

Skagit County Public Works
Review Workshop: Monitoring and Adaptive Management Program
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Ryan Walters: All right, well, welcome everybody. My name is Ryan Walters. I'm a Special Deputy Prosecuting Attorney with the Prosecutor's office here. And I'm contracted with the County to work almost exclusively on salmon-ag-fish-buffer and that issue with the Ruckelshaus Center process, and anything tangentially related that they can find to fit within that area of responsibility. Dog kennels was my last assignment.

(laughter)

Mr. Walters: We're here tonight to do our three-year review of our Monitoring and Adaptive Management Program. And I definitely like meetings where the public is outnumbered by staff and half of the public is my parents.

(laughter and applause)

Mr. Walters: But, you know, this is going to be broadcast. It's not live, but it's going to be broadcast on Skagit 21 and it'll be available on the website, and hopefully we'll get more interest. I mean, obviously there're a lot of people who are very interested in this issue; must-see TV is tonight, though.

What we're going to do here tonight is we're going to have three presentations. Our Monitoring and Adaptive Management Program – I'm sure all of you are familiar with it, but the viewers at home would probably be interested in knowing that this program is designed to take a look at stream water quality and salmon

habitat quality in streams around ag land. The State of Washington requires Skagit County and other counties to protect critical areas including streams and wetlands, and the general prescription for protecting those critical areas is buffers: areas around the stream, areas around the wetlands, where you don't build, you don't farm, you don't do anything. You steer clear of those areas so that there's less of a chance for damage.

But in Skagit County we understand that that can pose a pretty heavy burden on some property owners, especially farmers. So what Skagit County has chosen to do instead is create this Monitoring and Adaptive Management Program where we don't require buffers, we don't require you to buffer your land, but we – on ag land – but we do examine the stream water quality, examine the salmon habitat quality, find out if it's degrading, if we are causing harm to the stream, and, if so, what we can do to fix it. At least that's the general idea.

As it turns out, not too many people are fond of our program. The Growth Management Hearings Board doesn't like it. The Supreme Court doesn't like it. And we're now here tonight to find out why you don't like it either. We are under a timeout imposed by the legislature. We don't have any duty to change the program right now. We have until 2010 to come up with a solution to this issue and we're planning to use that time wisely. We're planning to not wait until the last minute. That's why we're here in 2007. We've got 2 ½ years to go. This three-year review was prescribed when we began the program in 2004 and so we're fulfilling that commitment now. And we would like your comments tonight.

We have two opportunities to comment. First, at sometime around 7:50 we're going to have an interactive workshop. With the large number of people here, I imagine that will go pretty quickly. But the opportunity there is for you to ask questions of the presenters, get some answers. And then after that period, we'll take public testimony. And although your back will be to the audience, the camera will be right on you, and that testimony will be transcribed. That should be around 8:15, I suppose.

Anyway, our first presentation is Rick Haley. Rick Haley runs Part 1 of our Monitoring and Adaptive Management Program, our stream water quality monitoring program. We also have Jeff McGowan. He's going to come second. He's going to talk about the salmon habitat monitoring program. And then we have Sally Lawrence who is not an employee of Public Works. She works for the Department of Ecology, and she's going to tell us what the Department of Ecology thinks about it. I assume they don't like it either, because nobody likes this program! But we're going to fix it.

So without further ado, we'll start with Rick Haley, and then we'll answer any questions you have after all three presentations.

Rick Haley: Good evening. Thanks for coming, everybody. We're going to keep our presentations brief tonight so that we have plenty of time for public comment and questions. And I'm not going to try and go over every little piece of data I've collected in three years because it's a pretty massive amount, but, instead, we're going to try and highlight a few conditions that perhaps need our attention.

A little background on our program: we started in October of 2003 after we passed the current critical areas for agriculture regulations. It's designed as a trends monitoring program, and then in order to get some points for an Ecology grant, we added a TMDL support aspect to it. TMDL is better known as a water cleanup plan, so, in other words, we told Ecology we'd collect some data at places they're interested in and in return they'd give us a lot of money.

We sample every two weeks at forty sites. I've got a map of those in a couple minutes so we'll talk about that more then. We sample for pretty standard water quality parameters: fecal coliform, dissolved oxygen, temperature, pH, turbidity, conductivity, salinity and various forms of nitrogen and phosphorus. As I mentioned, we do get State support from a Centennial Clean Water grant that funds 75% of our work. The other 25% comes from the Skagit County taxpayers, so thank you very much. We post our data on the web. We update it quarterly after we go through our quality control steps to make sure what we actually measured in the field gets into our data files. And you can catch me via e-mail on that address or on the telephone.

I've been told I need more people pictures in my presentations, so here's Jeff collecting a sample on a beautiful day. It's kind of hard to see, but it gives you an overall picture of where we are sampling in the county. You can see the cities in the middle of the map here and all those red dots are our sample sites. They range from on the main stem Skagit upstream of Hamilton; several of the smaller streams that feed the Skagit in mid-valley; a lot in the Samish basin and some along in the drainage infrastructure in the Samish delta; several down on the lower Skagit in the Skagit delta; and then a lot in the Nookachamps basin.

Not all these sites are in ag areas. We have some that are outside of ag areas for comparison's sake, and we have several upstream/downstream comparison-type sites.

Pay attention to where these dots are on this map. Memorize it in your head because the next several slides will also be maps showing various aspects of what we've found in our three years of monitoring.

These are sites that are not meeting the State dissolved oxygen standard for the most recent water year. As you can see, that's a lot of where we measure. Where you see a number without a red dot, those are sites that are meeting the standard, and these red dots are sites that don't meet the standard. The standard is different for the downstream – where did my cursor go? Oh, there it

goes. These downstream sites have a lower standard than the upstream sites, so I can't just say it's eight milligrams per liter. It's eight milligrams per liter dissolved oxygen for some and 9.5 for the other. But anyway, you can just tell by looking that there's quite a few sites that do not currently meet the dissolved oxygen standard.

And I need to say that the way our program is designed, we can't tell you why these sites aren't meeting the standard. There's several possible reasons for any particular site. Sometimes streams don't meet the dissolved oxygen standard merely because of the vegetation that grows around them. It takes out all the oxygen at night. Other sites may have a leaking septic tank on them or there could be some land use practice that is putting organic material into the water that is causing the dissolved oxygen to decline.

