

Tenmile Clean Water Project (TCWP) Meeting Minutes – Oct 11, 2017

Attendees: Bob M, Alan C, Hank K, Naomi M, Andy R, Lee F, Debbie V, Bob V

Past meeting minutes were discussed with two significant changes agreed in principle; Hank will circulate an updated draft to participants in that meeting, for approval.

No additions were proposed to tonight's agenda.

Announcements:

- Our group's grant application to the Whatcom Community Foundation was submitted Oct 5 and **approved on Oct 10th, for the full amount requested!** In coming weeks we will have \$52,000 available to support our '*Clean Streams, Healthy Community*' project for one year. See below in these notes for more information.
- Water Supply Forum ~~Wed, 9am, Nov 1st~~ **has now been moved to Dec 13th** – paid registration required; other details pending; see <http://whatcom.wsu.edu/nr/wss/>
- Whatcom Family Farmers' annual rally is Nov 2 at the fairgrounds; doors at 5pm, dinner at 6pm.
- Whatcom County Farm Bureau is holding a meeting to discuss proposed changes to County farm plan requirements for operations with small numbers of animals: 7-9pm, Thu Oct 19 at the Mt Baker Rotary Building, 1775 Front Street, Lynden. Our group took particular note of this meeting because it is of particular interest to our Tenmile community, and relates to our new '*Clean Stream, Healthy Community*' project.
- The Farm Bureau annual meeting 6:30-8:30pm Thu Oct 26 at the same location will host speaker Kent Oostra from Exact Scientific, who will describe the pilot project that is testing feasibility of DNA tracking of water pollutants. Find info for both events at <http://whatcomfarmbureau.org/events/>

Note about these Minutes:

As in September, this was already planned as a "business" meeting, so again these notes will include a summary of a few other subjects; then an update on our '*Clean Streams, Healthy Communities*' project and next steps for the two-year project in the planning stages.

Water Quality:

Sample results in September continued typically low & stable for summer months. Sampling in October: Lee will be unavailable; Bob will again collect the ambient samples. We discussed whether a buddy system makes sense for sampling, for safety reasons (of course, it does) – which led to discussing having our sample protocol documented to ensure consistency; this should include standards for technical quality assurance & validity, and our needs for volunteer training, but also our own rules, e.g. for safety.

Discussion again included efforts to discipline our overall sampling program, including: the protocols; understanding ZAPS data for troubleshooting & analysis; training; and documenting case-study of specific areas, with documentation, bracketing and mitigation. This is all work that should be planned under our new project – beginning now!

Laurel WID meeting: Andy, Hank & Bob attended the WID meeting and could comment on those discussions.

- Roger Blok reported on the Fourmile ditch cleaning; willows have been removed or chopped; current funds exhausted, more cleaning needed. Roger estimated up to \$100k cost over the course of their 5yr permit. More than 250 cutthroat trout were found in the fish survey. The WID has not yet committed to a funding contribution.
- The WID has voted to maintain the current assessment rate at \$6/acre.
- The pilot project at Scott Ditch that is testing feasibility of DNA tracking of water pollutants is still underway. (See relevant event in Announcements, above.) Fred said delays in the state Capital Budget may prevent further work on the pilot after current funding is spent.
- Leroy was there to express his willingness to consider hosting a ZAPS analyzer, stating he understood the location was eliminated due to high floodwater projections. This contradicts the same discussion last month stating the WCD eliminated the site due to Leroy's opting not to host. Hank has requested clarification from WCD.
- In a brief report on the Portage Bay Partnership, Fred commented on the key role played by Tim Ballew, Lummi Indian Business Council Chairman, and therefore the significance of this fall's election for his and other positions.

Water Week in September: several members attended the Symposium, with positive reviews – but also recognition that this would bear much more discussion! Various views were also expressed about the *Seafeast* event, with attendance rumored in the range of 15,000!

Business Meeting (7-8pm)

Meeting Programs:

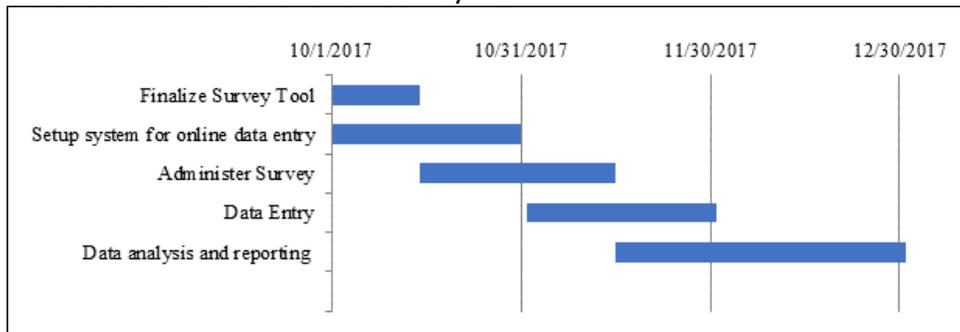
We had a consensus it is time to plan a series of programs for our meetings. Two speakers have a lot of interest: Mike Isensee (WA Dept of Ag inspector) and Kent Oostra (Exact Scientific, lab conducting the DNA pilot project.) One or the other are desired for November – stay tuned!

