

**Skagit County Conservation Futures Program Advisory Committee
(CFAC)**

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 6, 2012

Members in Attendance:

Carolyn Kelly, Chair

Keith Wiggers

Scott DeGraw

Andrea Xaver

Alan Merritt

Members not in Attendance:

Mike Hulbert

Staff in Attendance:

Kendra Smith, Program Director

Linda Christensen, Skagit County

Guests:

Allen Rozema, Skagitians to Preserve Farmland Daryl Hamburg, Dike District 17

Mike Shelby, Western Washington Ag Association Kevin Morse, The Nature Conservancy

Dan Berentson, Skagit County Public Works Henry Hash, Skagit County Public Works

Ryan Walters, Skagit County Prosecuting Attorney Department

Open

Meeting opened at 7:10 AM

One change to the agenda – postpone the monitoring report to next month.

Member Update

Andrea said there were approximately 1,000 people who attended the Coal Train meeting this week at McIntyre Hall in Mount Vernon and she was able to make a comment for the record as well.

Keith made a brief statement about the recent editorial in the Skagit Valley Herald regarding Agenda 21.

Carolyn announced that she was chosen to be on the committee that will discuss the FRPP program proposed new ranking criteria. She said there is a push nationwide for all Farm Bill funding programs tied to conservation plans.

Kendra said she will be involved with a telephone conference this week with the USDA national office to discuss legal lots and other issues. She also mentioned she is working on a BLA for the Nelson property, FLP 103. Scott asked for reassurance that staff will do a better job reviewing maps, aerials, title report, and other documents prior to executing a conservation easement to avoid conflicts in the future.

Meeting Minutes

Keith moved to approve the October 9 meeting minutes with the changes he suggested. Andrea seconded and the motion passed.

Financial Update

Kendra said that as we come to the close of 2012 there is approximately 77% left in the budget. Today there is a public hearing to increase the budget, based on additional anticipated grant revenues. She is optimistic that the 2012 properties will be closed before the year ends.

Old Business

Enforcement Issues

Ryan suggested that the current easement under review for enforcement issues be amended. Keith asked how we avoid splitting up conservation easements in the future. Ryan responded that land owners will not receive a development right on their property if the split is not done properly and there is the issue of impervious surface. This discussion will continue at the next meeting.

New Property Ranking

Kendra said that the applications received since the previous ranking earlier this year will be brought to the next meeting for review and discussion.

New Business

Farm Fish Flood Initiative (3FI)

Dan Berentson introduced the topic, 3FI, and Mike Shelby gave an overview. Small groups representing local agencies (The Nature Conservancy, Western Washington Agricultural Association, Skagitians to Preserve Farmland, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, NOAA, Skagit County and Dike District 17) have formed a committee to discuss and create an organized strategy that pulls together Chinook recovery, farmland, and flood protection priorities. This committee came together two years ago with a commitment to achieve the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery goals of estuary restoration and resource land protection through the formation of this Initiative. Their mission reads: *To create and advance mutually*

beneficial strategies that support the long-term viability of agriculture and salmon while reducing the risks of destructive floods.

This group formally agreed to achieve three goals:

Goal 1: Restore estuary habitats and functions in the Skagit Delta needed to meet the Skagit Chinook Recover Plan goal 9 (approximately 2,700 acres and/or 1.35 millions molts) consistent with the #FI mission.


Goal 2: Reduce the risk of destructive flooding in the Skagit Delta by implementing flood risk reduction alternatives consistent with the 3FI mission.

Goal 3: Protect and improve the agricultural land base and infrastructure consistent with the 3FI mission (secure 20,000 acres of agriculture easements and implement the Tidegate Fish and Drainage Fish Initiatives).

Moving forward, the 3FI members realize that these goals cannot be achieved without involvement of the community. Kevin said that this group received a grant through the Environmental Protection Agency to fund these initial initiatives. The grant is for developing strategies and also includes hydrodynamic modeling study, agriculture cluster study, and farmland preservation.

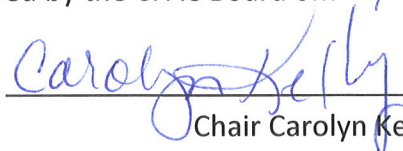
Dan mentioned that the 3FI group is working on a Memorandum of Understanding that will outline the involvement of all agencies. He also said that the timing of this project coincides with the GI Study, which is scheduled to be completed in the next two years.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Submitted by: 

Linda Christensen

Approved by the CFAC Board on: 1/08/13


Chair Carolyn Kelly