

ALLIANCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING Summary
OCTOBER 30th 2-4

Tilley ECC Building (Building E), Training Room

9521 Tilley Road SW Olympia

<http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/directions/maps/gd/Public-Works-Tilley-Campus.pdf>

ATTENDING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Executive Pat McCarthy

Commissioner Sandra Romero

David Trout

Jeff Dickison

Commissioner Randy Neatherlin (arriving late)

2:00

Introductions, approval of Sept. meeting summary

Commissioner Romero welcomed us to the LEED Gold Tilley campus. The campus functions as a pocket gopher sanctuary and includes lots of green building methods such as impervious parking, electric hook-ups, green products, reused water for toilets, etc. Offered to walk around and show off the grounds.

Approved September meeting summary

2:05

Discussion of Kitsap County Seat

Action:

- *Determine whether to allow Kitsap staff to fill seat, if another Kitsap Commissioner is unavailable to do so.*

Commissioner Romero cited Commissioner Garrido's letter stating that a very small portion of Kitsap is in South Sound (10%). Commissioner Garrido seems to feel that with their County already participating in two other LIOs that being part of the Alliance with such a small portion of the County may not be necessary.

David Troutt noted that there is a related conversation that may impact how the Committee addresses this issue later in the agenda. He suggested that it might be better to come back to this topic.

Executive McCarthy asked if everyone was fine with that. There was consensus to return to the topic later in the meeting.

2:15

Introduction to the Chinook adaptive management project

(Laura Blackmore/Mike Parton)

Laura Blackmore introduced the Chinook salmon and adaptive management project – to organize an adaptive management and monitoring plans across the South Sound. The South Sound adaptive management team is translating the 2005 plan – not making new plans. Next July they'll use the framework currently in development. That framework will support 10 year plan update and help each watershed identify monitoring priorities and to develop adaptive management processes.

Phase 1 benefits to the Puget Sound region:

- Provides common language across watersheds
- Fulfills NOAA requirement for a Monitoring and Adaptive Management (M&AM) plan
- Provides consistent communications
- Determines highest priority actions and gaps
- Identify cause and effect relationships
- Identify the most critical monitoring needs
- Identifies trigger points for decision

Focus for the project is to conserve Chinook and their habitat.

Adaptive Management in this case is defined as relating to the identification of what we care about. In this case, that means Chinook and their habitat. It determines ways to describe or measure the things we care about determine threats and then determine actions – set goals and adapt.

Puget Sound Partnership has its own language (e.g.; – pressures rather than threats).

Laura shared a simplified diagram from the RITT – the framework for all of these plans. The common framework will be used to link species ecosystem pressures and strategies. Indicators will be developed to monitor progress.

Executive McCarthy clarified that ecosystem components are different from the species (Chinook)

Laura Blackmore concurred that yes, ecosystem components are defined as habitat

Phase 1 expected products:

Customized framework based on 2005 plans

Populations

Habitats

Pressures and stresses

Strategies and actions

Viability assessment

Priority indicators (monitoring plans)

Structure for improved management – adaptive management process.

Phase 1 &2 expected products:

Fulfills NOAA requirements

Look across 22 populations (16 watersheds) and determine how the fish are doing and identify common themes, pressures, strategies, gaps and monitoring priorities.

Inform the development of the plan update process.

Integration with the action agenda == this is a pilot for the Puget Sound.

Phase 1 – 16 watersheds

Phase 2 – July – December – watersheds develop monitoring plans

Into the future – fund and implement and use data to do adaptive management.

Funding:

Currently the Puget Sound Partnership funds 40K to each of the watersheds, via EPA.

The Monitoring and Adaptive Management process (M&AM) is happening in all 16 watersheds at once.

Tom Kantz, a member of the South Sound M&AM core team, noted that the Alliance technical team approached Executive Committee last May/June – to gain approval of combining funding from Nisqually and South Sound with a little additional to hire a contractor (Mike Parton) to develop the adaptive management plan that Laura is referring to.

