

LAKE BALLINGER/MCALEER CREEK WATERSHED FORUM MINUTES
Mountlake Terrace City Hall
Council Chambers
January 17, 2023 2PM to 3:30 PM

Call to Order

Councilmember – City of MLT Steve Woodard, called the Lake Ballinger Forum Meeting to order at 2:05 pm.

I. Roll Call - Welcome and Introductions

Motion

Councilmember, Steve Woodard

Approval 10/17/22 meeting minutes

Councilmember, Jeff Johnson

Motion carried 5-0

Quorum Members Present:

- Will Chen - Councilmember, City of Edmonds
- Jeff Johnson - Mayor, Lake Forest Park
- Steve Woodard – Councilmember City of Mountlake Terrace

Quorum Members Virtual:

- Diane Buckshnis – Councilmember, City of Edmonds
- Tracy Furutani – Councilmember, Lake Forest Park

Attendees:

- Warren Andrews – Lake Resident
- Carrie Byron – Lake WA/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed (WRIA 8)
- Ken Courtmanch – Superintendent of Parks/Recreation, MLT
- Bob Danson – General Manager, Olympic View Water & Sewer District
- Donnelle Dayao – Parks Project Manager, Mountlake Terrace
- John Featherstone – Surface Water Utility Manager, Shoreline
- Rikki Fruichantie – Community Relations Specialist, Mountlake Terrace
- Patrick Johnston – Stormwater Technician, Edmonds
- Dale Newman – President & CEO, Nile Shriners Club
- Jeffrey Perrico – PW Director, Lake Forest Park
- Mark Phillips – Lake Forest Park Former Council Member
- Kari Quaas – Project Manager, Snohomish Conservation District
- Laura Reed – Stormwater Program Manager, Mountlake Terrace
- Ron Ricker – Resident, Lake Forest Park
- Tricia Shoblom – Lakes Specialist Ecology
- Andrew Silvia – Project Manager, Lake Forest Park Public Works
- Meg Stecker – Edmonds Lake Resident
- Bernadette Taylor-Moses – Administrative Assistant, Mountlake Terrace

- Phil Williams – Interim PW Director, City of Mountlake Terrace

II. Olympic View Watershed and Protection Areas, including Hall Creek

Bob Danson, General Manager of Olympic View Water and Sewer District, gave a presentation. Olympic View Water and Sewer District is a small utility district located south of Edmonds in Esperance which serves about 15,000 people. He discussed the watershed and well head protection areas, the well head protection plan, and guidelines.

There are three water sources:

1. Deer Creek Springs, a spring feed creek functions as a treatment plant to create drinking water
2. Future Source – 228th Street well field (not currently being used, is in permitting stages)
3. Well Head Protection Area (WHPA) influenced by a small part of the Hall Creek drainage basin (60% of supply from Seattle Public Utility)

Olympic View's Watershed and Wellhead Protection Areas are intended to protect drinking water sources.

Watershed and Wellhead Protection Plan – WWHPA is critical to maintain high quality drinking water, to protect the water sources to prevent the water from being contaminated. Water capture zones were created to protect the watershed recharge areas. Analysis is being done to recognize risk and better understand of what contaminates ground water.

Watershed and Wellhead Guidelines examples: Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas (CARA) to help protect, inform land authorities of areas of concern. There are adopted guidelines in place to prevent drinking source water recharge areas from being contaminated.

For example, the guidelines prohibit potential pollutants, sewage disposal systems, landfills and waste disposals, wood treatment facilities, radioactive materials, and mining; require oil-based and detergent based waste to be treated; require storm drainage design to prevent pollutants entering groundwater; prohibit UIC wells; require work with land authorities to help protect groundwater; and prohibit PFAS-generating surfaces.

Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas – CARA are critical recharging locations for aquifers used for potable water (watershed or wellness protection area). Land authorities must be informed that these areas exist and their locations, institute protections, and adopt city code language to protect CARAs. Letters have been sent to land authorities to help identify and protect the CARAs. One section of the Hall Creek watershed overlaps with a future CARA area.