Also, for future reference, here are ideas previously proposed: local politicians (w/ defined topic!); a hydrology speaker; **Dan Eisses**; Birch Bay deep aquifer project; **Erika Douglas**, County PIC; **Andrea Hood**, WA Dept of Health, Whatcom Clean Water Program Coordinator; **Meg Harris**, WCD/County Data Coordinator; Dr **Frank James**; **Frank Corey**, WCD; **Katie Pencke**, writes WCD Farm Plans for small animal operations.

Here is an **important issue not discussed** this month, but carried over from previous discussions of our meetings & programs: the idea of establishing an **annual meeting schedule** that incorporates speakers & programs; business meetings; and seasonal variations in focus & interest. As we are now into another seasonal cycle, with new focus to our work, this should have high priority also.

'Clean Streams, Healthy Community' Project – **Next Steps:**

- **Status of WCD's NRCS project** – Hank provided verbal update; further details are also included here. The headline & good news is that ***their work timeline is still a good fit for us***, even as it takes a while for us to get ramped up. Those who remember the early plan from this WCD project will notice this has now turned into a more deliberate process; that is a good thing, improving prospects for success. By the end of this year, the social survey information will be available. This, combined with the data compiled in their nearly-complete watershed characterization, will be used in early 2018 to identify target communities for focused engagement – the key piece of interest & value to our project. Here is the timeline for their survey work:



- **Coordinator job description** – **Andy & Hank** have a rough draft in the works; understanding this will be our “best attempt” based on a rough outline of work, and that circumstances will likely require flexibility and adjustment, we are seeking a form that is suitable for getting work started. **Hank** will send to the Subgroup for review, comment and approval by the Subgroup.
- **Coordinator work contract** – in collaboration with NSEA, this will be drafted after the job description is complete; **Hank** has requested a template from NSEA.
- **'Start Date'** for our project work? – after some discussion of what it would mean to start 'ASAP', we agreed that with grant funding now decided we are so near to 'starting' that efforts are best spent working on these next steps as top priority.
- **Lab analysis** – the most immediate need for the project funds is for increased analysis to support special-event & bracket sampling; **Andy** is soliciting contract terms from Exact & Edge for our consideration; **Hank** has asked NSEA if they have an existing Lab contract that we could piggyback on.
- **Expense accounting** – **Andy & Hank** have barely begun a simple Excel template for tracking project expenses, with more still to learn; stay tuned.
- **Checking account** – will we need one? (likely yes) and how that could be set up? Hank has consulted with WECU about requirements for an 'association' account, with more to be learned; **Hank** has requested NSEA to authorize an account using their EIN.
- **Business address** – will we need one? (not sure); we agreed that using 'c/o NSEA' address would be best, as needed, until we know more; **Hank** has asked NSEA about that option.
- **Email address** for our group – the one we had for the OSS outreach has been lost; **Hank** will set up a new one.

- **Project Plan** – once we have the Coordinator in place, this will be a priority task, and presents the ripe opportunity to begin the ‘strategic planning’ raised in our Goals meeting last spring and regularly in membership meetings; **Hank** will offer a template for discussion.
- **Draft Charter** – a ‘fresh’ rewrite of our charter proposed in June has never received proper review & consideration while we were working on the grant application; we agreed it would be best to do that ASAP now, to provide a fresh platform for any adjustments to accommodate the new project work, if needed. **Hank** will resend to the Subgroup for review, comment and then proposed approval by the membership.
- **Future funding** - Define a way forward to seek additional funding for year two of this project; this will be a continuing task under the new project plan, until full funding is achieved. The question was raised again about **the option to establish TWCP as its own 501(C)(3) non-profit**; there is still much interest, but a consensus to consider this as an option when funding year-two of the current project. **Lee** has checked on grants available from the Rose Foundation, which will be open again in the spring; **Alan** will report back on possible grants from the Puget Sound Partnership this fall.

Attachments: None

Next meeting is Wednesday Nov 8, 2017. We will feature a speaker to begin another season of programs to attract an interested audience.