He also noted that in Laura's slides, "watershed" should really read "Recovery Chapter"

Jeff Dickison asked how multi-species are incorporated into the framework.

Laura Blackmore: This is a Chinook focused process

Jeff Dickison: I understand NOAA's focus on Chinook. All the other components are not only Chinook.

Laura Blackmore: This is year one of a very long process. To the extent that a watershed strategy has other species in their plan, they can integrate that. NOAA has plans to integrate steelhead as we move forward. The RITT has set the template.

David Troutt noted that it's not a species specific template. The reason why it's currently Chinook focused is because of the Endangered Species Act.

Mike Parton stated that he's been the RITT member reviewing these plans. We've tried to strike a balance between understanding that we have had Chinook blinders and then to expand outward.

The technical framework addresses the same habitat and ecosystems things that are valid to the other species.

Laura noted that the South Sound core team includes Tom Kantz (Pierce County), Chris Ellings (Nisqually Tribe), Scott Steltzner (Squaxin Island Tribe), Mike Parton (Alliance contractor), Laura Blackmore (PSP/Long Live the Kings consultant), Stephanie Suter (PSP) and getting additional input from Cindy Wilson (Thurston County), Kathy Peters (Kitsap County), Amy Hatch-Winecka (Thurston/Mason County)

The Executive Committee asked that Gabby join that Advisory team.

Justin Hall asked how the Council fits into this?

David Troutt suggested that would be addressed in a later agenda items. He also noted that at present there is no owner of the recovery chapter.

Dan Wrye noted that one of the issues that you're seeing is that people are using a lot of different terms for the same geographies:

NOAA uses "watersheds"
Statute uses "Action Areas"
Partnership uses "LIOS"

That's causes huge confusion of language.

Executive McCarthy noted that in South Puget Sound – the Action Area is the same as the LIO. In NOAA the South Puget Sound Chapter is the same area except Nisqually and East Kitsap they call it.

Laura Blackmore shared that the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council is providing the policy guidance and capacity and funding down the road for the iterative work. They'll help with developing the regional adaptive management process to the watershed process.

Executive McCarthy: I think it's great. We're doing a pilot project to look at adaptive management strategies. We can get bogged down in the technical stuff but it's terrific. The language just needs some clarification.

The Executive Committee suggested that Laura should have a slide for Chapter Boundaries: Watersheds, Lead Entity boundaries, chapters, LIOS, statute.

David Troutt stated that we don't have a clear owner or policy body for the chapter – to be strategic about how we make adaptive management choices. It's very challenging. None of the lead entities manage the chapter.

Jeff Dickison stated that just reiterating that it's okay for multi-species to piggyback is different from having a multispecies plan. One is okay and one is not. That will have to be dealt with.

David Troutt asked, if a stakeholder came to you with other species strategies, can they then be included?

Mike Parton: It can't be excluded.

David Troutt: Nisqually is choosing not to bring that in, but the South Sound can do that.

Executive McCarthy asked whether there was a real big difference between the species in a plan like this?

Jeff Dickison responded that there are some technical biological differences. The administrative issue is different – a single species plan limits funding to only Chinook recovery projects. If we do that in South Sound then we take huge parts of South Sound out of the picture.

Mike Parton: The take home here is this is a learning exercise. But before we take on multi-species we have to figure out if we're doing this process right, to filter the chapter that was written and approved in 2005. For each species we need to decide what the most important limiting factor is. Here in South Sound – we have to rely on the Nisqually Chinook population as our mascot. But we have a big nursery that needs every good effort we can put into it.

Executive McCarthy reiterated that there needs to be some tending to the nomenclature – adding details to those nuances. The other take away is that we want to ensure that by supporting this, we're not blanket supporting a funding mechanism that only supports Chinook.

Dan Wrye noted that what is being talked about here is an endangered species recovery plan. The Chinook recovery plan was adopted and required in 2005.

