



Hood Canal Coordinating Council

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

Hood Canal Regional PIC Program Guidance Group Meeting Summary

January 13, 2022; 10:00 am - 1:00 pm
Via Zoom

Meeting Objectives

- Discuss potential HCRPIC Phase 5 activities
- Share updates on PIC activities

Attendees

Leslie Banigan, Kitsap Public Health District (KPHD)	Alena Reynolds, WA Dept. of Ecology (ECY)
Evan Bauder, Mason Conservation District (MCD)	Julian Sammons, Skokomish Indian Tribe
Seth Book, Skokomish Indian Tribe	Nick Schneider, Mason Conservation District
Scott Chernoff, WA Dept. of Health (DOH)	Ian Tracy, Mason Co. Public Health (MCPH)
Mike Dawson, Jefferson Co. Public Health (JCPH)	Tim Weissman, Jefferson Co. Public Health
Glenn Gately, Jefferson Conservation District (JCD)	Laura Westervelt Kitsap Public Health District
Andy Hokit, Hood Canal Salmon Enhance. Group (HCSEG)	Nate White, Hood Canal Coordinating Council

Phase 4 Grant Status

Grant amendment update

- HCRPIC Phase 4 grant amendment approved by WA Dept. of Health on Oct. 11, 2021

Subrecipient subcontract amendments

- Subrecipient contract amendments complete
- Only for those receiving reallocated funds in the main grant amendment (counties)
- Increased funds now available to spend

HCRPIC Data Reporting

- Data reports will be collected prior to April 1 grant reporting deadline (FEATS)
- Continue submitting monthly progress reports/invoices (by 15th of the following month)
 - o List #/\$ of septic rebates redeemed each month on the progress report
 - o Include septic rebate paperwork with invoice
- Continue spending septic rebate funds
- Send photos of HCRPIC field work! (no property identifiers, get releases)

HCRPIC Phase 5 Discussion

Start thinking about Phase 5

- Trend: decreasing \$; we expect this to continue
- We revisit the future of the HCRPIC program at the end of each grant
 - o Is it effective, efficient, successful?

- Is the value it provides enough to continue?
- Are the benefits worth the costs (capacity demands, reporting)?

Discuss scenarios

Scenario 1: full need (maximum effectiveness)

- Ongoing regional coordination
- PIC
 - Sufficient PIC funds
 - Includes timely response to threatened and actual shellfish growing area closures
 - Sufficient septic rebate funding
 - Continue freshwater monitoring
- Robust reporting (community outreach, conferences)
- HCRPIC grant funded side project(s)
 - ex. eDNA, Microbial Source Tracking (MST), entero, e coli, BMPs
 - Includes funding for QAPP(s), expanded reporting of side project results

Scenario 2: moderate need (similar to Phase 4)

- Ongoing regional coordination
- PIC
 - Some supplemental PIC funds
 - Some septic rebate funding
 - Some freshwater monitoring funding
- Moderate reporting (conferences)
- No HCRPIC grant funded side project(s)

Scenario 3: minimum need (to keep PIC useful/effective)

- Ongoing regional coordination
- No PIC
- Minimal reporting (ex. Guidance Group minutes only)
- No HCRPIC grant funded side project(s)

Scenario 4: no grant funding

- What does program look like?
- Does it continue?
- Partners fund:
 - Ongoing regional coordination?
 - PIC?
 - Reporting?
 - Side projects?

Potential funding sources

- PSP Action Agenda “project solicitations” (old NTA’s)
- National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) mitigation credits?
 - Form subgroup with partners to explore?
- Other funding sources?

