



# Hood Canal Coordinating Council

Jefferson, Kitsap & Mason Counties; Port Gamble S'Klallam & Skokomish Tribes

## Hood Canal Regional PIC Program Guidance Group Meeting Summary

September 21, 2021; 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
Via Zoom

### Meeting Objectives

- Share updates on PIC activities

### Attendees

Leslie Banigan, Kitsap Public Health District  
Seth Book, Skokomish Indian Tribe  
Scott Chernoff, WA Dept. of Health  
Mike Dawson, Jefferson Co. Public Health  
Andy Hokit, Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group

Joe Holtrop, Jefferson Conservation District  
Hans Daubenberger, Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe  
Julian Sammons, Skokomish Indian Tribe  
Ian Tracy, Mason Co. Public Health  
Nate White, Hood Canal Coordinating Council

### Phase 4 Grant Status

#### Main grant amendment update

- HCRPIC Phase 4 main grant amendment sent to DOH for final review
- Approval in early Oct. 2021 (estimated)

#### Subrecipient subcontract amendments

- Only for those receiving reallocated funds in the main grant amendment (counties)
- Sent to subrecipients for review
- Funds not available to spend until the main grant amendment is approved
- HCCC is working to expedite subcontract amendments with subrecipients so they are ready to be executed once the main grant amendment is approved
- HCCC will notify subrecipients when the main grant amendment is approved

### HCRPIC Data Reporting

#### Submit [Data Reports](#) for work from June 2 – Sept. 14, 2021

- Data reports will be used for grant reporting (FEATS report) due October 1, 2021

#### Reopened parcels check in

- Phase 4 objective: "Reopen all (20) closed parcels in Mason County due to elevated bacteria in drainages or due to failing onsite septic systems"
- 5 parcels in Hood Canal #6 have closed since 12/19/2019
  - o Hood Canal #6 = Great Bend (Mason Co.)
  - o Closed on 5/4/2021
- 2 parcels in Hood Canal #2 have reopened since 12/19/2019

- Hood Canal #2 = Seabeck to Bangor (Kitsap Co.)
- Reopened on 12/23/2019
- Questions
  - Any other parcels opened/closed?
  - Are counties actively looking for parcel opening opportunities?
  - Work done towards reopening parcels?

### Comments

Hood Canal #7 property: south Big Bend, neighbor infighting preventing septic fix, permits secured, no government roadblocks in way, waiting for neighbor conflicts to resolve before fixing system

Hood Canal #7 property: north Big Bend, septic effluent drains to sand of beach, new owner working with a septic designer on a solution, challenge: no suitable property available for a drain field (no room on their shoreline, steep slopes on their upland property), solution: convert existing septic tank to a holding tank? The owner is facing non-occupancy if they can't get it fixed, no pollution sources right now: they are not using facilities currently (using a sani can and composting toilet)

Hood Canal #6 property, new owner, four septic systems, unclear where they are, wants to upgrade to a single system, getting surveys to determine property available, timeline: redevelopment starts next year?

Hood Canal #6 near Hoodsport, five newly closed parcels (during HCRPIC Phase 4), identified by septic reviews triggered by harvest requests related to Hoodsport growing area reopening, new owner installing system to service four closed parcels (it will be a community system pumping to shared drainfield), currently pumped everyday, these parcels should reopen soon

Hood Canal #4 property, parcel closed in 2005 per DOH, historic challenges with owner with access/understanding of responsibilities, not professionally maintained (regulations require annual maintenance), monthly "inspections"/maintenance only involve removing scum from the top of the septic tank, no progress on reopening, enforcement action likely

### **Septic rebate check in**

- Underspending septic rebates?
  - Possibility of getting less funding for septic rebates in a potential HCRPIC Phase 5 if underspend
  - Have a year left on HCRPIC Phase 4 grant: not urgent, but be aware
- Total amount of septic rebate funding, and number of rebates redeemed by county
  - Mason Co.
    - \$15,000 available
    - Six rebates redeemed (\$2,100)
  - Kitsap Co.
    - \$7,500 available
    - One rebate redeemed (\$350)
  - Jefferson Co.
    - \$7,500 available
    - One rebate redeemed (\$100)
- Status of efforts? Barriers?
  - Mason
    - Water quality survey required first before using rebate = obstacle
  - Jefferson

