

## **W8 Saving Farms and Saving Fish – Creative Problem Solving and Incentive Programs**

### Intro - Kay Kelsey Gray

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Slide Presentation
- 3) Issue Expert Statements (2 min)
- 4) Sub-group sessions (5 questions)

### Presentation – Autumn Salamack

- Three part paper
  - Farming is a good neighbor for fish
  - Development of new incentives to address watershed-specific issues
- 1) Actions taken on farmland impact fish
  - 2) Keeping farms in farming is an important aspect of salmon restoration
  - 3) Need new partnerships
  - 4) Research process influences problems/issue definitions
    - a) Primarily worked with farmers and farm groups
    - b) Now need support from other groups
    - c) Good overall support – concern about certainty of results
  - 5) Impacts associated with farming
    - a) Land use change to more intensive uses
    - b) Farming practices
  - 6) Goals
    - a) Promote conservation practices
    - b) Make environmental considerations and practices part of each farmers modus operandi
  - 7) Initiatives
    - a) Improving farming bottom line
      - i) Economic development support
      - ii) Remove existing regulatory impediments (development of a model ordinance)
      - iii) Promote local farm products (Marketing campaign)
  - 8) Keep Farmland in Farming
    - a) Preferable to urban development
    - b) Beneficial to salmon if conservation practices implemented on those lands
      - i) Increase funding for and prioritize PDR spending
      - ii) Incorporate with other planning efforts
      - iii) Allow for ditch maintenance
        - (1) Drainage without adverse environmental impacts
  - 9) Protecting and Restoring Fish Habitat
    - a) Develop cost sharing approach
      - i) Technical assistance
      - ii) Financial support

- b) Commit to state share for CREP
  - c) CREP expansion
    - i) Other practices in addition to stream buffers
    - ii) Increase flexibility and certainty
  - d) Encourage development of farm plans
    - i) Tailored to individual farms
- 10) Implementation
- a) Need for commitments from groups
  - b) Support for representation for farmers; consistent voice

### Issue Experts

- 1) Sen. Harriet Spanel
  - a) Recognition of importance of farming
    - i) Not farming OR fish – we can have both
  - b) Farming and forestry are better than concrete
  - c) People with different interests must engage in dialogue
  - d) Mandates not always the best approach
    - i) Need to recognize that markets extend beyond local area; avoid narrow focus
    - ii) Critical Areas Ordinance
      - (1) Very controversial
      - (2) Ag and forestry very important to the country – we need both
      - (3) Ditch maintenance very important issue
        - (a) What is a ditch, and what is a stream?
  - e) Need to support and expand CREP
  - f) Need to consider practices on public lands as well
    - i) Efforts in Skagit County were successful
- 2) Lisa Pelly
  - a) 11 years on F&W Committee - developed appreciation of issues
  - b) Farm bill up for reauthorization in 2007
    - i) Need to advocate for CREP and Conservation Securities Program
  - c) Should encourage local farming
    - i) Food security is a concern
  - d) Believes that farmers really do want to do the right thing
    - i) Disconnect with policymakers in Olympia
- 3) Andy Werkhoven
  - a) Need to continue to build bridges
    - i) Cultural changes
    - ii) Frustration with government process
    - iii) Need to spend time with people with other interests, different backgrounds
  - b) Still great opportunities for farming in WA
- 4) Aaron Reardon

- a) Agrees that there is a disconnect with what the local communities voice and what gets reported in Olympia
    - i) Polarization of environmental, farming and other interest groups
  - b) Need to consider harvest in addition to the other three H's
  - c) Farming is a bottom line industry
    - i) Need to empower farmers financially
  - d) Government regulations cumbersome and sometimes ineffective
    - i) Need reform
  - e) Stewardship
    - i) Farmers committed to protecting land
  - f) Need for flexibility
- 5) John Gillies
- a) Whatcom Co perspective
  - b) Platform statement is a good starting point
  - c) Drainage is an important issue to address
    - i) Someone needs to take first step
    - ii) Struggle to obtain permits
      - (1) Timing critical
    - iii) Need for flexibility
    - iv) Fish and farming not mutually exclusive
  - d) Land Use
    - i) Significant Loss of farmland
      - (1) "No net loss" policy may be a good option
      - (2) Transfer of development rights another good option
- 6) Jay Gordon
- a) 7<sup>th</sup> generation farming family
  - b) Sees reasons for hope
  - c) Need for incentives
  - d) Taking land for restoration does not work
    - i) Farmers vacate
    - ii) Losing too many farms
    - iii) Rural communities need to organize
  - e) Farmers want to keep farming
- 7) Brian Cladoosby
- a) Has farming had an impact?
    - i) If yes, what should we do about it?
  - b) Farming is better than asphalt
  - c) Need willing farmers, but how do we address farmers unwilling to cooperate in conservation?
  - d) Do we need regulatory certainty?
  - e) Need to help farmers
    - i) Provide maximum amount of flexibility
    - ii) Need financial incentives

