

Deschutes (WRIA 13)
Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Committee
Meeting Summary

Committee website:

https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias_1962/37325/watershed_restoration_and_enhancement_-_wria_13.aspx

Next Meeting: December 12 2018, 12:30 pm – 4 pm – Location, TBD

Meeting Information

Thursday, October 25, 2018

9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Tumwater Fire Department Training Room

311 Israel Rd SW, Tumwater, WA 98501

Agenda

	Topic	Time	Action	Handouts	Lead
1.	Welcome	9:00 am	None	- Agenda	Chair
2.	Introductions	9:10 am	None		All
3.	Overview of Streamflow Restoration Act (ESSB 6091) and Committee Purpose	9:30 am	Presentation and discussion	- Streamflow Restoration Act (ESSB 6091) Overview - ESSB 6091 map	Chair/ Mike Gallagher
4.	BREAK – Ten minutes	10:30 am			
5.	Breakout session: share expectations for Committee and Plan	10:40 am	Activity and discussion		All
6.	Next steps	11:30 am		-Documents distributed following meeting	Chair
7.	Public comment	11:45 am	None		Chair
8.	Close	12:00 pm			

**all handouts are available on the Committee website*

Committee Representatives and Alternates in Attendance

Name	Representing	Name	Representing
Cynthia Pratt	City of Lacey	Julie Rector	City of Lacey (alternate)
Sue Patnude	DERT	Susan Clark	City of Olympia (alternate)
John Millard	City of Tenino	Grant Beck	City of Yelm
Neil McClanahan	City of Tumwater	Dan Smith	City of Tumwater (alternate)
Erin Hall	Olympia Master Builders	Allison Osterberg	Thurston County (alternate)
Sarah Moorehead	Thurston Conservation District	Amy Hatch-Winecka	Thurston Conservation District (alternate)
George Walter	Nisqually Tribe	Theresa Nation	WDFW
Linda Oosterman	Thurston PUD	Jeff Dickison	Squaxin Island Tribe
Angela Johnson	Department of Ecology		

Other Attendees

Name	Representing	Name	Representing
Josie Cummings	Building Industry Association of WA	Laurence Reeves	Capitol Land Trust
Jill Van Hulle	Pacific Groundwater Group	Paula Holroyde	League of Women Voters
Bob Barnes	South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group	Megan Kernan	WDFW
Dave Nazy	EA Engineering	Chad Wiseman	HDR, Inc.
Mike Gallagher	Department of Ecology	Mike Noone	Department of Ecology
Rebecca Brown	Department of Ecology		

Presentation on ESSB 6091/RCW 90.94

Presentation available on committee webpage.

Breakout Session on Expectations and Concerns

Comments from breakout groups, with duplicate comments merged. Flip chart images included at end of document.

Expectations	Concerns
Balance future water needs of all users without putting the burden on rural landowners	Focus on water quantity and not quality – this program is restoration and enhancement
This process will help bring people together across interest groups and strengthen community ties	Lose the knowledge base of the previous 2514 planning effort
Decisions made in this group lead to sustainable uses and projects/programs moving forward	RCW 90.94 is poorly written
This group will develop a list of actions that lead to an overall benefit for salmon/fish	Too much emphasis on using irrigated agriculture as one of the solutions
Thurston County will develop one planning/implementation approach across watersheds/WRIAs within the County	How will this group work with the WRIA 13 Salmon Recovery Lead Entity?
The group will agree on the current situation in the Deschutes on a scientific basis. If they disagree, it should be on policy and not science.	Ecology staff will be “too narrow” in the WREC effort and fail to cross-coordinate with other efforts – especially Capitol Lake estuary/reservoir issue, lead entity, SRF Board
Get to consensus	Data is not up to date – surface water, ground water, wells
Actions identified in the plan will be monitored and evaluated for success in the future	Shift to political issues rather than focus on task at hand
Use of Class A recycled water	Tie to threatened and endangered salmonids – concerned that the Deschutes will not compete for funding b/c of lack of population. Measuring success based on issue that is bigger than instream flows.
Define purpose of committee, clear vision	Decisions made hamper cities’ ability to accommodate future growth
Define roles of the parties involved – (expectations of cities, etc.)	Group will get close to making a decision and an entity walks out
Implementable tools that are supported for habitat restoration, fishery restoration, sustainable growth, etc.	Too narrowly focused on water without considering other community goals (i.e. affordable housing)
Save the whales	Scope creep/saturation
Sufficient funding	Limitations of the group
Include entire WRIA	All of the work done by the group won’t lead to consensus
Mixture of incentives and regulatory backstop	Water level declines and we lose a fishery
Communication – important for homeowners expectations, keeping the public informed, outreach (public/legislature elected officials)	Administration and enforcement of mitigation strategies
Promote goals of the GMA – growth in UGA	Not including all of the WRIA