Hall Lake and Hall Creek drain into Lake Ballinger which is on the edge of the aquifer. Groundwater from Hall Creek flows into Puget Sound. Groundwater from Hall Creek contributes to the aquifer, and any kind of pollutant or contaminant that enters the creek has the potential to contaminate the aquifer. Bob confirmed that the flow from the creek will take about eighteen years to get to the well discharge.

Question: What kind of peer review process do the hydraulic assumptions about the connection between Hall Creek and the CARA undergo?

Response: The protection plan goes through review similar to that for a Comprehensive Plan or SEPA process. There is an extensive back and forth with Department of Health and Department of Ecology.

Question: Have all the cities in the forum adopted CARA code requirements?

Response: Except for City of Edmonds, all other cities have some kind of code in place.

Question: Would pet waste contamination from Hall Creek be a significant consideration?

Response: Heavy metal and phosphorus are biggest contamination concerns for now. More research is needed regarding pet waste contamination.

Question: Is working with Army Corps of Engineers work around Hall Creek going to have a positive, neutral, or negative impact?

Response: It would have a positive impact.

III. WRIA 8 Grant Program Introduction

Carrie Byron presented Washington Resource Inventory Areas (WRIA) 8 Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed Salmon Recovery Program. The program focuses on recovery efforts for adult salmon returning to spawn, as well as juvenile salmon leaving the watershed to live in the ocean for few years. The priority areas are habitat restoration for freshwater stream and marine nearshore environments. The goal is to recover harvestable, sustainable Chinook salmon populations. Multiple factors are addressed to find ways for salmon and people to live together in heavily-populated urbanized areas.

Chinook salmon were listed in endangered species in 1999. The Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan was formed by local governments, partnerships among State Federal agencies, and local watershed groups. Governance of WRIA 8 is through interlocal agreements and the Salmon Recovery Council. The program also works closely with Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council. WRIA 8 priority actions include habitat restoration, public education and outreach, land use recommendations, and research, and monitoring. WRIA 8 has recently incorporated diversity, equity, and inclusion concerns.

The 2023 WRIA 8 grant round comes from two main funding sources: Salmon Recovery Funding Board Allocation (SRFB, \$498,343), and from state and federal recreation and conservation offices and Cooperative Watershed Management Funding Allocation (CWM, \$4,026,636), and from the King County Flood Control District. The funding may increase over time. SRFB is annual combination of federal and state dollars administered by the WA Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). WRIA 8 issues requests for proposals (RFP). Projects are selected and invited to submit full applications which is evaluated and recommended by Project Subcommittee. Salmon Recovery Council approves applications and forwards them to SRFB to be funded.

CWM funds eligible activities within King County. Approximately 75% of CWM funding goes to habitat restoration and acquisition projects, 20% to monitoring and assessment and 5% to education and outreach. WRIA 8 issues the RFP for these grants. Projects are selected and invited to submit full applications, which are evaluated and recommended by Project Subcommittee. The Salmon Recovery Council then approves grants and forwards the submittals to King County Flood Control District to award funding.

Many other funding opportunities are available from King County programs, state programs, King Conservation District Member Jurisdiction Grant programs, the Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board, the Dept. of Ecology Streamflow Restoration program and from Snohomish Conservation District programs.

Question: How can more federal funding money can be accessed by cities in the Forum?

Response: Federal funding can be accessed through RCO, NOAA Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund, and other direct federal agencies such as the WA Department of Transportation and WA Fish & Wildlife Department.

Question: How does WRIA 8 help various cities in the Forum when the cities are in multiple counties and jurisdictions?

Response: WRIA 8 will help to review project applications to match with the fund source, and/or provide letter of support. Details of project location, strategy, priorities, objectives, etc. are really helpful to identify which funding sources might be best applied.

Question: Are projects within specific watershed boundaries more competitive for funding that WRIA 8 administers?

Response: Projects within Tier 1 areas where Chinook salmon are present are the most competitive, including Cedar River, Sammamish River, the lake shore of Lake Washington, nearshore area of Puget Sound, and Bear Creek.

