



THURSTON COUNTY
WASHINGTON
SINCE 1852

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OFFICE OF PROGRAM AND BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

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Henderson Inlet Shellfish Protection District
Stakeholder Group
Meeting Notes of June 17, 2002

Present: All members except Mark Sloan
County Staff: Mark J. Swartout and John Tennis
Guests: Tim Ransom, Evelyn Farr, and Lindi Schmidt
Panel: Art Starry, Eric Hielema, Fred Knostman, Kirk Robinson, and Jennifer Hayes

1. Meeting called to order by the chair at 6:30.
2. Introductions, Approved Agenda, Approved the May 20th Meeting Notes, and no additional alternates were added.
3. Tim Ransom (Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team) – Provided a more detailed discussion of the “Response Strategy for Shellfish Growing Area Downgrades in Henderson Inlet and the Nisqually Reach”. A few major points were:
 - a. Distributed the updated task matrix.
 - b. Discussed the framework of the Strategy by category.
 - c. Announced that the Thurston Conservation District will be the taking the place of the Henderson Inlet Watershed Council as the Implementation Review Committee (IRC).
 - d. The Henderson Inlet Watershed Council has been disbanded for a variety of reasons. It was originally created to develop and oversee implementation of the Henderson Inlet Watershed Action Plan.
 - e. Discussed the requirements of the federal Clean Water Act. When a waterbody is listed by Department of Ecology on the 303d list for not meeting water quality standards the Clean Water Act requires Ecology to develop a Water Clean Up Plan. The first part of developing a Plan is to determine the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). The TMDL provides a total load that the waterbody can accept and still meet water quality standards. This total load is then divided into load allocations to various pollution sources. These sources must then develop and implement plans to achieve the load reductions. Monitoring then verifies whether water quality standards are being attained. If not, additional load reductions or changes in designated uses / water quality standards are considered.
4. Panel Discussion:

- a. Art Starry – Thurston County Environmental Health. Main points discussed were:
 - i. The first downgrades of shellfish beds in Henderson Inlet began in 1983/1985.
 - ii. The downgrades triggered several studies and an action plan, which resulted in holding back further downgrades until 2000 and 2001.
 - iii. The Henderson Inlet watershed is about 55% urban zoned including the urban and urban growth areas, has had an additional 15,000 additional population in the last decade, and there are about 14 homes per mile along the Henderson Inlet shoreline.
 - iv. It's very difficult to maintain water quality sufficient for shellfish growing in a growing urban environment.
 - v. In 1999 the County performed a Septic System Evaluation and Correction Project in the Henderson Inlet Watershed.
 - 1. 210 systems were surveyed with 58 tested – a 27% participation rate. The participation rate reflects the voluntary nature of having a septic system tested.
 - 2. Of the 58 tested 14% were found to be failing and 25% suspect.
 - 3. For a septic system to be considered failing it takes both a positive capture of dye and fecal coliform test result of 200 colonies/100 ml or greater.
 - vi. Water circulation studies indicate that most of the freshwater in the lower Henderson Inlet comes from Woodland Creek.
 - 1. Under high (storm) flow conditions it takes two hours for bacteria to travel from the mouth of Woodland Creek to Station 5.
 - 2. The study indicated there is very poor mixing of salt water with fresh water in the lower Henderson Inlet.
 - vii. The County performed a study “Bacteriological Contamination Source Identification” in 2002. The Committee had received copies earlier for review.
 - 1. The DNA analysis results, in the lower end of Henderson Inlet, indicated a high occurrences of human, birds, and canine.
 - 2. The results further out in the Inlet indicated high occurrences of birds, wildlife, and unknown fecal coliform bacteria.
 - 3. These results indicate the number of different bacteria strains found, and do not indicate how much of the fecal coliform present in the water comes from each strain.
 - viii. The County is currently working with Lacey in dividing Woodland Creek into segments and taking water quality samples in an attempt to help identify sources of fecal coliform. The sampling work is complete. Staff are analyzing the data and developing maps and charts to best display the results. This work should be done in September.
- b. Kirk Robinson – Thurston Conservation District – Some of the main points discussed:
 - i. During the period 1993 – 1999 40 farm plans were created voluntarily.
 - ii. Farm plans are difficult to do and can be viewed as works in progress due to changes in ownership, subdividing, and changes in farming activity.
 - iii. Current grant activity includes follow up visits and doing an additional 30 farm plans.
 - iv. TCD is working with Ecology on the TMDL process.
 - v. TCD is a non-regulatory agency that acts as a bridge between property owners

