

**Nisqually Reach and Henderson Inlet Shellfish Protection Districts
Combined Stakeholder Committee
Meeting Notes March 17, 2015**

Members: Tris Carlson (Nisqually SPD), Sue Shotwell (Nisqually Tribe), Mat Buldis

Guests: David Hall (Thurston Conservation District)
Kathleen Whalen (Thurston Conservation District)
Jean Snyder (WDOH)
Art Starry (Thurston County, Environmental Health)
Sue Davis (Thurston County, Environmental Health)
Derek King (Puget Sound Restoration Fund)

County Staff: Allison Osterberg (SPD coordinator – Thurston County, Long-Range Planning)

1. Administrative

- The committee approved the agenda
- The committee approved the draft November 18, 2014 meeting notes

2. Results from 2014/2015 Dye Testing

Sue Davis gave an update on the effort the county has made to conduct dye testing on properties within the two Shellfish Protection Districts to identify failing septic systems. In 2014, for Nisqually Reach they conducted 55 tests and found 7 failures. This 13% failure rate was set as the standard failure rate, since it was the first year of the O&M program. In Henderson Inlet, 41 tests were conducted with 1 failure. The dye tests are usually conducted between January and April, but 2015 has been unusual with its lack of rain. Thus far in 2015, 47 tests are being conducted in Nisqually Reach, and 57 tests in Henderson – so far there has been one confirmed failure near Johnson Point. 100% of sites in Henderson have been tested; this will take 3 more years in Nisqually Reach, which is just getting going.

- Were the failures in Nisqually Reach concentrated in one area or scattered? Scattered.
- Have past failures been repaired? Sue was not sure – their compliance team stays on this
- This information would be good to see in a spreadsheet (how many tests done, how many failures) that could be included in the annual report, and would be helpful for PIC work.
- Are failures reported to DOH? Yes.

EH has also been sampling outfalls – the new designs increase dispersion, but this makes them much more difficult to sample because there is no one pipe to check. A suggestion was to integrate this into the next management plan, so that there is a regular inspection process in place for these outfalls.

- One comment was that in Woodland Creek there continue to be high counts, and we don't know where they are coming from. Art noted that there are still gaps to address – some of these might be coming into the updated OSS management plan.

3. **2015 Work Program and Reporting**

Allison noted that progress on the Combined Shellfish Districts Work Plan was last updated with an “annual” report in 2008. Under the original ordinance approved by the Board of Commissioners, the Henderson Watershed Protection Area is scheduled to sunset in December 2017. It would be good to do a comprehensive update of what has been accomplished in the work plan, and what still might need to be done, so that the Board can make an informed decision on whether this date should be extended. This would be well timed with the TMDL Effectiveness Monitoring study, and could also provide lessons learned at a time when the county may be considering expanding some of the programs pioneered in Henderson to other areas of the County. A prospective date for this updated report would be in Spring of 2016.

Allison also asked for feedback on potential topics for upcoming stakeholder meetings. Some suggestions were, May: TMDL Effectiveness Monitoring, County's LID Code Update; July: Updates on Programs funded by Shellfish Fund, County's Shoreline Plan Update; September: 2016 Shellfish Fund Proposals; November: Update on Work Plan.

4. **Updates:**

- ***Chair:***

Tris met with new Commissioner Bud Blake and gave him a history of the Shellfish Districts. He has a lot on his plate as a newcomer.

- ***DOH:***

Jean said DOH should be wrapped up with their annual reporting by mid-April.

In Nisqually Reach, sampling has dropped to 6 times a year in the locations discussed at the last meeting, and the first data of the year was collected on March 10 – results are looking good except for the area near Luhr Beach, station 709. This is not a worsening trend, so overall things are good.

- There are additional protections around marinas. Question was raised as to whether Puget Marina is still a marina? DOH bases this on how many boats are present. The Nisqually Tribe might be in negotiations over this property.

Henderson Inlet presents a sadder story – counts on the eastern shoreline are creeping up, and stations 201 and 190 in the Approved section are threatened with a downgrade. Station 188 in the Conditionally Approved area is failing and DOH is recommending the rainfall threshold be dropped from ¾-inch to ½-inch. It is upsetting that things seem to be going backwards. DOH's shoreline survey crew covered the area around Fishtrap and everything was ok in the shoreline.

- Sue Davis said that they are also monitoring and Dobbs Creek continues to be a problem area. Agriculture and Pleasant Forest Campground have been noted as

potential sources, but there is poor water quality upstream of the campground, and TCEH is investigating some areas upstream that have a lot of cattle and little stream vegetation.

- ***Puget Sound Restoration Fund:*** Farm Stand sales are going strong, and the Community Farm has been doing outreach at the Turn of the Tides Festival, the Urban Farm and Garden Center, and Native Plan Sale. They were part of a WSEC tour, but harvest was closed on the day of the tour due to a heavy rain event. They will be working with South Sound Green on events in May and June. Derek is working on partnerships with local restaurants and food purveyors, including Dockside Bistro, Olympia Seafood Co, and Oly Underground.
- ***Thurston Conservation District:*** TCD recently completed a farm plan and has a few cost sharing projects in the works. Most of these are manure storage structures.
 - How often do people comply with a farm plan once completed? Kathy answered that in this area cooperation is very high, 75%, even though it is voluntary. Henderson has more farm plans than any of the other watersheds, probably owing to the greater focus given by the SPD.TCD will be hosting an oyster growing workshop, and recently hosted a tour of Thurston County agriculture and restoration sites to the Washington State Conservation Commission.
- ***TC Environmental Health Dept:*** There will be a second Septic Summit on April 29 at LOTT focusing on the results of the urban septic analysis that found there are 16,744 septic systems in the urban areas – most of these are in UGAs.

TC EH is releasing a new OSS Management Plan – in the report they are proposing to change the way funds are collected. The fee charged to Henderson and Nisqually septic owners would be replaced by a fee charged to all septic owners throughout the county – and O&M program would be expanded county-wide. The report can be downloaded at: http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehomp/docs/FINALDraft_OSSPlan2014.pdf
Fee collection for Nisqually has begun, with no problems encountered so far.

- ***Other:***
The Nisqually Tribe helped to fund a film on Jerry Yamashita, which was produced by Leaping Frog Films. You can view a clip here: <https://vimeo.com/100757760>