

# **Skokomish-Dosewallips- South Shore of Hood Canal Watersheds**

## **WRIAs 16 and 14b**

### **Operating Procedures Manual**

**August 2000**

*(Revised October 2008)*

## ***Introduction***

This document is a guide for members of the WRIA 16 Planning Unit to assist them in conducting comprehensive watershed planning under The Watershed Planning Act (RCW 90.82). This document may undergo additional revisions as necessary to address new issues as the planning effort evolves, and as determined by the Planning Unit.

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## **Chapter 1: Overview, Structure, and Tasks**

### **A. The Legal Framework**

The 1998 Legislature passed the Watershed Planning Act (Chapter 90.82 RCW) to provide a framework for local citizens, interest groups, and government organizations to collaboratively identify and solve water-related issues in each of the 62 Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIAs) in the State. The Watershed Management Act enables local groups called “Planning Units” to form for the purpose of conducting planning. If certain designated local governments and special districts agree to initiate planning, a Planning Unit may be formed. The bill also requires that the governments declare a lead agency and that all Native American Tribes in and adjacent to the WRIA be invited to participate in the planning process. These governments constitute “Initiating Governments” under the Act.

A WRIA is based on boundaries defined by regulation, Ch. 173-500 Washington Administration Code (WAC). WRIA 16 includes the Skokomish watershed, the Hamma Hamma watershed, the Duckabush watershed, and the Dosewallips watershed, inclusive of all smaller and independent tributaries adjacent to the above watersheds. Through an agreement with the WRIA 14 (Kennedy – Goldsborough) Planning Unit, the WRIA 16 planning effort included that portion of WRIA 14 that drains into lower Hood Canal. Legislation was passed in 2008 that officially “split” WRIA 14, and authorized the WRIA 16 Planning Unit to continue its planning and implementation efforts in the south shore of lower Hood Canal (the area the legislation defined as WRIA 14b—see RCW 90.82.060).

Under the law, citizens, local governments, tribes, and other members of the Planning Unit must assess water resources and needs, and recommend management strategies for the watershed. The Planning Unit may also assess habitat, water quality and instream flow requirements, and has considerable flexibility to determine the planning process, and focus on areas or elements of particular importance to local citizens. The law also includes constraints on the activities of Planning Units. For example, the Planning Unit does not have the authority to change existing laws, alter water rights or treaty rights, or require an implementing agency to take action that it has not agreed to during plan development.

Mason County, as lead agency, outlined the intent of the WRIA 16 planning process in conjunction with the other Initiating Governments of Jefferson County, Grays Harbor County, the Skokomish Tribe, and Mason County Public Utility District No. 1.

*NOTE: While a very small portion of WRIA 16 is in Grays Harbor County (including them in the definition of an Initiating Government), they opted out of this planning process.*

### **B. Planning History**

The WRIA 16 Planning Unit began planning in 1999, and completed and adopted the Watershed Management Plan in May 2006. The plan was officially approved by Mason and Jefferson Counties in July 2006. A Detailed Implementation Plan was completed in June 2008.

### **C.     *The Planning Unit***

The Planning Unit is a representative body of government, non-government organizations (NGOs), and local citizens, that is charged with determining how best to manage the water resource for the watershed. The Watershed Planning Act requires that the Initiating Governments shall provide for representation of a wide range of water resource interests on the Planning Unit.

The initial purpose of the Planning Unit was to agree to a plan that will assess the quantity and quality of water in the river basins, and include recommendations for managing the water resource. The Planning Unit was then charged with developing a Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP). The DIP is intended to provide the details on how the plan is to be implemented (i.e. who, what, how and when). To the extent possible, the Planning Unit will play an active role in all aspects of plan implementation.

The tasks of the Planning Unit include:

- Actively represent their respective organizations or areas of interest.
- Develop work plans for Phase 2 and Phase 3 planning efforts (completed).
- Approve a general expenditure plan, and approve contracted services.
- Add items to the Planning Unit agendas.
- Ensure the inclusion of planning elements as required in the Watershed Management Act.
- Approve policy direction for Planning Unit activities.
- Develop the watershed plan, including recommended actions for long term management of the resource (completed).
- Approve the final watershed plan (completed).
- After approval of the watershed plan, develop the Detailed Implementation Plan (completed).
- Oversee Phase 4 – Implementation efforts.
- As appropriate, establish sub-committees (e.g. technical or steering) to assist in carrying out the tasks of the Planning Unit.