## Small Group Session Findings

- 1) Are these the right actions necessary to create partnership?
  - a) Communication and honesty
  - b) Longevity
  - c) Bring people together
  - d) Tie together different groups (farmers, foresters, fisherman)
  - e) Dispel myths
  
- 2) What would be viewed as successes (in terms of agricultural viability and fish habitat)? How would we measure success?
  - a) Watershed health
  - b) Number of fish
  - c) More scientific information about habitat needs
  - d) Viability - Can farmers and fisherman afford new equipment?
  - e) Multi-step process
  - f) Rate of conversion of ag land
  - g) Are people still participating in process 20 years from now
  - h) Number of partnerships
  - i) Less conflict between groups
    - i) Needs of different groups are met
  - j) Recovery goals achieved
  - k) Viability of sport fishing
  - l) Events/festivals that incorporate both farming and fish
  
- 3) How do we encourage the development and implementation of farm plans to increase certainty for the farmer and certainty that fish habitat will be protected?
  - a) Eco-labeling (produce and fish)
  - b) Adequate funding and incentives
  - c) Fair and appropriate regulations applicable to specific sites
  - d) Streamlined regulation
  - e) Broaden farm plans to include habitat
  - f) PR to engage the public
  - g) Ensure credibility of voluntary measures (measurement)
  - h) Cooperatives
  - i) Improve and expand CREP program (include forest farms)
  - j) Guidelines to evaluate farm/fish tradeoffs
  - k) Provide incentives to produce/restore habitat
  - l) Level playing field (balance of effort and rewards)
  - m) Viability of fish and habitat
  - n) Maintain viability of GMA
  
- 4) Next steps? How can we make this possible?
  - a) Keep it local
    - i) Develop focus

- ii) Education
  - iii) Input
  - iv) Feedback
  - v) Garner support from local stakeholders independent of political support
  - b) Garner political support
  - c) Demonstrate success during each stage of the process
    - i) Encourage participation
  - d) Shared Strategy needs to define its own role
- 5) Are we asking the right questions and have we identified all the bottlenecks?
- a) Are laws being enforced?
  - b) Is there political support? How to obtain?
  - c) Broadening incentives for participation
  - d) Focus on areas that make a difference (priority habitat)
  - e) Are we considering fisherman?
  - f) Increase awareness
  - g) Ecosystem issues
  - h) Identify costs
  - i) Incorporate farm language with fish language in regulations
  - j) Identify successful efforts
  - k) Identify key issues within different ag communities
  - l) How to deal with people who do not cooperate?
  - m) Is local marketing effective for ag sectors with international markets?
  - n) Can we have an impact on development? Cannot presume.
  - o) How do farmers know what is the best available science?
  - p) No net less policy is a bottleneck
  - q) Industries that utilize natural resources have common interests, common culture
  - r) Do people know or care about where and how their food is produced?

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*Below you will find a summary of additional comments submitted by people in **Summit Comments & Evaluation forms**; (these comments were submitted post-breakout, and may reflect the views and opinions of individuals who did not participate in the breakout session dialogue.)*

- Platform currently reads like a promotion piece for farming, it does not read like a defensible plank in a salmon recovery plan. The platform would greatly benefit from adding watershed science, and regarding farming and fish habitat *haves* and *needs* in the agricultural landscape.
- Farms are better than subdivisions, but we need restoration too. Short term incentives like CREP are not likely to provide incentives for the restoration of estuarine habitat where dikes need to be removed, etc. Neither do they guarantee that the land will not be returned to agriculture once a conservation easement expires. Increased farm protection needs to be tied to restoring our estuaries.

- The platform should articulate how the proposed elements would look on the landscape, and how they work to provide the elements of fish habitat necessary for salmon recovery.
- Highlight where tribal and farmer partnerships have benefited, or could benefit fish habitat in the agricultural landscape.