These are sites that don't meet the temperature standard. And, again, that looks a lot like the overall map because we don't have very many sites that don't meet the temperature standard. And, again, the reasons for that are probably different for each stream. Some of them are pretty obvious. Site 17 here is right downstream from the outlet of Big Lake. It's probably not going to make the standard because Big Lake gets pretty warm. We'll get more into that part of the discussion either later with mine or during question and answer, or perhaps Sally has a thing or two to say about it. There are such a thing as natural conditions. Some of our streams may not meet standards because of that.

These are sites that don't meet the fecal coliform standard and, again, it's a lot of them. Again, fecal coliform could come from a number of sources. I'm going to switch right ahead to the next slide because you're probably not memorizing all these sites anyway. There's lots of sources for fecal coliform. Leaking septic tanks are a problem in Skagit County. We've identified many of them and we're working on getting them fixed up. Cows in the stream can deposit fecal coliform in the stream, but so can the wildlife. We have a lot of birds in the county. We have deer here and there. So what we really need is a fecal coliform i.d. program. There are methods being developed that you can take a water sample and identify the source of the fecal coliform. We have not done that yet because the methods so far have not reached the point where we can rely on the results; however, the field is rapidly developing and we look forward to the day – hopefully in the not-too-distant future – where we *can* submit our samples for that kind of analysis.

As I said at the beginning, one of the main focuses of our program is to determine trends. This is because the way the program is set up our critical areas regulations are designed to protect, and we've received court rulings that we don't need to restore pristine conditions; we need to protect what we have.

So with that in mind, we've developed a trends monitoring program so that we can look at the streams we're monitoring, and if there's no trend or a good trend,

then our regulations are probably doing the job. If there's a bad trend, then we need to look at that spot and see why there is.

So the good news first here: we have many sites with some parameters that are improving. We have some sites that have increasing trends in dissolved oxygen, and we have a couple sites that have decreasing amounts of fecal coliform, and a few sites that have turbidity decreasing. The Skagit River sites that are decreasing in turbidity, that's almost certainly just the waxing and waning of the Chocolate Glacier on Glacier Peak. In years when it doesn't melt much, we don't get as much turbidity, and so that's probably responsible for that trend.

And here's the not-so-good news: we have declining trends in several places for several parameters. These ag sites with declining dissolved oxygen, those all three are in the Samish Delta drainage infrastructure so they are not salmonid streams as-such. They are ditches out there by Edison.

We have some places with increasing fecal coliform, at least based on the 2006 data. We're busy analyzing the data through 2007 and I'm happy to report that the fecal coliform trend at site 4, which is Thomas Creek, has disappeared with this year's data. We think we've gotten some septic tanks fixed in the drainage and we're cautiously optimistic about that. It's still not meeting the standard, but it's a lot better than it was before.

We have some increasing turbidity here and there, and a little note at the end about ammonia. That's a nitrogen form in the water, and that could be due to – again, it's kind of the same things that give you fecal coliform. It could be septic tanks, it could be animal manure. (It's) possible it could be wildlife or something like that, too.

We also have a trend in pH at many sites. It's increasing and we're not quite sure why that is or what that means. The rate is low enough that it's not like our streams are turning toxic or anything like that. It's possible that it's just a sign of aging equipment. I don't think that's it because we keep our equipment up and change the parts that need changing. But it's interesting that it's at many sites, and we're not quite sure what to make of that. So we'll be continuing to look into that one.

So, in summary, this was brief, again, and you can always look at our data on the Web or call me or write to me and I can provide you more detailed analysis. We also have our annual reports posted on the Web so you can read more in depth there, should you suffer from insomnia or other dementia. Many sites in Skagit County are not meeting water quality standards for several parameters: dissolved oxygen, temperature, and fecal coliform being kind of the big three.

Again, we need further work to determine why that is and it's going to be a different reason for each individual case. If there's one thing I've learned in five

years of monitoring Skagit County streams is every stream is different and it's real difficult to make blanket statements. They just all react differently to what's going on in their watershed. And they can be close together geographically and miles apart chemically. So that's been really interesting.

And then, as you saw, we kind of have a mixed bag of increasing trends and deleterious trends, and so as our program keeps going and as we work towards our 2010 changes to our standards, we'll be looking at those trends and trying to figure out what they're telling us about those individual sites where those trends exist.

So, as Ryan said, we're going to have questions at the end after all of us are done, so at this point I'm going to turn it over to Jeff.

Jeff McGowan: Thank you. Thanks for coming. I'm Jeff McGowan. I'm the Salmon Habitat Specialist for Skagit County Public Works and I'm here to talk about the salmon habitat program. This program was established at the same time as Rick's was and related to our Critical Area Ordinance and our no more harm standard. And that standard's a lot easier to do if you have standards like Rick has in water quality as opposed to habitat, which doesn't really have any defined standards.

So when we were putting this program together, we had discussions with the state and federal agencies about – they had concerns that habitat was being overlooked in our ordinance, and so we met with them and we came up with a method to do that.

So what the objectives of the salmon habitat monitoring program was to, you know, to be statistically, you know, valid. And we're going to look – the two WRIsAs in our basin are WRIA 3 and 4, basically the Samish and the Skagit. The Skagit's are split into WRIA 3 and 4 because it's so large. So these are the objectives of the program:

- to establish the statistically valid baseline of the current general physical habitat conditions in the WRIsAs;
- conduct habitat conditions monitoring for future years to be used to analyze a trend in salmon habitat conditions over time;
- to determine whether habitat conditions are improving, degrading or remaining static in Ag-NRL- and Rural Resource-NRL-zoned lands;
- and also to provide a differential between the trends in salmon habitat in Ag and other lands, basically.

So, you know, initially there was some talk that we should look at all streams. We figured that would be cost prohibitive. There's way too many streams to actually do a habitat survey on every one of them. And we wanted to do sites in

both Ag and non-Ag. We didn't want to just look at Ag sites in case there were impacts that were happening differentially between the two sites.

When we look at this, we need to acknowledge that habitat – salmon habitat – does not form rapidly. So when we go out there to try and determine a trend, we're basically at this point just taking a baseline data.

So that's what we did in 2004 and 2005. We picked the EPA's protocols for looking at habitat, we randomly selected sixty sites to do the first year of the initial 2004 site. Unfortunately, we didn't get all the sites in that summer. We had a lot of landowner issues. And so we basically finished it up in 2005, which became our baseline years.

So sixty sites was the minimum that we figured would be statistically valid, and then we'll do that again in 2009. And then those of you that – the initial comparison of habitat conditions. This program – to really do a good job in protecting trends in habitat, we'll have to go out many more years. You know, you don't grow a big tree overnight. And a lot of the protocols look at, you know, habitat forming over time. Trees that fall in the stream creating habitat have to be big enough to stay there. In a lot of cases they're currently not. Anyway, I'll get into more of that.

