

Draft WRIA 20 Report: Visioning Forum and Interviews



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WRIA 20 Visioning Forum

**Clallam County Shoreline Management Plan Update
Forest Hemlock Room
Olympic Natural Resources Center
Forks, WA 98331
7pm – 9:30pm
October 26, 2010**

Introduction

The Forum was called to order by John Calhoun, Director of the University of Washington’s Olympic Natural Resources Center. Mr. Calhoun welcomed the participants and asked them to introduce themselves. He then explained the purpose of the meeting and the role of ONRC. Mr. Calhoun described ONRC as serving in a facilitating role for the component of the Clallam County SMP update that addresses shoreline rules in Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 20 and the Forks Urban Growth Area (FUGA). This meeting is the first public session in a process that is expected to require extensive public input and two to three years of activities. He assured the audience that a lengthy opportunity for detailed input would be offered during the second half of the meeting and encouraged those present to share their knowledge, express their views and consider ways that the area’s natural resources can be conserved and protected. He then introduced his colleague, Miranda Wecker, the Director of Marine Programs for ONRC.

Ms. Wecker presented a series of slides aimed at explaining the SMP Update process as mandated and defined in state law. The SMP planning process was established to *prevent uncoordinated and piecemeal development, protect against adverse effects to waters and aquatic life, and secure the public interest*. The state directs that local jurisdictions protect the environmental resources of the state, set priorities for uses that require shoreline location and promote public access and enjoyment of the shorelines. Existing uses are “grandfathered in” but new uses must be consistent with the updated rules. A new state directive that is central to the update planning process is the mandate to assure “no net loss of ecological functions necessary to sustain shoreline natural resources.”

She stressed throughout her presentation that state law demands that local jurisdictions provide citizens and stakeholders with repeated and meaningful opportunities to influence the outcome of this planning process. A great deal of flexibility is anticipated so that the rules fit the local conditions and suit the preferences of local residents and other interested parties. Approval by the Department of Ecology is required of all updated SMP plans and all jurisdictions must have approved plans by 2014. She went on to outline the various documents that the state guidelines call for to satisfy the requirements established in the law. As facilitator of the WRIA 20 component of this process, ONRC assured participants that their knowledge and viewpoints would count in the outcome of this update.

The purpose and design of this evening’s “Visioning Forum” was then explained. The Visioning Forum is the first step in establishing the direction for the SMP update in WRIA 20. Other steps in the Update process were identified and she assured the group that additional opportunities to provide comments would be available over the course of the year. As the first SMP Update task, the Visioning Forum was intended to allow residents and stakeholders to define their views of a preferred future for the shorelines of WRIA 20. In particular, the law mandates that residents consider and provide

their vision in relation to four major topics: shoreline uses, shoreline protection, shoreline restoration and public access. She explained that 4 “Listening Stations” had been set up to allow for submission of written comments on flip charts and to support more intensive conversations on the 4 mandated topics.

Ms. Wecker directed the audience’s attention to a series of maps that had been posted on the walls to provide relevant information on the local rivers with shorelines of statewide significance. She pointed to stacks of copies of “zoomed in” maps. These handout maps depicted key reaches that will require the most thorough review due to the potential for development. These “hand out” maps were generated to allow citizens to make notations in regard to specific areas they are familiar with and want to comment on. She mentioned that the maps posted on the walls will be available to view and comment on throughout the process. ONRC and Clallam County had established an “online map cabinet” at Clallam County’s website, as well as a SMP Information Center at ONRC. She asked if there were any questions about the SMP process or the evening’s activities. A few citizens asked whether their views would really matter, how the plan would be adopted, and how designations would affect their property. Participants were then invited to move around the room and view the data layers presented in the WRIA wide maps.

Comments Taken at the Listening Stations

Shoreline Uses

Current recreational uses include camping, fishing, horseback riding, and hiking. Landowners also on occasion need to remove danger trees and replace physical structures that have been lost. More information is needed on the effects of the new rules: whether buildings must be constructed on the same foundation, what will be allowed if structures are lost due to fire or wind; whether a replacement building must be same type and have the same footprint; how “no net loss” will be defined; and how non-conforming uses will be regulated. Concerns were raised about the noise and safety hazards associated with log truck traffic along the western shore of Lake Pleasant.

Protection Opportunities

Most of the shorelines of WRIA 20 are productive and relatively healthy compared to the shorelines in urban areas. The presence of large blocks of commercial forestlands is beneficial in minimizing impacts to habitat. Maintaining the viability of commercial forestlands will help protect the shorelines. Control of invasive knotweed is important to protect salmon habitat. Salmonid spawning beds are found in various places and need protection. A Bear Creek location was pointed out as one example. Concerns were raised regarding streambed gravel mining taking place regularly at a shallow ‘ford’ on the Bogachiel River. (See handout map below.)

Restoration Opportunities

Bear Creek has been impacted by logging by USFS and State on uplands and offers a restoration opportunity. The structure over Mill Creek should be a bridge not culvert. This project is being assessed this year by SRF Board. (NOTE: This area of Mill Creek is beyond SMP jurisdiction). Information was requested regarding the agency responsible for implementation of the restoration plan.

Public Access

Concerns were raised about noise associated with recreational boating on Lake Pleasant. More information in the form of maps or signage should be offered to visitors on shoreline trail hiking opportunities. The salmon coalition trail on Mill Creek was an example.

Public Comments Submitted on Handout Maps

The public offered a number of comments through written notes on handout maps. The maps are presented below. The following list compiles the submitted notations.

★ **Forks Area West map:**

- Oxbow on Calawah River below Highway 101 bridge: "Flood map NOT accurate."

★ **Calawah-Elk Creek Area map**

- On North Fork Calawah River: "Designated ford could go across with vehicle."

★ **Three Rivers Area map:**

- At confluence of Bogachiel, Sol Duc and Quillayute Rivers: "Flood zone might not be right."

★ **Lake Pleasant Area map:**

- "What's the rule on: 1. Removal of dangerous tree? 2. Private access to the lake?"
- At north end of lake: "Gravel beach; sockeye spawning area."
- Along east shore of lake: "Please look at the designation for this as conservancy. This is the developing side of Lake Pleasant and should not be designated as conservancy."

★ **Bogachiel River Area map**

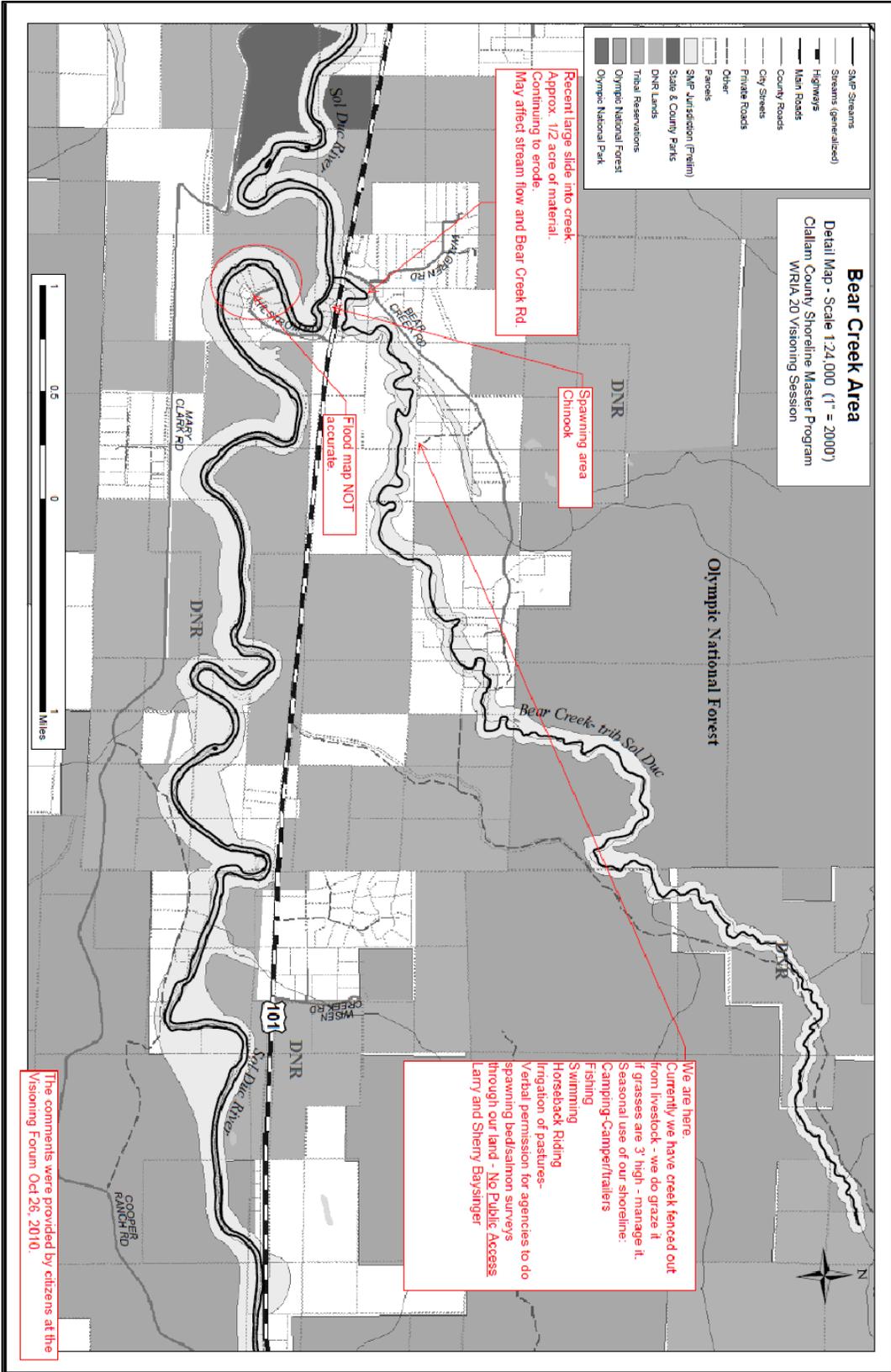
- On Bogachiel River upriver from confluence with Mill Creek: "Campbell Bar: Gravel mining? Maybe not in past years?"