Expectations	Concerns
Training for committee – western water law, GMA, water rights 101	Integrating water quality
Ecology takes into account stakeholder expectations	How is this adopted at a local level? (i.e. coordinated water system plan)
Utilize previous/existing technical resources available	Ecology doesn't override stakeholder expertise
SRF Board Grant tie into 030 products.	Non-eligibility/lower ranking of land purchase to take out water rights
Don't develop plan in a vacuum	How to account for 15 year funding and 20 year growth timeline
Better zoning	Conflicts, not meeting goals
Use salmonid ecological requirements for targeting efforts - existing framework	Funding challenges
Projects should be ready and meeting goals in 3 years	Consensus in 030 basins and board decision-making

Discussion Summary

Committee Chair Angela Johnson introduced the Committee and discussed goals for the group as well as next steps. Mike Gallagher (Ecology) gave a presentation on ESSB 6091/RCW 90.94, with a focus on WRIA 13. Throughout the meeting, Committee members raised several questions and concerns.

Water use fees in Thurston County vary substantially, and a question was raised about whether or not restrictions could be enacted beyond those limits. There is a possibility that tiered rates could be enacted in the future.

The metering pilot program is looking at remote monitoring and metering as a feasible technology. The outcome of this study will be used for information in a report to the Legislature at the completion of the study.

Climate change was discussed, and its impact on aquifers. The timing and rate of snowpack melt may affect water use restrictions.

The Deschutes is comprised of independent watersheds, such as McClane Creek and Woodland Creek. This is something the group will keep in mind as we move forward, and further discuss sub-basins.

A point was raised regarding the use of acronyms, and how the group should consider avoiding them in the future in order to be inclusive of the different knowledge base in the group.

Concerns were expressed regarding the purpose of the offset, along with a disagreement that RCW 90.94 limited the Committee to replacing permit-exempt well consumptive use in place, and in time. It was proposed that the Committee could go beyond that limited scope with its plan.

The group will need to discuss what constitutes consensus in terms of decision-making within the Committee. We will be getting more in detail on this, as well as the structure of the group, in the next couple of months as we discuss the group Operating Principles and Charter.

A concern was expressed that the Ecology well database is not accurate, and that the group should consider looking into ways to get a more accurate count of wells.

The \$300 million in funding authorized for the next 15 years is a new statewide funding source. We expect that some projects will apply for funds from this new Streamflow Restoration Grant Program as well as other existing funding sources. Eligible projects include water projects and non-water projects, such as habitat restoration. Water projects are prioritized for funding. Projects in basins undergoing planning and basins with endangered fish species are also prioritized for funding. The first grant round closed on October 31, 2018. For the first round, the focus was on “wet water, shovel ready” projects in the priority basins. Final decisions on projects awarded by Ecology will be made in early 2019. Some Committee members have expressed disagreement with project eligibility under the interim guidance.

Ecology accepted comments on two actions related to the Streamflow Restoration Law: The Streamflow Restoration Funding Program Interim Guidance was open for comments through October 28, 2018. This guidance will be developed into rule proposal which will be used for future grant periods after the 2018 Streamflow Restoration Grant funding cycle. Additionally, comments were accepted on the Net Ecological Benefit (NEB) Interim Guidance through November 9, 2018. The final NEB guidance is anticipated to be published in early 2019.

Rulemaking would be triggered by the following: the Committee, by consensus, recommends a change to the \$500 building permit fee or a change to the 950 gallons per day maximum annual average limit; or if the Committee does not approve the plan by June 30, 2021. The Committee can make recommendations to Ecology to change the instream flow rule, but this will require more discussion within the Committee. It is possible that new information may be available in some areas with better data collection and modelling, and this would be a good topic for discussion at a future meeting.

Plans are adopted if the Committee approves them and Ecology determines that they meet Net Ecological Benefit by June 30, 2021.

Concerns were expressed regarding duplicating efforts of existing committees. At the December meeting, we will talk more about coordination with Salmon Recovery Lead Entities (LE), Local Integrating Organizations (LIO), and other existing efforts. In the meantime, Ecology staff will continue discussions with LE and LIO staff. Ecology staff chairing the various Committees will coordinate when there is an issue that overlaps multiple WRIAs.

