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**PUBLIC HEALTH AND
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Nisqually Reach and Henderson Inlet Shellfish Protection District
And
Nisqually Reach Septic System Operation & Maintenance Project Committee
Draft Meeting Notes April 20, 2010

Members present:

Christine Buckley, Mat Buldis (Aquaculture), Tris Carlson, Mark Fischer (Community Shellfish Farm), David Hall (alternate for Conservation District), Kathy Whalen (Thurston Conservation District), Peter Heide, Randy Jackson (Septic Professionals), Linda Malatesta, Fred Michelson, Gregory Moe (Realtors), Angela White (Olympia Master Builders), Bryan Wilson, Daniel Hull (Nisqually Reach Nature Center), Gene Brown (Homeowner Association)

County Staff: Mark J. Swartout (Shellfish Protection District Staff), Sue Davis, Art Starry, Dave Tipton and Linda Hofstad (Environmental Health)

State Staff: Lynn Schneider (DOH), Lawrence Sullivan (DOH), Cindy James (DOE)

1. Recap, information requested, comments – no changes to March meeting notes.

Introduced new members: Angela White, Olympia Master Builders (replacing Bill Stakelin) and Gene Brown (alternate for Glen Connell, Beachcrest Homeowners Assoc).

2. Henderson risk-based Septic System Operation and Maintenance Program - PowerPoint presentation given by Linda Hofstad and Dave Tipton: Included history, program development process, program elements, program implementation, and results of first cycle of Henderson's program.
3. Discussion of the model program:
 - a. Homeowner Inspection Certification Workshop
 - i. Most certified homeowners get their inspections in on time.
 - ii. In the second 3-year cycle, half of the class attendees are homeowners that paid for the inspection the first cycle and are now learning how to do the inspection themselves.

iii. Question asked: *“What is the benefit of the class? How much can the participants remember three years later.”* Class teaches people how to find all of the septic system elements, and, if there is no record drawing on file at the County, requires the homeowner to make a drawing, which becomes the record on file at the County. Also homeowners become better consumers regarding septic system service.

b. Misc. topics

i. Incentives were/are not built into the fee.

1. Riser rebates and Small Grants are funded through the Shellfish Protection District’s 28% of the annual Conservation District assessment.

ii. Program fees pay for staff, inspections, notices sent, review, certificates issued, compliance, follow up inspections, database management, lab fees and supplies. Henderson’s annual program budget is ~\$220k. This pays for about 2 FTEs. The Department has had to supplement with other funding sources in order to host the demand for homeowner certification workshops.

iii. *Do we know how many septic systems or their risk level in the Nisqually?* This will depend upon the program area boundary. If it were the current Shellfish Protection District boundary, it would be around 6,000.

iv. *Do we know how many staff it will take and the cost?* This will also depend on the boundary. The department knows the cost per system type and cost per program element, i.e. Therefore the cost is calculated by the numbers and types of systems within the program boundary.

v. For a Nisqually proposal, the workshops will need to be built into the funding formulas.

vi. The Advisory committee will need to review inspection criteria and frequency, the role of service providers, and the level and methods of compliance.

vii. *How much pollution comes from Pierce County?* DOH’s survey shows problem with fresh water running off the nearshore areas of the Reach. Therefore this program focuses on the nearshore area. Much of the Pierce County area is the Fort. The Nisqually River loading is not the problem; it is the tributaries and flow from the shoreline areas.

viii. *What is the impact of removing the dikes?* This data is being gathered by multiple agencies to determine what effect the removal of the dikes is having.

ix. Discussed the history of Eld Inlet septic system dye test project and growing area upgrade.

1. Success of dye testing septic systems along the entire shoreline of Eld with subsequent system repairs resulted in water quality improvement that enabled a shellfish growing area upgrade.

2. Entire 6-year testing was grant funded with no continuing financial support. Eld water quality is again declining.

- x. The Henderson O&M program meets the state regulatory requirements of a *marine recovery area*.
4. Public outreach discussion.
- a. What is the timeline?
 - i. 4 monthly meetings here
 - ii. Draft proposal will be prepared after these meetings are completed
 - b. Currently working on a newsletter to go out this summer or early fall.
 - i. Will include a summary of the Nisqually O&M project.
 - c. Late in the year or early next year will have public workshops
 - d. TCTV
 - e. Meeting with the Olympian editorial board.
 - f. Daniel Hull offered having an outreach activity at the Nisqually Reach Nature Center.
 - i. Great location within the watershed area.
 - ii. Daniel would like to have data and information so he can talk to his neighbors.
 - g. Staff offered to attend homeowner association meetings to talk about the proposal and answer questions.
 - i. Discussed likelihood of people attending as neighborhood meetings are not known for high attendance. More likely if program fee is discussed, people may attend.
 - ii. Homeowner association reps said they can put a link on their homeowner association websites.
 - h. Lynn Schneider suggested that others who have collected water quality data come to the meetings so it's just not county staff with their data.
 - i. *How do we address the issue that the water quality problem on the Nisqually Reach isn't as dramatic as it was in Henderson?* That will be a challenge. There are state and local legal requirements to address the water quality issues that do exist. Septic systems have been identified as a pollution source. Water quality data results to a 2-miles prohibited area along the Reach near Mill Bight.
5. Comments, questions, etc.
- a. Staff encouraged everyone to write us with suggestions and problems.
 - b. May 17th the next meeting.