

SAN JUAN ISLANDS CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Special Meeting of the Board of Supervisors

March 24, 2023

Location: at 2687 West Valley Road, Friday Harbor, WA 98250, and via Zoom

In Attendance

Supervisors: Vicki Heater, Lynn Bahrych, David Bill,
Carson Sprenger, Claire Crawbuck

Associates: Jim Skoog, Thom Pence (absent)

Staff: Paul Andersson, Tony Fyrqvist, Bruce Gregory, Cathi Winings, Kai Hoffman-Krull,
Laura Pitts, Kelsey Kittleson, Walt Andrews

Partners: Jean Fike, WSCC Puget Sound Regional Manager;

Public: None in attendance

MEETING SUMMARY – Draft

Vicki Heater convened the special meeting at 1:15pm

Introductions and ice breaker activity.

Program Area Discussions in the context of 1-year and 5-year strategic planning

For each program area, the group will consider three key questions:

1. What are the outcomes/program goals for the next 5 years?
2. Should this category grow, maintain or decrease?
3. What funding sources do we want to explore/cultivate/continue/expand
(4. if time and energy allow – What key metrics of success will we set for this work?)

- Forest Stewardship
- Riparian Restoration
- Farms and Agriculture (Including VSP, Cost Share)
- Habitat – Island Marble Butterfly, Eelgrass, Other
- Islands Conservation Corps
- Youth Conservation Corps
- Climate Change
- District Operations

Forest Stewardship

Forest Stewardship – What are program goals for next 5 years?

- Climate migration (spp and genetics)
- Heat vs power vs biochar production
- Tribal partnerships – co-management
- Application of biochar (demand side of supply chain)
- Additional biomass products/processing methods

See also – Forest Stewardship Strategic Outline:

Key Objectives

- Maximize carbon sequestration, climate change mitigation
 - Improve forest health conditions to maximize resiliency in a changing climate
 - Reduce fuel loading to mitigate risk of wildfire
1. Landscape Scale Restoration
 - a. Garry Oak habitat
 - b. Wildfire mitigation – thinning and relevant BMPs across as large an acreage as possible
 - c. Tree species selection – climate change
 2. Forestry Cost Share
 - a. Forest Health Practices – recommendation and implementation
 - b. Farm and Forest Biochar Application
 3. Forest Management Planning and Education
 - a. Private landowner Forest Management Planning
 - b. Habitat creation and improvement
 - c. Firewise programming / Structure ignition assessments
 - d. Community education, workshops, outreach, conferences
 - e. Coached Planning Course (WSU Extension)
 4. Community Wildfire Protection Plan and Hazard Planning
 - a. Community Wildfire Protection Plan updates – is SJICD responsible for this? Original process we were a junior partner; political process; possibly deprioritize our leadership in this
 5. Workforce Development
 - a. Islands Conservation Corps
 - b. Skills training and certifications
 - c. Community education opportunities, trainings and workshops
 6. Woody Biomass Utilization – Market Development
 - a. Biochar production
 - b. Commercial composting
 - c. Combined heat and biochar or power production facility
 - d. Chipping – e.g. community chipper program
 - e. Support existing infrastructure; efficacy; look for small advances to existing options instead of starting from scratch
 - f. Drive/stimulate
 7. Research
 - a. OSU biochar research

- b. Fire modelling
 - c. Forest Stand Analysis and Assessment
 - d. Carbon modelling
 - e. Species migration
8. Co-management

Partnerships

- Ecotrust

Forest Stewardship – Funding Sources

- DNR – several streams
- Forest Health Collaborative
- CWDG – USDA
- WSCC
- NRCS
- NNRG
- Private philanthropy
- SJ County
- Fee for service
- BLM, State/National Parks
- Firewise (NFPA)

Forest Stewardship - Growth Trajectory

Most say grow the program; establish sustained funding

Riparian Restoration

Riparian Restoration - What are program goals for next 5 years?