Public comment raised concerns about the ineligibility of land acquisitions that preclude water from future development, and expressed that the Committee should coordinate with groups in the watershed conducting similar work.

Parking Lot

Parking lot items will carry over to future meetings until the Committee agrees they have been addressed.

- Is funding available for WRIA 13 studies to support decisions? If so, how much? How will we access it?
- Suggestion for Ground Rules: use fewer acronyms and more “plain talk”.

Action Items

- Ecology will send out a doodle poll to schedule the next meeting for early to mid-December. Starting in January, we anticipate having a set day of the month and a set location for future meetings. Ecology will send out an additional Doodle Poll to select the standing meeting date.
- Ecology will continue conversations with Salmon Recovery Lead Entities and Local Integrating Organizations to discuss opportunities and concerns regarding formal/informal engagement in the planning process.
- The next meeting will focus on operating principles. Ecology expects committee members to review the draft document, provide input ahead of the meeting, and come prepared to discuss at the December meeting.
- Ecology will set up a number of trainings over the next few months to bring everyone up to a similar level of base knowledge to ensure we can have informed discussions and decisions going forward.
- Ahead of the December meeting, Committee members should consider:
 - Formal or informal engagement with other collaborations/committees (e.g. salmon recovery lead entities, local integrating organizations, etc.). What would engagement look like?
 - Should we come up with a new name for the Committee?
 - What are some trainings the Committee would like to see?

Flipcharts from breakout sessions

Expectations/Hopes	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sufficient Funding ✓ - INCLUDE ENTIRE WRIA. - Mixture of incentives + Regulatory Backstop - Communication - why important <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Homeowners expectation - Keep public informed - Outreach ^{Public} <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leg tours. - Leg/Off electors - Promote Goals of GMA - Grow with USA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sufficient Funding? ✓ - Exclude Parts of WRIA. - Integrating WQ - Exempt wells - Adopted at Local Level? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinated water system plan. TRAINING - Western water law/ GMA Water Rights 101
Expectations / Hopes	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USE OF CLASS A Recycled water. - Define Purpose of Committee. - VISION - Roles of the Parties (expectations of cities, etc.) - Implementable tools that are supported for habitat restoration, fishery restoration, sustained growth, etc. - Save The Whales! - Sound Science Update Science & INFO. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scope creep/ Saturation - Unnecessarily Limit. - Concern that all the work ≠ consensus. ✓ - Water declines, and we lose a fishery. - Administration & enforcement of mitigation strategies.

Expectations / Hopes	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have water - water • Balance future water needs of all users w/o putting burden on rural landowners. • Process will help bring people together across interest groups & strengthen community ties. • Decisions made lead to sustainable uses & projects/programs moving forward. • Group will develop list of actions that lead to overall benefit for salmon fish. • Thurston County will develop one approach across watersheds. • Group agrees on current situation in Deschutes on a scientific basis. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If we disagree it will mean policy not science. • Get to consensus! • Actions from plan be monitored and evaluated for success. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adaptively manage it not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data (surface water, groundwater, wells) is not up to date. • Shift to political issues rather than focus on task at hand. • Tie to T&E Salmonids <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deschutes will not compete for funding - Measuring success based on issue that is larger than instream flows. • Decisions made hamper cities' ability to accommodate future growth. • Difficult to making a decision and an entity walks out. • Too narrowly focused on water w/o considering other community goals (i.e. affordable housing). • Plans remain responsive to emerging science. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Program as a whole supports/funds development of emerging science.

Expectations / Hopes	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group to work on connections w/ each other and not get "siloed" • More acquisition projects (acquisition projects be given a higher priority) • Broad instream restoration so individual wells not overly burdened • That this effort gives useful tools for larger permitting efforts • That this effort does not lead to unfunded mandates for cities/counties • That we do a better job from the Falls upward of protecting the upper watershed • Do a better job of restoring the riparian buffer (and monitoring that) • We hope for "regulatory flexibility" from Ecy + other resource mgmt. agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall water quality (+not just quantity) [this is restoration and enhancement] • That we have appropriate metrics, measures, use of science as we move forward • Not lose the knowledge base of the previous 25+ planning effort • Poorly written law (2009) • Too much emphasis on using irrigated ag as one of the solutions • How will this group work/lead w/ the WRIA 13 Salmon Recovery lead activity? • That Ecy staff get "too narrow" in this WREC effort and fail to cross-coordinate w/ other efforts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - esp the Capital Lake estuary/reservoir issue - Lead authority SRF Board