

Lige Christian 9/10/19



**Jefferson County Conservation Futures Committee  
Special Meeting, Wednesday, April 3, 2019, 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM  
Jefferson County Public Health Pacific Room  
615 Sheridan St., Port Townsend, WA 98368  
FINAL MINUTES**

\* Decisions and action items are indicated in bold font.

**Members Present:** Scott Brinton (via teleconference), Interest – Agriculture; Lige Christian, Vice Chair – District 3; JD Gallant – District 3; Rob Harbour, Interest – Working Lands; Richard Jahnke, Interest – Coastal Areas; Joanne Pontrello – District 2; David Seabrook (via teleconference), Interest – Food Security; Dave Wilkinson, Chair – District 1

**Members Absent:** Ray Hunter, Interest – Fallow Farms; Lorna Smith, Interest – Ecotourism

**County Staff Present:** Tami Pokorny, Environmental Public Health; Jacqueline Stenman, Water Quality Division, recorder

**Guests:** Phil Andrus, Mary Biskup, Craig Schrader, Peter Bahls, Northwest Watershed Institute (NWI); Sarah Spaeth, Jefferson Land Trust (JLT)

I. Call to Order

Chair David Wilkinson called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

II. Approval of Minutes

**Richard Jahnke moved to approve the draft minutes of the November 13, 2018 Meeting with the correction of semicolons; JD Gallant seconded. The Jefferson County Conservation Futures (JCCF) Committee approved of the minutes with all in favor. The JCCF Committee accepted by consensus the final minutes from the October 10, 2018 Meeting as written, which were signed by the Chair.**

III. Approval of Draft Agenda

**Lige Christian moved to approve the draft agenda; JD Gallant seconded. The agenda was approved with all in favor.**

IV. Guest Observer Comments

A guest commented that the JCCF Committee is a great committee. Tami Pokorny reminded the Committee members that there were eight members present of the ten

total. A quorum required six members, absolute majority was six members, and a two-thirds majority was seven members. Three members were unable to vote because they were awaiting reinstatement.

V. Old Business: Bylaws

The Committee reviewed edits that were made to the bylaws last year. **Lige Christian moved to approve the bylaws; Rob Harbour seconded. The motion passed with all in favor.**

VI. Subcommittee Reports

There were no reports.

VII. New Business

Bishop Dairy Preservation

This item was moved up in the agenda. Sarah Spaeth gave an update on the project, which was a 2015 Conservation Futures application. The project is beyond the three-year timeframe, and match is required to be in place. Originally, the project had Navy funding for part of the match, but the landowner preferred to find match funding elsewhere. A National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) grant was too problematic, and was turned back three months ago. JLT is back to pursuing Navy funding, but going back and forth with funding sources created a significant time delay. The landowner also sold part of the farm that was part of the original easement proposal; the easement is now 57 acres less. JLT does not view the reduction in acreage as critical to the project, and is waiting on a reappraisal and final acceptance from the landowner. With the time delays and the change in scope of the project, JLT is requesting an extension until the end of 2019 and for agreement to the scope change. Sarah reviewed the changes to the proposal. **Rob Harbour moved to approve the extension of the Bishop Dairy Preservation proposal through the end of 2019. Lige Christian seconded.** The Committee discussed the project changes. Sarah clarified that the scope change includes removal of the 57 acres that were sold, and that match percentage approval should wait until after the appraisal because the easement may still be appraised at the same value. If the appraised value changes, a special meeting may be called to approve of the match percentage change. **After discussion, Rob amended his motion to include approval of the project scope change; Lige seconded the amended motion. The motion passed with all in favor.**

Project Presentations:

2019 QWC Addition

Sarah Spaeth presented on the 2019 Quimper Wildlife Corridor Addition, which includes the addition of two new properties to the wildlife corridor: the Gressley property and

the Jones property. The goal of the Quimper Wildlife Corridor is to connect a series of wetlands and high habitat values with a green belt of native vegetation, stretching most of the way across the Peninsula. Over the years, JLT has been working closely with multiple funding sources to acquire over 80 lots that make up the corridor. The Gressley property is a three-lot property, which the landowner wishes to sell. Funding for the Gressley property is being leveraged by the donation of the Jones property, which was appraised at \$40,000. A \$5000 stewardship match has also been donated. As a JLT acquisition, stewardship of the wildlife corridor involves more than 30 volunteer preserve stewards, a stewardship fund, and insurance that covers any enforcement or preserve challenges. While the project does not directly protect anadromous fish habitat, it does contribute to the protection of water quality, and provides habitat to a wide variety of wildlife, including several threatened species. The project also provides broad community benefit through public trail access, school use and the preservation of local green space. The Committee asked whether it was possible to amend the application for the increased value of the match due to the contribution of the Jones property, but Sarah said that would not change the total cost of the project so there was no benefit to the amendment. The 2019 Quimper Wildlife Corridor Addition ranked second by JLT out of their proposed projects.

#### Dosewallips River Lazy C Phase I

Tami Pokorny presented on the Jefferson County acquisition project on the Dosewallips River, the second largest watershed in the Hood Canal. The river deposits a significant amount of sediment when it's forced to make a turn and slows down along the Lazy C, causing the river to meander. The purchase of two parcels would be the first step in acquiring the lower Lazy C lots to improve salmon habitat by, for example, providing the open space necessary to develop a fish-friendly response to ongoing erosion there. The County typically responds to erosion-related issues on an emergency basis using riprap, which can degrade habitat and transmit the erosive power of the river downstream. The acquisitions are part of a larger effort to improve habitat for summer chum salmon and additional project elements may also include designing improvements to a side channel, creating more habitat complexity, protecting existing summer chum habitat, reducing risks from developed placement, lessening the instability of the channel migration zone and continuing established partnerships within the community. Although it is definitely a fish project and will benefit all anadromous fish except sockeye, the project will also provide compatible community benefits. The request is for \$7649 towards the acquisition of two parcels; the total project cost is \$50,992. The County has demonstrated stewardship of about 80 acres it already owns in the area, including lots within the Lazy C.

#### Tarboo Forest Addition

Peter Bahls presented on the conservation easement acquisition, which would add 21 acres to the 400-acre Tarboo Wildlife Preserve, the largest conservation project in the County. It is a landscape-scale project to establish a protected corridor from the Tarboo Creek headwaters down to Dabob bay. NWI has been working to protect and restore

this area by removing fish passage barriers; re-meandering Tarboo Creek through the valley; decommissioning unstable roads; and recently working with DNR to remove four houses and outbuildings, take out a giant bulkhead and re-slope the homesteaded area to natural conditions. The 21-acre property was purchased by NWI through multiple loans, but if funds are not secured by 2019, the parcel will have to go back on the market. The easement has been appraised at \$215,000. The request is for \$110,000 from Conservation Futures to help pay for a conservation easement that would be held by JLT. The proposal is also on the list of projects that JLT is submitting for Navy funding. While Navy funding is not guaranteed, all projects JLT has submitted have been funded in the past, and Sarah Spaeth was told that federal funding is increasing. The considerable amount of timber on the property is sequestering carbon, but a forest management plan is also in place that includes some timber harvest to thin trees to restore old growth characteristics. In addition to an existing certified management plan, JLT provides excellent stewardship, and NWI will conduct on-the-ground stewardship. Priority species and diverse habitat are present on the property. There is no open public access, but an active public access program is in place as part of the Tarboo Wildlife Preserve. The area has been identified by State as a priority for conservation, and by the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe as a cultural resource. The Committee asked for justification of the high acquisition cost. Peter said it was a bare bones budget and listed the costs for the appraisal, staff time, legal fees, excise fees, recording fees, settlement fees and title insurance. Private donor funds of at least \$25,000 will have to pay for stewardship funds required by JLT. The Committee inquired whether timber harvest could help with the cost. Peter said there were several alternatives to the proposal, such as selling off a couple of the lots or selectively harvesting, but it would completely change the nature of the proposal, which has high conservation value. Also, harvest volume will increase by 30 percent in ten years, and by 50 percent in 20 years. The group asked how much water runs into the bay from the streams and rivers. Tarboo Creek is the main water source to Dabob Bay and provides natural flushing; high water flows would increase with clear cutting and could have a huge impact on the watershed.