- Low property surveys due to COVID: have to contact people before knocking on doors, people not responding to mailers or other outreach, outreach has picked up lately (ex. online septic classes) but it's not the same, message not getting out as much, departmental staffing focus on COVID is leading to lower PIC enforcement and monitoring requirements (still doing it though), all of these things normally lead to septic rebates (ex. making people be current on O&M), also down a staff position
    - Kitsap
      - 27 vouchers distributed, got 2 back, mailers sent to all properties upstream of hotspots (Kitsap has a letter to share with other counties if they're interested), offering low/no contact site contact, down one staff person, COVID capacity issues, doing online classes: good participation, classes include technical content and good Q+A, Google "Septic Sense" for upcoming workshops, economy has been challenging, people are reluctant to spend \$ on septic repairs
  - Other ways to get info out so rebates get spent?
    - Kitsap: mailers, phone surveys, field inspection; "Septic sense" webinar

## Partner Updates

### Quick re-cap of activities since our last meeting, including:

- Overview of shellfish upgrades/downgrades, or changes in progress
- Reopened parcels
- Ongoing work in Priority Areas
- Emerging issues
- Coordination/training needs
- Share success stories
- Photos (no property identifiers)

### Mason Co.

Dry season dye test at property along east side of Annas Bay (negative), swallow nest above drain, nest there for a while, likely leading to high hits

Lots of water quality surveys in Skokomish Valley (homes near Purdy Cutoff), talking with homes about septic service/rebates that haven't been serviced in a while, one pending septic rebate

Annas Bay property, high hits in past from a pond, ducks contributing, owner reduced number of ducks, reconnected streams, lower hits, but still high, under 200 fecal coliform threshold to be considered a PIC hotspot

### Jefferson Co.

No changes in shellfish upgrades/downgrades

Duckabush: higher bacteria in summer (when closure happens)

Pierce Ck: high hits in close proximity to high hits in estuary, working on violations in this area, closed one case on Kelley Rd where RVs were not connected to septic, removed, another RV situation risen to nuisance level (also a solid waste site), getting enforcement action

Oak Bay 53: septic failure corrected, bacteria low in dry season, want to see wet season results before closing Oak Bay

Oak Bay standing closed parcel: two approved septic permits, work in progress, will hopefully open parcel soon

Little Bruce Ck: dry season high bacteria levels, trying to figure out if there are upstream contributors, not hearing back from mailers there

Paradise Bay 42: low in bacteria, waiting to get on a shoreline property to test, trying to contact owner, septic complaint upstream, RV on site not tied to septic system

Mats Mats 121: dry in summer, previous correction on overcapacity septic system working, waiting to see wet season results to see if can close

Point Whitney: past direct discharge, went to sani can, new septic installed via Craft 3 loan program, septic now in service, ready to close

Point Whitney Lab: prompt O&M response to DOH testing, tested negative after repairs made

Irondale Ck: historic hotspot (biggest hotspot in past), recent high bacteria, but not as high as before, a few septic repairs in past, but no smoking gun, checking each property again, not a lot of land use changes in area, no restrictions on shellfish beds as a result, but posting warning by creek, factsheet too

- Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe has had luck using game cams to identify animal inputs at mystery hotspots
- Jefferson Co has used game cams on Irondale Ck, wildlife presence could be making an input, but hits in the 10000-15000 range probably mean it's more than wildlife

Chimacum Ck: trailer removal along creek, mobile home perched on steep slope, no solid foundation, unoccupied for many years, no response from owner, EPA removed recently, septic system still there, seeing if can remove (not failing)

#### Kitsap Co.

56 surveys: 38 no problems, 12 concerns, six failures

Two gravity systems installed, two pressure systems installed

Four agriculture manure complaints, notified owners that sampling will occur in the winter, recommending mitigating pollution before wet season to avoid fine

Unusual living complaints in Holly, owners allowed samples, no hits

Enforcement action for Big Beef Creek situation

COVID impacts: Leslie spent four months so far this year working on COVID; manager has spent eight months

Staff retirement, replacing position in November

#### Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe

Monitoring on-reservation systems, couple of issues over summer, mostly attributed to wildlife

### Skokomish Indian Tribe

Continuing efforts with WA Dept. of Ecology: water quality concerns upland off reservation (agriculture situation: cattle), providing helpful info to state (ex. photo evidence, data), working through violation flowchart, working with landowner to put up fencing

New concerns being identified, slow process, first flush over weekend, cattle near water, likely causing a spike in Annas Bay (sampling not conducted over weekend), takes lots of water to dilute these spikes