So these were the initial sites. These were – we used the EMAP program which comes from EPA. They have a program that randomly selects sections of streams throughout the county. And the red ones are the outside of the Ag areas – Ag-zoned areas – and the green ones are inside the Ag-zoned areas. So you can see they're pretty well distributed. In some cases there's not a lot of Ag upriver, but there is a couple sites that we can do upriver.

So what we did, we did issue a 2004/2005 Baseline Report, and this report outlined our monitoring program – described our monitoring program and also started a comparison of the data we received in that baseline. We did sixty sites, and we took – instead of just issuing a report that just says this is our data, we took a little effort and ended up comparing, you know, the conditions that we found in Ag zone sites to non-Ag zone sites.

And I just want to make clear that it's too early to do any kind of trend analysis with the data we have now. We do do twenty sites every year. If you go back to that thing, that previous slide, part of the program is to do twenty sites in between those five-year stretches – that we do sixty sites. In order to try and document events that may happen – a flood or a fire, or any kind of catastrophic event – so we know we can help. When we do our trend analysis, we can say well, this is what caused that, or attempt to do that. If you have some big floods, we can explain why things happened. So we wanted to make sure we documented some conditions over time every year.

So I'll just – this is the kind of stuff we measure when we're out there. We measure channel and riparian characterizations; what kind of trees are on the bank; what the sediment looks like – those kind of things. We tally the large woody debris and we look at discharge also. The Thalweg Profile is – Thalweg – Ryan loves this term – is actually the deepest part of any – of the stream. Basically where the current is most of the time.

So we actually used the Thalweg to determine our length of our sample sites and where we actually do our sampling. And then we look at the – you know – the other issues relating to what's happening in that channel. Is it _____, is it cut down, _____ channel constraint? Do we feel it's, you know, been affected by debris torrents or major floods – those type of things.

So I'll just go over some of the criteria that we looked at. I won't go through everything we measure, but some of the high points. We do measure shade or canopy cover in each of the sites, and we use that with – this up in the corner there is a demonstration of a mirror we use – I guess I can use the – this right here. We actually have a little concave mirror that we look at and it reflects what we see as far as the canopy – where the canopy's over. And that's how we determine how much shade is. And I don't want to go into anymore – too much detail, but just point out that – and this is actually a foot off the surface of the water. So in this case, Ag actually had a better percentage of shade than non-Ag, and basically that's – I think that's mainly because of a lot of times the Ag sites, although they don't have any trees they have a grass cover. You know, _____ grass is pretty thick in some areas.

So we take shade in the middle. We measure – that's kind of what this indicates. We take four measurements in the middle of the channel and then one on each side. This is the comparison we came up with. This would be Ag at 79% and 90% shade. And basically shade is figured by how many of these dots are covered in this mirror when you're standing in the middle of the stream. So it's actually how many out of seventeen. That's just kind of how we measure shade and canopy cover.

We also measure the vegetation type on each of the streams. This would indicate deciduous, conifer, mixed and none. So we also have two canopy layers: greater than five meters and lower than – below five meters. So, as you can see, Ag actually has quite a bit of the smaller cover but not so much of the other – or it's lower. And also Ag had a lot – or a higher number of sites with no canopy whatsoever, which you would expect on some of the channelized streams.

This is the sediment type. And predominantly in Ag, which is in the purple, we had fines, which you can expect. Ag is typically done in a low gradient area where the stream would have finer sediment as compared to non-Ag areas which

would have a higher grading and have a more coarse sediment. So this isn't unexpected.

For the sites we looked at, these are the main land use issues. As you can see, Ag was predominant with dikes, pastures and roads, whereas the non-Ag site was roads and logging, which is not – I don't think that surprises anybody.

This is the wood tally. As you can see, small wood was numerous in both sites as compared to the larger wood. The amount of wood in any particular stream – well, as you can see, the purple is the Ag and it was predominantly – well, non-Ag is – sorry. Non-Ag is the purple and it had a lot more wood than the non-Ag, as could be expected. And the Ag, the wood that the Ag did have was typically small.

So that's basically what I have. Again, the report is online, if you guys'd like to look at the Baseline Report. We also have yearly summaries. This is me sampling – looking at the canopy. Anyway, that – again, the habitat portion of this program is more of a long-term. It's going to take us a long time for us to determine trends in habitat conditions because the things that we measure don't change a lot or don't change quickly anyway. And also the State is actually doing something similar to this on more of a grandiose scale, trying to get a handle on if, you know, restoration projects and all the money that's been put into salmon restoration are actually improving things.

So that's what I have.

Sally Lawrence: So I'm Sally Lawrence and I work for the State Department of Ecology out of the Belleview regional office. And I cover two kind of areas of the state in my work: Kitsap County and Skagit County. And my work has to do with – I work on water quality improvement projects. We call them water cleanup plans, or TMDLs. And the objective of those is to improve waters of the state where we've found that they don't meet our state water quality standards.

So I've been familiar with this monitoring program since it got going about 4 ½ years ago. So I was very pleased to be asked to give my perspective, and so thank you for inviting me here.

Just to give you a sense of why Department of Ecology is involved in giving its viewpoint here: we're – this is actually just what I'm going to cover in this talk. I'm going to talk about our role in protecting waters of the state; I'm going to talk about what the purpose of this monitoring program was; I'm going to talk just a little bit about the results and what the next steps might be in looking at the monitoring data.

So the reason Department of Ecology's involved is we have this authority delegated to us by federal agencies, by EPA. They can delegate their authority

to regulate waters of the nation to each state. And so our Department's responsibility is to manage the NPDES programs, which is industrial dischargers and waste water treatment plant dischargers, and now we have a new municipal stormwater program. So those are all considered what we call "point sources" – individual dischargers.

We also establish the water quality standards for the state and we develop a list of waters of the state that don't meet those standards. And then we do these projects called TMDLs, which is my area of work. We work with local government, local organizations and the tribes to develop a plan for cleaning up an individual water body to make sure it meets the standards. So that's kind of the perspective Ecology has in this.

The County's monitoring program is pretty unique, as you've heard already. It really was designed to answer particular questions about whether agriculture was affecting waters in this county. And this is a fair approach. This really enabled the County to not have to do a mandatory buffer program. The ag community said we're not all the same; don't regulate us all the same. We want you to do some science, and we think there will be differences in the water quality.