### **D.     *Lead Agency: Mason County***

Mason County, as lead agency, has the authority to make day-to-day administrative decisions, but shall defer to the Planning Unit on budget, contract and policy decisions.

## ***Chapter 2: Planning Unit Composition and Roles***

### **A.     *Composition***

As of September 2008, the following organizations and areas of interest comprise the Planning Unit. The Planning Unit will maintain a current list of interests, members and alternates as a separate, stand-alone document.

*NOTE: For the purposes of formal decision making, all voting governmental agencies must agree by consensus, with non-governmental voting members' agreement determined by majority vote. (See Chapter 3 G – Decision Making and Voting)*

**I. Initiating Governments (Voting Governmental Agencies)<sup>1</sup>**

- Mason County
- Jefferson County
- Skokomish Tribe
- Mason County PUD # 1

**II. Invited Governmental Agencies (Voting Governmental Agencies)**

- Department of Ecology\*
- Jefferson County PUD #1

*\* NOTE: The Department of Ecology was designated by the Governor's Office to represent the State's interests to the Planning Unit. Ecology is the lead for the "State Caucus".*

**III. Other Voting Members – Interests Represented**

<b><u>Interest:</u></b>	<b><u>Represented by:</u></b>
Development	Lake Cushman Maintenance Company
Forestry	Currently Vacant
Agriculture	Skokomish Valley Farmer
Citizens' Group	Lower Hood Canal Watershed Coalition
Environmental Organization	Hood Canal Environmental Council
Recreation	Walkie-Talkies
Salmon Recovery	Currently Vacant
Shellfish	Taylor Shellfish
Ports	Port of Hoodspout
Lakes	Save the Lakes Coalition
Growth Management	Currently Vacant
Realtors and Builders	Local Realtor
Mason County	Up to Two Citizen Representatives
Jefferson County	Up to Two Citizen Representatives
Skokomish Tribe	Up to Two Citizen Representatives

The above list includes all interests that have been identified by the initiating governments of the Planning Unit. While not limited to this group of interests, the Planning Unit will endeavor to have these interests represented. The Planning Unit may also decide to amend this list as necessary. The composition of the Planning Unit may be changed if it is determined that important interests are not represented (See Chapter 4).

**IV. Invited Ex-Officio Partners (Non-Voting)**

- Hood Canal Coordinating Council
- Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group

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<sup>1</sup> Initiating governments are defined in 90.82.060 (5) RCW.

- Puget Sound Partnership
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
- US Fish and Wildlife
- Washington State Department of Natural Resources
- US Forest Service
- Mason Conservation District
- Jefferson Conservation District
- United States Geological Services
- Olympic National Park
- Washington State Department of Transportation
- Washington Sea Grant
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Jefferson County Planning Commission
- Mason County Planning Advisory Commission

#### **V. Other Interested Parties (Non-Members)**

Some alternatives to Planning Unit membership exist for those individuals, agencies or organizations that are interested in the Planning Unit. All Planning Unit meetings are open to the public and observers are welcome. There will generally be a public comment period at each Planning Unit meeting. Subject to agreement by the Planning Unit, individuals may request to:

- Be placed on mailing list for agendas, minutes and other materials, (budget permitting),
- Make presentations to the Planning Unit, e.g. request to be on the agenda;
- Be a representative on task groups that the Planning Unit forms to deal with specific issues related to their interests; and/or
- Be a technical advisor to the Planning Unit.

In addition, an existing Planning Unit member may agree to work with the individual, agency or organization to represent its interest on the Planning Unit.

#### ***B. Planning Unit Member Roles***

The Watershed Management Act relies on local communities to take responsibility for organizing watershed-planning efforts. The initiating governments in the Skokomish -- Dosewallips river watersheds are relying on people with similar interests to organize themselves within those areas of interest. Each member group should identify a primary representative, who will participate on the Planning Unit, as well as an alternate, whose role is to fully represent the group's interests in the absence of the primary representative. Planning Unit members providing for "at large" citizen input need not identify an alternate. It is important for all members to understand their roles and responsibilities within this process.