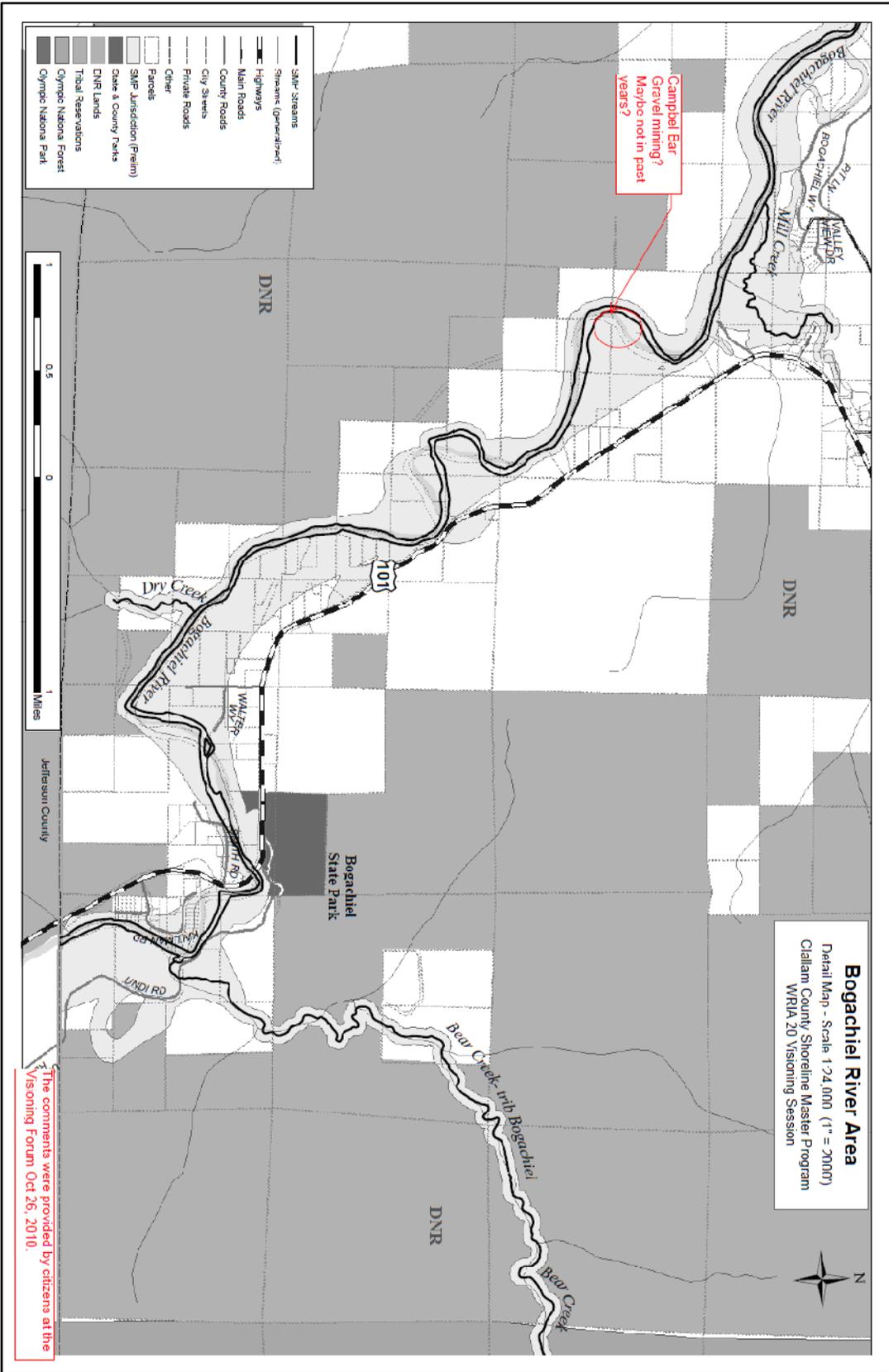
★ **Bear Creek Area map:**

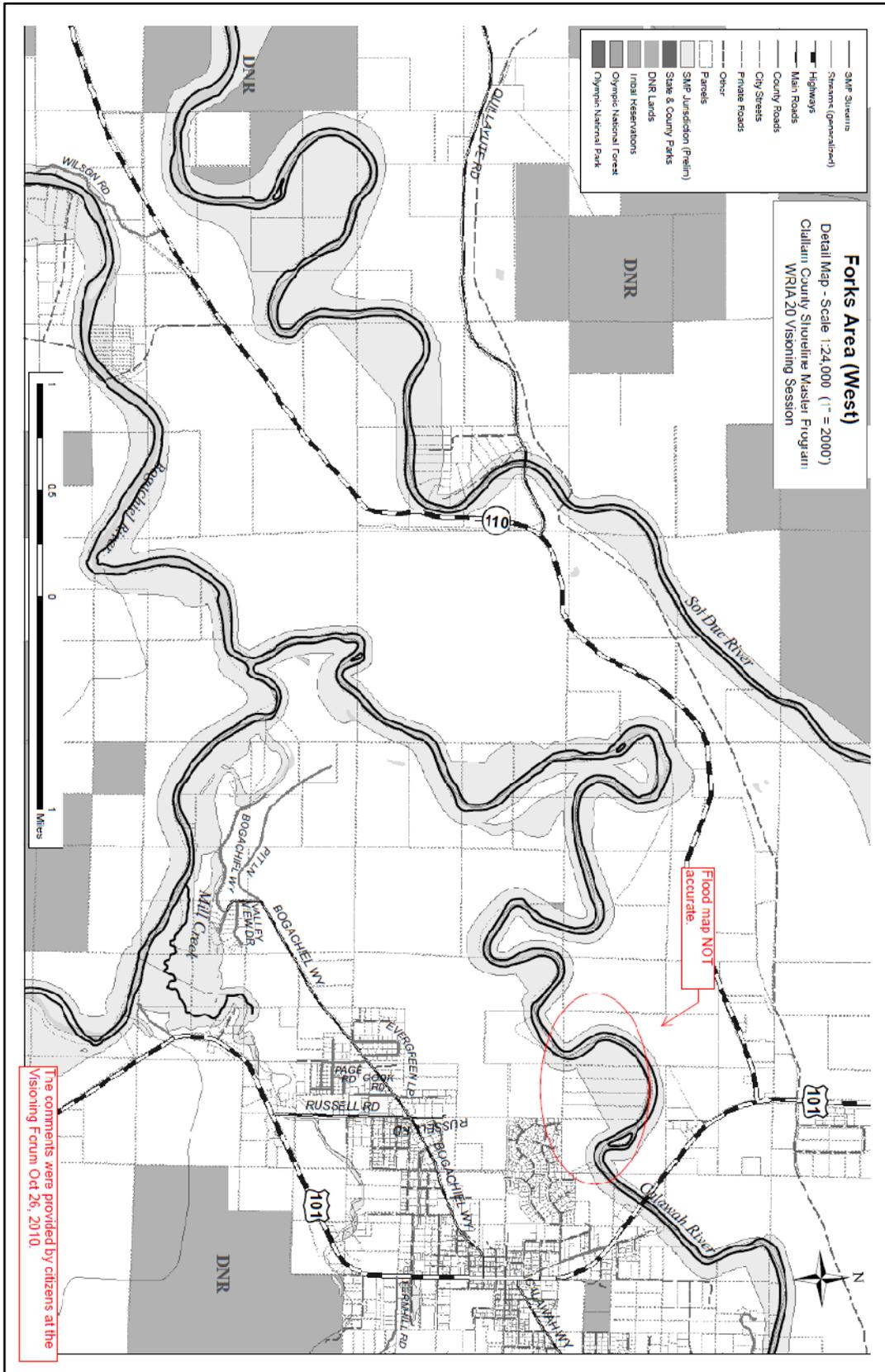
- Near the Walgren Rd/Bear Creek Rd junction: "Recent large slide into creek. Approx. ½ acre of material. Continuing to erode. May affect stream flow and Bear Creek Rd."
- On Sol Duc River upstream of Bear Creek confluence: "Spawning area: Chinook."
- On Sol Duc River near Hilstrom Rd: "Flood map NOT accurate."
- At end of spur off of Bear Creek Rd: "We are here. Currently we have creek fenced out from livestock—we do graze it if grasses are 3' high—manage it. Seasonal use of our shoreline: Camping—camper/trailers; Fishing; Swimming; Horseback riding; Irrigation of pastures; Verbal permission for agencies to do spawning bed/salmon surveys through our land. No Public Access."

