Toward a Natural Asset Management Plan for Kitsap County
KNRAMP Workshop Summary

Date: 06/17/24

Attendees: Steve Todd (Suquamish Tribe), Alison O'Sullivan (Suquamish Tribe) Marla Powers (Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe), Brittany Gordon (Kitsap County), Irene Weber (Kitsap County), Jim Rogers (Kitsap County), Jonathan Raine (Kitsap County), Kirvie Mesebeluu-Yobech (Kitsap County), Mindy Roberts (WA Conservation Action Education Fund), Robinson Low (WA Conservation Action Education Fund), Elizabeth McManus (Ross Strategic), Dana Stefan (Ross Strategic), Casey Hart (Ross Strategic).

Next Steps

- WCAEF and Jonathan will provide the Core Team with updated full county maps.
- WCAEF will reach out to County staff to determine any BIBI outliers.
- WCAEF will connect with Steve Todd (Suquamish Tribe) to connect fish passage barriers to management units (MUs) and review fish passage barriers in Chico Creek.
- WCAEF will send a brochure to Jim Rogers (Kitsap County) on shorelines from the 1990s.
- Ross will send Steve Todd a Sea Grant study on overlapping inundation layers.
- WCAEF will develop the implementation considerations for the list of scenarios, to be included in the Pilot Implementation Memo.
- Ross will update the County-Wide Decision-Making Framework and Implementation Plan based on Core Team feedback between now and October.
- WCAEF and Ross will continue to connect with Core Team members.
- WCAEF will finalize a Pilot Implementation Memo.
- WCAEF will draft a Pilot Implementation Report.

Introduction, Workshop Objectives, and Approach

Dana Stefan (Ross Strategic) welcomed the Core Team, reviewed the agenda items, provided an update on the 2024 major milestones (see milestone slide), and framed the desired outcomes of the meeting. The meeting's focus was to identify a set of geographic areas and restoration/preservation strategies to start implementing. Mindy Roberts (WCAEF) and Elizabeth McManus (Ross Strategic) emphasized that the exercise is to help amplify learning of decision making and only will help determine an important starting point of how to move forward. It doesn't set aside or remove any strategy from further consideration in the future or from work if, for example, a good opportunity comes along. Dana reviewed considerations for each strategy to help start the discussion. Robinson Low (WCAEF) reviewed discussion goals and scenarios/strategies for the Big Beef and Chico Creek shorelines, streams, and forests, as well as timelines for scenarios/strategies. Robinson clarified that each scenario will bring level of service (LOS) to a high or very high level. Some of the scenarios are complementary.

Scenarios and Discussion on Where to Start

The Core Team identified the following scenarios/strategies to start implementing in Big Beef Creek and Chico Creek:

Big Beef Creek scenarios to start implementing:

- Scenario 2 (shorelines): Decrease shoreline armoring to <50% for MU_64 with Medium LOS or remove 4021 ft.
- Scenario 7 (streams): Remove all (2) full blockage fish passage barriers from S_33.
- Scenario 10 (forests): Protect forested area in F_398 to increase mature forest % up to 45%.
- Scenario 3: Upgrade shellfish growing area in Big Beef Creek estuary from PROH to COND for MU_65 - Admin step (no in situ action).
- Scenario 8: Combination of fish passage barrier removal and riparian vegetation planting.

The following considerations were discussed by the Core Team as important when choosing these scenarios:

- Growing shellfish and reducing shoreline armoring are priorities for the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe.
- Reduction of shoreline armoring will allow a natural beach to function and in return create a healthier habitat and require less work to upgrade shellfish growing areas.
- Communication of shellfish harvest areas may be a quick solution.

Additional scenarios considered by the Core Team but not selected for immediate implementation are listed below. These scenarios can still be considered in the future for implementation:

- Scenario 1 (shorelines): Increase shoreline vegetation to at least 90% in the two MUs with Medium LOS (MU_64 and MU_65) or 4563 ft of planting.
- Scenario 4 (shorelines): Upgrade shellfish growing area in Big Beef Creek estuary from PROH to COND for MU_65 (decrease bacteria via PIC Program).
- Scenario 5 (streams): In M_64 reduce armoring to 74.9% or by removing 892 ft and improve riparian vegetation to 70.1% and in MU_65 improve riparian vegetation to 85.1% or combined 1799 ft of riparian planting.
- Scenario 6 (streams): Increase % Riparian Vegetation up to 85% in S_33 and S_41 (both MUs currently rated Medium).
- Scenario 9 (forest): Improve forest cover in all MUs to 90% and F_398 to 92%.
- Scenario 11 (forest): Combination of Scenario 1 and 2, what if we did both?
- Scenario 12 (forest): Increase forest cover to 85% where below and mature forest to 30% in F_398.

