

**Nisqually Reach and Henderson Inlet Shellfish Protection Districts
Combined Stakeholder Committee
Meeting Notes May 16, 2017**

Members: Tris Carlson (Nisqually SPD), Kim Benedict (City of Lacey), Margaret Homerding (Nisqually Tribe)

Guests: Kathleen Whalen (Thurston Conservation District)
Jean Snyder (WDOH)
Donovan Gray, Derek Rockett (Ecology)

County Staff: Allison Osterberg (SPD Coordinator - Long Range Planning)
Art Starry, Jane Mountjoy-Venning (Environmental Health)

1. Administrative

- The committee approved the agenda
- The committee approved the draft January 17th, 2017 meeting notes

2. Current WQ Issues in Henderson Inlet

- The Henderson Inlet O&M program will sunset in 2017 unless it is reauthorized by the Board of County Commissioners. There is a briefing with the Board on June 1 to introduce the current status, past improvements, and ongoing concerns for Henderson. Ecology and DOH staff will attend along with County staff. The group brainstormed on topics to include in this discussion, including data sources, examples from other jurisdictions, and economic benefits of shellfish industry for the county.
- Ecology's story map of the Henderson TMDL effectiveness study is not quite finalized, but it is close.
- Tris Carlson is taking Commissioner Hutchings on a tour of shellfish farms on May 26.
- The program will need to be reauthorized by September, in order for there to be time to include it in the property tax assessment for next year.

3. Updates:

- **WDOH:**
 - DOH completed its annual inventory of growing areas in April. No failing areas in Thurston County for now, but several were identified in Mason County. No downgrades are proposed for Thurston County this year.

- Station 189 in Henderson is failing again and only going to get worse as some of the better numbers fall off in future months. Station 191 is threatened. Station 190 is at the highest level it has been in many years – this is an alarming trend. DOH picked up some bigger rain events during their sampling.
- If 195 and 190 fail, it will close down the Community Shellfish Farm – they are no longer subject to conditional closures, so it is all or nothing.
- WQ in Nisqually Reach is looking fantastic, even at Station 709.
- Shoreline survey staff have been out collecting samples.
- ***Thurston County Environmental Health***
 - Staff are continuing to monitor the chicken farm near the headwaters of Henderson.
 - EH received funding through the Action Agenda Near Term Action process, and the group supported developing a pilot Pollution Identification and Correction program for Dobbs Creek in Henderson. This project is not yet under contract.
 - EH also received funding to do a voluntary O&M program in Eld Inlet – Board is interested in seeing the effectiveness of voluntary measures. They are also reviewing the OS Management Plan, and need to decide on next steps, since they have pulled back on funding.
 - EH staff are still processing samples from the dye test season – but anecdotally, there were few failures.
- ***Lacey***
 - Planning for their watering season and will have many watering parties coming up.
- ***Ecology***
 - Ecology staff are working to finish the Story map for Henderson and support communication efforts.
 - Nonpoint staff have been doing an assessment of Henderson and found some water quality concerns related to the chicken farm. In general, however, they have not seen glaring agricultural issues in Henderson.
 - One question was to look at the density of sewer vs septic systems in the Nisqually Reach area
- ***Conservation District***
 - 2017 is the last year of the district's tax assessment – they are proposing to move to a rate system, which would be based on parcels. They have a briefing scheduled with the Board of County Commissioners.
- ***Nisqually Tribe***
 - The shellfish farm will shut down in July for the vibrio season, and are developing a plan for the farm over the next few months.