Next steps

- HCCC will follow up to get the specific funds needed for each scenario
- HCCC will ask for the full need, but it’s good to explore and prepare for other scenarios
- Bring scenarios to HCCC Board of Directors (BOD)

- Will decide whether to pursue HCRPIC Phase 5, based on HCCC/Guidance Group input

Comments

Desired scenario #1 (sufficient funding)

- Ongoing regional coordination
- PIC
 - Minimal PIC funds
 - Minimal/no? funds for septic rebates
 - Explore expanding freshwater monitoring beyond Mason County
- Minimal reporting (social media, mapping)
- HCRPIC grant funded side project(s)
 - Examples discussed: MST, eDNA, BMPs, entero
 - Pursue QAPP efficiency (ex. other partners with capacity complete QAPP(s), coordinate on work, share results with Guidance Group)

Desired scenario #2 (minimal funding)

- Ongoing regional coordination
- PIC
 - No PIC funds
 - No funds for septic rebates
 - Explore expanding freshwater monitoring beyond Mason County
- No reporting aside from Guidance Group minutes
- No HCRPIC grant funded side project(s)
 - Explore opportunities for other partners with capacity to pursue side projects, coordinate on work, share results with Guidance Group

General

- MCD not fully funded for water quality work; sustainable funding needed, technical assistance needed
 - CDs are important for a non-regulatory approach for non-point pollution

Coordination

- There is value in regional coordination: letters of recommendation, BMP outreach, etc.
- OK if HCRPIC program just did regional coordination

PIC

- Supplemental PIC funds
 - HCRPIC program was never supposed to provide full regional funding of clean water
 - Tribes deferred HCRPIC Phase 4 supplemental PIC funding
 - Counties: supplemental PIC funding is nice, but not necessary; funding provided through counties' own water quality fees
 - Would be good to have \$ for shellfish growing area closure response plans (ex Annas Bay)
 - Ask for a small amount of money for this, so if closures arise or threaten, funding can be used to address them proactively
 - Ex. funds for writing closure response plans, administrative process to close areas
 - Use HCRPIC grant funding to focus on large problem areas at risk of closure
 - Risk of potential Oakland Bay growing area closure soaking up PIC funding: no funding left for Annas Bay? Better to ask for placeholder PIC \$ to prevent this
 - Mason County's new Clean Water District funds flexible, can provide funding for

closure responses

- Septic rebates
 - o Counties: rebates nice, not necessary, have separate septic rebate funding sources, money better spent on side projects (MST, eDNA, entero)
- Freshwater monitoring
 - o The community science volunteer element of HCSEG's freshwater monitoring is a good method for the public to understand water quality issues
 - o MCPH taking over HCSEG's ambient freshwater monitoring sites, expanding to 30-35 sites
 - o HCSEG willing to participate in Phase 5 freshwater monitoring, but deferential to the needs of long time partners (MCPH especially)
 - o Expand freshwater monitoring beyond Mason County?
 - Jefferson County freshwater monitoring well covered, but could supplement Duckabush, Dosewallips monitoring
 - Potential North Kitsap County freshwater monitoring could be useful
 - Volunteers willing to travel longer distances (ex. Jefferson, Kitsap Counties)?
 - Explore this idea more

Reporting

- PIC funding not worth it because cumbersome reporting requirements are attached to it?
- How to do the cheapest, yet successful reporting?
 - o Look at social media campaigns more than traditional outreach (ex. mailers)
 - o JCPH currently collaborating with the recreational shellfish program to post relevant water quality and shellfish safety info on Facebook, Instagram, seems successful
- Community outreach important: big successes need to be told
- Community perspective: water quality is being taken care of, fully funded (not the case), public needs to know work being done, how it's funded
 - o Ex. Want the public to know the work that the Mason Co. Clean Water District fee funds so that people understand its value when it's up for reauthorization

Side projects

- Greater interest in side projects rather than supplemental PIC \$, septic rebates
- Possible projects
 - o MST for agriculture
 - o Entero: pilot marine embayments with outfalls
 - o E coli: comparison between fecal coliform and entero
 - o Animal waste BMPs
 - Current animal waste BMP/farm planning focus among MCPH, Skokomish tribe, MCD (funded through Centennial Clean Water Fund Section 319)
 - ECY limited in what they can do by buffer requirements
 - If \$ funneled through ECY, BMPs have to implement buffers, fencing, and maintenance for these; issues and challenges with this
 - But these are technical issues: could they be overcome through water quality BMPs that avoid buffer issues?
 - Funnel \$ through tribes to use NRCS requirements over EPA/ECY requirements?
 - Skokomish Tribe has water quality data showing improved agriculture water quality is needed
 - Don't forget summer water quality impairments too (cows in streams)
 - MCD working with ECY closely on animal waste BMPs
 - MCD: has full time year-round riparian buffer restoration team
 - People reach out MCD to solve problems: uptick in need, MCD wants to