Chico Creek scenarios to start implementing:

- Scenario 4 (shorelines): Upgrade shellfish growing area in Chico Bay from PROH to COND (MU_148) – Decrease bacteria via PIC program.
- Scenario 7 (streams): Remove all full blockage fish barriers and improve riparian % in 3 Muss currently rated Medium (S_672; S_55; S_413)
- Scenario 10 (forests): Combination of scenario 8 and 9. What if we did both?
    - Scenario 8: Improve all Mus below 82% forest cover up to 82% - by planting 494 acres of upland forest.
    - Acquire and protect forest to achieve High LOS across the watershed by improving % mature forest. Scenario 5 (shorelines): In MU_148 improve shellfish growing area to conditional and improve riparian vegetation to 55.1% in MU_147 and MU_149 reduce armoring to 49.9% and improve riparian vegetation to 70.1% (MU_147; MU_148; MU_149) – Increase forest cover by planting 2397 ft and remove 2886 ft of shoreline armoring.

The following considerations were discussed by the Core Team as important when choosing these scenarios:

- Shellfish are a high priority for the Suquamish Tribe.
- A high dollar cost is worth pursuing if it results in a strong ecological gain.
- Some areas are already experiencing a lot of restoration. It may be more beneficial to take action on areas where work is not already occurring.
- Riparian restoration would involve floodplain reconnection.
- Emphasize protection of mature forest conditions. This has cascading effects on large woody debris inputs, wildlife, and diversity.
- Regarding Scenario 5: addressing PIC may be quicker than addressing other components which can be worked towards later.

Additional scenarios considered by the Core Team but not selected for immediate implementation are listed below. These scenarios can still be considered in the future for implementation:

- Scenario 1 (shorelines): Increase shoreline vegetation to at least 95% in all three MUs (MU_147; MU_148; MU_149) by planting 7240 ft.
- Scenario 2 (shorelines): Decrease shoreline armoring to <15% for all MUs (MU_147; MU_148; MU_149) by removing 5548 ft.
- Scenario 3 (shorelines): Upgrade shellfish growing area in Chico Bay from PROH to COND (MU_148) - Admin step (no in situ action).
- Scenario 6 (streams): Increase riparian vegetation to 75% in 3 MUs with Medium LOS (S_672; S_55; S_413).
- Scenario 8 (forests): Improve all MUs below 82% forest cover up to 82% - by planting 494 acres of upland forest.
- Scenario 9 (forests): Acquire and protect forest to achieve High LOS across the watershed by improving % mature forest.
- Scenario 11 (forests): Improve forest cover to a minimum of 80% and mature forest to 35% in F_401.

Overall Reflections

Overall, the Core Team members had similar thinking in ranking scenarios. Several overall reflections included:

- The chosen rankings were not focused on costs and feasibility (e.g., more affordable as long-term solution rather than cheaper fix). Cost and feasibility would still be considered separate from the rankings if not incorporated into the rankings.
- It will be important to clearly address why rankings of higher cost were chosen.
- It will be important to consider what other programs (such as PIC) can support to coordinate efforts and funding.
- Rankings focus more on immediate actions to increase LOS rather than long-term stewardship. There will be a need to invest in riparian restoration for long-term benefits.
- Regardless of ranking, all the scenarios still have opportunity to be pursued.
- Rankings do not have to be a sole decision-making tool; other considerations will be included when implementing KNRAMP County-wide.

Core Team Updates

Kitsap County Update:

- Brittany Gordon will be busy with work on the derelict vessel meetings.
- A first workshop for a sea level rise risk assessment project will be held in mid-July.
- Some Big Beef Creek parcels are transferring to the County or WDFW. Further updates will be provided as they occur.

Suquamish Tribe Update:

- The Tribe has been working on creosote and spartina removal.

Next Steps

The Next Core Team workshop is planned for October and will focus on the County-wide Decision-Making Framework and updated Implementation Plan. See above for full list of action items.