- and regulatory agencies.
 - vi. TCD emphasizes educational activities e.g. 4H, pasture management, and soil testing.
 - vii. TCD survey of agricultural activities in the Henderson Inlet Watershed that the average size is about 5 acres and most of the livestock are horses. Dogs / kennels are also an issue.
 - viii. One of the TCD projects is lending a manure spreader that can be pulled by a small garden tractor. The spreader is to help develop better manure management practices.
- c. Eric Hielema – City of Lacey Stormwater - Some of the main points discussed
- i. Emphasized that stormwater is a conveyor of fecal coliform, it doesn't produce it.
 - ii. Coliform sources include what's found on pavement, stormwater ponds where dogs are allowed access, leaking septic systems, and airborne particulates.
 - iii. Two of the stormwater outflows on Woodland Creek are planned for upgrading.
 - iv. Stormwater facilities are not designed to treat for fecal coliform. Some treatment technologies are available but are technically very difficult and expensive.
 - v. Infiltration of stormwater probably the best way to treat stormwater for fecal coliform.
 - vi. TMDL for fecal coliform are difficult to model.
 - vii. The emphasis on fecal coliform is source reduction through educational programs.
- d. Mark Blosser – City of Olympia Stormwater – Some of the main points that weren't already discussed:
- i. Stormwater ponds reduce fecal loading by about 50%.
 - ii. Based on wasteload allocation work done elsewhere, TMDL load reductions needed to attain the fecal coliform standard will probably be much higher than what stormwater ponds can achieve.
 - iii. Mark provided a hand out that including the most innovative approaches to treating fecal coliform in stormwater. He identified several that have promise but have high costs or long timelines.
- e. Fred Knostman and Jennifer Hayes – Land Use - Some of the main points discussed:
- i. Before 1990 and Growth Management Act (GMA) requirements the rural zoning was one unit per acre.
 - ii. After 1990 GMA:
 1. Rural zoning went to 1 unit per 5 acres.
 2. The purpose was to decrease density in rural areas to preserve their character and increase density in the urban area.
 3. It was required to develop Comprehensive Plans that could accommodate 20 years of population growth in the urban areas.
 4. County and cities developed joint plans for the urban growth boundaries to accommodate the 20 years of population growth. There are two urban growth boundaries in the Henderson Inlet Watershed – Olympia and Lacey.
 5. Required developing a Natural Resource Chapter and Natural

Environment Chapter in the Comprehensive Plans. A part of these chapters is the development of the Critical Areas Ordinance. The policies in these chapter lead toward the development of ordinances.

6. The development of Comprehensive Plans required coordination of the cities and county.
 - iii. County is currently working at updating its Comprehensive Plan - Natural Resource Lands and Natural Environment Chapters and Critical Areas Ordinance.
 1. The Natural Resource Chapter may include designation of Shellfish Growing Areas including recreational and commercial.
 2. The Chapter will need to include something that will protect these areas.
 3. The state has developed a model Critical Area Ordinance for guidance to Counties but it doesn't include model language or guidance to manage Shellfish Growing Areas specifically.
 - iv. Discussed Low Impact Development.
 1. Even though Lacey and Olympia now have ordinances that allow developments that meet low impact standards, no developer has constructed one.
 2. As the jurisdictions incorporate and implement the requirements of the new Ecology Stormwater Manual it will lead toward low impact development.
 3. Currently almost all new stormwater facilities require 100% infiltration.
5. Discussed Next Steps:
- a. Prioritize problems by sources.
 - b. Decide how to attack the problem.
 - c. What are on-going activities? Mark S. will develop a diagram to illustrate these activities.
 - d. Mark S. will provide 3 examples of the work of other shellfish districts as examples.
 - e. Discussed developing a map with stormwater outfalls, agricultural activities, parcel lines, and water quality test results of the County.
 - f. What are constraints:
 - i. On-site
 - ii. Agricultural activities
 - iii. Stormwater
 - iv. Land-use
 - g. Need to develop a public outreach strategy.
 - i. Press release after this meeting. John Tennis and Mark S. will work on one and send to committee for comment and approval.
 - ii. Plan community meetings e.g. State of the Watershed Conference.
 - h. What are the quick wins?
 - i. If there were no constraints what could we do?
 - j. Have the TCD show the committee examples of its successful marketing approach.
 - k. Also include the Cooperative Extension as a resource of public education material and marketing.
6. Agenda for July 15th meeting.

- a. Public comments.
- b. Continue discussion of Next Steps.
- c. What kind of products?
- d. Quick wins (information to be provided by technical staff).
- e. August Agenda

7. Adjourn – 8:50