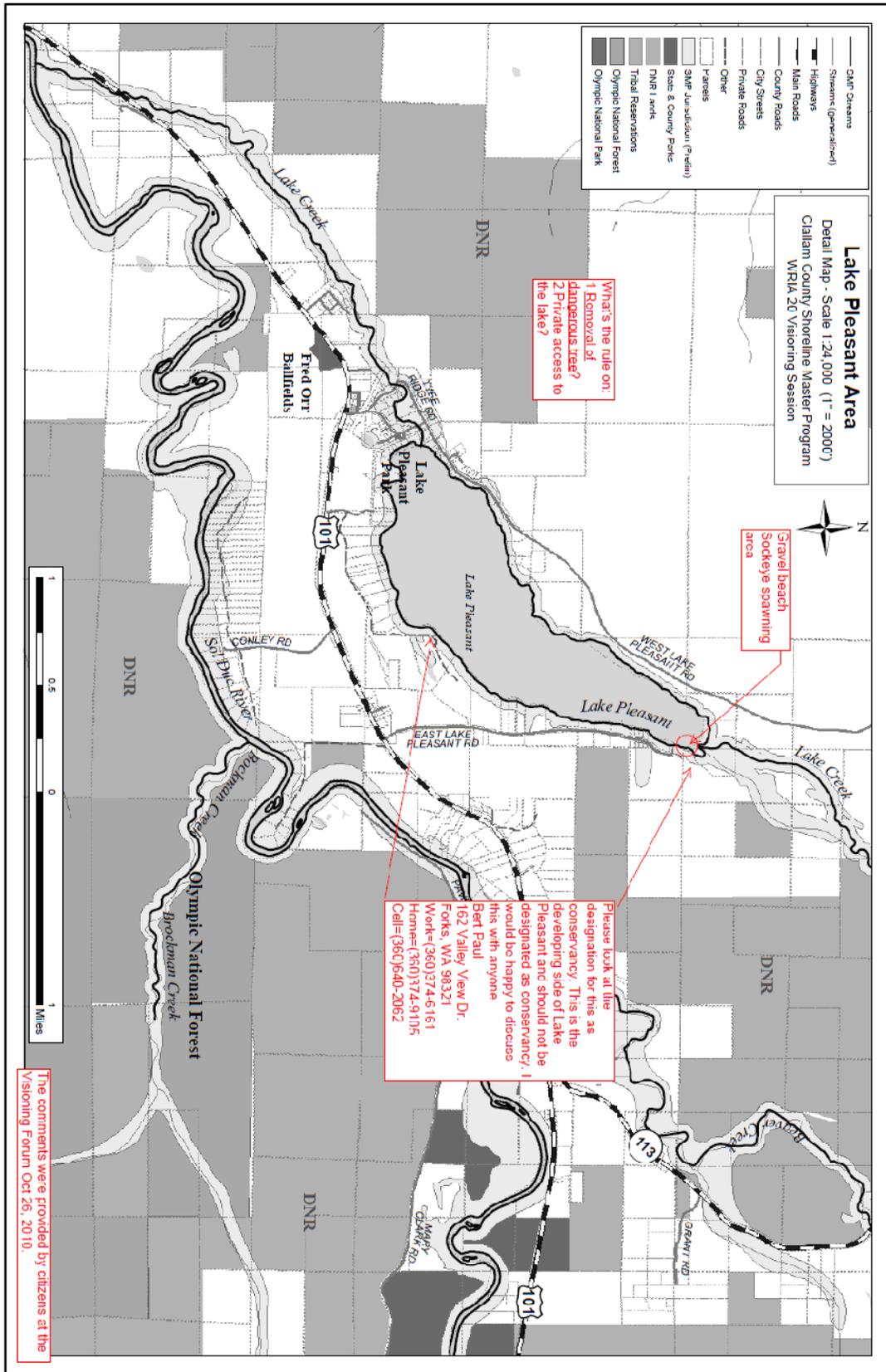
Visioning Forum Attendance List

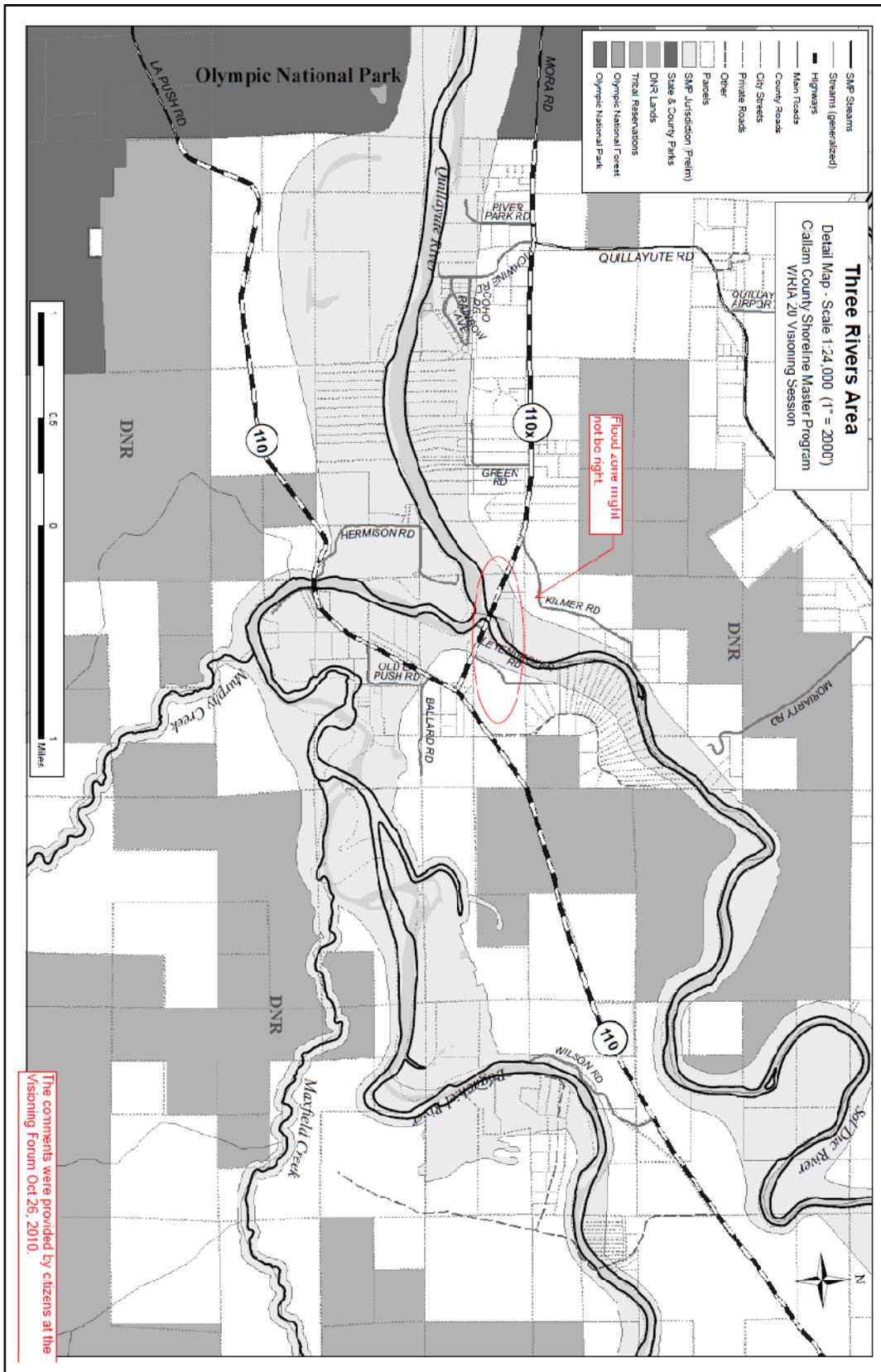
M. Hopfensperger	
G. Preuett	3530 NE Old Belfair Hwy. #57 Belfair, WA 98528
Kris Northcut	krisoec@olyphen.com
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Rich Hsu	rhsu360@yahoo.com
Theresa Santman	santman@centurytel.net
Richard & Kandi Lohneis	jklohneis@yahoo.com
Roy Grafstrom	pentechservices@yahoo.com
Rich Osborne	WRIA 20
Stephen V Barnett	20917 Military Rd. S, Seatac, WA 98198
Jim Klahn	19034 40th PL NE Lake Forest Park, WA 98155 jimklahn@hotmail.com
Joe Soha	Forks, WA builtbyjoe@hotmail.com
Bert Paul	162 Valley View Drive Forks, WA 98331 bert.paul@unifiedretailer.com
Katie Krueger	P O Box 187 Lapush (QNR) katie.krueger@quileutenation.org
Rod Fleck	500 East Division St Forks, WA 98331 rodf.forks@centurytel.net
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Linda M Dillard	P O Box 51 Clallam Bay, WA 98326-0051 lindill27@gmail.com
Ed Bowen	P O Box 111 Clallam Bay, WA rockypt@olyphen.com
Larry & Sherry Baysinger	2094 Bear Creek Rd Port Angeles, WA 98363 baysinger@centurytel.net











The comments were provided by citizens at the Visioning Forum Oct 26, 2010.

Visioning Interviews

Introduction

ONRC developed a strategy for soliciting the views of key interested stakeholders who were unable to attend the Visioning Forum. It was decided that ONRC would conduct a series of interviews with interested individuals. ONRC drafted and circulated two explanatory emails seeking assistance and advice from interested parties. The emails included hot links to the online map cabinet and a powerpoint display that provided a summary explanation of the SMP update process. These emails were circulated to a list of representatives of numerous conservation organizations, timber companies, fishing advocacy groups and the local tribes. No responses were received to the first email message. The second message was followed up with phone calls encouraging participation and seeking a convenient time for the survey.