And so that's really what this program does. It's like taking the temperature of a patient. It allows us to look at various spots throughout mostly ag areas, but some non-ag areas and say, well, what is the state of the waters there. Are we meeting those standards? And it was designed to address those local values, and it has gone through state review, so it follows the same kind of protocols that Ecology uses in designing other monitoring programs that we use throughout the state. And it had to pass the Credible Data test, which – this was an act passed by the legislature in 2004, but these are the kinds of criteria we've used for years in our agency to design our monitoring programs. We have to follow accepted quality assurance, quality control procedures during sampling and handling, sampling and analysis; we have to make sure the samples are actually representative of the condition of the water at the time of sampling; we have to make sure that the number of samples taken is adequate to give a picture of the water quality at that time; and the methods and protocols have to be those that are scientifically acceptable.

So these are the same kind of procedures that Ecology uses in our statewide monitoring programs, and when we reviewed Skagit County's program, we made sure that they were following and keeping up those same high standards of acceptability.

This slide is just a summary, just a picture of one of the parameters that Rick mentioned. The really good thing about this program is it does take – a number of things are measured at each sampling site. And I'm just summarizing a little bit about dissolved oxygen because dissolved oxygen is such a good indicator of how healthy a stream is. We have a lot of cold water fish that need high levels of

dissolved oxygen in order to survive and thrive. But there's a whole spectrum of aquatic life that needs dissolved oxygen. It's not just the salmon.

So this list here that you see on the left are some of Rick's sampling sites that meet standards consistently. He's got three or four years of data now that really show some excellent results. You see the list. The biggest part of the river, the main stem, the north and south forks of the Skagit, have been meeting DO standards consistently. So have two locations on Hansen Creek, Wiseman, Coal, Friday Creek at that location. So that's a really good set of data. We've got three years of data there. Then there's a set that pretty consistently have a period in the summer usually, when the water temperature warms up, when they *don't* meet the standards.

And, again, another good thing about this data set is that the County's measuring several parameters at once at each location. So we don't just have kind of a single blip of data about that location. We really can put together kind of an understanding of what's going on. For example, at this location, Hansen Creek at Hoehn Road, if you look at the y-axis on the left, that's measuring dissolved oxygen from zero up to twenty milligrams per liter. And what we're looking for there is a high level; above eight or ten milligrams per liter would meet the standard. And as you look over the year, you can see that as you get to the right side of the graph you're in the summer, between July and October. And that's when dissolved oxygen dips down because the water has warmed up. And the pink colored dots are showing the temperature of the same sample at that location. And so you can see in the cold time of the year it's colder, there's plenty of dissolved oxygen in the water. So this is partly a response to those warm summer temperatures. And, again, because we have these many parameters we're measuring at each location, you have a really good picture of condition of the water.

And this is just one more slide of data just to show that we can take a look at it and compare it. In this slide I'm comparing it with some data Department of Ecology collected in the Samish River system. This is on Thomas Creek. Because we did an intensive Samish water quality study over the last year in one of our TMDLs, we monitored one of the same stations that the County monitors. And so the purpose of this slide was to show that for the same period of time, State Department of Ecology was measuring fairly similar amounts of fecal coliform bacteria as Rick was measuring in his program for the County. So the numbers you see on the y-axis – again, it's fecal coliform bacteria. The middle line is 100. That's our State standard for this type of fresh water. But you can see that the pink dots and the blue dots are pretty much in the same range, and bacteria measurements are pretty variable. So this is a pretty satisfactory comparison. We didn't always sample on the same day, so we don't expect them to be identical, but what this shows is a lot of confidence that we're out there measuring the same thing in a very similar period of time.

So just a few comments about what we should be thinking about as we interpret the data. Clearly some of the sampling locations are not in compliance with the State standards. And just the fact – just because there's no trend at some of these locations doesn't mean that you get a pass at that location if you're not meeting the State water quality standard.

But what we're looking for from the County is to follow through on its adaptive management. And there's a really good process the County can be following. You need to review the land uses; look at the flow of the water, the topography, the runoff; make contact with the landowners; use, you know, all the capabilities that are out there for education and technical assistance from the Conservation District. There's a lot of good information that can be provided to the landowners if there's a problem in the stream.

And what we've – what Ecology has found in our work in the County is that most people out here want to be good stewards. They're really doing a good job. And it's just being fair to everybody if you do follow up where there is a problem.

And I'd like to point out that we've been working really, really well with Skagit Health Department as we've worked in the Samish watershed. We've often – in the last year, we've looked at clusters of houses where we think or where we know from our data we're getting high fecal counts. We've been working with the County and they'll – the Health Department will send letters if there's a group of houses where it appears there may be a failing septic. And so what we're hoping is that if there's similarly a livestock program that that same kind of approach could be taken with those landowners. And that puts everyone on a fair standing.

And just finally, again, those good stewards – they're out there. This is Mr. DeVries's property on Nookachamps Creek, and he's allowed the fisheries enhancement group to do a whole bunch of planting on one side of the creek, and he's got his livestock fenced back away from the creek and they're, you know, they're not impacting the water. So that's – you've got some really great examples out there.

So that's all.

Mr. Walters: Okay, so now we're going to move into our workshop portion of this evening, where you get to ask any questions and give – well, no, this is just the question time really. If you have purely commentary, we're going to be taking testimony next, but first we're going to do questions. But in order to inform what some of those questions you might want to target, let me tell you what our next steps are here.

We are taking comments tonight and written comments through December 24th. So if you have friends that want to comment, I can't really say that we've

received that many comments so far. So be sure to get those in by December 24th. We will then compile those and report to the County Commissioners on what it is you said generally. And then we are going to – we've actually already hired an academic from WSU – from the WSU Water Research Center – to evaluate our monitoring program and let us know what changes he thinks make sense. We should have that report by March 31st. And all of these reports – all of our current monitoring reports, our report to the Commissioners, our report from the academic – they'll all be available on our website, which is listed on the bottom of the first handout.

All along we have been and will continue to be participating in the Ruckelshaus Center process. This is a – the Ruckelshaus Center is a WSU-U.W. cooperative policy shop that was instructed by the state legislature to analyze this issue and propose policy options. They have another two years to work on that, and right now they're studying the – they're trying to get a grasp of the issue. They'll do that through this year, through next year, and then the year after that they will work on policy options.

Now assuming that they don't come up with some end-all, be-all solution to this issue, we will still need to comply with the Growth Board order in 2010, which means we will need to have a compliant monitoring and adaptive management program then. We have until December 28th in 2010 to do that, so we have some time, but it's a long process and we really don't want to do this anymore. We want to get this done. We want to do this one more time and come up with a compliance solution and not spend any more time in court.

