



March 11, 2015

APPROVED Meeting Notes

Dungeness River Management Team

Dungeness River Audubon Center, Sequim, WA

2:00 – 5:00 P.M.

Notes prepared by: Shawn Hines

Team Members/Alternates in Attendance:

Scott Chitwood, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe
Judy Larson, Protect the Peninsula's Future
Robert Brown, Dungeness Beach Association
Shawn Hines, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe (alt)
Cathy Lear, Clallam County (alt)
James Beebe, Riverside Property Owner (alt)
Ben Smith, Water Users Association
Don Hatler, Sports Fisheries

Tom Martin, Clallam County PUD #1 (advisory member)
Ann Soule, City of Sequim
Matt Heins, Estuary-Tidelands/Riverside Property Owners

Others in Attendance:

Melissa Soares, resident
Les Jones, resident
Aiana Linderoth, Sequim Gazette
Phil Martin, resident

I. Introductions/Review Agenda/Review & Approve February 11, 2015 DRMT Draft Meeting Notes

Scott Chitwood called meeting to order. Introductions were made, sign in sheets circulated. Approval of February notes was postponed until the next meeting due to lack of quorum at the time of approval.

Public Comment: There were no public comments.

II. Railroad Bridge Update (*Scott Chitwood, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, for Powell Jones, Dungeness River Audubon Center*)

- Scott provided the bridge update in Powell Jones' absence.
- Scott clarified that that it was the trestle, and not the bridge, that was damaged during recent high flow event. Pilings from one of the trestle piers were undermined by the force of the flow, and were carried away downstream. Remaining pilings have been secured.
- There is no record of how far down the pilings were driven into the ground when they were originally installed.
- Each trestle span is a 5 pile pier, and on top of pier is big piece of support timber (tack), plus a cap. One of the central piers of the trestle was eroded out.
- The water going under the west-side trestle used to be considered as a side-channel. It is now the main channel, and the cottonwoods that have fallen down were previously at the location where the rack accumulated.
- Scott showed several photos of the bridge, trestle and river – taken from a variety of viewpoints (ground-view and aerial views).
- The Tribe did have the bridge insured; however, there is rather a large deductible (due to the likely cause of most of the damage being from the flood).
- The bridge itself is 150 feet, 600 feet of trestle. The Tribe's view is that the creosote pilings (160 of them) are not in good shape. Originally, cedar pilings were used. Those were replaced in 1958 with creosoted fir. It's only a matter of time before the rest of the trestle becomes unusable. Therefore, the thinking is that it would be best to replace all 600 feet of trestle, add that to the current 150-foot bridge, for an updated crossing. A consideration might be to put in a temporary bridge. Cost for a temporary fix might be "x", but a more long-term fix could be three or four times "x". The objective is to make it usable again by the public for what it is used for now (bikes, pedestrians). In the long term, we are looking at not a couple thousand, but potentially a couple million. Hoping the NOPL process can be of help.
- Matt Heins said there was talk about switching out the McDonald Creek project (which would remove structures from McDonald Creek channel), and instead using that funding (from Floodplains by Design) for the bridge repair. He thought most of the partners agreed it seemed to be a perfect fit. Scott said it is

difficult to speculate because we don't know how much funding we'll need for the various parts (design + engineering + construction).

- Judy Larson asked if the Roads Department will be involved. She advocated that a letter be sent in support of the re-allocation of the McDonald Creek project funding toward the bridge repair.
- Don Hatler said one of the problems will be access for a pile driver and other construction equipment. Scott said the construction would need to happen during low water. Perhaps a temporary bridge deck would be used.
- Tom Martin asked how deep the streambed was scoured. Scott said an assessment has not been done; just early investigation of possible funding themes.
- Robert Brown asked if the County would do anything about the downed trees? Scott said it wasn't likely that engineers would recommend permits for their removal. Water still goes through rootwads; cottonwoods don't last long.
- Matt asked what the next steps were. Scott said the next step would be to secure the engineer/design work and get that going. Costs to cover replacement probably wouldn't happen by this summer. Best scenario would be construction during next summer (2016). Joe Holtrop asked if the Legislature had been contacted. Scott said Chairman Ron Allen had been involved in some discussions. Unknown as of yet if anything will come of those discussions. Don asked for estimate of engineering costs. Scott said there may be as much as \$100,000 available for that purpose; not sure what the actual costs will be yet. The Tribe's Administration is taking the lead on discussions about both engineering and design work, and discussions with other relevant groups (North Olympic Discovery Marathon, etc.) Scott isn't directly involved in the planning, but the Tribe's Chief Operating Officer is on the River Center Board. It was also noted that the bridge is on the National Historic Register.
- Judy asked if this (bridge safety/transportation alternatives) has ever been an issue for the County, or County work session item? Cathy Lear suspects that Rich James in Public Works is involved to the extent that he can be because of his work with the Trails Association. **Cathy will speak to Rich and get back to Shawn.**
- Scott mentioned that the latest *Living on the Peninsula* issue includes an article on the Railroad Bridge. Don commented that some of the historic facts in that article are not accurate.
- Scott said the first bridge to span the river was finished in 1915. It will be the focal point of the Dungeness River Festival this year (September 26), for the 100th Anniversary. Not sure of what the status of the bridge will be for that event. Les Jones commented that the recent flooding wasn't even close to the record flood. We've had much bigger floods going under the bridge.
- Discussion ensued about the previous Dungeness floods, impacts to upstream logjams, and lessons that might be learned when considering future scenarios as Scott showed aerial video footage from John Gussman.