- Outreach and Education
- Barrier removal
- Increase landowner involvement
- Implementation based on priority watersheds
- Planning and design– buffer widths, priority areas, species types, barrier removal, stream enhancements, mapping – combine different available datasets
- Work in prioritized watersheds
- Research
 - o Reed canary grass
- Adding large woody debris – biomass utilization
- Monitoring
- Successful plantings – x,000 trees
- Water containment – reduce runoff – raingardens and bioswales
- Explore water conservation through diversions, recharge
- Integrate w/Farm and Forest planning
- Healthy wetlands
- Healthy ponds
- Healthy nearshore

Riparian Restoration - Funding Sources

- SJC Clean Water Utility
- WSCC
- NRCS
- DNR – FFFPP
- Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
- EPA/ECY – Clean Water Centennial
- SRFB
- RCO
- Private Donation

Riparian Restoration - Growth Trajectory

Most say grow, some say hold steady, one says decrease

ICC

ICC - What are program goals for next 5 years?

- Campus – Classroom and study space
- Housing
- Increase or improve balance of ICC integrations with SJICD
- Forest Planning
- Ag
- YCC
- Internships
- Skills training – train practitioners
- Improve structure within which ICC crew can contribute to SJICD operations (institutionalize)
- Develop business skills
- Incubation of new enterprises and research
- Improved public outreach
- Succession planning
- Increase Stability/Redundancy
- Safety
- Transportation – boat, vehicle(s)
- Increased crew compensation
- Facilitate additional employment opportunities outside of ICC
- Grow the funding, not the program footprint
- Increase crew compensation
- Expand staffing

ICC - Funding Sources

- Fee for service
- Public landowners
- DNR
- Community Foundations
- USFS
- Career Connect

- Private donations

ICC – Growth Trajectory

Keep program where it's at, grow staffing and support infrastructure

YCC

YCC - What are program goals for next 5 years?

- Year-round programming
- Connected to schools
- Succession planning, stability, redundancy
- 2-person management team
- Island managers
- Reduce burnout
- Housing
- Transportation – vans
- Outdoor adventure; wilderness survival skills, Expeditions
- Competitive pay for crew leaders
- Low barriers
- Local recruitment
- Tribal partnerships – CSYSC, other groups
- Encourage island autonomy - How to decentralize?
- Advisory Team – retention; engagement
- Progressive education/training curriculum
- Highly Interdisciplinary curriculum
- Balance work/pay/productivity/fun/stipend
- Collaboration between Dist Board and Advisory Team
- Board Supervisors engage in field days with YCC crew

YCC - Funding Sources

- Career Connect
- Philanthropy
- Donations
- Donor Subscriptions (e.g. gold member, etc)
- Sponsorships
- Grants
- Fee for services

YCC - Growth Trajectory

Most say grow services and outreach, obtain sustainable staffing model

Farms/Ag

Farms/Ag - What are program goals for next 5 years?

- Biological soil health
- Equipment storage shed
- High quality manure/compost spreader

- More compost facilities funded
- More climate smart farm plans
- Follow-ups with farmers with farm plans
- Effectiveness –
- Cost share project continuity – Coached Planning for Farms
- Education, education, education – soil health (e.g. kiss the ground)
- Soil workshops
- Performance survey of customers to hear how their experience was working with us
- More farmer follow-up
- Reduce financial barriers to biochar application
- Continue support for Ag Summit
- Irrigation efficiencies
- Consider prioritizing ISP wait list ecologically based on VSP priorities – more proactive outreach to livestock owners near water
- Focus on FBP balanced management plan that doesn't disenfranchise ag including livestock grazing (Vicki)
- Highlighting and rewarding farmers who are Brand Champions – e.g. plaque, award “Conservationist of the Year”
- Integration between Farm/Ag and other programs
- Increase water access, conservation, etc.

Farms/Ag - Funding Sources

- WSCC
- NRCS
- DOH
- ECY
- IRA
- WSU
- Dept of Ag
- DNR – biomass utilization

Farms/Ag - Growth Trajectory – Most say hold steady

District Ops

District Ops

- Decarbonization Plan
- Private philanthropy
- Outreach/comms staffing
- Succession planning
- Campus

Habitat

Habitat – not discussed

Adjourn – the meeting was adjourned at 4:15pm.