

Skagit County Conservation Futures Program Advisory Board
DRAFT Meeting Summary
September 10, 2019

Members in Attendance

Steve Sakuma	Andrea Xaver	Scott DeGraw	Keith Morrison
Jim Glackin	Owen Peth		

Members Absent

Wendy Pare

Staff and Others in Attendance

Kara Symonds, Skagit County Public Works
Michael See, Skagit County Public Works

Scott called the meeting to order at 7:00 AM

Member Update

The group discussed a planned get together with the Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland Board on November 13, from 5:30-7:30, at the Skagit Farmers Headquarter Building. There have also been discussions of a get together in 2020 including the Farmland Legacy Program Board, SPF Board, and Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board. The goal would be to hear and share concerns across a boarder spectrum of agricultural interests.

Steve noted that Drainage Districts are progressing with goals through the organization of the Consortium and it's been a positive environment for projects and growth.

August Meeting Summary

Steve moved to approve the 8/13/19 meeting summary; Andrea seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

FLP 199 (F2M) Application

The group discussed the previous meeting's consultation with Drainage District 16; Kara will proceed with the landowners on easement development.

FLP Contractors

The group discussed the monitoring agent and their sources of data. The sources of information on easements include the FLP database, FLP files, Commissioners contract searches, Assessor data, Planning permits, and Auditor recorded documents. Kara has created an FLP electronic folder for each FLP file. Kara will complete the USDA easement monitoring as they'll be due before the contract is in place, which will hopefully be in the next month.

The County has hired a full time staffer to work on the Voluntary Stewardship Program; they are also within the Natural Resources Division of Skagit County Public Works. The group discussed that VSP is of high interest to the long-term viability of agriculture. The group discussed the County's history of enrollment into the VSP, and how that enrollment seeks to balance the Growth Management Act goals of farmland preservation and Critical Area protection.

FLP Outreach

The group discussed the need for additional and targeted outreach to landowners that may be interested in the Program. The group discussed advertising in the financial section of the newspaper and specific press releases involving enrolled farmers. It was suggested that the group could approach the Assessor's Office about including information with the tax statements that are sent out bi-annually.

The group also discussed other focused outreach efforts, such as Nextdoor, estate planners, lawyers, bankers, trade groups, dairy organizations, and real estate agents. The Program should have a fact sheet that can easily be handed out at these various functions. Jim added that the Program could sponsor a seminar which would allow the ability to share program information to a specific audience.

Kara will create some mock ups of ads to run on a recurring interval in the paper.

Property Update

The group reviewed the properties in the queue. The group shared concern that priority properties need to be paid a premium due to location specific factors. The group asked Kara to check in with the Prosecuting Attorney's Office on the requirements of paying appraised value.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 AM