Mike Parton offered to put together a terminology list. The Executive Committee suggested that a brief history of the subject from the core team might be very helpful.

Review of Alliance strategy Task Force Discussion

David Troutt noted that there were two big issues the task force had to consider including the funding of LIOs and the control over our future and the strategies for getting there.

The task force identified goals including 1) having the capacity/funding to implement South Sound priorities. 2) Improving the Puget Sound Partnership by better positioning the LIO for grassroots implementation.

He noted that there may be conflict between those two goals. We've been working on a legislative strategy for about six months and drafted some legislation that has provided an opportunity for discussion.

David Troutt posed the question: Are we interested in getting something in front of the legislature in the next two months or do we want to get something for the longer session in 2014? Further, in the course of that discussion how do we build partnerships? If we're to move this fairly quickly we should develop a team – such as Hood Canal Coordinating Council to partner on this. If the idea is to build a larger coalition – then we begin to create and build this bill differently. The other idea is the idea of creating another organization. For example, in the Salmon Recovery (SR) world the salmon regions get together once a month (Council of Regions) to recommend policy actions to the Salmon Recovery board.

We also have another group. We have 25 Lead Entities that get together every 6 weeks or so and come to the SR Board to respond to proposals. Having the ability to get together to unify strategy has been very helpful.

We need a Council of LIOs where once a quarter the leaders of the LIO get together to move common agendas forward.

In David's discussions with PSP's Marc Daily, that seems to be a common goal. David proposed that the Bill be the first order of business for that group to develop a broad base for support for this bill and a way to bring the PSP in.

Commissioner Neatherlin suggested that there was a third option - all of the above. We can push forward now and at the same time begin building that Council of LIOs.

Stephanie Suter added that those were the two options that she heard – and the addition that Randy talked about. There were a few changes that we agreed on before the bill went out for discussion regardless about the option.

Dan Wrye added that there was agreement among the task force that getting the bill out to begin that discussion was an important first step. Not having the document out is confusing and may cause misunderstanding. There was an additional item presenting in terms of consolidating Lead Entities.

Jeff Dickison stated that the Squaxin Island tribe has voiced it's concern about the constant churning we do and jumping through the PSP hoops as opposed to the real

work on the ground. I am concerned David – I don't oppose the idea of a Council of LIOs, but to put all of our eggs in the basket of letting the agency with which we've had the most problems continue to lead us into the future. I have a lot of concern about identifying that as a sole path forward. If we continue business as usual then Squaxin Tribe isn't going to see the value in that.

David Troutt responded that in his personal opinion, the work Dan has done has focused us onto the important work that needs doing. I think trying to do this between now and January is going to be really challenging. I think that we should say that by Nov of next year, we'll have a bill ready and sponsors to give us time to build the biggest broadest base possible. The Council LIOs wouldn't necessarily be subservient – but they could also go to the Governor.

Commissioner Romero suggested that it's really not cooked yet enough to be successful this year. But I do think that there will be bills in the legislature this year that will bring out the people we want to build coalitions with. I'm building on Randy's hybrid, because I think we should have a presence in the legislature this year. I'm agreeing with David and with Randy. I don't think we're ready for a bill. There will be the investment district legislation to build on .

Executive McCarthy stated that she appreciates that point of view. If I could ask Jennifer Joly – is it plausible to float a bill that's not ready for prime time? In essence it takes the boogey man out so people aren't imagining things.

Jennifer Joly responded that a lot of people have a two or three session plan to get a bill through. Particularly in a short session. People drop a bill to educate the legislatures and try and get a public hearing. Would we have to make a formal process – state that we're not dropping it yet. But we can do that now – and start to distribute it and educate people. We have a code reviser version now and even without dropping it formally it would get conversation.

Executive McCarthy: Would that defeat our effort?

David Troutt: That would build coalitions. If we were to get sponsors or get opposition.

