

Tenmile Clean Water Project: Meeting Minutes – Jan 10, 2018

Attendees: Bob McWhorter, Alan Chapman, Hank Kastner, Andy Ross, Marge Laidlaw, Shane VanderVeen, Debbie VanderVeen, Christine Woodward, Eric Sundstrum, Naomi Murphy, Meg Harris, Erika Douglas, Albert de Boer, Kent Oostra, Clint Spiegel, Charlie Maliszewski

Note: Comments annotated to the meeting agenda information are shown in red.

Consent Agenda Approvals:

1. Previous Meeting Minutes
2. Financial Report:

Tenmile Clean Water Project Monthly Finance Report

Settled by end of: December 2017

	Budget (12 mo.)	Expended - Current Mo.	Expended - Total	Grant Fund Balance	Notes
Coordinator	3000/mo.	1,520.15	1,520.15	31,479.85	
Sample Analysis	670/mo.	0.00	675.00	7,325.00	
Outreach (gross)	3,000.00			3,000.00	
Measurement (gross)	2,400.00			2,400.00	
Discretionary (gross)	5,600.00	2,615.00	2,615.00	2,985.00	1, 2
TOTALS		4,135.15	4,810.15	47,189.85	
WECU Balance	=====>			485.00	3

1. Discretionary Budget = Admin; donations; 5% fiscal sponsor overhead (12 mo)
2. Current expense = 5% grant admin fee to NSEA, one-time payment
3. WECU account debited \$15 for blank checks

Approved, with these comments:

- One clerical edit to the December minutes on page 3
- In future financial reports, show grant admin fee as distinct line
- S/C should agree on a better label than 'Discretionary' for that finance line item

Announcements

1. **WCD Speaker Series:** Best Practices for small scale & urban poultry; Thu, Jan 18, 6-8pm, the Garden Room at 322 N. Commercial St, Bellingham
2. **WCD Small Farm Expo:** Sat, Feb 24, 10a-2p, in Lynden at the NW Fairgrounds; **noted that David Montgomery will be speaking at noon at this event**
3. **Next Steering Committee meeting:** Jan 23, 5-7pm, location ~~TBD~~ – subsequently confirmed for Bellewood Acres
4. **Portage Bay Shellfish Protection District Citizen Advisory Committee** meeting. Wed, Jan 31, 3-5pm, Whatcom County Courthouse Room 514; allow extra time to pass through security. (See 'new business' below.)
5. Alan noted there has been a major fish kill at the Lummi Bay fish hatchery during a recent high water event, which is being investigated.

Note: #2, 3 & 4 were all sent separately by email to the full members list after this meeting.

Reports

- **Steering Committee (S/C)** – Jan 3 meeting notes; Hank summarized, besides some admin items, meeting time was spent mostly on the project plan (see 'Business' below.) Alan highlighted our continuing work to pursue grant funding through the Puget Sound Partnership 'Near Team Action' grant program
- **Water Quality** – data report & forward planning. Andy & Bob described the month's sampling as illustrated on the watershed map. See Andy's written summary report in the Addendum below.
- **Laurel WID** – Jan 8 meeting report; Hank offered as highlight the ~45 minute discussion led by Henry Bierlink describing an effort to gain Ag Water Board consensus to promote an approach to resolving water supply issues focused on each Nooksack sub-basin watershed, beginning with two pilot efforts in WID watersheds.

New Business:

As mentioned earlier, the Portage Bay Shellfish Protection District Citizen Advisory Committee is meeting Wed, Jan 31, 3-5pm. At roughly 3:25, Tenmile members have been invited to take 20 minutes to explain what we do and why it is important. Our Steering Committee (S/C) has welcomed this opportunity and will have members speaking to the group. If you are interested in helping, please contact a S/C member or attend our next meeting. In any event, please come to show support, and even learn more about why this committee is important to our work! (Our own Andy Ross is a citizen member.)

Business:

Brief discussion of the on-going process of developing a Tenmile project plan for 2018, building on notes from the Jan 3 Steering Committee (S/C) meeting. Andy did not have enough time to fully explain this effort; please refer to the Jan 3 S/C notes for details of recent progress and consider attending our next meeting to learn more about this important work.

Program:

Kent Oostra is from [Exact Scientific Services](#), which is the lab that now analyzes all of our non-routine (not 'ambient') water samples. But Kent is also well-informed about various DNA analysis methods being tried out in our area & others; and he is leading the pioneering DNA work that Exact is doing for farmers in the Scott ditch area.

Kent's presentation was titled 'DNA Demystified'; using jars of multi-colored jelly beans (!!) as illustration, he reviewed his company's unique approach to using the many available DNA sequencing methodologies, specifically focused here on the challenge of fecal bacteria source identification. One emphasis: the importance of the sampling process itself; e.g. getting a *representative* sample, when every water sample, even 'back to back' has the potential to be different on the DNA level.

Further: there are many pros & cons involved in pursuing this experimental approach; e.g. huge potential to identify specific sources, this is cutting edge science, with the chance to get in early, data accumulation will only increase knowledge & capability. But also: there is risk that results will under-perform expectations, initial costs are high to accumulate the necessary large-volume data, managing public perception & understanding is a huge challenge, and there is a need for early peer review.

This discussion was dense with new information, presented well, and no doubt stimulated much discussion afterwards. **Kent's full presentation** will be sent to members along with these meeting notes.

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Addendum: Data Report, Dec/Jan highlights, provided by Andy prior to the meeting, summarizing both results & discussion. Data charts will be sent to members along with these meeting notes.

Dec. 12, 2017:

Ambient (routine) sampling showed low counts throughout the Tenmile Watershed! Fecal coliform levels varied from "non detect" to a high of 30 cfu/100 ml. Additional samples collected upstream of Chasteen Road on Tenmile Creek yielded some higher counts, but nothing to indicate a source for the high count observed at Chasteen Road in November 2017. The sampling occurred about 10-days into a dry period. More follow-up sampling as well as figuring out the hydrology of the area is underway.

Dec 19, 2017:

Storm-event sampling two and a half days into a major storm yielded moderately elevated counts at four of the five sites sampled (168 to 300 cfu/100ml), and one very high count. Three of the samples were collected in the Deer Creek Watershed, and two in the upper Tenmile Watershed.

The North and South forks of Deer Creek were out of their banks and most low lying fields were flooded due to intense precipitation (~4 inches over 3 days, delivered in two 24-hour intervals with some intense precipitation within those periods). The source of the high count is being investigated and the landowner in the area is cooperative. The sampling in Tenmile Creek at Tenmile Road and upstream yielded results of 230 cfu/100 ml or a bit less. More sampling and investigation is needed.

Sampling by others:

Other sampling at the mouth of Tenmile Creek (Site T1) showed low counts (4 cfu/100 ml or less) through early December, but a count of 250 cfu/100 ml was recorded on 12/20/2017, likely a result of the storm.

The Washington State Dept. of Agriculture sampled the area in December during the storm and found elevated counts in Silver Springs Creek and some of its tributaries as well as some Tenmile Creek tributaries in the Medcalf and Chasteen Road areas (150 to 480 cfu/100 ml). Fecal coliform levels upstream of the Hannegan Road in Tenmile and Fourmile creeks ranged from 40 to 104 cfu/100 ml, with only one sample over 100 cfu/100 ml. This sampling will help inform further follow-up sampling by the Tenmile Clean Water Project and builds on previous sampling done by the Laurel WID in the Silver Springs area.

DECEMBER 2017 AMBIENT
12/12/2017

Tenmile Clean Water Project

