



# Hood Canal Coordinating Council (HCCC)

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

## Hood Canal Shellfish Initiative (HCSI) Workgroup Meeting #10

Date: August 11, 2020; 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM

Location: Zoom

Links:

- [Agenda](#)
- [Presentation](#)

Attendees:

- Phil Best, Hood Canal Environmental Council
- Laura Butler, WA Dept. of Agriculture
- Bill Dewey, Taylor Shellfish Farms
- Sarah Fisker, Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee
- David Fyfe, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
- Bobbi Hudson, Pacific Shellfish Institute
- Teri King, Washington Sea Grant
- Paul McCollum, Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe
- Blair Paul, Skokomish Indian Tribe
- Alex Paysse, Mason County
- Dawn Hanson Smart, Hood Canal Snail
- Camille Speck, WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
- Dan Tonnes, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- Jon Wolf, Skokomish Indian Tribe

Facilitators:

- Nate White, HCCC
- Haley Harguth, HCCC
- Kelly Biedenweg, Oregon State University (OSU)

### Welcome and Introductions

HCCC staff reviewed the agenda and provided an overview of the meeting. Introductions were made by reading off of the participant list on Zoom.

### Hood Canal Shellfish Summit update

HCCC staff reviewed plans for the Hood Canal Shellfish Summit date with the Workgroup. The proposed date is Oct. 29. However a scheduling conflict was discovered with this date so now Oct. 22 is being considered. HCCC staff will be in touch with the Workgroup about the finalized date. At the Summit, the HCSI Action Plan will be presented and feedback will be sought on its contents. There may also be speakers discussing topical shellfish issues relevant to Hood Canal. The target audience is broad group of Hood Canal shellfish partners, such as tribes, growers, community groups, local, state, and federal governments, and the general public. Invites and more information will be sent soon.

### The Future of the HCSI

HCCC staff explained the next steps in the HCSI Action Plan process. After the Action Plan is complete, the Workgroup's work will conclude and the group's recommendations for priorities and

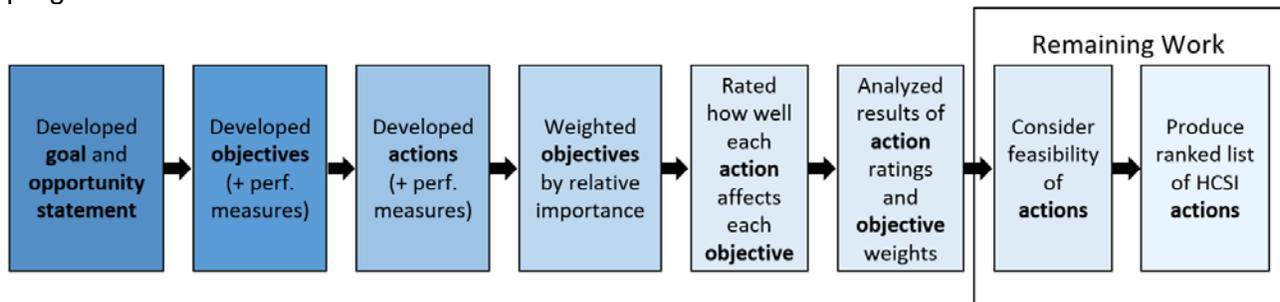
project funding will go to the HCCC Board of Directors for approval. After funding decisions are made, the Action Plan will be incorporated into HCCC’s Integrated Watershed Plan (IWP), with ongoing oversight by the HCCC Board of Directors. IWP committees (which are being restructured now and may be broadened to include partners with specific shellfish expertise, among other topical areas covered by the IWP) will then take on a technical advisory role for the HCSI and adaptively manage the HCSI as future needs arise (i.e. funding opportunities, technical advice, recommendations for the HCCC Board of Directors, etc.). HCCC will continue outreach efforts to engage our shellfish partners to utilize the HCSI Action Plan to prioritize shellfish recovery, protection, and enhancement actions.

Workgroup comments:

- Concern: the Workgroup is where a lot of the enthusiasm and momentum has been built around the HCSI. That energy and excitement is important to carry forward. Wants to keep the people in the Workgroup engaged through the implementation (especially since many will likely be involved).
  - HCCC Staff response: Agree that it will be very important to maintain that momentum. We think that an expanded IWP committee structure with representatives from the Workgroup can continue this momentum. Also, as we transition into the implementation phase we will provide periodic progress updates to our Board which could then be delivered to a broader audience. Pending funding, we might even host events to provide updates to the broader community to keep them engaged. Open to suggestions for how to continue this momentum.
- We could potentially have a two-day in-person symposium in Spring 2021 (if the COVID situation allows) with a lot of expertise in the room to keep this conversation alive. The Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe may be able to contribute funding for this.
  - HCCC Staff response: Agree. This would be great to partner on, as HCCC does not have funds to host another Summit with our current grant.
- Is there a tracking system for how HCCC will track the implementation of different HCSI efforts?
  - HCCC Staff response: Not at this point, but we do have our performance measures that we can track periodically. We are developing a monitoring plan as part of the HCSI Action Plan. More info to come on this.
- Similarities to the statewide Shellfish Initiative: when that shifted to implementation, a smaller core group tracked progress and periodically brought all implementers together to discuss updates, distribute charts of activities, etc. Worked well, HCCC may want to consider this structure.
  - HCCC Staff response: There will be an online home for all of the Action Plan content; likely including visuals describing progress. Also, within the IWP committee structure, we envision a subgroup or steering group focused on the HCSI going forward.