III. City of Sequim Updates (*Ann Soule, City of Sequim*)

- Ann came prepared to answer some questions raised at some previous DRMT meetings:
 1. What is the City's water supply storage capacity? Answer: Total is just under 3 million gallons, with standby of 0.5 million gallon. Typical demand is 0.5 million gallons (0.6 million in winter, over 1 million gpd in summer) per day. Standby means over your wet season usage; what goes over the 0.6 million. Thought to be a DOH term. The new Water Systems Plan includes increasing reservoir capacity, but that is behind a lot of other projects. The Plan is now approved. Judy asked about Solana subdivision reservoir status. Ann said that kind of detail should be in the City's Water System Comprehensive Plan.
 2. Can the City report on results of the sewer-smoke-testing? Answer: Smoke testing is used to find connections between the sewer and the outside environment, to find evidence of leaks. It is done section by section from one sewage manhole to the next, and sending smoke-balls up and down the lines. Several were found to be leaking, for example a sewer clean-out that didn't have a cap on it, or a roof down-spout connected to the sewer (which is illegal). The upcoming Storm/Surface Water Plan will identify those locations.

3. Schedule for Storm/Surface Water Plan should be released the third week of May. Presentation to DRMT in May. Then Planning Commission Review and City Council review and public hearing during that process.

- Ben Smith stated that Steve Gaither (Manager, Highland Irrigation District) said the amount of water they are dealing with now (from Feb. 27 high water event) is probably the largest amount that Highland Irrigation District has had to ever deal with in the last 25 years – with no major catastrophe. They were spilling where they needed to, and wondered if City felt things went well as far as runoff management.
- Ann Soule said things did go relatively well in a lot of ways during this flood. DOT retention pond between 3rd and Sequim Avenue worked as planned.
- Ben said need to coordinate because WDOT and City tried to unplug – they had to tell them not to. Need to make sure everyone on same page with that; continue education about how that’s supposed to function.
- Runoff from West Happy Valley is one of the problems in stormwater plan that City wants to resolve, trying to store it possibly; discussing with Amanda Cronin.
- Judy asked about reviewing retention requirements for developments, and brought up concerns about possible contaminated runoff from Bell development. Ann said they are in process of setting up meeting with County Public Works (who approved drainage plan for Highland Hills, the Bell Hill development) to discuss. There’s also a drainage committee who is paying attention. Ann stated that retention ponds are designed to retain the water for only a certain amount of time.
- Judy asked about efficiencies – no more than 10 percent lost. City had not been meeting that standard, has it yet attained that? **Ann to find out.**
- Judy asked again about leaks. Has there been analysis as to how much sewage has gone out from pipeline leak versus the others mentioned? Ann said slow leak (not spill per se). Those kinds of leaks can be fixed in various ways. **Will find out if there is a report.**

IV. Drought Planning (*Ben Smith, Water Users Association and Scott Chitwood, Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe*)