And if we're very lucky, we may come up with a solution that's better than buffers for both farmers and salmon. That's really the goal. And salmon is really the driver of this whole controversy. We're not promoting habitat to raise mosquitoes or even squirrels; it's salmon. We want to protect salmon; they're a threatened species. And, as a result, we've come up with some things that we can do right now to help salmon that don't involve additional restrictions on landowners. And they are laid out in our salmon policy resolution, copies of which are on the back table and also available on the website. And the website is www.skagitcounty.net/salmonstrategy. And there are links to all of these materials, the salmon policy resolution. There will be a transcript of this hearing and video of this hearing there.

So now we're going to take some questions Donohue-style. And if you recall, Donohue never let go of the mic.

(laughter)

So who's got their first question? And we can ask questions of any of these three panelists.

Carol Ehlers: I'm going to ask this question of you –

Mr. Walters: I was hoping you would.

Ms. Ehlers: -- to follow on what you just said about the website. There are many people who know about the website, find the beginning of the website, and get overwhelmingly lost. So if you, in the course of this, could explain how one finds this information on the website, it would be a public service.

Mr. Walters: So let's answer that right now. The information is at that address that I just specified. And if you go to that page, you can click on "Monitoring and Adaptive Management" on the left-hand side, and then there's an explanatory couple paragraphs and then links to all the materials.

Mr. Haley: So, Ryan, again, that's skagitcounty.net/salmonstrategy/?

Mr. Walters: Right. And there are other materials there, too, that you can explore to your heart's content. But I know other people have questions, right?

(Unidentified) Lake Cavanaugh Man: This is a question for anyone that wants to answer, because I don't know who to direct it to. At Lake Cavanaugh, I don't believe there are any salmon. And yet you do enforce these buffers around streams that feed into Lake Cavanaugh. If the focus of the program is to protect salmon, why do we have buffers at Lake Cavanaugh? Or am I mistaken? Are there some kind of cryptic salmon there that I'm not aware of?

Mr. McGowan: There's resident trout, which, you know, the main – we like to look at salmon because they're a, you know, high profile species, but actually the ordinance is directed to protect fish life.

Lake Cavanaugh Man: So it's not just salmon.

Mr. McGowan: Right. Trout –

Lake Cavanaugh Man: And the other question I have for you, Jeff, is I noticed from the picture you were in a – what I conceive of as a large stream; you had to have waders on. The streams on my property are, like, this big – maybe six inches. They run pretty much year-round, but they're very small. And yet same thing: fifty feet on either side of these very small streams. And I understand from speaking with Sally that the concern is water temperature but, again, the fish are in the lake, not in the stream. My little tiny streams, no matter what the temperature, isn't going to materially change the temperature of the lake. And so the question again – why you would apply a fifty-foot buffer to a little tiny stream or a great big stream that require waders to cross. Because there I can see where it might have an impact on where the salmon ultimately live. But in some

cases, it's inconceivable that the size of the stream that I described could have any impact at all on Lake Cavanaugh.

Mr. McGowan: That's a big question. It stems back from, you know, the size of the creek and the width of the buffer. I guess it depends a lot of times on what the land use is next to it how much of a buffer you need. You know, in a case of a small stream that may not have any fish in it, it's maybe a water quality and a fish production. You know, bugs still grow in those things and drift downstream, so they're still important for fish life downstream and water quality downstream.

Lake Cavanaugh Man: Again, if you look at the contribution of these streams to the totality of the lake, I'm sure you couldn't measure it. I mean, it would be a rounding error unless you had a twelve-digit calculator. In other words, I guess the bottom line is are we truly helping – in my case, Lake Cavanaugh – or are we just uniformly enforcing rules without looking at the true impact of what we're really concerned about, which are the fish. I don't have any problem being concerned about fish, but I wonder about, you know, setbacks that might not have any salutary effect on the fish or the lake.

Mr. Haley: The other thing that setbacks might do on streams tributary to Lake Cavanaugh is protect other aspects of the water quality. If you have setbacks on the tributary streams, that can keep some nutrients and sediment from getting into that stream and, therefore, into the lake. And if you got enough nutrients and sediment into that lake, you could have nuisance algae blooms, you could have rampant growth of other aquatic vegetation, or you could get so much sediment into it that your lake's no longer clear like it used to be. So there's – setbacks along streams do a lot of things for water quality besides just temperature.

Mr. McGowan: And, you know, again it comes back to if you have a clear-cut right up to the edge of the bank, you're going to get a lot of runoff, you know, and runoff isn't good for streams.

Ms. Lawrence: Right, or if you have a lawn – a green lawn – going right up to the bank of one of those little creeks, then those – if you're using nutrients or fertilizers on your lawn, that's going to end up in the creek, too, and it will feed the lake. And all the lakes we have around here there's a danger of eventually getting eutropic – the lake fills up. So those regulations do have a purpose.

Mr. McGowan: When you start to get those wood in the stream, too, it also helps to stabilize the stream, so you want that coming in to collect sediment so it just doesn't wash downstream. So the wood functions, you know, not just as a fish habitat but also as sediment retention in an area.

Lake Cavanaugh Man: Just a comment because I'm new to this: one thing that would help me with this presentation (was) if you would have said if this is a good

thing or a bad thing. In other words, when we got to the wood, I didn't know if too much wood was good or bad. You guys know.

Mr. McGowan: Oh, sorry! Wood is good, wood is good.

Mr. Haley: We spend so much time preaching to the choir that sometimes we forget.

Mr. McGowan: I think I have that in my notes, but I skipped by it.

Mr. Walters: All right, any other questions?

Randy Walters: Yes, when you guys were talking about pH – quality of the water – you were seeing a rise in pH?

Mr. Haley: Yes.

Mr. Randy Walters: Has anybody been checking the – I mean, are you testing where your water's coming from? In other words, from the sky, as well as from the snowpack?

Mr. Haley: We have not done testing of anywhere other than where our forty water quality sites are, so we have not routinely checked rainfall pH. Frankly, this kind of just came up when we did our trends analysis at the end of last year and it was like – it was a head scratcher because, you know, the first thing you think of is okay, it's so many places this must be some kind of overall effect. So, one, is it our equipment – which would affect everything – or, two, is there something going on more regionally?

And the first thing you think of, of course, is climate change. Well, it's the opposite effect. If climate change is the result of increased carbon dioxide in the water, then that should result in *lower* pH – acid rain – but that's not what we're getting, obviously, in our trends. We're seeing an increasing trend. However, I would say that the scope of the change is small enough that right now to me it's more of a curiosity than something that I'm raising a red flag over. But we'll continue to look at it and I might just buy a new pH meter and see if it goes away!