#### Quilcene Headwaters to Bay

Sarah Spaeth presented on the 80-acre property on Jakeway Creek that is being proposed for protection through a conservation easement. The project is part of the larger objective to protect the Quilcene Bay estuary, from the upland forest down to the bay itself. Purchase of the conservation easement would reduce development from four potential residential rights down to one. JLT would acquire three of the rights, and the landowners would retain one right. The Mahan family owns the property and is willing to work with JLT to improve habitat and forest values. Their goal is to pay off their property loans with the easement, to protect the agricultural functions of their property and, perhaps, ultimately the neighbor's property, and to have a working farm. Restriction of timber harvest makes the easement expensive; it is estimated at \$280,000, with similar additional fees and costs to those Peter Bahls listed for the previous project. Stewardship of the property has the same high value as the other JLT projects. Project feasibility is high due to the eager landowner, and the inclusion of the

project on the JLT Navy funding list. The property is surrounded by other conservation easements and preserves, spreads to other projects in the Hood Canal and builds on efforts to protect Quilcene Bay. Hood Canal summer chum salmon may be a candidate for delisting in the future, in large part due to community efforts like this one. Public benefits include the protection of agricultural lands, riparian buffers, and water quality in Quilcene Bay; sediment reduction through forest improvements; and the opportunity to contribute to another headwaters-to-bay project to protect fish, farms and forests. The Committee asked whether the project could be phased through a promise of funds for this year and next year. Sarah did not know, but she was aware of time constraints for the landowners. The group asked if she could share the Navy easement. Sarah said she will, but will need permission from the Navy first.

#### Snow Creek Middle Reach Forest Protection

Sarah Spaeth gave an update on the project, which JCCF funded last year. The original proposal was for four of six lots being sold by the landowner. After the appraisal was completed, it became evident that the landowner only wished to sell if all six lots were sold together. The two additional lots included the site of a decommissioned gas station, which was evaluated by the Department of Ecology and given “a clean bill of health.” The JLT contract should go through without any difficulties as long as the budget is not increased. Since the appraised value of the four original lots came in at about \$40,000 less than the estimate, and there is not much additional value to the other two lots, it is likely that the proposal budget will not increase. A draft contract is currently with the County. If all goes well with their own assessment of the gas station parcel, JLT wants to expand the scope of the project to include the additional parcel acquisitions without adjustment to the budget. No action is required at this meeting, but action from the JCCF Committee may be required at the next meeting to approve the change to the scope of the project. The downside to the scope change is that JLT will be buying land that has no real restoration value, but if it means they can acquire the critical land, they are willing to go through with the entire acquisition.

#### Annual Reports

**The JCCF Committee decided to table the discussion of the annual reports until the May 1, 2019 Meeting.**

#### Election of New Officers

**Richard Jahnke moved to appoint Lige Christian as the new Chair of the JCCF Committee; Rob Harbour seconded. The motion passed with all in favor. Lige Christian moved to vote for the Vice Chair. The group discussed the terms of the position, which lasts for one year and is rotational among Committee members. Joanne Pontrello volunteered for the position of Vice Chair. Rob Harbour moved to appoint Joanne Pontrello as Vice Chair; JD Gallant seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.**

Next Meeting: WED May 1, 2019 4-6 PM

This item was skipped.

VIII. Announcements/Administrative

Tami Pokorny announced that the 2004 Gateway Project is now protected by an agreement between the City, County and JLT. The previously unsigned agreement is now fully executed and attached to the parcel through a Notice to Title. She was unable to get a JCCF budget balance before the meeting, but will email it out. Tami noted that, in December, one of the county commissioners asked the CF Committee to consider whether scoring on climate change is needed. Tami will also send out a new Excel scoresheet.

IX. Guest Observer Comments

Joanne Pontrello commented that Paul Mahan asked via text that the JCCF Committee prioritize his project.

X. Adjournment

**Richard Jahnke moved to adjourn the meeting; Joanne Pontrello seconded. The motion passed by consensus. The JCCF Meeting adjourned at 8:57 PM.**

*Meeting notes prepared by Rebekah Brooks.*