Outreach to WRIA 20 Co-managers

Technical staff of the Quileute Department of Natural Resources provided extensive information during a 2 hour session with ONRC staff on February 10, 2011. Staff interviewed included Katie Krueger, Kris Northcut, Frank Geyer, and Garrett Rasmussen. The views of the Tribe were solicited regarding use, protection, restoration and public access priorities and concerns. Detailed notes were taken during that 3 hour meeting held in La Push at the Quileute Natural Resources Department. The information and comments provided by these representatives of the co-managers are documented the map presented below. Interviews with representatives of the Makah Tribe were requested. No opportunity for such interviews was made available.

Forks Urban Growth Area (UGA) Stakeholders

The following City of Forks Urban Growth Area (UGA) property owners participated in the interviews:

David Mansfield
Patricia Dorst, Kurt Klahn, & Jim and Leslie Klahn
Dan Kosbaugh
Kevin Miller & Jean Miller
Patricia Whidden & Criss Whidden

WRIA 20 Stakeholders

The following WRIA stakeholders agreed to take part in the survey and were interviewed by telephone:

Andrew Marks, Coastal Conservation Association
Joe Murray, Merrill and Ring
Jody Kennedy, Surfrider Foundation
Harry Bell, Green Crow
Greg Good, North Olympic Land Trust

Ron Garner, Puget Sound Anglers
David Croonquist, Puget Sound Anglers, Olympic Peninsula Chapter
Anne Shaffer, Coastal Watershed Institute
Jill Silver, 10,000 Years Institute
Norm Schaaf, Merrill and Ring Company
Meghan Tuttle, Rayonier Company
Devona Ensmenger, Wild Salmon Center

Comments provided by WRIA 20 and FUGA stakeholders are presented in the appendix below

Conclusions

The residents and stakeholders of WRIA 20 held a diversity of views about the preferred future for shorelines of WRIA 20. For the most part, participants felt that the local rivers are in good condition and the ecological processes are functioning well. The absence of any listed salmon runs in most of the rivers is seen as evidence of the good stewardship of local people. Some citizens pointed to the small population of WRIA 20 and the vast tracts of public and private forestlands as the reason the ecosystem is as healthy as it is.

There are areas of concern however, some of which were noted on the handout maps. Participants described themselves as very concerned about maintaining the local quality of life, a large part of which is enjoyment of natural resources. Among the specific issues mentioned were gravel mining in the riverbed, roads along shorelines, vehicle traffic in the streambed (where shallow fords are located), mass wasting and windthrow from unwise logging or development practices. All of these impacts are viewed as occurring on a small scale than in many areas around the state.

Many participants displayed concern about the SMP update process and the potential impacts on their ability to use and develop their property. They worried whether they would in fact be able to influence the outcome. It was feared that the real decisions would be made in Port Angeles by county planners without regard to the views of local people. Many wanted to know from the outset how the new regulations would differ from current rules. Some wanted to know how the designations would be changed. It was explained that the update process calls for a serious and authentic re-examination of the Clallam County SMP, so it was not possible at this time to know how it would all turn out. Their views did count and they should provide their perspectives. Many of the vague concepts central to the update process such as “no net loss of ecological function” were troubling to people, because they feared that these ideas could be used to foreclose all new development.

Residential development is limited to a minor portion of the rivers of this WRIA. Over the years, the WRIA 20 area has experienced very limited growth in the population. Concern was expressed that zoning restrictions already limit subdivision of shorefront property in most river reaches. The prohibition on subdivision in conservancy reaches within the Forks UGA was particularly problematic in light of the purpose of the UGA as a planning tool to channel growth away from open spaces into urbanized areas. This logic also applies to a portion of the Lake Pleasant reach that is designated conservancy but contains residential zoning. The subdivision prohibition is opposed in the UGA and Lake Pleasant.

The economy has shifted towards more dependence on tourism and less on extractive uses. Nevertheless, timber production and fisheries-based tourism remain key elements of the local economy. Fishing organizations consider the rivers of WRIA 20 among the most productive and pristine in the state. Representatives indicated that they felt the rivers are being fairly well protected under the current rules. The biggest challenge in protecting the shorelines is the adequacy

of riparian buffers. In some cases, the riparian buffers left by commercial harvest operations have blown down. Bank erosion is also an issue. Buffer problems are visible in places along the Bogachiel and the Sol Duc shorelines. The Sol Duc, Bogachiel, Calawah, and Quillayute are very popular with bank fishers as well as drift boat and inflatable raft fishers. The Dickey River was cited as an example of a river with more limited access options, but it was recognized that some areas are just difficult to get to. Maintenance problems were cited. Not all ramps are well maintained and many have trash and outhouse problems. Public information and outreach are needed on available camping sites, hunting access opportunities, and areas of danger such as rapids and steep slopes. Access is considered very good for most of the rivers that are easiest to navigate. Bank access to rivers is considered sufficient, but camping opportunities could be improved and expanded.

In general, citizens appeared to be interested in maintaining the quality of life in WRIA 20 and cooperating in this process to define how the shorelines of statewide significance will be managed. They take their stewardship responsibilities seriously, but want to make sure that objective information is used as a basis for decisionmaking. They recognize that as residents who work and play in the environment, they have a great deal of knowledge to share.

Restoration Opportunities?

Not really.

Opportunities for Public Access?

None for general public. Occasional access by permission granted by owner on a case to case basis.

Is there anything else that hasn't been covered above that you would like to discuss/share?

Owner was adamant about ensuring that no additional restrictions were placed on the property arising from the SMP update process. Already significant restrictions on the 80+ acres he owns and doesn't want any additional changes.

Owner also does not want the SMP designation to change from Rural to Conservancy and may bring in a letter to that effect.

[Owner came into my office and we agreed to just sit and type out the interview form and use it as the interview document instead of me writing up a narrative. His signature below reflects that he read through this and it captures what we discussed.]



12 May 2011

Interview with Patricia Dorst, Kurt Klahn, Jim and Leslie Klahn.

Parcels and their ownership:

- 132805340500 Estate Trust
- 132805430150 Janik Enterprises
- 132805430100 Jim and Leslie Klahn
- 132805430050 Janik Enterprises
- 132805430000 Jeffrey Klahn

All parcels are located on the Calawah River. Currently, the parcels are designated as being "Conservancy" under the existing Clallam County shoreline management plan (SMP). Parcels are located in Clallam County and are near the existing City of Forks boundary limits.

At present, all five parcels are associated with timber and timber management with no dwellings on the properties. Further, none of the properties have any other structures on them.

Future plans for the properties, individually or in some collective combination, could include residential development as well as possible light commercial development such as a lodge or bed and breakfast. If pursued, such commercial development would be done in a manner that has a light impact to the property as the timber/forest there is an important asset of the property.

As to environmental protection needs, there were no identified needs. There is eagle activity within the vicinity of the parcels. As to the river, there is an effort being pursued to question the FEMA floodplain maps and also the channel migration zone. Owners have had a report from DNR about the channel on these properties not moving for over 130 years. It is their opinion that that river channel on all of these parcels is very well established and stable. They will provide a copy of that report to attach to this interview. See attached. Based upon this information, they expect to undertake discussions with the County to amend the FEMA map delineating the floodplain.

There was no issues or suggestions regarding restoration opportunities for any of these properties. Further, public access opportunities are by permission only via foot and not by motor vehicle.

At the close, it was reiterated that any development of these parcels would be done in a manner that would minimize any perceived environmental impact. The land is in a beautiful location and condition. Also, there was collective agreement that the parcels should be designated in a manner that reflects the fact that parcels are within an urban growth area and could be developed as City grows in the future. Based upon this, the owners interviewed believed that a "Rural" designation made more sense than a conservancy designation in a revised SMP. Finally, interview participants asked to ensure that Janik Enterprises be added to the City's mailing list for SMP related notices.

City of Forks SMP Interview

15 April 2011

Parcel No. 132802130050

Dan Kousbaugh

The Kousbaugh's own property on the South Fork of the Calawah that is currently zoned as "conservancy" under the Clallam County SMP. Uses on the property include a gravel pit and forest lands; the latter which was recently logged.

There is no dwelling on the property, nor any other structures. There are two access roads that come off of Calawah Way. These are gravel roads that are gated; however, there is unauthorized ATV use on the property at times.

As to future plans, the owners would like to be able to divide the property into a series of lots (currently eight acres) similar to other parcels owned where a short plat was done.

Regarding environmental protection needs, the owner noted that the river is at a drop of 40-50' below the property's upper bench. The slope is so steep that there is little to no usage by wildlife of the bank area. The river bank is about two to three feet in width at the bottom of that drop. There is no real restoration needed, nor interest in such activities at this location. Also, the owner does not believe that there exists opportunities for public access to the river due to the vertical drop being too dangerous for public access.

When the property was logged, the owners left on the upper bench additional timber (alder) as an additional buffer. Also, the property is designated as "forest lands" for tax purposes.

City of Forks SMP Interview

15 April 2011

Parcel No. 132803120070

Dan Kousbaugh

The Kousbaugh's own property on the Calawah River that is five acres in size. The property is zoned as "rural" under the Clallam County SMP; within the City's zoning code the property is zoned "R2" (moderate density residential).