For the Skokomish -- Dosewallips Watershed planning process, there are 14 categories of public interest, often represented by specific organizations. Each Planning Unit representative should be willing to invest time and effort facilitating the work and representing his or her area of interest or specific

organization on the Planning Unit. Each member organization must select and (as appropriate) formally appoint both the representative and alternate. *Both the representative and alternate* should be able and willing to:

- Prepare for and participate in meetings of the Planning Unit;
- Participate in additional meetings of subcommittees or work groups;
- Communicate on a regular basis-using phone, mail, and e-mail with other people in the interest group to inform them of Planning Unit discussions and seek their input;
- Facilitate consensus among interest group members regarding key issues of substance; and
- Present fairly the interests and ideas of the interest group as a whole to the Planning Unit regardless of personal feelings.

Each member of the planning unit is responsible for his or her own work. Their effectiveness in representing their interests on the Planning Unit will depend heavily on outside activities. The member organization representative and alternate, in particular, have the most responsibility for coordinating the discussions of the organization of which they are members. The alternate will have the vote in the event that the primary representative is not present.

### ***Chapter 3: Ground Rules and General Operating Procedures***

Ground rules are agreed upon procedures for working together in a group. They establish trust by setting guidelines that are fair and help the group get work done efficiently. They clarify group procedures for conducting meetings, reporting results, resolving differences, and accomplishing the task of the group.

The Purpose of ground rules and operating procedures is to provide a framework for fruitful discussion and exchange that guide, rather than constrains, the interaction. Ground rules also make explicit the common expectations with which the participants undertake the watershed planning process and participate on the Planning Unit. These rules describe the purpose of the process, the manner in which the several interests are structured for effective participation, the decision making process, the responsibilities of the participants to one another and to their constituents, and the principles of collaborative decision-making.

#### ***A. Observers***

Meetings of the Planning Unit and any other Committees will be open to the public. At each meeting, a brief comment period will allow observers to offer comments related to issues at hand, subject to time limits determined by the facilitator.

#### ***B. Responsibilities of Members***

- Members recognize that Planning Unit sponsored recommendations, actions and activities are the result of cooperative efforts of the group. All members are expected to communicate expeditiously with one-another in situations where substantive discussions of these efforts will

occur with other entities.

- Members are expected to attend meetings.
- Members accept the responsibility to come to meetings prepared for discussion, and to educate themselves on issues.
- All members will recognize the legitimacy of the concerns and interests of others, whether or not they are in agreement with them.
- Members will seek to state their own concerns and interests clearly, listen carefully to others, and explore issues from all points of view before forming conclusions.
- This watershed planning effort will receive priority attention and time commitments.
- Participants enter these discussions in the spirit of giving the same priority to solving the problems of others as well as their own.
- Members commit to:
  - Search for opportunities: creativity will lead to better results.
  - Listen carefully: ask questions to understand and make statements to explain or educate.
  - Act on —~~act~~” not “rumor”.
  - Support each other and the process politically with constituencies and public.
  - Attempt to reach consensus on planning and implementation issues.
  - Be an advocate for the Planning Unit’s efforts.
- Members will seek to share discussion time, encouraging everyone to participate fully.
- Members will enter into dialogue with the intent to identify areas of agreement wherever possible, but also to clarify differences when they occur, listen carefully, share discussion time, ask questions, educate each other, and search for common understanding.
- Members will strive to keep any communications with news media concerning the planning effort on a positive note. All will be mindful of the impacts their public and private statements will have on the success of this effort.
- Members may represent agreed upon Planning Unit recommendations to outside interests including the media, public and private organizations, and decision and policy makers. Members should take care in differentiating between Planning Unit positions and personal opinions.
- Members’ efforts will be focused on benefits to the watershed as opposed to individual interests.