Commissioner Romero noted that there is a danger in terms of shopping it in the halls, it brings out people you might not want to bring out this early.

Jennifer Joly confirmed that the Executive Committee would maintain more control over the process if you deliver it directly.

Executive McCarthy: I think it's important to remind people that our bill helps the PSP and it strengthens the PSP and it tells the PSP that we're serious. This idea of theirs that we just need to change or align the language better is just not going to be enough – we're not buying into that. We really have a different strategy that includes a different funding scheme. I don't want the PSP to go away. Jeff, I know you have a lot of angst about the PSP, but we need to help them be a better organization. We're stronger in numbers. While I don't mind being a lone wolf, I like winning and that means we need to build a coalition.

David Troutt: So, if our target is the next legislative session for the funding strategy, then the next step might be releasing the bill – in preparation for that session.

Commissioner Neatherlin noted that the bill itself has a few issues that we need to address. These are easy to fix. It's obvious to me that we need funding – to accomplish anything. This is an opportunity to do that. But if a sponsor sees it and decides to take it on we should be able to return to the committee and take advantage of that.

He added that PSP have a very important need based on the Audit - -they need to have deliverables. We may be able to show those deliverables, in partnership with one of the other LIOs. We should take advantage of the opportunities and to get it out now.

Jeff Dickison stated that the committee does not yet have consensus whether we're moving into the coming session or delaying. He added that making the corrections noted by the Task Force is okay.

Executive McCarthy suggested that the committee approve the dissemination of the bill, in order to get feedback and then informally give to legislators shooting for the long session.

Commissioner Romero noted that she has concerns that if we move forward now we'll do more harm than good, but that we should continue working on it, keeping it moving forward and working it.

Commissioner Neatherlin added that if someone picks it up we may need to revise that.

Jeff Dickison stated that the committee's marching orders have been get this out and get it moving. Squaxin Tribe has been tenuous about this process because we feel that this bill empowers the PSP. Unfortunately PSP hasn't seen it that way. I don't subscribe to the fully cooked bill legislative process. I believe the nature of that process is that you get it out there, get engaged and that you keep at it through multiple sessions.

Executive McCarthy stated that she appreciates Commissioner Romero's input especially on this matter as she is a former legislator.

Dan Wrye noted that an ongoing concern is getting something out so people can see what we're talking about. Once we get those clean ups made – we could take it to the partnership and sit down with them and the Ecosystem Coordination Board and EPA and others, set up an amendment /proposal process that has the task force, or committee or whatever, to listen to the feedback that's coming from those conversations to see if that should change the bill. We need a structured process to have that conversation – considering if the bill needs to be changed and in the process – hopefully getting coalition.

David Troutt: The key is the date that we drop the bill.

Jennifer Joly stated that she thinks King County has something going – watershed improvement districts. Sometimes the legislature categorizes topics. It's important to take advantage of the opportunity but also to be flexible with the process.

Commissioner Romero suggested that in lieu of having the bill, we take this opportunity to make friends – and then building the opportunity and get a clear message out about we're trying to build this strategy. I know as a committee chair all the bills will be lumped together and we'd hear them all in one day. That's what would happen this session. Nothing is ever fully cooked but we can't be sloppy.

Executive McCarthy: How soon could we get feedback and from whom? How soon could we accomplish that? Is it plausible to do this?

Jennifer Joly: if this is for 2015 the urgency is not there.

David Troutt: Urgency also creates defensiveness. Having the opportunity, especially to work with the other LIOs is going to be important. If we get a lot of opposition from key people at the gate then it's dead. I think winning takes more time than we have.

Executive McCarthy: I agree with you, but I think that the focus on this stuff has brought us a lot of attention. But I do want to make sure that our final product is something we can build support on. We can be nimble.

David Troutt: I suggest shooting for 2015 session, but we'll get it out there immediately and get some feedback and if there 's good feedback – we can get at least a conference call.