The property is currently covered with a 40 year old stand of Douglas Fir. It is an undeveloped parcel without any dwelling or structures that is currently used for forestry. The owners did have utilities (power, phone, and water) brought to the lot or within close proximity.

The future plans for the property would be to divide it into four lots of equal size. There is a nice straight shot to the river, however, there is a 30-40' somewhat vertical drop from the bank to the river edge that has alder and shrubs on it. There is no real usage of this steep bank by wildlife/game.

There are no ideas regarding environmental protection. Further, restoration of the bank is not being considered as it was always timbered in alder with some conifer. As to public access, the bank is too steep and such access could not be provided safely.

Owners felt that any update needs to allow for the division of river frontage and not restrict river frontage to an overly larger linear frontage. Also, set backs at this location are not a problem, and shouldn't be as the owners feel that houses do not need to be on top of the bank.

City of Forks SMP Interview

13 April 2011

Parcel No. 132818340030 - shed

Kevin Miller

132818340025 - house

Mr. Miller owns two parcels located along the Bogachiel River. The parcels are designated as "rural" under the Clallam County SMP. There is a single family residence with an approved septic system located on parcel no. 132818340025. There is a shed on parcel no. 132818340030 which is associated with equipment repair of farm equipment and personal vehicles. Both properties are used for agricultural purposes to include hay; raising cattle, and occasionally growing other crops.

There is a dwelling on parcel no. 132818340025 that was built in 1981 and is located about 100+ feet from the river bank. There is a shed on parcel no. 132818340030 built in 1981 and located about 150+ feet from the river bank. Both were constructed pursuant to a county authorized permit. There is a fence along the river at the high water mark that was built in 1981. Most of the property is used for haying and other agricultural purposes, but not in the "open space" area.

The continuation of the existing uses now are the expected future use. Mr. Miller noted that the property "was that way in 1895 and I expect it to continue on that way for decades to come. I don't want any more structures on the property."

Mr. Miller stated that there was no need for environmental protection, because there is no erosion along river bank. He did note that occasional a tree was lost due to rot and wind. Regarding restoration opportunities, he noted that "I think my stretch looks pretty close to what it did 100-200 years ago. Some large spruce that are 100 years plus. So no need for restoration. Lots of rotten alder, but that is natural." He also felt that neither of his parcels should be designated for public access. He has provided on a permission only basis limited public access.

He pointed out that there are no streams that cross either his or his parent's grass fields. They also avoid uses that make mud to avoid siltation issues. He feels that his family has been good stewards of the property and have a century old tradition in this area. His major concern is being able to continue doing what they are currently doing with the property.

City of Forks SMP Interview

13 April 2011

Parcel No. 1428131401000 - Forest

Jean Miller

132818320000 - Farm

Rich and Jean Miller's property is located on the Bogachiel River and is currently zoned as "rural" in the Clallam County SMP. The farm was originally bought in 1919 and consists of a single family residence, barn, and equipment shed located on parcel no. 132818320000. The property is used for agricultural purposes to include raising cattle, as well as the growing of hay and other occasional crops.

Only 13281832000 is developed with structures located on it. These include:

1. A house – located about 900' from river and built in 1970;
2. Barn and out building/shed – located 600-700' from the river and built about 1940;
3. Fencing near river to keep cattle away from river, but river usage is permitted per existing water claim.

There are no other structures on the property which was cleared prior to 1970. Parcel no. 1428131401000 is designated as forest land for tax purposes. Firewood is collected from that parcel. There is a fence on the parcel.

Mrs. Miller noted that the future vision for the developed lot is "a farm which means work. Not foreseeing any subdivision." Regarding parcel no. 1428131401000, she foresees that remaining in forestry with some agricultural use. She also thought that the parcel could be a future single family residence.

She did not see any need for environmental protection on either lot. She did note that there may be some erosion issues at times, but that the river is at its historic and constant location. There is an elk trail through the field. There are about 80 elk in this herd now, but in the 1940s there were 5-20 depending. The elk herd comes through every three weeks and stay about four days. The owners have about 20-30 cattle on average a year. Any public access needs to be by permission of the owners.

She expressed some frustration as to "why don't we have easier rights to protect the property from wash outs? Hopefully, all of this interest in our property will result in an easier permit process to help us keep our property." She also noted that there are no streams that cross over either parcels.

06/24/2011 11:27 IFAX fax@forkswashington.org

+ Rod_Email

001/002

FROM : BOGACHEL ADULT FAMILY LIVING FAX NO. : 3603749327

Jun. 24 2011 12:35PM P1

Attention Rod Fleck:

STOP

- 1. NO MORE REGULATIONS**
- 2. NO CONSERVANCY**
- 3. STAY RULE**

Patricia Whidden 06-24-11

LAND OWNER, BOGACHEL RIVER

06/24/2011 11:27 IFAX fax@forkswashington.org

+ Rod_Email

002/002

FROM : BOGACHIEL ADULT FAMILY LIVING FAX NO. : 3603749327

Jun. 24 2011 12:36PM P1

Attention Rod Fleck:

STOP

- 1. NO MORE REGULATIONS**
- 2. NO CONSERVANCY**
- 3. STAY RULE**

LAND OWNER, BOGACHIEL RIVER

Criss Whidden 06-24-11

WRIA 20 SMP Stakeholder Survey

Date: 2/9/11
Interviewee: Andrew Marks
Organization: Coastal Conservation Association

General Comments

CCA promotes sustainable development. Sustainable utilization of fish resources depends on selective harvest and protection of wild stock genetics. The West End represents a world-class fishery with very good access in some rivers, but relatively poorer access in other rivers. In general, the landscapes are in good shape and that is reflected in the healthy status of many of the salmon and steelhead runs.

Shoreline Uses:

Shoreline uses and development appear to be regulated adequately. Compared with the urban area, WRA 20 is only lightly populated and there is no heavy industrial development. Forest uses, farming and light residential development are compatible with healthy ecosystem.

Environmental Protection Needs:

Landscapes are adequately protected, although there are some erosion issues and landslides here and there. Consumptive uses of natural resources are the primary source of local income and at present they are being conducted in a way that appears to be sustainable. There is little pressure to develop in ways inconsistent with maintenance of ecological processes. CCA supports land acquisitions aimed at establishing conservation zones along the important river segments of WRIA 20.

Restoration Opportunities:

No opinion regarding where restoration opportunities are present.

Public Access:

For CCA, public access is the major issue. CCA's membership lives throughout western WA. Many members fish on the rivers of WRIA 20 and consider these rivers to be among the highest quality remaining in the state. The bigger rivers—Sol Duc and Bogachiel-- have sufficient access points, but not all of those points are well maintained. Some of the boat ramps have deteriorated and become only usable by 4 wheel drive vehicles. Many have litter problems. Only a few have toilet facilities. Rather than add new facilities, the state should work on improving the ones that exist.

More should be done to provide access to information about the available facilities on the west end, through Google Earth edits, YouTube videos, social networking sites, and signage. Information about river hazards and the skill level needed to safely navigate stream reaches should be offered.

The area is considered an untapped goldmine for recreation. All that is needed are more marketing efforts and strategic enhancement of campsites and other tourist facilities.

WRIA 20 SMP Stakeholder Survey

Date: 2/1/11
Interviewee: Joe Murray
Organization: Merrill and Ring

Shoreline Uses:

They are fine the way they are. There is residential, industrial and residential access in place already. Also, if someone were to propose a new shoreline use, it would be hard to get through for approval. Applications for use tend to get negative feedback as opposed to desires for more protection. Protection and use need equal time. The ONP access should also count, since they are uses that do exist, even though they have chosen to be exempt from the update. Like to see uses for things like jet skis; there should be a place for those uses to go. The whole coastal region should come into play here because there are designated uses all along here already-incorporate them.

Environmental Protection Needs:

Good! The environmental protection laws we have in place are being carried out well: Forest Practices, Coast Guard, shoreline protection, etc. They are doing a bang-up job of protection: no sewage dumping, emergency oil spill clean-up is in place, etc. Cautious in adding additional setbacks. The ones in place are doing a good job: if it's not broken, don't fix it.

Restoration Opportunities:

What makes a site good for restoration? Some people might say that the old Rayonier Mill site is a restoration opportunity. But we need places for industrial uses too. Some of these sites are just cleaned up and moved around because we end up creating a new site for another industrial use. Why not just keep the old mill site as a site for light industrial use? This should be a decision for the landowners if they are not doing anything to degrade the shoreline. Should a house within 200' of the shoreline be torn down? Is that restoration? This is a nebulous question, so how to answer it? Maybe the approach should be something like: Do you know of any specific places that could/should be restored?

Public Access:

This should be the landowner's prerogative. However, even if the landowner wanted to create a new public access point, they would have a hard time getting things approved through the permitting process. This makes it difficult to add access points. Think it through! The county approached Merrill and Ring asking them to supply public access to their beach in Sekiu, but the county was not willing to offer any assistance with law enforcement, clean-up, maintenance, litter, etc. It is not appealing to the landowner to create a new public access point if they are asked for access but offered no help in maintenance! If the landowner chooses to add a new public access point, like installing a boat ramp, then they are responsible for clean-up and they go into it willingly that way. Be aware of liability: once the access is developed, you have all the protection needs that come into play again because now people are involved and it is no longer pristine.

WRIA 20 SMP Stakeholder Survey

Date: 2/9/11

Interviewee: Jody Kennedy

Organization: Surfrider Foundation (The Surfrider Foundation is made up of volunteer groups with locations all over Washington.)