- Ben Smith stated that snowpack is now at six percent of normal in the Olympics. Though, we’ve had 106% of rainfall to date (starting in October).
- Ben explained that Amanda Cronin of Washington Water Trust is putting together a leasing program with funding from Washington Department of Ecology. The funds would cover late-season leases (August 15-September 15). There will be a bid process like in the past, for larger than 5-acre parcels that have been historically (within last five years) irrigated. Those participating would not water during the last month of the season. The Water Users Association has been informed about the program. [Amanda will discuss this at April 8 DRMT meeting].
- Don Hatler asked how much water they are willing to buy. Ben said as much as possible within their budget. Last time they did this it was a couple of cfs.
- Robert Brown asked if there are any incentives for people to use more efficient watering. Ben said yes. The “big guns” are considered, not “best”, but a good management practice. Joe Holtrop said they actually aren’t that good, only 60-70% efficient at getting water where it’s supposed to go. The low pressure “booms”, however are 90% efficient. Joe said there is funding available for those. The problem is that the “big guns” are very convenient. Robert said this would be the prime year to put out incentives. Ben agreed with Joe that in theory the booms are great, design is good, but there are issues – such as expense.
- James Beebe wondered about encouraging folks to not water lawns. Ben said there is no program for lawn irrigators like the lease program. Ben said it would be difficult to track the individual lawn irrigators. Tom Martin added that the lowest dollars/acre will be picked for the lease program. Seems unfair advantage for those with larger acreage. Larger acreage can drop their per acreage price. Is crop-type factored in? Ben didn’t think crop-type is factored in. Matt Heins noted all this highlights the importance of the need for a reservoir. Ann Soule said that right now ground water levels are high; ground is fully saturated. James asked how much water it would take to keep one acre of lawn green per day. Answer – 20 inches per year for season, for optimum grass-clipping production.

- Cathy mentioned the possibility that the current low snowpack (or what it means) may not be common knowledge, surprisingly. Link from snowpack to water supply and lawn watering may not be obvious to some.
- Tom Martin said that SNOTEL (in addition to snow pack info) makes forecasts for streamflow each month, starting in January. In January, streamflow was predicted to be 90%; February forecast said 80%. The latest one is 60%. Doesn't translate directly to streamflow; for example, 80% snowpack doesn't translate to 80% streamflow. Streamflow is lower.
- Scott next provided information from the Water Supply Availability Committee (State committee who reports to the Emergency Water Executive Committee (Department heads who report to Governor's office) convened by the State. The Tech. committee is made of people collecting, providing, discussing data and meeting regularly to assess whether watersheds are projected to receive enough water, per certain criteria. The criteria for receiving State assistance for drought is having flows less than 75%, and having potential for hardship. Scott went through a slide-show that was provided during the Tech. Committee meeting.
- There are 62 WRIA watersheds, and 40 of those have been flagged at below 75%. There is a proposal for \$9 million in assistance for those expected to experience hardship. The Dungeness is particularly challenging because we do a lot of irrigation without a reservoir.
- At this time, Scott went over a slide-show presentation from the water meeting he attended [forwarded to Team via email].
- The Dungeness and Waterhole SNOTEL sites are the most relevant to Dungeness River. We are at 110-120% for precipitation right now, along with much of the State. As far as temperatures, SEATAC has been recording record-breaking temperatures on a fairly regular basis lately.
- Discussion ensued about El Nino conditions, potential fire hazards, and lack of snow at Hurricane Ridge.
- The main objective at the water meeting was to determine if a watershed was above or below the 75% threshold, and if don't know – then must keep a watch. Dungeness is currently at 44%.
- Scott showed Excel charts he created based on data from the SNOTEL sites. [Forwarded to Team via email].

Public Comment:

- Tom Martin announced that it is National Fix a Leak Week.
- Judy Larson raised concern about the Tribe's resort pipeline capacity for sewer treatment. Scott said that estimate was for build-out. Judy asked where the water would come from, and wondered whether it would impact our WRIA. Judy suggested that this be discussed at a future meeting, as we did about Battelle's plans.
- Robert Brown brought up a particular marijuana grow that he mentioned at previous meetings. He recalled that Sheila had said the County was paying attention. He's not sure it's being addressed. The growers did get a permit. Looks like a lot of construction going on within the existing barn – two stories inside the barn. He thinks there are things going on there that the County doesn't know about. He had mentioned some of this to Mike Gallagher at a previous meeting. He would like an update.

V. Adjourn

Action Items or Items Needing Follow-up	Date Requested	Date Completed
Drought planning	2/11/15	Evening community forum anticipated mid-May.
County Public Works involvement with bridge repair	3/11/15	
City of Sequim meeting 10 percent loss?	3/11/15	
City of Sequim report on types of sewer leaks?	3/11/15	