The other item that the task force discussed was lead entity realignment. There is no entity accountable for the nearshore chapter. I propose that the Salmon Recovery take that. The south sound recovery chapter for Chinook now has the responsibilities divided up between 5 lead entities. The Adaptive Management process identifies weaknesses – policy making capabilities are not in place. One of the reasons to consider this is to be more strategic, speak with a single voice and to focus on the South Sound.

Every place has a chapter except for South Sound and the nearshore. I propose that this LIO take on the responsibility of being the lead entity for South Sound lining up with the South Sound Recovery Chapter. It provides simplicity for implementation and the Alliance Executive Committee becomes that policy board. The Alliance Council would be the citizen group and then the Council technical committee serves the technical role. We're not seeing the projects we want to see in the region.

Areas go lacking and there's no strategy for moving forward. Once the Ecosystem Recovery Strategy is in place, where does it go? Who will be responsible? The money for lead entities would come here and we hire staff to manage it. That would serve a very important role for both Chinook and multi species recovery.

Dan Wrye added that part of the conversation relates to the inclusion of the PSAR funds - salmon recovery funds, but not limited to Chinook. Under this proposal these funds it would come to the Executive Committee.

Executive McCarthy asked is this a legislative fix?

David Troutt responded that there are WRIA consolidations that are part of the proposal. We'd need the counties, cities and tribes involved in that choice. If we move down this path – we need to do it by March of next year for the next round of RFPs – as a target.

Dan Wrye added that as an alternative, it could be wrapped into the current legislative effort

David Troutt: We'd have to check in with Kaylene at the RCO.

Dan Wrye stated that we could amend multiple statutes with one act.

David Troutt noted that this proposal lines up with our LIO boundary, maintaining the Chinook boundary for Nisqually. There will have to be a conversation about it together with RCO. He also noted that given Kitsap's position with the LIO they would probably approve this shift as well.

Executive McCarthy addressed the non-committee attendees: So what are people thinking?

Amy Hatch-Winecka (Lead Entity WRIA 13 and 14) stated that this is the first time she'd heard it formally discussed. She requested that she be included in the discussion. Much like the previous discussion, we have watershed groups all around the sound – we should engage them, they are accustomed to having their voices heard.

David Troutt noted that those groups would then be included into the Council.

Amy Hatch-Winecka noted that whether lumping or splitting, the most important part is that the people around the table are heard and acknowledged.

Jeff Dickison added that this is something that we Squaxin are already on the record in earlier discussions that there's a need to hire a scientist as well as an administrator. One of the ways to do that would be to consolidate the lead entities and hire a scientist who could coordinate the activities under the requirements, David spoke to. It has to play out by lead entity. WRIA 14 is roughly 4 parties. WRIA 13 is more complicated because it has more cities. WRIA 15 would be an interesting proposition. I would propose that we negotiate with them – it's in our best interest that we request a portion of the funding that goes with that geography.

So, each one is a building block that has to play out. We are supportive. I support David's proposal.

Commissioner Neatherlin noted that the issue of sovereignty will come up – there are a lot of different entities.

Commissioner Romero clarified that the cities have to agree. Thurston doesn't have many cities and Mason doesn't either. I would love to have a map that had all the numbers on it – and the counties and so forth.

David Troutt: We can do that – and then email it to the committee. It includes all cities within the boundaries.

Commissioner Neatherlin added that the task force could also look at overarching funding issues – or how to look at funding issues.

Executive McCarthy noted that there seems to be consensus on next steps:

There was Executive Committee consensus about pursuing the Lead Entity Realignment and Legislative Bill by getting both out to stakeholders or other potentially interested parties for feedback, questions and so on. The Executive Committee can discuss and determine next steps at their November Meeting.

4:00 Adjourn

Next meeting of the Executive Committee is on November 20th in the Rainier Room (7th floor) of the Tacoma County-City Bldg.

***NOTE: November 20th meeting was later moved to the 5th of December.*