Shoreline Uses:

The Surfrider Foundation is a water recreational uses group, so most of their influence is on the coast. Their mission statement relates to nearshore impacts and uses, so those are the areas they have a concern about—not the rivers as much, except as to how they impact the nearshore. This means a main concern is sediment transport. The foundation is also concerned about recreational access for things such as kayaking and fishing. It is important that people be able to enjoy their access and not have it blocked off. This may be a better question to pose to the public: Do people feel like they have enough access? Another area of concern is the quality of the ecosystem—fish getting upriver—forest practices possibly blocking the river.

Environmental Protection Needs:

Water quality is a top priority—better care taken of the rivers. Buffers are a major priority. Logging practices in and near buffer zones can end up damaging fish passage through sediment and blockage. Also ensuring historical and cultural access. This might be a question to pose to tribal managers. There is a question about how much authority they have in private lands off of tribal reservations.

Restoration Opportunities:

Stabilize banks, LWD, impacts on the nearshore—how stream management and conditions interface with the nearshore. She said she would defer to the Quileute Tribe on this.

Public Access:

This is a priority, but it should stay a local issue. Locals know where they want access and where they don't. A possibility would be to invest some money in a process to involve property owners in public access so that there could be some cooperation between the land owner and the public. A possible scenario could be landowner provision and volunteer cleanup/maintenance, with some funding source for development. This would prevent the landowner being responsible for the maintenance, which might deter them from donating public access. Local chapters could adopt site maintenance. This comes with a fear that the property owner could close the access at any time if it remains privately owned. Marine debris? This is often carried down through the rivers. Excess garbage is often a problem because there is a cost for throwing garbage away. More dump sites? How is this impacting the nearshores.

WRIA 20 SMP Stakeholder Survey

Date: 2/23/11
Interviewee: Harry Bell
Organization: Green Crow

Shoreline Uses:

Highest priority is to grow and harvest trees for commodity production. Other appropriate uses are for water related business that need shorelines access and carefully planned single residences.

Environmental Protection Needs:

For timber production, the separate habitat conservation plans for state and private lands should be accepted as sufficient protection for shorelines. For other uses water quality should be maintained to actual use standards.

Restoration Opportunities:

Restoration should not be limited to man caused problems. For example, we can enhance natural fish production by LWD and engineered log jams to provide habitat diversity in river reaches that are naturally deficient of woody material. Restoration should only be done where this is a measurable ecological improvement that is worth the cost.

Public Access:

Public access should be developed only where there is public road access.

WRIA 20 SMP Stakeholder Survey

Date: 3/2/11
Interviewee: Greg Good
Organization: North Olympic Land Trust

Shoreline Uses:

Not sure.

Environmental Protection Needs:

We are focused on the Calawah River and Big River/Lake Ozette areas as they have highly important salmon habitat that is in fairly good condition.

Restoration Opportunities:

We do not have any focus on restoration so I don't think I could answer this properly.

Public Access:

Not sure.

WRIA 20 SMP Stakeholder Survey

Date: 2/8/11
Interviewee: Ron Garner and Dave Croonquist
Organization: Puget Sound Anglers

Puget Sound Anglers has members all over the Puget Sound Basin. The chapter closest to WRIA 20 is the North Olympic Chapter. It is estimated that hundreds of PSA members use the rivers of WRIA 20. Overall, PSA representatives reported that they believe the County is doing a good job managing WRIA 20's shorelines. They rivers are in good shape and the fish runs are healthy with few exceptions. The rivers of WRIA 20 are among the most productive in western Washington.

Shoreline Uses:

The shorelines of WRIA 20 are at most lightly populated. This level of development presents few problems for fish runs.

Environmental Protection Needs:

The biggest challenge in protecting the shorelines is the adequacy of riparian buffers. In some cases, the riparian buffers left by commercial harvest operations have blown down. Bank erosion is also an issue.

Restoration Opportunities:

Where riparian buffers have failed, replanting can be done to stabilize the banks and begin the process of restoring the canopy cover. Buffer problems are visible in places on the Bogachiel and the Sol duc. There are a number of opportunities for erosion control and LWD enhancement. One approach mentioned was stabilizing trees that were about to fall into the river. These trees would be cabled to interior trees to hold them along the bank once they did fall into the river.

Public Access:

Many of the WRIA 20 rivers have numerous access options. The Sol Duc, Bogachiel, Calawah, and Quillayute are very popular with bank fishers as well as drift boat and inflatable raft fishers. The Dickey River was cited as an example of a river with more limited access options. It was recognized that some areas are just difficult to get to. Not all ramps are well maintained. Some have trash problems. Some have outhouses that are not well maintained. Some ramps are difficult to use without 4 wheel drive. Some are no more than steep muddy banks. Some are causing sediment inputs into the river. In addition, the rules governing access to bank fishing are not easy to find in relation to specific stream reaches. Clarification of the rules regarding which rivers are navigable would be helpful. Agencies should look for ways to make that information more easily accessible. There should also be more readily available information on camping sites, hunting access, and areas of danger such as rapids and steep slopes.

WRIA 20 SMP Stakeholder Survey

Date: 2/28/11
Interviewee: Anne Shaffer
Organization: Coastal Watershed Institute

Shoreline Uses:

Ecological uses are the priority. Migrating, foraging and juvenile fish from as far away as the Kalamath and the Columbia use the Straits and the WRIA 20 shorelines. This makes the rivers that flow into the nearshore particularly important. Estuaries, pocket estuaries, nearshore and the lower rivers all affect nearshore habitat function.

Environmental Protection Needs:

Protecting the environmental conditions of the lower rivers, nearshore, riparian and intertidal zones are priority.

Restoration Opportunities:

The lower rivers and creek mouths should be the focus for assessing for restoration, particularly the Quillayute River. An inventory should be taken of these areas to assess and prioritize the restoration needs.

Public Access:

No need for any additional; the current is adequate.

WRIA 20 SMP Stakeholder Survey

Date: 2/2/11
Interviewee: Jill Silver
Organization: 10,000 Years Institute

Shoreline Uses: Priority uses should be water quality, habitat and fish protection. Secondary uses should be public access, residences, parks, trails, etc. If she could go back 100 years and write an SMP, she would ensure a public trail along these rivers. Now much of that opportunity has been lost because of development. Most of the rivers have very difficult walkable access. For example, the Sol Duc is very difficult to access because of its steep banks. They are accessible by floating or boating downriver, but this is not enough for most people. The Quillayute river has easier access because it has more gravel bars and is not as steep; but this is in itself a problem because it has lost most of its large wood, which is eroding the banks.

People are clearing and developing their properties right up down to the banks, and the loss of the large wood is causing a significant degradation of the banks, particularly in the Quillayute and Bogachiel rivers. The SMP should protect the public resources (water, habitat, wildlife, etc.) first and the residences and private owners should be pleased about this. “Limbing up”—instead of the removal of the whole tree and its root structure, encourage landowners to remove the lower limbs of the trees between the residences and the water view. This leaves the tree in place to protect the river, but allows a water view.

Where anyone is willing to giving public access, a trail should have SMP priority/protection to connect a walking trail along the rivers between the public access trails on ONP and NF land. Right now, you can't walk from Forks to the ocean and biking is not comfortable on the highways with all of the trucks.

Environmental Protection Needs: Mainly along the Quillayute and Bogachiel rivers, where the banks are being degraded from large wood loss.

The SMP is not being well applied, possibly because the channel migration and wetland zones are not accurate. We should develop accurate maps so that we can implement protections.

The mainstream rivers need riparian zones restored. On highway 110 from Three Rivers to La Push by the Bogachiel Bridge, the river is being riprapped. If the bridge is lost and the river channel migrates it will take out the town and the only access to La Push. The Bogachiel is going to eventually cut through the road. But riprapping is not the way to go. Quit riprapping and use softer structuring techniques, like log jams and large wood. The Quinault is a good example of where they have done this successfully.

Restoration Opportunities: Knotweed, reed canary grass and other invasive species control. Walking the rivers reveals that there is a lot of invasive species material still moving, in spite of efforts. In her experience, once you think you've got it under control, you have another ten years to go!

Restore riparian zones where they have been eliminated, particularly on private land.

Inform the public about how to control invasive species and why it is a danger for the natural environment. Also inform them on why restoration is desirable.

Public Access: Connect the trails in ONP and NF through direct purchase or easements to give the public more waterfront access.

Not enough public access to rivers. They should be better signed and have more education to go with them too. There is a need for public awareness and enforcement so that the largest, best wood is not lost from the tribes and fishermen cutting out the log jams for firewood. Educate the public on what is legal and why it makes sense to support protection.

Notes: Is the SMP combining with the Critical Areas Ordinance? Maybe we should adopt it by reference like the Jefferson county SMP did. Jefferson also found that viewsheds were a big concern, especially in real estate pricing. The buffer management component was fraught with conflict. Owners were afraid of losing rights and uses to their property, losing lawn space, views, etc.

Jill recommended making the two sets of laws (Critical Areas Ordinance and SMP) copacetic. Jefferson county also tried to make sure to give a lot of attention to landowner concerns and public access/protection.

WRIA 20 SMP Stakeholder Survey

Date: 3/2/11
Interviewee: Norm Schaaf
Organization: Merrill and Ring

Shoreline Uses: Based on the location of the shorelines in WRIA 20, a huge amount of use is in forestry and commercial timber production. This use is kept within the restrictions of existing shoreline regulations and Forest Practices, but it is the dominant land use in WRIA 20.