- match that
 - ECY interested in supporting MCD to meet the community's need: ECY more involved in enforcement, but they refer landowners in noncompliance to Conservation Districts
 - HCSEG water quality lab is expanding to test for e coli, entero
 - Route samples to HCSEG lab if HCRPIC pursues side projects?
 - Explore QAPP efficiency
 - HCRPIC partners with capacity pursue side project(s), do QAPP, coordinate with other HCRPIC partners to ensure regional usefulness, collect data/do analysis, then share results with HCRPIC group to avoid the burden of a HCRPIC grant-funded QAPP?
 - Ex. JCD study comparing e coli to fecal coliform
 - Ex. Skokomish: could do a QAPP for eDNA; could also pursue WDFW eDNA "research" opportunity which falls outside QAPP?
 - Ex. Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, JCPH/JCD all have completed QAPPs that could be used templates
 - Ex. WA Dept. of Ecology (ECY) could pursue an eDNA project with WDFW, would need to establish eDNA procedures but maybe it's not a full QAPP, ECY currently lacks capacity to pursue this, but could work with someone on this to spread out the work

Potential funding

- NMFS mitigation funds?
 - Use NMFS funds from mitigation of Hood Canal water quality impacts to fund PIC work?
 - This potential funding source is currently being explored by HCCC staff
 - Would PIC work be considered out of kind mitigation? Mitigation has to be kind for kind
 - Ex. septic repairs, water quality improvements would have happened anyway through county regulatory processes: can't count as mitigation because it's not additional
 - Ex: Agriculture related mitigation? Probably not additional
 - Interested: KPHD, ~MCPH (capacity)
- Private funding? (The Nature Conservancy, Vulcan)

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

Jefferson County

Challenging time for public health, COVID

Wrapping up ECY grant funded projects in Oak Bay, Mats Mats at the end of March

Septic rebates have been a challenge: not getting big sanitary survey numbers, no in-person septic classes, sending out mailers, but challenge getting public to respond through mailers

Escaped recent flooding issues

Wet season sampling: Shoreline monitoring waiting until daytime tides are better (Feb-March 2022, some done in December 2021)

ECY PIC grant in East Jefferson County: analyzing freshwater inputs to recreation areas and shellfish areas

Dabob Bay growing area review upcoming, sending freshwater monitoring plus high hits to ECY and DOH

High hits in Tarboo Bay, Bolton Peninsula, contacting landowners, directly working with local shellfish company to avoid harvest in polluted areas, only collecting freshwater samples in high flow site rather than drips (more efficient with staff/lab costs)

Kitsap County

67 surveys

Six failures (fixed five of the six failures)

Six agricultural complaints

- Two complaints closed
 - o One: invited by property owner for a site visit
 - o Two: property with BMPs installed by Kitsap Conservation District
- One unresolved complaint working with KCD
- One unresolved complaint to be potentially closed soon (no violations: outreach materials sent instead)

258 people attended three Septic Sense workshops, short presentation, lots of Q/A, 28 vouchers distributed, three redeemed (typically higher redemption: economic concerns?), redoubling septic efforts, mailing out 258 mailers in coming weeks

KPHD is fully staffed again: welcome Laura Westervelt!

