

**Nisqually Reach and Henderson Inlet Shellfish Protection Districts  
Combined Stakeholder Committee  
Draft Meeting Notes July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

Members: Tris Carlson (Nisqually SPD), Kim Benedict (City of Lacey), Robert Johanson (Nisqually Tribe)

Guests: Jean Snyder (WDOH)  
Lindsey Hamilton (WDOH)  
Derek King (Puget Sound Restoration Fund)  
Derek Rockett (Department of Ecology)

County Staff: Jane Mountjoy-Venning (Thurston County, Environmental Health)  
Allison Osterberg (SPD coordinator – Thurston County, Long-Range Planning)  
Natalie Sahli (Thurston County, Long-Range Planning)

**1. Administrative**

- The committee approved the agenda
- The committee approved the draft May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016 meeting notes

**2. Henderson Inlet Analysis Presentation by Lindsey Hamilton**

Lindsey Hamilton has a one-year fellowship position with the Washington State Department of Health. She wanted to share her findings with the group, as well as solicit advice on what to include/omit from her analysis. Her project looks at fecal coliform trends in shellfish growing areas. For this project, she focused on three main questions 1) How fecal coliform has changed over the past 25 years, 2) How are trends changing in response to the environment and/or restoration efforts, and 3) Have restoration efforts been successful at reducing fecal coliform trends. Lindsey used a multiple linear regression incorporating the variables of salinity, temperature, rainfall, and date. Henderson Inlet showed no upward or downward trend for fecal coliform over the past 25 years. Over the same time period, wet and dry season coliform values declined for Nisqually Reach. Lindsey applied a restoration timeline for the past 25 years to the trend charts, focusing mainly on actions implemented on the ground. Advisory Group members encouraged Lindsey to include pet waste outreach as a significant effort to be correlated with water quality trends. Pet waste was originally identified as one of the main contributors to water quality decline. Since this time, the city of Lacey and other partners have extended a great effort in curbing pet waste runoff into watershed. Lindsey's analysis additionally noted that Henderson inlet had an upward trend in fecal coliform prior to the formation of the SPD. The next stages of her project focus in on single stations and correlating water quality trends to fine-scale restoration efforts. One example of this was how work done in agriculture led to a decline of fecal coliform in McAllister creek. Historically, Henderson Inlet fecal coliform events had been driven by rain events. However, rainfall showed no correlation to bacterial levels in the second half of the timeline. This shift was hypothetically attributed to improvements in stormwater made within the SPD. Although it did not show a downward trend, one notable accomplishment for Henderson Inlet is that it represents one of the few growing areas in an

urban setting. Though the population has doubled in the watershed, fecal coliform has not increased since 1989 - a relative success for the SPD.

The City of Lacey expressed interest in connecting Lindsey to the stormwater implementation timeline. Environmental Health was curious if the OM program had made any difference. However, the specific effect of OM on water quality can't be assessed due to the scale at which it was implemented. Possible effects could be observed when looking at big pushes in OM. Tanglewild and Woodland Creek septic connection efforts could be tied with specific stations, and especially important when looking at conditionally approved areas. Stormwater activities have been extremely beneficial in the region, especially in regards to pet waste and updated facilities. One change the group suggested to Lindsey was to remove the NPDES Stormwater phase 1 permit on her timeline, since all Thurston County jurisdictions are phase 2 stormwater municipalities.

The Henderson Inlet SPD is up for reauthorization by the Board of County Commissioners in 2017. Lindsey's research could be useful to show the water quality effects of the SPDs, especially when tied to specific actions. She plans to create final drafts in mid-August for feedback from the group. WDOH will have everything on record, and will be able to talk to the BoCC. Other members suggested that Lindsey write an article for the Stream Team newsletter in order to reach the community with this information. As the community is most involved in these efforts, it is important to reach out to them. Also, a copy of these findings should be submitted to Bud Blake.