Mr. Randy Walters: Yeah, there's one other thing, too. Another aspect is you're dealing with older snow, older ice, if you're melting glaciers that haven't been melted for a long time.

Mr. Haley: Yeah, most of our sites don't have any snow melt going in to them except for maybe, you know, during that one snow storm during January. So I don't think it's snow melt that's responsible for it. Really only the Skagit has any glacial melt in it and we're seeing this effect in a lot of the side streams that start fairly low in the foothills.

Tarn Mauer: Thanks, ___. I have a couple of questions for Mr. McGowan on his presentation. Here – sorry, do I need to talk into the microphone? – on your slide discussing Channel and Riparian Characterization – Canopy Cover, you measure mean percent of shade but you also have a mean densiometer reading. Can you explain what that does?

Mr. McGowan: Sure.

Mr. Mauer: Or characterizes?

Mr. McGowan: You remember – that little drawing up above is actually a reproduction of the mirror that we look at. This is the guy looking down at the mirror. If you count up those dots in there that make up the squares, there should be seventeen of them. And so what the mean densiometer reading is is the average of those dots that are covered.

Mr. Mauer: Okay.

Mr. McGowan: Seventeen being the maximum.

Mr. Mauer: Okay, I was just double-checking.

Mr. McGowan: Sure.

Mr. Mauer: Then here you had another slide here: “Channel and Riparian Characterization – Riparian Disturbance.” Underneath it says “Proximity Weighted Disturbance Index.” Can you explain – show the lay folk what that means?

Mr. McGowan: Sure. There’s a formula that’s used to figure that out. These – when we do our surveys, we take the proximity of the disturbance to the creek. It goes from right on the bank to within ten meters and outside of ten meters. And those impacts – or those effects – are weighted differently. And it comes up with a formula that kind of indicates what the – a comparative index, so you can compare the potential impacts. So that’s basically what that is. It’s a formula that EPA developed.

Mr. Mauer: Okay, and just one more question.

Mr. McGowan: Sure.

Mr. Mauer: Sorry to get into this too much, but could you describe for the audience in inches – not necessarily metric, but in inches or feet – what would qualify as a medium-sized large woody debris?

Mr. McGowan: Sure. A meter is about thirty-nine inches, so when you look at this, a .1 is about ten inches – something like that. Okay, so up to .8, which would be thirty-five inches maybe.

Ms. Lawrence: So that's diameter.

Mr. McGowan: Right. Are you looking for –

Mr. Mauer: No, no, no. I was wondering what would qualify as a *medium* size, because you have very small, small, medium, large, very large. What is the possible ranges of woody debris that would qualify as medium?

Mr. McGowan: Well, if you look at the chart, it's – the diameter –

Mr. Mauer: Well, maybe I need new glasses then.

Mr. McGowan: -- .3 to .6 inches in diameter – or meters in diameter – and greater than five but less than fifteen meters long would be a medium piece.

Mr. Mauer: So one to five – no, one, two feet in diameter. So something – let's say about – something two feet wide and fifteen feet long qualifies as medium. Very small would be – okay, so I see how that works.

Mr. McGowan: A little over fifteen.

Mr. Mauer: Okay, sorry. My contacts work real well but my glasses don't.

Mr. Walters: We'll have enlargements of these slides on the website.

Mr. McGowan: Again, my baseline report, which goes into more detail on each of those, is available online. And there's a lot of other things we measured that I didn't mention in my report that may be of interest to you also.

Mr. Walters: Do you have more?

Glen Johnson: Yeah, I have a Jeff question also. You had mentioned earlier that when you were starting to do your location sites that you ended up with landowner issues. And I'm a landowner. I don't have much issue. I love fish. I do everything I can to promote their production as naturally as we can make it happen. But there's a lot of people that own property that feel like they're being taken from. And I'm just wondering if anyone has really engaged the landowner in economic opportunity as a solution to the salmon habitat issue, and that is creating a circumstance where people can actually be paid for the production of fish that they can prove on their land by working with Department of Ecology, DNR, and creating fish habitats that are not just solely for philanthropy, but for I'll split the fish we produce off my land, and I get paid for half of the increase that

we come up with – a background amount. And start thinking about fish as a crop.

I mean, I see lots and lots of crops that sell for really cheap and I see lots and lots of fish that sell for a lot of money. And I'm a landowner who's looking at it and I'm taking significant steps and property out of agricultural production to hopefully produce high quality, high value fish that is not within the wild fish world. And, you know, we have hatcheries that operate way under capacity and we have a shortage of fish. We put fish farms out in places where they shouldn't be. Maybe some of the fish farms could be where the habitat really should have them be. And instead of thinking Atlantic salmon, you know, we could be raising steelhead trout on farms and produce some cash flow for the farmer who's putting his land into buffer. Some of those buffers could contain containment for farmed fish – farmed fish, wild fish, crossings, making it – I mean I'm throwing a whole lot in a real quick hurry here, but the possibility never seems to be broached and I want to broach it and bring it to the light of day that people are a big issue, and if you don't have people who are landowners actively wanting to be involved and instead looking at – you come onto their land, it's get off my land – we're going to have roadblocks for a long time. And so I'm just wondering if that has ever really been brought to the landowner.

Mr. McGowan: I think it's been brought up in the last couple years, but just as an idea. But I don't think anybody's really taken it anywhere.

Mr. Haley: Ryan, do you want to talk about the Salmon Legacy Program?

Mr. Walters: Right, that's one kind of analogous program: the Salmon Heritage Program that we proposed earlier this year but have somewhat backed off on since, would have compensated landowners for the purchase or conservation easement purchase of buffers. So it's kind of – it's kind of what you're talking about, but much simpler to administer. Are you familiar with that program? Did you hear too much about it?

Mr. Johnson: I think I remember a little bit about it.

Mr. Walters: It briefly appeared in the news, but then we got wrapped up with Senate Bill 5248, which imposed our timeout and some other things. But that's also something that the County has not completely given up on and may come back to to start implementing.

Jeff, do you want to talk a little bit briefly about the issue – the landowner issues – that you mentioned?

Mr. McGowan: Well, initially it was decided within the County that we would actually get written permission to access people's land. So we picked out all our random sites, put out a big mailing, didn't get a good response back and the

response we got were mixed. About half and half would let us on; the rest of us, we got some letters that – not only no, but ...

Voice in audience: Emphatically no!