The other dominant use is in dispersed outdoor recreation such as fishing, hunting, gathering, public boat access/launches, etc. Not things like water extraction for sale (beyond the limited amount that already exists), industrial and transportation uses, etc. Those uses are not dominant or the focus for resources out here.

Environmental Protection Needs: No specific locations for additional environmental protection. Already operating within the shoreline regulations and Forest Practices. Regulations like these are already protecting the environment. No knowledge of any additional needs.

Restoration Opportunities: Opportunities would include any required restoration methods that are already in place and being worked on. Road Maintenance and Abandonment Plan (RMAP) is already working toward this goal and is scheduled to continue over the next few years. This plan includes restoration for culverts, bridges, sediment control, etc.—anything associated with roads. RMAP restoration covers a good share of the land in WRIA 20.

He can't speak to federal land needs, since RMAP does not include federal lands.

There are chronic Hoh River washouts on the road that goes up into the rainforest and at the Hoh River mouth on Oil City Road. On Oil City Road, the river is encroaching and was backflooding onto the road when he was out there in December.

There are extensive opportunities for LWD placement, but he is not aware of specific locations.

Public Access: He has always had all the access he has needed, but that has included private access to places, so this may be less of an impact from his perspective. He is not aware of any necessary additional access; it is not needed from his perspective.

WRIA 20 SMP Stakeholder Survey

Date: 3/1/11
Interviewee: Meghan Tuttle
Organization: Rayonier

Shoreline Uses: A sixth category is needed for the environmental designations. The five current categories are focused on residential and ecological use; a sixth is needed for forestry/agricultural use. Rayonier's position is that the uses should continue in forestry using current Forest Practice regulations.

Environmental Protection Needs: Current regulations already satisfy the Endangered Species Act and the Forest Practices Act, etc. Additional regulations and restrictions limit forest uses and encourage private timber companies like Rayonier to use their land for more economical purposes, liking parceling it off and selling it for development. This ends up having a negative effect on environmental protection, particularly along sensitive areas like shorelines where management is even more restricted. The incentive to manage these restricted areas goes down and the incentive to sell them increases as the restrictions/regulations increase.

Restoration Opportunities: These locations should be out of the plan for private landowners and kept for public lands. Rayonier is happy to partner with other organizations/tribes for restoration work, and has done so, but this should be something private landowners do voluntarily, not something that is required. RMAP is ongoing restoration work that Rayonier and all private timber companies are part of.

Public Access: Rayonier is currently transitioning to charging for their public access locations. They want to make sure and keep private any areas that Rayonier maintains complete control over.

If the Olympic Discovery Trail were to come out here, Rayonier would be open to easements to make that possible.

WRIA 20 SMP Stakeholder Survey

Date: 2/15/11
Interviewee: Devona Ensmenger
Organization: Wild Salmon Center, Portland OR
Phone Number: 360 640 2631

Shoreline Uses:

The Wild Salmon Center has focused on the Hoh River (outside the scope of the Clallam County SMP Update Process) and on the Calawah System. The Center will be submitting detailed written comments. For the purpose of this interview, the interests of the WSC are principally aimed at protecting key habitat important to resident and anadromous fish. Several areas of high value have been targeted for intensive analysis by WSC. Most are currently undeveloped forestlands and are unlikely to be subject to development pressure in the future. A number of high value reaches are desirable for human shoreline uses. One such reach is the portion of Elk Creek in the Forks Urban Growth Area. Another is the reach of Elk Creek immediately upstream of the FUGA boundary. These reaches are extremely important for trout and coho rearing. More detailed comments will also include the specific scientific information on which these suggestions were based.

Environmental Protection Needs:

Protection for the key fish rearing habitat Elk Creek has been advanced by the acquisition of adjacent lands by the North Olympic Land Trust. Natural designation status under the SMP would be consistent with the conservation status of the shorelands. The WSC also recommends the highest levels of protection for the Sitkum River and its tributaries. Upstream portions of the North Fork of the Calawah system also are important areas for protection. More protection should be afforded to the highly active channel migration zones in the Sol Duc and Bogachiel mainstems.

Restoration Opportunities:

The WSC took part in the development of the Restoration Plan facilitated by the Quileute Tribe a few years ago. Those priorities were well defined.

Public Access:

No immediate suggestions were made.

NOTE: The Wild Salmon Center submitted a Letter and 3 attachments in a pdf format by email. These are attached below.



March 24, 2011

Miranda Wecker
Director, Marine Program
University of Washington Olympic Natural Resources Center
PO Box 160
Naselle, WA 98638

RE: Shoreline Master Program Amendment Cycle for Clallam County (WRIA 20)

Dear Ms. Wecker

Wild Salmon Center (WSC) appreciates the opportunity to provide input on the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) amendment cycle for Clallam County (WRIA 20) that the University of Washington Olympic Natural Resource Center is facilitating.

WSC is an international non-profit conservation organization whose mission is to identify, understand, and protect the most important wild salmon ecosystems of the Pacific Rim. In 2006, WSC established the North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership (NASSP)—a public-private partnership that aims to protect the last remaining healthy river systems where wild salmon are most abundant, biologically diverse, and have the best chance of surviving the long-term impacts of development and climate change.

The Quillayute watershed is currently recognized as a salmon stronghold by NASSP and the Quileute Tribe. Scientific analyses conducted by WSC indicate that the Calawah and Bogachiel Rivers (two of four major Quillayute tributaries) produce the most abundant and diverse wild salmon populations across the entire Washington coast (Attachment 1). These populations also provide some of the most viable treaty and non-treaty fisheries in the state and are inextricably linked to the economic health of the City of Forks.

A major goal of the Shoreline Management Act (1971) is "to prevent the inherent harm in an uncoordinated and piecemeal development of the state's shorelines." Washington Administrative Code (WAC) provides statutory guidance that "Master programs shall assure no net loss of shoreline ecological function" resulting from agriculture, aquaculture, boating facilities, commercial development, forest practices, industry, in-stream structural uses, mining, recreational development, residential development, transportation and parking, and utilities (WAC 173-26-241).

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WSC reviewed http://www.clallam.net/RealEstate/html/onrc_wria_20_maps.htm, a map cabinet located on the county's website, to develop a series of recommendations for the current SMP amendment cycle. The focus of our comments are on the SMP Environment Designations (WAC 173-26-211), including designations for non-designated shorelines and changes to existing designations (WAC 173-26-201). Designations are recommended with the intent to minimize any loss of shoreline ecological function necessary to support healthy wild salmon and steelhead populations and to promote public safety (EXHIBIT A).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the current SMP amendment cycle--we understand it may be 20 years until the next amendment cycle.

Please direct questions, further inquiries and follow up material to Devona Ensmenger at devona@wildsalmoncenter.org and by phone (360) 640-2631.

Sincerely,



Devona Ensmenger
Washington Program Manager

cc Guido Rahr
President & Chief Executive
Wild Salmon Center

Dr. Jeff Baumgartner
Executive Vice President
Wild Salmon Center

Rich Lincoln
Director
State of the Salmon

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EXHIBIT A

**Recommendations for SMP Environment Designations in Clallam County (WRIA 20)
(WAC 173-26-211)**

WSC provides the following recommendations only for "natural" and "conservancy" Environment Designations (designations). Within both categories, designations are listed in order of ecological priority based upon WSC analyses. WSC defers "rural," "suburban," and "urban" designations to the municipalities and other jurisdictions best equipped to do so--though WSC is poised to evaluate and refute designations as necessary within all five categories.

NATURAL

1. Elk Creek

- a. East line of parcel 132802330040 upstream to west line of parcel number 13281222000

JUSTIFICATION Elk Creek is five miles long, yet produces one-third of total redds in the Calawah river system (Attachment 2—pg 7). The creek valley contains extensive wetlands, spring fed side wall channels, and second growth forested floodplain with isolated old growth characteristics. The valley is prone to landslides and erosion

(http://www.clallam.net/Maps/assets/applets/Critarea_p14.pdf).

Upland habitat (256 acres) within this proposed designation area was conserved through the Salmon Recovery Funding Board and is currently owned and managed as conservation land by the North Olympic Land Trust.

2. Sitkum River

- a. From the confluence of Sitkum River and S. Fork Calawah River upstream to end of SMP jurisdiction (20 cfs/RM 12.7), including Rainbow Creek (to RM 0.6) and S. Fork Sitkum (to RM 2.3)

JUSTIFICATION WSC surveys and analysis indicate that the Sitkum River contains high concentrations and a broad distribution of quality rearing habitat used by 0-age trout, steelhead parr, and cutthroat trout (Attachment 3—pgs 41, 42). The Sitkum River flows through mature ecologically complex forests within the Olympic National Park and USDA Forest Service that largely remain untouched. However, uplands of the Sitkum's south draining tributaries are largely characterized by clear cuts and younger aged forests. However, all but two of these shorelines fall outside of SMP jurisdiction.

3. Lost Creek

- a. From the confluence of Lost Creek and S. Fork Calawah River upstream to end of SMP jurisdiction (20 cfs/RM 2.3)

JUSTIFICATION Lost Creek flows through mature ecologically complex forests within the Olympic National Park and USDA Forest Service that largely remain untouched. WSC surveys and analysis indicate that Lost Creek is a critical low water rearing refugia for coho. (Attachment 3—pg 41)

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CONSERVANCY

1. Elk Creek

- a. From the confluence of Elk Creek and Calawah River upstream to east line of parcel 132802330040
- b. From the east line of parcel 13281222000 upstream to end of SMP jurisdiction (20 cfs /RM 4)

JUSTIFICATION *As described under Natural (1. a.).*

2. S. Fork Calawah River

- a. From the west line of parcel 122806onf001 upstream to the confluence of the S. Fork Calawah River and Sitkum River, including Hyas Creek (to RM 3.8).