### **3. Agriculture and Septic Work Plan Implementation Matrix Update**

The group discussed updating the sections of the Implementation Work Plan related to agriculture and septic sources. One suggestion was to create a new action that would allow the county to be more proactive instead of reactive. With current staff resources, county environmental staff cannot always analyze monitoring results to identify problem areas and cannot always follow up on potential water quality issues when they do show up in the monitoring. With additional resources, EH staff could do segmentation studies, send out notices, and do regular check-ins on problem areas. This could be similar to the Pollution Identification and Correction (PIC) programs that have been run in Kitsap County and other jurisdictions with some success.

Group members wondered what the consequences are for people who have farm plans to follow them - they have a year to implement them, and Environmental Health staff can follow up. An action should be added to investigate and clarify the legal aspects of reviewing and revisiting farm plans, with Ecology as an enforcement backstop.

Another suggested changes is to put more emphasis on conducting workshops in the watershed, rather than tours. Workshops could target noncommercial farms and backyard farmers with chickens.

Under the septic section, there will need to be an action added to reauthorize the Henderson program, if the county-wide OSS plan fails to advance. A separate action could be added that calls out the riser rebate program.

#### **4. Updates**

##### WDOH:

-Nisqually- WDOH has been sampling Nisqually 6x per year. Fecal coliform counts have been staying relatively low. The 3 year OM program is wrapping up, and is helping keep numbers down.

-Henderson- Station 188 is failing in Henderson. However, elsewhere in Henderson WQ is looking great. Station 195 has a relatively high estimated 90<sup>th</sup> percentile, and 190 is slightly elevated. Stations 187 and 189 are passing. Station 188 fails regardless of rainfall. In the conditionally approved zone, 35 acres will be upgraded to Approved. 10 acres in this area will be downgraded to Prohibited. As stations 187 and 189 don't have lower counts in the rolling estimated 90<sup>th</sup> percentiles dropping off, it may be difficult for them to pass at the end of the year. Hence, the upgrade may not be permanent. Station 212 is currently passing. If the tribe has interest in harvesting there, the line could be redrawn. The report to change classification will be done by the end of the following week. An administrative order takes about 35 days to complete. Hopefully, the changes will be in effect in September. The land use issue in the 188 area can be attributed to both Dobbs and Woodland creek. Recent effort has been put into a failing system north of station 212. There are also rotating pastures on either side of the inlet that may be contributing to the issue. The pleasant forest community on Dobbs creek may also be contributing. There is a need to follow through with inspections of the encampment. However, management of this area is difficult because there is no official history. At station 825 at the head of the bay, almost 30 samples have been collected. At this point, WDOH will know whether this station will be Conditionally Approved or downgraded. A leaking septic system near this area was identified and is currently being fixed.

##### WDOE:

Scott Collyard created Henderson report draft. He detected issues around encampments and hobby farms. Scott will be in to present findings in September after an internal review, followed by a longer presentation in November.

##### City of Lacey:

Watering parties near Woodland Creek continue. However, bees have been negatively affecting volunteers. The city is also looking for two new Americorps members.

##### PSRF:

Most of the education is wrapped up for the season. The education programs reached 400 students with near shore education and about 75 people at the Saturday shellfish work

parties. Slurp, Dive into Your Neighborhood tour, and TCD plant sale reached about 675 people. The oysters are growing quickly. Though, the farm is not using a cooling system, choosing, instead, to shut down for vibrio season. Community members have become involved as farm interns.

Environmental Health:

The dye test season is finished. There will be follow-throughs with failures and enforcement. 11-12% of systems needed minor repairs.

Long-Range Planning:

The Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) is working on plan for all of Thurston County's watersheds, but could use more input from environmental groups. The county is reaching out to anyone that would like to participate or know of any environmental agency that may participate.

Other:

WSU is becoming more active in Point Meyer site. They are in the early stages of input from the educators. The dean of science and art is facilitating discussions. They hope to make the area a retreat for classes and a wet lab. So far, the university is working with the county to see if everyone is on the same page. Thus far the group has some funding, and is hoping to have more through the Allen Foundation.