

ILIO Executive Committee Meeting
November 27, 2019, 9:30-11:00 am
1 NE 6th Street, Coupeville, WA (Annex Room B-102)

Meeting Summary

Executive Committee Members Present:

Helen Price Johnson, Island County Commissioner
Tim Callison, Mayor of Langley
John Mishasek, Coupeville Port District
Janet Saint Clair, Island County Commissioner
Stan Walsh, Skagit River Systems Co-operative (Swinomish Tribe)
Blaine Oborn, City of Oak Harbor
Molly Huges, Mayor of Coupeville
Robert Severns, City of Oak Harbor Mayor

Technical Committee Members Present:

Keith Higman, Public Health Director
Dawn Spillsbury, WRIA 6 Lead Entity Coordinator
Linda Lyshall, Snohomish Conservation District
Dennis LeFevre, City of Oak Harbor Planner
Steve Powers, City of Oak Harbor
John Lovie, Habitat SIAT, Citizen Volunteer

Also Present:

Lori Clark, Island County DNR, ILIO Coordinator
Laura Ferguson, PSP Ecosystem Recovery Coordinator (via WebEx)
Mallory Palatucci, Island County Watershed Planner
Meredith Penny, Island County Long Range Planner
Hanna Liss, Island County Critical Areas Planner
Libby Gier, Department of Natural Resources, Habitat SIL
Rachel Bouchilon, WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife

I. Call to order

Chair Commissioner Helen Price Johnson called the ILIO EC meeting to order at 9:30 am.

II. Approval of July 24, 2019 Meeting Summary Notes

MOTION:

Tim Callison made a motion to approve the July 24, 2019 meeting summary notes as written. Janet Saint Clair second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

III. NTA Approval for FY2019 Local NEP Allocation

Discussion:

- In July, the ILIO Executive Committee approved using the FY2018-2022 scoring process and scores assigned to allocate the FY2019 NEP local allocation. The ILIO Technical Committee reviewed the 2018-2022 NTA scoring and discussed the assigned ranking from that process. The City of Oak Harbor is currently receiving funding for conducting a feasibility study to evaluate and inform NTA# 2018-0091, 2018-0092 and 2018-0093 therefore they are not being considered for 2019 NEP local allocation funding. They should be poised to compete for FFY2020 NEP funds.
- The status of the 2018-2022 NTAs was discussed. Most of the 2018-2022 NTAs have been funded. The Town of Coupeville, the Snohomish Conservation District, the Whidbey Conservation District and Island County Public Health all have active projects funded with NEP funding.
- Town of Coupeville and the Town of Langley are current capacity limitations right now.
- Moving three NTAs to the Strategic Implementation Lead will allow them to fund #2 or #3 if one or more of these projects are funded with FFY2019 regional allocation funds.

Motion: Tim Callison made a motion that the ILIO Executive Committee approve the ILIO Technical Committee's recommendation to recommend the following Near Term Actions for FY2019 NEP funding to the Stormwater SIAT:

2018-0637	Island County Stormwater Technical Assistance and Outreach Network
2018-0137	North Whidbey Island Water Quality Outreach & Best Management Practice Assistance
2018-0836	Enhancing soil health in a changing climate for hydrologic, habitat, and agricultural benefits

Land Development and Cover Workshop
DISCUSSION:

- Libby Gier with the Habitat Strategic Implementation Lead team is seeking local input on:
 - Locating and identifying ecologically important lands,
 - Identify ecologically important lands under high pressure of development, based on an appropriately scaled risk analysis,
 - Build support coalitions that increase the use of approaches to advance broad diverse coalitions that support protection and enhance opportunities for restoration, and
 - Align incentives, regulations, funding, and information to encourage protection and enhance opportunities for restoration.
- The group discussed ways Island County can preserve areas of high biodiversity importance and allow for migration in the long-term. Migration corridors and biodiversity conduits were possible solutions.
- High conversion to residential use observed on the presentation seems accurate – 80% of growth in rural areas, which is unusual compared to other areas in Puget Sound. 90% of timber on private property here, lots of clearcutting
- Strong perception that the more we remove timber, the more we affect critical recharge

- Demographic realities – Island county residents about 20 years older than state population. Pressures on land (specifically commercial use) would be different if demographic younger – everyone works off island
- Some ILIO members were surprised by the response to pressures on wetlands. The question was if we have very strict wetlands buffers etc, why are pressures to wetlands rated so high? Island County has provisions in code for building within wetland buffers under certain provisions – no net loss of ecological functions, mitigation. Island County Planning staff added that it is difficult to track permits and mitigation efforts (monitoring). Understaffing makes it hard to find unpermitted projects within wetlands.
 - Many residents don't want to submit complaints if they see violations – how to protect anonymous submissions?
- Wetland mapping is more of an indicator, not an accurate map – unmapped wetlands not accounted for:
 - Mapping done from GIS database – ballpark, more wetlands here than mapped, so can't tell how much destruction is actually taking place.
 - Streams also inadequately mapped.
- Low, moderate, and high susceptibility critical recharge areas considered during land use proposal review – areas rated high are a “no go”.
- When Island County looks at risk to aquifers, protecting shorelines helps protect from seawater intrusion.
- There was a caution raised that some of the conversation gets away from CAO critical areas language – don't want goalposts to change now that new CAO has been approved.
 - Need way to measure and monitor CAO effectiveness in order to better inform updates
 - Need recovery to align with those requirements
 - Secondary ramifications of creating another map
- People have a right to develop property outside of urban areas, mitigate impacts
- Island County is unique in its abundance of undeveloped shoreline – value in preserving unaltered shoreline, but County doesn't receive the kind of financial incentives to do so
- Data quantity and quality from the presentation seems accurate – general consensus.
- Lots of bluffs here (high use of geo hazard data)
- Shoreline – habitat conservation areas or geologically hazardous areas?
- Island County paid a consultant to identify FWHCAs – the data is really good.
- All of these data categories are really good – with the exception of wetlands and streams where the site-specific, geographically accurate data is lacking.
- Wetland area changes, but place where it was delineated doesn't really change – hydro soils and vegetation based boundaries are still there.
- Start with low hanging fruit for recovery – the 7 or 8 diking districts are not going to change (lots of houses built behind these dikes).
- Map doesn't capture processes we're trying to recover and protect.
- Protection very different from recovery – Deer Lagoon has potential to be high quality habitat for recovery, but lots of residences. Deer Lagoon also has water quality and shellfish habitat concerns.
- Watershed characterization mapping exercise during most recent CAO update
Penn Cove hotspot – respondents must have been more focused on protection than recovery
South Camano, Elder Bay important too but had to only pick 5

- People who participated probably represent narrow focus – would be interesting to expand survey to others; broader group would probably focus more on central Whidbey, current respondents clearly biased towards coastal/nearshore areas.
- Comprehensive plan update included mapping process – look at those and make suggestions based on available resources
- Water quality issue areas targeted for recovery, then those areas need to be protected; direct correlation between water quality atlas and hotspot areas
- Huge data need is knowing where streams actually are but it's expensive to ground truth
- Most streams here are ephemeral, so it's even harder to locate them
- Wetland layer is being updated as new permits come in, going to work on backlog
- DNR/DFW: start going through backlog of water type change forms! Regulatory stream layer needs to be updated more regularly
- Very helpful to have both executive and technical people at meetings.

VI. Meeting adjourned 11:20am

Audio recording of all ILIO meetings are available, by request.