**Prioritize the HCSI Actions**

In preparation for a discussion of which actions to prioritize for the HCSI Action Plan, HCCC staff walked the Workgroup through the steps they have taken to this point. A chart summarizing this progress is below.



HCCC staff then explained the actions survey results to the Workgroup. There were a total of 70 actions across six objectives that the Workgroup rated using two surveys. The Workgroup was

reminded that actions were initially created for specific objectives to organize thinking about relevant actions, but that we are now broadening consideration of the actions across all of the objectives. Ultimately, we want to create a list of the actions that people think are most important and impactful, regardless of what objective they were originally created for.

HCCC staff then showed graphs related to the survey results. These graphs start on slide #6 of the [presentation](#) and go to slide 17. There is a set of three graphs for each objective. The graph on the left shows how much people thought the actions affected the objective they were originally created for (average impact on a scale of 0 to 5), and the graph on the right shows how much people thought the action affected all unweighted objectives (average impact values added together across all six objectives). The third graph shows how much people thought the actions originally created for an objective impacted that objective compared to actions from other objectives. Dark blue text and bars represent actions originally created for an objective, and faded out text and bars represent actions created for other objectives that people thought impacted the objective at hand.

Slide 18 of the presentation shows the six HCSI Action Plan objectives and the different weights the Workgroup created for them. These weights were created by asking the Workgroup how much more important the objectives are from each other, using the provided scale to approximate percentages.

Slide 19 shows the actions ranked by their impact across all weighted objectives. Because this list incorporates the ranked survey results and the weighted objectives, it is considered to be the Workgroup's preliminary priority action list.

Workgroup feedback was sought on whether this prioritized list reflects the general understanding of the actions and their relative impact, whether it reflects the values of the group, and whether the list "looks right".

#### Workgroup comments:

- Pleased with the top ten actions. The group has worked hard and well to get to this.
- This is great. What should we do with the other actions that are not at the top of the list? Perhaps if we focus on the top ten actions each entity in this group could decide three other actions to pursue to see if they scale up.
  - HCCC Staff response: The priority list is designed to show which actions are most important, so we hope that people using the list to fund projects pick projects in their prioritized order.
  - HCCC Staff response: We selected ten actions as an arbitrary number, but we can discuss if ten actions sufficiently captures the top priorities of the Workgroup.
- Will HCCC put these 70 actions forward as NTAs?
  - HCCC Staff response: Not all (due to capacity constraints), but the NTA process is a very likely landing spot for these actions to hopefully become NTAs in the next Action Agenda.
  - Response: It's important to get them on the NTA list (a federally recognized plan) so they can be eligible for federal funding.
  - Response: We'd need more detail on each one for the NTA process, but it shouldn't be too much more work to do that.
- Disappointment that actions to grow the shellfish industry did not make the cut. Concerned that when it came down to doing the surveys, it's been a small subset of the overall group and wonders if this may have affected things. The top actions do support a sustainable shellfish industry in Hood Canal, but concerned that no actions developed to specifically grow or benefit the industry are near the top of the list. Wants to get the industry excited about the HCSI, so wants to include actions that benefit them to get their support.
- (The HCSI Goal statement was brought up to make sure the top actions are representative of the Goal).
  - The top actions do seem to match the Goal statement.

