

**San Juan Initiative
July 30, 2007
Grange Hall
Friday Harbor, San Juan Island
Meeting Summary –Draft**

Policy Group Members Present:

Pete Kilpatrick,
Fayette Krause,
Kit Rawson,
Ron Zee,
Patty Miller,
Lynn Bahrych,
Jonathon White,

Tom Cowan,
Steve Simpson,
Bridget Moran,
Jody Bush,
Sam Buck,
Rich Doenges,
Peter Dykstra,

Kevin Ranker,
Jeri Ahrenius,
Lisa Byers,
Bernie Hargrave
Jeff Bash

Staff: Jim Kramer, Amy Windrope, Carol MacIlroy

Public:

Laura Arnold,
Barbara Rosenkotter,
Shann Weston-
Beachwatchers,
Jack Cory,
Tom Schultz, WSU

Joyce Lewin- LCV,
Joe Gaydos.
Thor Hanson,
Carson Springer,
Amanda Azous,
Jim Slocumb,

Tina Wylie-Echeveria,
Shireene Hale,
Stephanie Buffum-Field

Fall Meeting Schedule:

Sept. 12: Orcas Senior Center 1-4:30

Oct. 26th: Lopez Library 1-4:30

Dec. 5th: San Juan Grange: 1-4:30

Decision Point: The Policy Group agreed to address protection of:

- 1. Marine nearshore habitats and shoreline function associated with shoreline development.**
- 2. Terrestrial habitat quantity and quality, terrestrial biodiversity and rare ecological communities from loss of habitat and connectivity from single family residential development.**

The San Juan Initiative enters Phase 2 – assessing effectiveness of protection programs for the above two issues.

Prior to Sept. 12th Meeting:

1. The Policy Group asked for a detailed scope of work before the next meeting. This scope of work will allow the Policy Group to understand what the assessment will provide and for what price. The assessment scope will also show when and how the public will be involved. At the next meeting there will be an opportunity to critique and discuss the assessment in depth.

Scope of Assessment for protection of nearshore habitats and terrestrial habitats

1. Timeline for assessment
 2. Costs of products and analysis
 3. Products and analysis
 4. Community involvement over the course of Phase 2
 - a. Local and regional strategy
2. There was not consensus about how to address the remaining 6 threats. Prior to the next meeting, staff will consider how to continue addressing them within the time and budget we have.
3. Agenda Items for Sept 12th meeting:
1. Facilitation
 2. Science informing policy
 - a. Choosing science team

Policy Group Member Follow-up:

Kit will update the Policy Group with MRC's plans for addressing rockfish abundance

Staff will follow up on Bridget's offer for technical staff to assist in assessment

Staff will work with co-chairs to write op-ed piece summarizing SJI

Policy Group discussed the following threats at this meeting:

2. Threats to marine nearshore habitats and shoreline functions associated with San Juan County shoreline development.
3. Threats to terrestrial habitat quantity and quality, loss of native biodiversity and rare ecological communities due to loss of habitat, loss of connectivity of habitat associated with single family residential development.
5. Threats to marine water quality associated with increases in stormwater run-off, increase in land based toxics and increase in water based toxics from boaters and a catastrophic oil spill.
6. Threats to surface water processes including alteration of stream flow, increase in Impoundments, degradation of wetlands and changes to land cover due to the cumulative impacts of development.
 1. subset: Address rockfish abundance and the voluntary rockfish closures.

Detailed Notes:

Jim Kramer: welcome and introductions

Amy- Overview of the Agenda

Amy- Approval of notes. Approved with clarification that Jeri was present on June 25 meeting..

Science Panel Questions and Discussion:

Thor Hanson, terrestrial ecologist

Amanda Azous, environmental scientist

Carson Springer, forester

Joe Gaydos, marine biologist, veterinarian

Power point attached.

There was concern that the agreement between the science reviewers and technical reviewers was a product of the process and may not represent the actual significance of the threat.

What is your personal feeling that this group focus on and why?

Thor- need to really refine the assessment to be useful

Amanda- development pressures and practices need to be a focus

Joe- top two: nearshore/marine and terrestrial; assessment will be key- San Juan County specific data and information; figure out what can be done with the problems that are identified

What was basis of “regional” analysis?