Working with USGS to put flood flow gages in Purdy Ck, Weber Ck, and overflow channel near Skokomish RM 5 for sediment loading analysis, answers question: at what height at the Hwy 101 Skokomish River gauge is flooding occurring at sites lower down river? Data will be put online

Upgraded water quality lab capacity away from HAB, have a GCMS to share in exchange for HAB freshwater lake toxin monitoring analysis in Skokomish usual and accustomed areas, also have incubator equipment that will be possibly accredited for e.coli (just for Skokomish Tribe use)

### WA Department of Health

Jean Frost is back as supervisor on Oct 16

Annas Bay growing area upgrade in process from prohibited to restricted (whole polygon), in external review, due back for comment in early October, potentially another administrative order review period for 35 days, longest term case for upgrade taking effect is the beginning of November, basing upgrade possibilities on data collected up to January 2021

### Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group

Ambient freshwater sampling every three weeks, from Dewatto River to Lilliwaup, 10 sites in between on south side

Five sampling events since June 2021, hopefully get four more sampling events before end of year, core group of volunteers, three new ones

No water quality concerns this summer, high hit sampling site along Union River doesn't qualify for hotspot in QAPP, huge area would take lots of time to investigate

### Jefferson Conservation District (JCD)

Shellfish funding source: WA State Conservation Commission, "[Shellfish Program](#)"

- State funding (\$3-4 million/biennium) for site-specific water quality projects related to shellfish
- Intent: open/keep open shellfish areas
- Actions/project have to be tied to actually improving water quality
- Downgraded areas have a higher priority
- Capital funding (has to be used to actually build something)
- 1x/month WA State Conservation Commission selects projects
- Cost-share: most Conservation District's pay up to 75% (25% landowner contribution can be labor)

- Direct agreement with landowners: JCD has to collect project details using state-provided forms, follow policies/procedures
  - o Including buffers?
  - o No buffer requirements for agriculture, but Conservation District's required to have NRCS conservation buffers
- JCD: struggling to find projects for this funding source
  - o Conservation District's traditionally worked with agricultural properties for this funding source, but JCD's mission is to conserve natural resources, so projects can be broader than agriculture
  - o Ex. Clallam Co. Conservation District: 18-19 septic corrections, not necessarily on agricultural land

## Wrap-up & Next Steps

### Start thinking about Phase 5

- We revisit future/value of HCRPIC at end of each grant
  - o HCRPIC Phase 4 grant ends September 30, 2022
  - o Trend: decreasing funding for PIC grants; we expect this to continue
  - o HCCC will get guidance from our Board of Directors on the future direction of the HCRPIC program
    - Is it effective, efficient, successful? They will want to know the added value of HCRPIC
- Quick, initial thoughts to prime discussion for later
  - o Necessary to have a regional coordinating body?
  - o Different entity coordinating HCRPIC?
  - o Individual organizations carry on?
  - o (Sustainable) Funding opportunities?
    - Fund through new NTA RFP process? (in development; done in early 2022)
    - Fund more through partners' Clean Water District/Shellfish Protection District \$?
  - o Ideas for continued/new PIC work?
- Next Guidance Group meeting: further discussion of Phase 5 components

### PIC regional workshop

- Whatcom County, Skagit County, and the Snohomish Conservation District are collaborating to put together a PIC workshop for early 2022
  - o From the organizers:
    - "For those who have never attended a region-wide PIC workshop, it's an excellent opportunity to learn from the successes of other programs, hear about new tools, and connect with colleagues."
    - "Please help us plan the workshop by answering a few questions! We have a short survey for you at <https://publicinput.com/PICWorkshop> where you can tell us when the best time for you is, and what you'd like to learn about."
  - o Optional, but Guidance Group members are encouraged to attend (can use Task 3.1 Coordination funds)

### Announcements

- Mason Co Clean Water District Fee

- Funding available in April 2022
- Billing based on property tax collected from Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> 2022
- Board established to monitor fee
- Hiring new staff through fee in April 2022 at the earliest

Mason Co. discovered they have a code related to animal waste enforcement (it was mistakenly deleted in the past), starting enforcement on animal waste issues affecting surface water, complicated based on sampling (\$, capacity)

**Next meeting**

- Next meeting in January 2022
- Please fill out this [Doodle Poll](#) to schedule the next HCRPIC Guidance Group meeting