(laughter)

Mr. McGowan: Yeah. So it was a little frustrating because, you know, the way the program was set up we had these random sites picked out, and if we couldn't do those, we had to go – we had to pick out into the next set of random sites. So we kept going down the list, trying to find people who would let us on their land. So it was one of the main reasons why we weren't able to get the sixty sites in the original year. We were supposed to do sixty sites in 2004, but had to extend it into 2005.

Eventually I just took the approach where, you know, if we had a landowner I was just going to go out and knock on the door and say is this okay, instead of mailing out. Some people are just paranoid about signing a piece of paper that the County sent them, you know, but if you go up and shake their hand and say this is all I want to do. I want to walk on your land for – or walk the creek – for an afternoon, is that okay. And, you know, 90% of the time it was just fine, especially if you tell them that, you know, this is to try and prevent buffers which ...

Mr. Johnson: It really hasn't been an issue of trying to get as many landowners as possible to want to be involved. Because it seems like – I mean, I listen day in and day out to talk radio about landowner issues, and everybody that buys a piece of rural land, they basically get told you don't get to do much with it because it's resource land, it's a wetland, and everybody wants to drain it quick as they can or something to turn it into a different designation. And I'm just seeing huge business opportunity for the whole northwest that'd be awash with fish, rather than sitting here in this big conundrum, this big fight, between the fish and the farmland. And the farmland could grow fish better than they could grow potatoes, more than likely.

Mr. McGowan: Yeah, it's – I guess there's two things: there is programs that are similar to what Ryan was mentioning there. There's the CREP program which actually will, you know, rent your land, basically, for ten to fifteen years, I think it is. You're probably familiar with that.

Mr. Johnson: (inaudible)

Mr. McGowan: Yeah. Also I guess we need to think of fish as a state resource. It's everybody's resource. So I imagine it gets a little convoluted when people are trying to be compensated for what has been viewed as a resource that we all share.

Mr. Walters: On the other hand, I think the County is definitely open to innovative ideas and solutions to this.

Mr. Johnson: I was just thinking about this man's small little stream with big fifty-foot buffers on each side. He's lost value. Because, you know, there might be a few fish on there. Well, if there was a background amount of fish that could be figured on his land – say, well, we have three reds that we've noticed on your stream, whether you realize it or not, and there's a potential for 75,000 fish to go down into Lake Cavanaugh and become rainbow trout for the sport fishery or whatever. You could say if that were all of a sudden on your property to be a hundred reds, we'll pay you a hundred bucks a red that you can create or something. And get people actively in their own philanthropic world like I've done on my property. I've taken 30% of my ag production out to promote fish that I don't even have a fish in my pond yet. You know?

But I'm getting absolutely no moral support for doing the right thing, whereas other people have to be brought to court to be told no, you can't do something on your property. And so I just think that we could be going a long ways to be proactively creating opportunity for landowners to do the right thing, give them tax breaks, give them a part of the fish production – whatever. And I know that I've been in negotiations with this with the tribal fisheries and they are all over the idea of the potentiality of compensating farmers for converting some of their ag land into fish land. And if they can verify a before and after heightened quantity of fish production, or food for fish – you know, quantifying some of these things in these water quality monitoring circumstances – it seems like it would go a long way to bring public relations toward you and the Department of Ecology and anyone that's a bureaucracy that's, you know.

There's a lot of people out there that are really anti, and they could just as well be pro. And I don't like anti. It just doesn't get anywhere but fighting in courts. And, you know, I mean, finding people like me and saying hey, you're doing the right thing. I'll give you – we'll give you some support to do it further, you know, rather than it be do the right thing just for, you know, the goodness of your heart. And it's like sometimes people can have that big of a heart and some people don't have that big of a pocketbook, you know. And so if we – I just think that there's ways that we can get landowners to become co-cooperators in this whole process and I just don't see that really happening as well as it could.

Mr. Haley: But I think the County is pretty well aware of the economic impact of taking land out of production, and if we weren't aware, we've heard it over and over again. And that's why the County took this approach to not require – to try and find a way to not require buffers in the agricultural lands. And that's why we have this program instead. And we're not there yet because –

Mr. Johnson: Not everybody's happy.

Mr. Haley: -- not everybody's happy with it.

Ms. Lawrence: Well, I'd like to just comment on your idea because I think you're thinking very creatively and very strategically, and thinking about what kind of motivation would a landowner require to buy into buffers. And I think you have an excellent idea. I think people should – I think you should talk to – you know, you've talked to the tribes about it. I do believe there're some practical, logistical problems.

Mr. Johnson: There are specialists who take care of problems!

Ms. Lawrence: Right, right, right, right! But I don't want you to think that it's not – I think it's a great idea and we should all at least think about how that might be done, even though I know there's some logistics. There's – you know, it is – the wild fish are supposedly, you know, a common resource but at the same time we have, you know, commercial fisherman who – they invest in their boat, they invest in their capital. So they make an investment, but they're essentially harvesting a common resource. So maybe there's a sliver there that we could negotiate. So I'd say let's keep talking. And I'm – I only work for Department of Ecology, and we have, like, no ownership of fish. That would be DFW. So I'm sort of speaking out of turn here, but I like your idea.

Mr. Johnson: Thank you.

Mr. McGowan: It seems like, you know, I think a tax benefit is probably more realistic than actually paying somebody. You know, I think the – my impression is the fish and forest rules – you know, the ones that went into effect a few years ago – actually, you know, actually gave a big break to timber companies as far as their taxing on their harvesting. So I think that's maybe an approach that could happen is a tax incentive.

Mr. Johnson: They'd get a tax incentive to leave a buffer?

Mr. McGowan: Right. That's the way it kind of shook out, but, yeah.

Mr. Walters: All right, do we have other comments – other questions, rather? Any other questions? All right, well, then we'll move into Phase 3, which is our public testimony portion. This is the part where we all leave and don't listen.

(laughter)

Mr. McGowan: But it is recorded.

Mr. Walters: It's – this is recorded, televised and transcribed, and your comments will go to the County Commissioners. So anybody who would like to

speaking – I think we do have a sign-up sheet, but how many people – how many people signed up on that? Looks like, Sally, you were one of the people who signed up.

Ms. Lawrence: Oh, well, that was a mistake!

Mr. Walters: Okay.

Ms. Lawrence: I already spoke; you heard all you wanted to hear from me!

Mr. Walters: All right, so Jean Shea is first and possibly last. Anybody who wants to speak next can go ahead after Jean. But, Jean, you've got thirty-five minutes.