Joe- tried to focus on things that we could have a policy impact on here that are also of issue other places

Amanda: all are important, salt water intrusion low regional

Should we look at threat more clearly than the ecosystem effect?

Joe: No, then not doing the ecosystem; need a broad assessment that looks at ecosystem and then looks for impacts.

There is a lot of room for recommendations about development standards as there is a lot of flexibility in the rules- most clients want LID but it is an option not a requirement. LID enhances value but there are no development standards that require it.

Jeff Bash- DOE- will be able to contribute additional thoughts from DOE staff- similar thoughts as represented by existing panel.

Prioritizing Assessment

Due to limited time and resources, the Policy Group was asked to focus its work on just one or two identified threats. Each Policy Group member was asked for her top two threats and the reason behind the choice. Below is a summary of some of the common themes from that conversation:

- By focusing on #2 and #3, we will reach more of the ecosystem than the other threats identified.
- Many communities are trying to resolve #2, we could have a significant impact regionally if we can generate some good solutions.
- #2 and #3 were highest priority from both the technical/policy review and the science review. That level of agreement is rare and represents a high level of certainty that we are addressing issues that are not only important for the

ecosystem but that there are significant gaps in protection and opportunities to improve protection.

- # 5, marine water quality, is a critical issue that is of highest priority for the MRC and would allow partnerships with the MRC and the stormwater utility.
- By looking at marine and terrestrial land use issues, we are addressing directly the land-sea connection that is so critical to the overall ecosystem.
- Modifying the assessment to be area specific and perhaps watershed based was of interest to many members. (Lincoln's idea) Capturing all ecosystem threats within a few watersheds.
- #2 and #3 open up more pots of money.
- # 3 is important because the County really needs a terrestrial stewardship plan
- The Nearshore Science Team could be a resource in defining the connection between terrestrial and coastal habitats.
- By focusing on #2 and #3, we can work at the local level, which is a good scale in which to generate positive solutions.

Kit- #2 then #5

Jeri- #2, then do #3

Ron- even split between 2 and 3.

Lynn- agree with Ron and Lincoln's thinking with focus on residential development

Jonathon- #2 and #5

Patty- #2 and #5

Tom- #2 and #3

Lisa- #2 and #3

Steve- #2 and #3

Bridget- #2 first and # 3 second;

Jody- #2 then #3

Sam- # 5

Rich- #2 and # 3

Peter- #2 and # 3-

Kevin- #2 and #3

Jeff- #2 and #3

Lincoln- Address 2 and 3 within a few watersheds.

Bernie- #2 and #3

Pete: #2, #3, #4

Fayette: #2 and #3

All eight threats together represent the breadth of concern about the San Juan County ecosystem. In choosing two, there is continued interest in advancing the remaining 6 in some fashion. Staff will work with co-chairs to propose how this could be done. Policy Group members were also concerned with losing focus and spending staff time on other 6 and want to maintain focus.

Public Comment:

Shann from Beachwatchers- The community is very interested in the health and welfare of marine biodiversity. As you move forward in considering #2 and #3, keep marine biodiversity in mind. And, climate change is critical to consider. Remember how important it is to educate the public about the health of the entire system.

Tina Wylie-Echevaria- Very interested in how #2, marine shorelines, protection will be advanced in process. Looking forward to seeing assessment work.

Community Engagement:

Staff presented an overview of community engagement. Community engagement would be at two levels. The first level is general public relations about the goals and process of the SJI. This first level would raise overall awareness of the Initiative and prepare the community for deeper engagement. The second level of engagement will focus on the communities directly involved with the assessment and would be designed to gather public input into assessment. There is a bias towards working at the neighborhood level instead of through town hall style gatherings.

Policy Group members reminded staff that in working at such a small scale, it is possible to alienate those outside that are beyond that small circle. Members recommended retaining the opportunity to work through town hall meetings as a way to reach broader audience. In addition there must be effort to reach beyond the Islands and into state agencies to ensure that discussions aren't leaving critical perspectives behind. Time is ripe now for an Op-Ed that describes Initiative and the foreseeable community engagement. Outreach will begin in October.

New Information potentially useful during assessment/ Low Hanging Fruit

Soil survey (Lynn B) related to LID, stormwater, development practices, can be done right now is to link this information with these pieces.
Stormwater utility budget is 400,000 and can be a partner.