IV. Ballinger Forum Project Review

Laura Reed reported on a big project in Mountlake Terrace, the Ballinger Park Hall Creek Restoration Project, which will be built this summer. The construction contract was awarded for \$5.5 million dollars. It will be 17 acres of restoration, consisting of realigning the creek, new boardwalk, new vehicle bridge, and removal of an old tennis court. Also, the investment in controlling aquatic plants in Lake Ballinger is an on-going effort. Mountlake Terrace is also very close to completing a hydraulic and hydrologic study of Hall Creek. The study is focused on finding ways to alleviate flooding from the creek, particularly on 216th St SW at 68th Ave W.

Patrick Johnston reported on the City of Edmonds project list. 7317 Lake Ballinger Way, an abandoned house on the south shore of Lake Ballinger has become a public nuisance, and has contributed to pollution issues when the lake rises to higher water levels. Currently, the city is

exploring receiving funds, as well as purchasing the property, and developing plans for the property. The update is that the city is still tightening numbers for a grant application for funding from the Department of Ecology. In about a month the city will go out for an appraisal, and there will be further updates during the next meeting.

Additionally, Edmonds City Council in mid-December approved a funding package in the amount of \$25,000 for improvements to the Ballinger Boat Launch in Edmonds. This is a community park on the west side of Lake Ballinger, often used for small boats, kayaks, and stand-up paddle boards. The funds will be used for new signs, new access, egress improvements, and a new bench. These will be the first improvements that this park has received in many, many years. The work is planned to happen in 2023, with completion in 2024.

Andrew Silva reported on Lake Forrest Park projects. Work on McAleer Creek basin projects are currently limited. Most of the city's energy for capital projects delivery is within the Lyon Creek basin. Two culverts have been replaced in Lyon Creek in the last few years. Efforts have been focused on moving upstream, replacing fish barriers with fish passable crossings within the Lyon Creek basin. Lyon Creek was selected as the high priority basin for the city's Stormwater Management Action Plan. The project to replace culverts within McAleer Creek at the Town Center and under SR 522 was completed about five years ago, but the city is still dealing with legacy post-construction requirements for these projects, and should be finalized soon. A project was proposed regarding habitat inventory on McAleer Creek, this hasn't been launched yet. The purpose would be to gain an understanding of baseline habitat and biological use in McAleer Creek. Feedback was received from one of the funders at RCO suggesting that a study of the city's basins could potentially help improve the city's chances of being funded in the future.

John Featherstone reported on the City of Shoreline's project for the Echo Lake cyanobacteria management plan. Echo Lake is within the Lake Ballinger watershed. Shoreline received a grant from the Department of Ecology to study the cyanobacteria (toxic algae) issue in Echo Lake.

Will Chen, Councilmember, City of Edmonds announced that as part of the budget process, the City of Edmonds has awarded \$200,000 funds to Mountlake Terrace for Ballinger Park, along the Interurban Trail.

V. Announcement & Updates

There are no current status updates from WSDOT regarding McAleer Creek I-5 culvert replacements.

McAleer Creek maintenance is vital in making sure the flow leaves the lake and gets downstream. MLT staff have been regularly inspecting the McAleer Creek channel through the Nile Golf Course. A tree did fall into the creek, but there was flow under and over it with no obstruction when the creek was in maximum flow stage. There was some flooding on Lake Ballinger at the end of 2022. During heavy rains lake level monitor for Edmonds was not

working, but it has been repaired.

VI. Public Comment

Sewer line replacement is underway in Edmonds.

VII. Topics for next meeting:

Staff from the cities in the Forum are working on revisions to the current interlocal agreement (ILA) which expires at the end of 2023.

VIII. Date and location of next meeting

Meetings are held once a quarter, and the next meeting will be virtual and held on March 21, 2023 at 2:00 pm.

Adjournment – 3:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes Approved 3.21.2023

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized name, possibly "J. A. Smith", written over the text "Meeting Minutes Approved 3.21.2023".