Jean Shea: Well, for those who don't know me, my name is Jean Shea. And my family moved to Skagit County in 1995, right in the middle of the flood, and we have 100 beautiful acres on the beautiful Samish River. And I got involved in this effort because we installed buffers and we had habitat built and we love the fish. And one day we looked outside the window and didn't know if we were ever going to be able to farm this land that we had every penny of our livelihood dumped into. And my youngest was three at the time and, out of desperation, myself and the Skagit County Cattlemen started looking into science and stream monitoring techniques, and we filed an appeal to the Growth Management Hearings Board. And now, thankfully, Skagit County has a wonderful stream monitoring and adaptive management plan put together.

Unfortunately, we have disagreed from the beginning on the data analysis methods of Skagit County in a similar way that Growth Management and the Supreme Court have. And I really want to thank Jeff McGowan for using these three words – statistical valid baseline – over and over. And, basically, Skagit County has put together a design in their stream monitoring plan and adequately sampled quite a few different – as you saw, forty different sites. Where we part ways is we believe there is enough data to do a statistically valid baseline to determine the existing background conditions for our streams and, therefore, identify when there's a condition that is degrading or not. And then if there – then the adaptive management would kick in – according to the Skagit County ordinance – and require the landowner to work with the Conservation District or NRCS, or simply make a management decision to change whatever it is that has been shown to be affecting the stream quality in a negative way.

We – I, personally, and the people that I've been working with, including the Skagit County Cattlemen – we don't believe that meeting state quality water standards should be a part of the Growth Management effort. Not that meeting state water quality standards is a bad thing; I think it's just too much to bite off with this effort. It's a huge undertaking to do the sampling and data analysis to

develop the statistically valid baseline in these stream parameters, and also to determine whether or not the conditions are degrading.

If we meet the Growth Management requirement of doing no harm, then we've met our Growth Management goal. It's possible to say that if we've established baseline conditions and we've determined that they're background conditions, and if they don't meet state water quality standards, then by association we've met state water quality standards. But I think that the exercise of determining the statistically valid baseline must come first. And I would be willing to venture that most cases would not develop a condition that was outside of state water quality standards that couldn't be remedied with some kind of adaptive management if it was not determined to be baseline.

So I think that the effort should be separate from the effort of Department of Ecology. And, also, I really encourage Skagit County to move forward with getting these proposals from WSU on determining possible methods of determining statistically valid baselines for different parameters. And, also, we shouldn't wait for the Ruckelshaus committee to give us the recommendation of the entire state. I think Skagit County needs to take the lead on this, just as we have with the ordinance itself and the stream monitoring program. The landowners and the Skagit County Cattlemen have not agreed with the methods that have been used to establish trends. And apparently it's not statistically valid enough for Growth Management or the Supreme Court.

I really appreciate the effort that Skagit County has made, and we've come a long way in this effort. And what we really need to do is to keep moving forward, and if we can tie up the loose ends on the stream monitoring and data analysis, then we can probably be an example for the entire state. Thank you.

Mr. Walters: All right. Have we got anyone else who would like to make comment? Please come up here to the podium and say your full name and address.

Mr. Mower: Where's the camera?

Mr. Walters: Over there.

Mr. Mower: My name is Tarn Mower. I reside at 35658 Lyman-Hamilton Highway, Sedro-Woolley, Washington 98284. That's the mailing address. It's slightly east of Hamilton, so kind of in the upriver area.

The Skagit County monitoring program and adaptive management is both flexible and innovative, and make no mistake that Skagit County has gone forward with this and is setting the bar for probably the rest of this state, but possibly the entire Pacific rim of the United States in how we deal with local government regulation of water quality. This is possible.

Oh, I forgot. I should have thanked Skagit County government for sending so many members here today and also we have a guest from the Department of Ecology. I really am thankful that she came down here and had some things to say about the Department of Ecology's view of the water quality monitoring program, which I have here, in which she states that it is designed to answer the simple question of is agriculture impacting water quality and salmon habitat, and, if so, what are the quantitative data that reflect this and what is the actual impact on the water.

If there's a problem, according to the old ordinance which was put in place, the landowners came forward and said that they would fix it. If there's a problem, if we can determine that this problem is being created by land uses at-site, then the landowner would fix the problem. I don't understand what causes difficulty with so many agencies in accepting this as an acceptable solution to any problem that might be seen. We have a problem; we will fix it. I don't – it just doesn't make any sense to me whatsoever that somebody can say this does not cut it, when, in fact, after fourteen years of gnashing teeth and pulling hair we can't come forward with this and say look, we've got a possible solution here. If there's a problem, we'll fix it. We're going to institute fair and unbiased water quality monitoring. And then when we detect a problem, when something exceeds a total maximum daily load – TMDL – consistently and is part of the land use, we will come forward as landowners and fix it. We'll try to come up with the solution and fix it. There's – obviously – there's the Salmon Heritage Program might have been a solution. There's CREP, which can be used in many cases. There's a lot of tools already out there. There're a lot of tools already out there that are incentives for landowners to improve salmon habitat that could be used, in this instance, on agricultural land.

Now I applaud Skagit County in instituting this ordinance. It has taken a very long time and a lot of meetings and a lot of hours and a lot of sleepless nights and ulcers and that sort of thing on parts of certain members of the community to get this in place. And I would hope that, as we proceed in the three-year review, that we will come to understand that this is really a truly innovative program that can work and *will* work. And hopefully we will be allowed as a county, as a local government, to proceed with this and hopefully see some results. Thank you.

Mr. Walters: Thank you. Anybody else like to make comment?

Mr. Johnson: I was just going to ask if what I've already said is my comment, or could it be construed – I mean, was it recorded tonight?

Mr. Walters: Yeah, it was recorded and will be transcribed so, yeah. Anyone else?

Betsy Stevenson: Ryan, we didn't get his name.

Mr. Walters: Oh, yes; we didn't get your name, though.

Mr. Johnson: Oh, my name's Glen Johnson.

Mr. Walters: Glen Johnson. And your address?

Mr. Johnson: 20482 Skagit City Road, Mount Vernon, Washington 98273.

Mr. Walters: All right. Hopefully we got that by virtue of my mic. All right, well, in that case, if there is no further testimony, then we'll conclude this workshop. Please stay tuned. You can sign up for updates on our website, and we'll send out e-mail notifications when there's something new that has happened or something new that is added to our site that you can review. And this is going to be a long haul – another two-and-a-half years – but hopefully we'll come out with something that works. So thank you all for coming. See you next time.

Mr. Haley: Thanks, everybody.