### **C.     *Role of the Facilitator***

The facilitator is an impartial individual who guides the process and facilitates meetings. The facilitator's job is to keep the group focused on the agreed-upon task, suggest alternative methods and procedures to reach agreement, encourage participation by all group members, and halt efforts to dominate the process or outcome by any one party or interest group.

### **D.     *Meeting Schedule***

The Planning Unit shall meet at least monthly. Any other committees created by the Planning Unit will hold meetings as needed. Meetings will begin and end on time, and will be generally scheduled for the same day each month.

### **E.     *Administrative Support***



Mason County can approve expenditures consistent with approved scope of work and contract. The Planning Unit is responsible for quality control/quality assurance for all work products associated with this planning effort. The Planning Unit approves contract awards and accepts or rejects final products.

#### ***F. Meeting Summaries/Results***

Summaries of the Planning Unit and other committee meetings, including key decisions, will be provided to members by the meeting facilitator.

#### ***G. Decision Making and Voting***

- Other committees may be tasked to review work and make recommendations to the Planning Unit.
- No proxies will be accepted.
- Each member has one vote by interest or organization.
- A majority of the voting governmental agencies (four members) must be present to constitute a quorum for the purposes of official decision making.
- Advanced notice on action items will be given whenever possible as part of the operating principles of the Planning Unit.
- For routine, procedural or minor decision making, the Planning Unit will use "general consensus" to move forward efficiently in the meetings. If a decision is complex or significant, or if there is disagreement amongst the members, the formal decision making process will be invoked.
- For formal decision making, the Planning Unit will use consensus among voting governmental agencies and majority vote among other voting members as a decision-making rule (as described in RCW 90.82).

### ***Chapter 4: Planning Unit Membership***

The purpose of this chapter is to manage the number of Planning Unit members so that we can maintain the ability of each member to participate totally in discussions, and to maintain the Planning Unit's balance of interests and effectiveness. The overriding mandate established by the Act is that the composition of the Planning Unit should "provide for representation of a wide range of water resource interests". Citizen members should reside in the planning area and organizational members should have an on-going, active presence in the planning area.

#### ***A. Adding New Planning Unit Members***

The Planning Unit recognizes the need to remain open to changing its composition to adapt to changing community interests and issues.

If the Planning Unit wishes to add a member, it will require a consensus approval among the voting governmental agencies and a majority approval of the other voting members.

If an individual (or group) desires to become a Planning Unit member, the Planning Unit may require a written request identifying the ~~interest~~ or group represented; an explanation as to how communication will occur with the group represented; and a commitment to support the Planning Unit's efforts. The Planning Unit may request that the individual attend up to five meetings before taking action on their request to become a member. If there is more than one applicant for a vacant position, the Planning Unit may develop selection criteria for that position.

## ***B. Replacing Planning Unit Members***

Circumstances may arise where members of the Planning Unit resign, or are unable to represent their interests adequately.

In situations where a member representing a specific organization resigns, the Planning Unit will defer to that organization to designate a replacement. In situations where there is no ~~organization~~ (e.g. citizen representatives), the Planning Unit will seek interested volunteers to fill the vacated position in accordance with section ~~A~~ above.

In situations where, due to lack of attendance at the Planning Unit meetings, the group agrees a particular interest is not being adequately represented, that member will be contacted by a representative of the Planning Unit to determine their intent to continue participation in the Planning Unit. If, after a member has been contacted, he or she still does not adequately represent that member's interest, the Planning Unit will notify the member of removal from the Planning Unit. The Planning Unit will then decide if it should find a replacement to represent that particular interest.

If citizen members are no longer attending Planning Unit meetings, they will be contacted by a representative of the Planning Unit to determine their intent to continue participation in the Planning Unit. If the member does not resume attending meetings, the Planning Unit may vote to replace the citizen member.

## ***Chapter 5: Organizational Support Documents***

Several documents exist relative to roles, responsibilities, limitations and other agreements regarding the WRIA 16 watershed planning process. They are:

- Skokomish Tribal Resolution Number 98-76
- Skokomish Tribal Resolution Number 00-19
- Intergovernmental Agreement regarding the formation of the Skokomish-Dosewallips Partnership, signed in February 2000.

Copies of these documents are available through the Planning Unit.