



Alliance for a Healthy South Sound (AHSS) Executive Committee Meeting
August 9, 2019, 9:00AM -10:30AM
Conference Call

Executive Committee Members:

Jeff Dickison, Squaxin Island Tribe
Derek Young, Pierce County Council
Commissioner Kevin Shutty, Mason County
Commissioner Tye Menser, Thurston County

Additional Attendees:

Brad Murphy, Thurston County
Andy Deffobis, Thurston County
Jeff Barney, Pierce County
Karin Stralioff, Thurston Conservation District
John Bolender, Mason Conservation District

Facilitation Support – Ross Strategic

Elizabeth McManus`

Mary Byrne

Meeting Summary

I. Initial Briefing on the South Sound Shore Friendly Initiative and Upcoming Work (20 min)

Karin Stralioff, coordinator of the Thurston County Conservation District Shore Friendly Program, provided an overview of the South Sound Shore Friendly Initiative. The South Sound Shore Friendly Initiative is a collaboration of Pierce, Mason, and Thurston Conservation Districts. In the South Sound, there are approximately 380 miles of residential shoreline, half of which are armored. The South Sound Shore Friendly Initiative is a homeowner focused technical assistance program that will provide stewardship guidance and identify armor removal projects.

The program will engage residential parcel owners throughout the South Sound with three central focuses:

1. Reducing shoreline habitat destruction (e.g., shoreline modification, hard armor, removal of vegetation, and other land management activities that impact the food web)
2. Reducing disruption by shoreline armor/modification to maintain natural coastal processes.
3. Addressing gaps in homeowner understanding of shoreline management and its impact on natural coastal processes.

The South Sound Shore Friendly Initiative enables Pierce, Mason, and Thurston Conservation Districts to work closely coordinate shoreline restoration efforts. Each conservation district will staff a shoreline specialist who will be the first point of contact with shoreline homeowners. The conservation districts will complete a strategic shoreline assessment to identify priority shoreline parcels. This strategic assessment will integrate other resources (e.g., Squaxin Island Tribe nearshore analysis, various prioritization efforts, Ecology oblique photography, etc.). Priority properties identified by the analysis and properties that are still in natural condition will be the primary targets for shoreline stewardship. A shoreline specialist, professional engineer, and professional coastal geologist will be available to provide technical expertise.

This initiative is modeled after the Mason County Shore Friendly Program. In 2014, Mason Conservation District engaged in a social marketing campaign focused on shoreline landowner behavior. Karin noted that word-of-mouth quickly raised awareness of the program and helped garner enthusiasm for the

opportunity to have technical support. In the past two years, Mason Conservation District has had 100 calls for assistance and has provided 86 shoreline landowners with technical assistance. The program removed 200ft of hard armor in Mason County. The South Sound Shore Friendly Initiative is replicating the Mason Shore Friendly Program model in Pierce and Thurston to create an integrated South Sound program.

The Initiative will offer small incentive grants to help homeowners implement shoreline improvement measures. The Initiative will engage in a targeted communications campaign to shoreline landowners with natural unmodified shoreline and to landowners with bulkheads. There will also be a broader media campaign and in-person workshops. The South Sound Shore Friendly Initiative was awarded \$580,000, which has been split evenly between the three districts. Of this funding, \$200,000 is dedicated to project development and construction consultation and \$30,000 is available for shoreline landowner incentive grants.

II. Ecosystem Coordination Board land use and role of LIOs discussions

Derek Young provided an update on the Ecosystem Coordination Board (ECB) discussions around land use and role of LIOs. Derek will represent the South Sound counties on local and Tribal government sub-committee of the ECB. This committee will examine impacts of land use on the Puget Sound and how the ECB and Puget Sound Partnership can provide support for local and Tribal governments around land use decisions.

Pierce County recently had a Shoreline Master Program (SMP) update. However, the Growth Management Board overturned the SMP update, offering corrections that are on the behalf of industry stakeholders. Derek noted that Pierce County has received conflicting input regarding plans for land use management. Counties face competing land use demands, and directives to densify urban areas and increase housing availability often have impacts on county shorelines and stormwater. Local governments are hoping to utilize the ECB to better understand competing land use responsibilities and potential solutions.

The committee will meet after the August 15 ECB meeting to identify local and Tribal government challenges, constraints, and needs related to land use.

- **Action:** please email Derek if you have feedback on goals/strategies, land use considerations that are unique to your area, or other thoughts you'd like Derek to share with the group.

ECB will be considering the role of LIOs at the next meeting. LIO coordinators will ask the ECB to provide the following support for LIOs:

- Advocate for statutory reorganization of LIOs (reorganize to be like Lead Entities)
- Advocate for more capacity for LIOs (e.g., can participate in implementation strategies, etc.)
- Advocate for funding models that better support LIOs (e.g., distribute NEP and dedicate 70% of funding to LIOs projects developed in implementation plans)

Executive Committee Comments:

- Jeff Dickson noted that Puget Sound salmon runs are not recovering, and that orca populations continue to decline. Jeff shared that Derek has the support in the Squaxin Island Tribe to advocate for an aggressive approach to land and shoreline protection, as business as usual will not suffice. Furthermore, Jeff noted that current land management plans must take into consideration future impacts from population growth and climate change.

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- Jeff Dickison shared that the Squaxin Island Tribe has raised concerns around specific to limitations in aquaculture in the Pierce County SMP. Jeff asked Pierce County to consider that there are other interests in the South Puget Sound that are more supportive of shellfish aquaculture than the Squaxin Island Tribe interpreted the SMP update to be. Derek shared that some South Sound Tribes who do not participate in aquaculture had asked Pierce County to hold off on requiring designated areas for aquaculture.
 - Jeff Dickison asked for a status update regarding altering the structure of different PSP organizations that work on various aspects of recovery.
 - **Action:** Elizabeth will share any new news with the Executive Committee regarding the status of this conversation and if the Partnership has plans to develop a cohesive coordination plan.

III. Discussion: LIO support for 2019-2020

Ross Strategic has provided LIO support for AHSS for the past few years, with Thurston County being the contract administer. The Executive Committee moved in favor of supporting Ross Strategic to provide LIO support for 2019-2020.

IV. Wrap up and Next Steps

Elizabeth McManus thanked the Executive Committee for the opportunity to continue to support the Alliance for another year. Elizabeth noted that the Council and Technical Team will be working on an analysis of South Sound shoreline armor removal and shellfish beds. Ross is looking to sub-contract with Brian McTeague, Quantitative Services Manager for the Squaxin Island Tribe, to update some of the Alliance GIS maps.

[Orca Recovery Day](#) is Saturday, October 19. Orca Recovery Day is a yearly opportunity to join with local Conservation Districts and other partner organizations and work to recover our critically endangered Orca whales.