- Agreed. Would be curious to know what would help the industry grow better. What actions in the list would be what you thought would help?
  - Response: The slide that had the actions for the industry objective was accurate.
- What if we keep the top ten actions, but add 2-3 actions that are specific to sustainable industry?
- HCCC Staff: Maybe the objective weighting should be revisited? This may help balance the top actions across other objectives.
  - Leaning more to looking at the next ten and bumping a few up as opposed to changing the weighting. Especially because the order of the objectives matched the earlier objectives rating survey. Water quality and habitat being on top make sense. I think messing with the weights makes less sense.
  - Don't think we need to mess with the process, but open to keeping the top ten actions and adding a few that help grow the shellfish industry.
  - Curious that even though the shellfish industry objective is weighted, how is it that there are no actions in the top ten that were originally related to the shellfish industry objective?
    - HCCC and OSU Staff response: This has to do more with people rating the impact of shellfish industry actions lower across all objectives than it does with the weighting. Also, it's possible that a low amount of survey responses could have contributed to the lower ratings of the shellfish industry actions.
  - Inclined to close the gap between the top two weighted objectives (Water Quality and Habitat) and the next highest objective (Cultural Appreciation). This could benefit the more people-related objectives.
  - OSU Staff: Clarification on the process of how the actions survey ratings and weighted objectives interact to give the priority actions list. For each action, the average survey rating score for each action was multiplied by the weighted objective value, repeated for all six objectives, then added together.
  - Uncomfortable changing the weightings now after seeing the results: the data is the data.
  - When we weighted the objectives, don't know that we all had a clear understanding how the weight would be applied to give us the priority actions. Might have weighted things differently if understood the consequences. Agreed that balancing the weights might benefit people-related objectives.
  - It was hard to see how the weights would actually play out.
  - What if we got rid of the weightings? How would that affect the results?
    - OSU Staff response: The order of the top actions does not shift that much. The overall priorities are more affected by the perceived low impact that relevant actions have on objectives, as rated in the surveys.
  - Concerned about the process here: could we adjust priorities by simply adding actions to our top priority list now, rather than changing the weights?
    - HCCC Staff response: we advocate using the weights, and iterating until we're satisfied with the results. This is where we insert our values and priorities in comparing these objectives against each other. Comfortable tweaking the weights to get to this rather than cherry picking actions to add to our top priorities, which is less transparent. However, if there is consensus on the latter approach, we're OK with that.
  - Comfortable with the top actions. They seem to support the shellfish industry well enough. Uncomfortable with changing the process because we don't like the results. Might not seem fair if we do this.
    - HCCC Staff response: this is a values-based exercise, so it's OK to change the process until the group arrives at the desired results.
- HCCC Staff: there are a variety of approaches to consider the top priorities. It's important to bring in different groups and maintain their interest in the HCSI process. In order to do that, we have to show them they are a piece of it and include actions that benefit them.

- It might be good to hear about whether PIC is actually worth exploring the feasibility of it.
  - HCCC Staff response: Each county has their own PIC program, and there is a regional PIC program as well that HCCC facilitates. Would be happy to answer questions.
  - Response: Do shellfish protection districts fit under the PIC program banner?
  - HCCC Staff response: There's overlap but they are different programs
- Suggestion to use the top ten actions + the top two actions for the objectives not already covered in the top ten (making sure that the top two actions from the objectives in the top ten are included). The actions would stay in the order of their existing overall ranking in the weighted objective list. This would ensure that an action impacting each Objective is included in the final prioritized list of actions and provides a richer field.
  - Does that mean something gets bumped, or are we just expanding the priority list and will have less of the limited HCSI's implementation funds to implement the actions?
    - HCCC Staff response: We have around \$50,000 for implementation as part of our HCSI planning grant. We would need to decide if we put money to all of the actions, or choose a couple. The point of narrowing to 10-15 actions would be to focus our efforts. Ten is an arbitrary number.
    - Response: Good to hear about HCCC's implementation funds. But the partners involved in the HCSI Action Plan shouldn't assume that's all it's going to take to implement the HCSI. The partners who have resources to bring to the table can and should use the prioritized list of actions to keep implementation going into the future once HCCC's initial implementation funds are spent.
  - OSU Staff: should we choose the highest rated action within the Sustainable Industry objective, or the highest rated action that meets all objectives?
    - Response: The highest rated action within the objective ("Develop pre-permitting process for priority aquaculture development sites") makes it more apparent that we support industry. Ideally we would do a spatial analysis first (the fourth rated action within the objective: "Conduct spatial analysis to identify suitable sites for aquaculture development and ecosystem protection needs") to ensure that a pre-permitting process makes sense. This would address tribal concerns as well.
    - There was general consensus to combine the pre-permitting action and the spatial analysis action.
  - This approach sounds good, but let's be consistent for how we choose the top actions for the objectives not in the top ten.
  - HCCC Staff response: There seems to be general consensus to use this approach, so we will use it.
- OSU Staff: Does the timescale of the HCSI matter for the selection of actions (i.e. revisit the priorities every five years, etc.)? If the timeline is longer, it is OK to be broad; if it is short, better to be specific.
  - HCCC Staff response: No timeline has been set, but the HCSI will be incorporated into HCCC's IWP where the priorities and other revisions will be adaptively managed into the future. The IWP update cycle is every four years.
- Either the HCCC Board or this group needs to work through feasibility, and that will narrow the list of prioritized actions further.

### **Next Steps**

This is the last Workgroup meeting before the Hood Canal Shellfish Summit in October. HCCC staff will create the draft HCSI Action Plan in the interim and distribute it to the Workgroup for review prior to the Summit. We will then distribute the draft Plan to the HCCC Board of Directors for review and approval, asking them to affirm the Workgroup's prioritized action list and provide feedback on feasibility. The Plan will then be presented at the Summit, where broader feedback will be collected. After that HCCC staff will revise the Plan to incorporate any new insight, and submit it to the HCCC Board for final approval and general direction on how to spend the limited HCSI implementation. Soon after that, we will form a subgroup of the Workgroup to recommend

specific projects to fund. Final funding decisions will be made by the HCCC Board. RFPs will be sent out after funding decisions are made to solicit projects.

Camille, Blair, Paul volunteered to be part of the subgroup to make final funding recommendations. HCCC staff will reach out to other Workgroup members to seek more volunteers.