

Island County  
WATER RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

For more information about Watershed Planning in Island County, visit our web site.

<https://www.islandcountywa.gov/Health/DNR/WRAC/Pages/Home.aspx>



## Meeting Notes

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

**Thursday, September 01, 2016 2:30—4:30 PM**

**Oak Harbor Public Works**

**1400 NE 16<sup>th</sup> Ave, Oak Harbor**

### Call to Order and Introductions

#### Present:

Citizen Members: Carol Gillespie, Al Williams, Barbara Brock, Tom Fox, Jay Lawrence, Maddie Rose

Island County Staff: Doug Kelly, Vin Sherman, Stephanie Croan, Keith Higman, Beverly Zendt, Matt Zupich

Guests: Greg Cane (Cane Engineering), Jim Patton (WIWSA)

### Adoption of August WRAC Meeting Summary Notes

Barbara Brock moved to approve the August 04, 2016 meeting summary notes as corrected. Tom Fox seconded. Motion approved.

### Reports

*Camano Water Association Consolidation Study* – Matt Zupich reported that he and Al Williams, Maddie Rose, Carol Gillespie (WRAC) along with Beverly Zendt and Nathan Howard (IC Long Range Planning) attended a recent meeting held by Camano Water Association (CWA). The purpose of the meeting was to share CWA's results from a DOH-funded consolidation study performed in Central Camano Island this year. Matt introduced Greg Cane, of Cane Engineering, whom provided engineering review services for the 8 water systems participating this study. Greg shared a PowerPoint presentation as an overview of the study components and findings. The key findings are: 1) Consolidation makes sense, long-term, for 5 of 8 participating systems; 2) Systems are disinclined to consolidate; 3) Systems are facing increased frustrations/challenges to operate properly; 4) Adjacent jurisdictions have set up Public Utility Districts (or similar); 5) PUD's provide refuge for systems that are unable or unwilling to operate as a single entity; 6) CWA is interested in pursuing a PUD-type model for Island County. The group then engaged in an extensive Q&A session.

*Coordinated Water System Plan Update* –Keith Higman reported that the CWSP is one element of the Comprehensive Plan and, as such, has been proposed in a long-range planning work plan to be updated in 2017. This draft work plan is subject to approval of the Board of County Commissioners. He indicated the update will likely be a large task with limited grant funds available. He envisions the WRAC taking on the role of a task force to address components of the plan in need of updating as well as a mechanism for engaging the public in this process; all of which is yet to be determined.

*Clean Water Utility, Phase 2* – Keith provided a brief explanation of how CWU elements have been phased for the purpose of implementing capital infrastructure projects first then adding low impact development assessment and watershed planning and coordination positions being added later in a second phase. Phase 2 is now part of the 2017 budget proposal which he anticipates will be approved by the Board of County Commissioners the first week in December.

*WRAC Membership Structure* – Matt reported that with the separation of salmon recovery responsibilities from the WRAC, a new County resolution must be developed to reflect this change. In drafting this new resolution, any proposed changes to

the WRAC membership structure and/or charter ought to be considered. Tom Fox suggests revising the charter prior to making membership structure changes to ensure committee expectations are met. The group decided to table any decisions on this subject until one or both co-chairs are in attendance.

### **Presentation – Microbial Source Tracking Study**

Matt Zupich, Island County Water Quality Specialist, gave a PowerPoint presentation on an EPA-supported study conducted by Island County Water Quality staff from 2014-2015 in the Holmes Harbor and Cultus Bay watersheds. The intention of the study was to evaluate the feasibility of using DNA analysis to track specific sources (human or ruminant) of bacterial pollution in surface waters. He provided some background on the water quality program and traditional source identification methods as well as a history of events leading up to this study. Results of the field samples indicate that ruminant animals are the predominant contributors (38%) of fecal bacteria in sampled waters with general bacteria (neither human nor ruminant) came in closely behind at 36%. Human fecal bacteria were found in only 4% of 92 total field samples.

Some limitations of using MST as a method for source identification include: the very high cost (about \$100/sample, compared to \$33 for fecal coliform), it is time consuming (takes up to 1 year to have enough data to form conclusions), it currently lacks standardized methods, it does not have regulatory approval (Ecology), false negative and false positive results may be obtained, there are few known markers, it does not quantify contamination like fecal coliform sampling does, and therefore it cannot replace conventional testing methods. There is no known correlation between MST and fecal coliform counts, and it is recommended for future studies that samples for MST and FC should be collected concurrently to attempt quantifying as well as qualifying streams with known contamination issues. Due to these limitations of MST, Island County will continue using conventional sampling and analysis methods for source identification. If a situation arises in the future whereby distinguishing between human and animal sources is necessary to assist in corrective action and adaptive management efforts for a stream with known contamination issues, MST may be a useful tool.

### **Public Comment**

No Public Comment

### **Meeting Closure**

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.

*Next Meetings:*

*October 06 (Oak Harbor Public Works)*

*November 03 (Camano Island)*

*December 01 (Oak Harbor Public Works)*