Mason County

Lost other water quality staff person in December

- Only one water quality staff at MCPH now
- Hiring replacement position in April/May
- Very busy as a result

Lots of work in Skokomish Valley

- Working on septic maintenance on multiple properties
 - o Lots of septic mailers sent (only one family responded)
- Mostly hay fields (no livestock) with no riparian buffers
 - o Most people are not receptive to riparian buffers

Closed parcel on N Shore Dr., signed septic company contract, no septic permit submitted yet

Working to open a closed parcel in Hoodspott, repair permit issued/approved, hopefully done in summer, work with DOH to open then

Shoreline sampling completed in early fall 2021, tides aren't favorable now, February 2022 tides good for shoreline sampling, will do then

Harvest request, Rendsland Ck area, request recently approved, a parcel closure never occurred here, procedural error, maintenance issue known, but septic system abandoned, never updated in septic tracking system, now fixing records for this property

- Example of successful DOH/County coordination through the HCRPIC program

Skokomish Indian Tribe

Lots of floods this year, water diluted in main Skokomish River, difficult to monitor for PIC, refocusing on smaller tributaries on the reservation this year

Additional Annas Bay closure impending

Setting up water quality lab for analyzing e coli

Thurston Co water quality lab almost closed, but it's still open for now

- Closure would be problematic for PIC water sample processing
- Explore using HCSEG lab as an alternative?
- Skokomish lab transitioning to e coli to meet statewide standard, also doing fecal coliform for shellfish (Skokomish lab is for tribal use only)

Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group

Wrapped up ambient freshwater monitoring in Dec 2021, won't be in the field for the rest of the HCRPIC grant period, 18 sampling events, 211 samples, 12 volunteers (downgrade in volunteer #'s from Phase 3 due to COVID, but great participation from these volunteers), in contact with KPHD and MCPH regarding high hits, so far monitoring is meeting standards, unboxing/itemizing new lab equipment

Jefferson Conservation District

Received an email from a farmer re: water quality questions, working on that

Working with JCPH doing MST monitoring (working through EPA lab): doing wet/dry months sampling, one more wet month sampling

Mason Conservation District

Dedicated restoration crew, extremely active, finishing maintenance season, gearing up for planting season to build on buffers

Working with landowner in Annas Bay to install exclusion fencing, encouraging partners to refer agriculture owners to MCD, Farm Plan: help landowners adopt new land management practice, especially parasite treatment for livestock to reduce transmission of e coli, Mason Co. referring landowners to MCD, but challenges with landowner willingness

- HCRPIC: good forum for ECY, MCD, Mason Co to refer issues, landowners to each other

WA Department of Health

Still doing COVID work, but will be doing more PIC work soon

Annas Bay classification downgrade

- Don't know if they will upgrade or downgrade right now
- Working on the annual report now: entering rest of data, then will write report and determine downgrade/upgrade

Closures: seven day emergency shellfish growing area closures from 1/7/22 - 1/14/22 due to greater than three inches of rain, conditions were so extraordinary that they didn't know what was going to happen so they closed areas to prevent risk

- Portion of Hood Canal growing area #6
- All of Hood Canal 7
- Hood Canal 8
- Hood Canal 9

No permanent closures/reopenings in Hood Canal area, hopefully some reopenings will occur soon

Early closure warning reports being changed in early spring (April-May)

- Threatened area, classifications, reasons for prohibited class, history of upgrade, downgrade
- This is in addition to listing early warning reports

WA Department of Ecology

Time limitations for pursuing MST, but recently fully staffed five non-point regional pollution positions, all hands on deck with training, takes time, but this time constraint for putting together standard procedures may not exist down the road once their training done

Meeting with community members in Skokomish Valley, working with MCPH to respond to septic and livestock complaints close to shoreline on E shore of Annas Bay, couple of investigations open, working through compliance process (long standing issue, since 2017)

ECY very grateful for coordination with local partners (HCRPIC funds used here)

Wrap-up & Next Steps

Announcements

JCPH: Environmental Health Dept. advertising a code compliance position soon, position will focus on septic and solid waste enforcement

JCPH: Looking for a volunteer for Jefferson County Clean Water District Advisory Council

Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference

- HCCC's PIC presentation was accepted for the Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference!
- HCCC is hiring a consultant to create a StoryMap about the last ten years of HCRPIC successes
- Will share with the Guidance Group when complete

Next meeting

- No timeframe in mind as of now
- HCCC will follow up with partners individually to get estimated \$ for each Phase 5 scenario
- May try to time next meeting so it occurs before the PSP Action Agenda project solicitation so we can collect more info for a potential Phase 5 application
- Look for a Doodle Poll in the next few months