, 2006

Members: Tris Carlson, Steve Langer, Bryan Wilson, and Tim Wilson

Alternates: None

Guests: Mark Fischer (Puget Sound Restoration Fund)
Betsy Peabody (Puget Sound Restoration Fund)
Kathy Whalen (Thurston Conservation District)
Stuart Glasoe, (Puget Sound Action Team)
Chris Hempleman (Ecology)

County Staff: Mark J. Swartout, and Sue Davis

1. Administration:
 - A. Introductions
 - B. Approved the Agenda
 - C. Approved the July 12, 2006 Meeting Notes.
2. Discussed the proposed 2007 Work Program – included in the meeting packet were the proposals. The meeting notes will add to the information included in the packet.
 - A. Background:
 - 1) Mark explained the Shellfish Protection Fund, which receives 28% of the Thurston Conservation Fund annual assessment.
 - 2) The proposals should implement the recommendations from the Shellfish District's Report and Recommendations and the Septic System Operation and Maintenance committee.
 - 3) The 2007 Shellfish Protection Fund Work Program needs to be mutually approved by the Thurston County Board of County Commissioners and the Thurston Conservation District Board of Supervisors.
 - B. Puget Sound Restoration Fund – proposes to continue funding the Henderson Inlet Community Shellfish Farm (CSF).
 - 1) The CRS has had 983 students and teachers visit the site this year.
 - 2) There are about 600,000 oysters at the farm.
 - 3) They have been able to get plant 15 shellfish gardens on private property in

Henderson Inlet.

- 4) An idea was presented to award property owners who pump their septic systems within the Henderson Inlet watershed to come to the farm and get 12 free oysters as an incentive.
- 5) The upper tidelands at the farm are marginally productive.
- 6) To become financially self-sufficient the farm will need to plant several acres of shellfish gardens on private property due to the marginal productivity of the farms tidelands.
- 7) Even though the farms tidelands are marginally productive it is a great educational site.

C. Thurston Conservation District:

- 1) The Shellfish Pledge program:
 - a. The Pledge program has had 83 participants and has implemented 1,200 actions to improve the water quality in Henderson Inlet and the Nisqually Reach.
 - b. A video based on the pledge program has been developed and shown on TCTV (local access channel), at the county fair, and the Nisqually River Festival.
 - c. The program seeks participants in the worst areas.
- 2) Cost Share:
 - a. The request for 2007 is \$10,000 less than 2006.
 - b. The TCD tries to add additional funds to this program from other sources such as NRCS. However, the TCD Cost Share program is in greater demand because of less red tape and quick availability of funds.
 - c. The list of problem sites is shrinking.
 - d. One of the criteria to be eligible for this program is to be developing or have a Conservation Plan.
- 3) Planning and Technical Assistance:
 - a. The TCD is also applying to Ecology for a grant to do this program. If the application is successful this will release money for other activities in the TCD work program.
- 4) Students, Shellfish & the Shore – education:
 - a. TCD is looking for restoration sites for students to work on.

D. Thurston County Environmental Health:

- 1) Small grants program:
 - a. There will be greater demand for this program due to advertising and participation in the self-certifying workshops.
- 2) Septic O&M incentive program:
 - a. The County is able to provide funding to private parties and not be considered as gifting because the revenue source is the TCD assessment, which allows cost share programs.
- 3) Nisqually Reach dye testing:

- a. Anticipating higher voluntary participation due to the potential geoduck leasing opportunities.
- b. WDOH has officially downgraded the area to “Prohibited”.

E. Outcomes of discussion:

- 1) The stakeholder committee agreed to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners and Board of Supervisors approval of the proposed 2007 Shellfish Protection Fund Work Program.
- 2) There was a discussion on how to evaluate the effectiveness of the various education activities in the work program in changing behavior. It was decided that doing a valid evaluation would costly. Each program would include in their annual report specific examples they can identify of behavioral changes.
- 3) There was also a discussion of what appears to be a lack of coordination among the educational activities. It was decided that the TCD would take the lead and write a short report describing how the various education activities are coordinated and collaborated. The report would be provided to the two Boards when they review the proposed programs.

3. Updates:

- A. Discussed the recent issue on geoduck farming needing a substantial development shoreline permit. Tris asked the committee if they would be willing to write a letter to the Commissioners in support of the aquaculture industry. The letter should be written at a time when the Board will take an action on this issue. It was decided to have a more lengthy discussion at the next meeting in **November** including outside resources to help educate the members of the committee.

4. Adjourn

MS:ms/shellfish_06/meeting notes 9.13.06