JUSTIFICATION *WSC surveys and analysis indicate that the S. Fork Calawah River contains high concentrations and a broad distribution of quality rearing habitat used by 0-age trout, and steelhead parr (Attachment 3—pgs 41, 42).*

3. N. Fork Calawah River

- a. From the west line of parcel 112915200000 upstream to the end of SMP jurisdiction (20 cfs/RM 20.2), including Pistol Creek (to RM 2.2)

JUSTIFICATION *WSC surveys and analysis indicate that the N. Fork Calawah River, just beyond a frequently dry reach (RM 11.5 to RM 18.5), contains a two-mile long concentration of quality rearing habitat used by coho, 0-age trout, and steelhead parr (Attachment 3—pgs 41, 42).*

4. Boagachiel River

- a. From the confluence of Bogachiel River and Calawah River upstream to south line of parcel 142822310000
- b. From south line of parcel 142823110000 upstream to east line of parcel 132834wtr001.

JUSTIFICATION *Flood prone (100-year) and critical aquifer recharge area with high gravel recruitment suited to non-permanent use of biological resources. Land ownership is predominantly private timber. Sources: Based on evaluations of land ownership from Clallam County Assessor Parcel maps (http://www.clallam.net/aimsxwebsite/CA_pacs/viewer.htm), maps and aerial photos from Clallam County Shoreline Master Program Update map cabinet (http://www.clallam.net/RealEstate/html/onrc_wria_20_maps.htm), the Clallam County Shoreline Master Program report revised June 16, 1992 (http://www.clallam.net/realestate/assets/applets/SHORELINE_MASTER_PROGR_AM.pdf) and Google Earth.*

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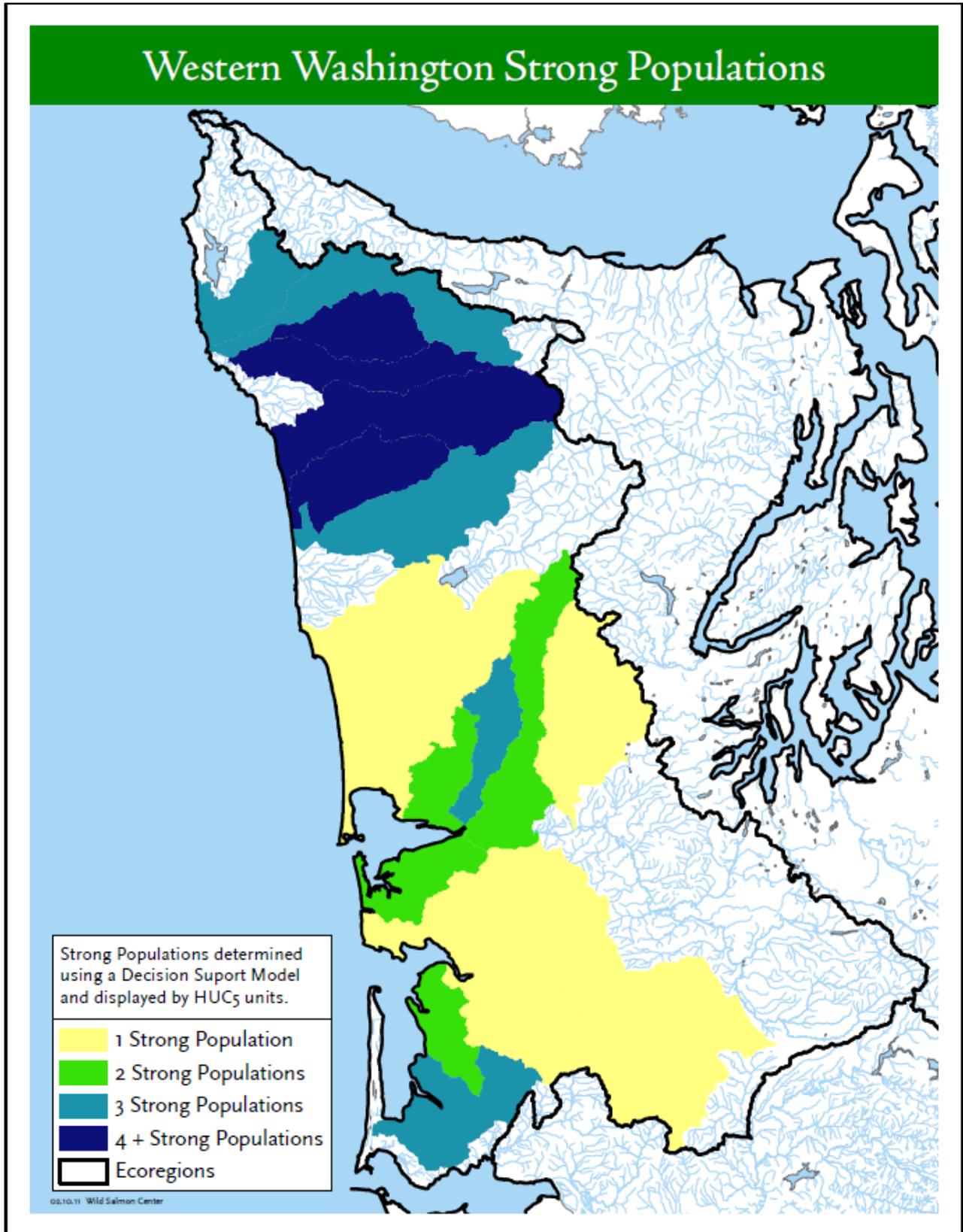
5. Sol Duc River

- a. From east line of parcel 132929200000 upstream to south line of parcel 132921410105

JUSTIFICATION *Most significant and expansive floodway in Clallam County (WRIA 20) and critical aquifer recharge area with high gravel recruitment suited to non-permanent use of biological resources. Land ownership is a mix of private timber and residential.*
Sources: *As described under Conservancy (4. a., b.).*

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11. Evaluation Proposal

Applicants must respond to the following items. The local citizen and technical advisory groups will use the evaluation proposal to evaluate your project. Applicants should contact their lead entity for additional information that may be required.

Up to eight pages may be submitted for each project proposal.

BACKGROUND

Elk Creek is the major tributary to the mainstem Calawah at RM 9.2, a part of the Calawah River Basin which joins the Quillayute River and enters the Pacific Ocean at La Push, WA at the Quileute Indian Tribe Reservation. As a Class I, Tier I stream, Shoreline of the State, Elk Creek provides approximately five miles of contiguous low elevation, low gradient, high quality spawning and rearing habitat for salmonid.

Elk Creek Acquisition Project is aimed at a 1.8 linear mile section of main channel spawning and rearing habitat as well as extensive wetlands, springs and spring fed channels, flood plains and numerous (many more than are currently mapped) feeder streams that provide year-round quality habitat for wild Coho, steelhead, cut-throat trout and an occasional Fall Chinook. It incorporates 220 acres of forested wetlands, steep and unstable hillsides subject to heavy rainfall and run-off during the winter and spring with an average annual rainfall of 120 inches/year. (Annual rainfall pattern and slope stability geomorphic features as documented by WRIA 20). The ponds and spring-fed side wall channels are not currently delineated by WDFW, DNR or USGSs maps. (Limiting Factors Data gap – WRIA 20).

This riparian area is a highly productive wildlife corridor that has a naturally reseeded multi-storied canopy of spruce, alder and hemlock with many old snags and sizeable stumps over grown with rain forest type vegetation of moss and ferns. The valley floor resembles an old-growth type forest with open areas, grassland, and large diameter trees. Elk Creek meanders through this valley providing optimal salmonid habitat.

The main channel is in very good condition with large woody debris, refugia and buried logs providing deep pools alternating with shallow gravel sections used extensively by wild Coho and steelhead for spawning purposes. Where the channel braids, there are stands of varying ages of alder which provide leaf litter and shade and provide small pools that Coho utilize throughout the summer. These pools are fed by underground water sources and the temperature remains constant. Juvenile Coho thrive in these pools until fall water levels reconnect these pools with the main channel.

II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Timely protection for this productive salmon stream is being sought. A forest practice clear-cut harvest plan is currently underway with a proposed harvest occurring in Spring 2003. Our concern is the areas of Coho utilization have not been adequately documented and potential for harm to rearing and over-wintering habitat is likely. At a minimum, the multiple feeder streams, their branches, and the seeps and springs present in this riparian lowland need to be thoroughly inventoried so that proper protection under Fish and Forest Practice Rules can be applied when a Forest Practice Application is submitted. Given the steep terrain of the valley walls and confluence of side channel tributaries, potential harmful sedimentation to the main channel spawning gravel is likely during the heavy rainfalls experienced in this watershed. (Limiting Factors Analysis – Habitat – WRIA 20)

Important to understanding the problem of a clear-cut harvest in this productive salmon habitat area is a clear visualization of the terrain. First, the proposed area of harvest is a narrow strip (1/4 mile wide x 1.25 miles long) section that borders both sides of Elk Creek and includes the many tributaries and wetlands as described above. Secondly, multiple confluent feeder streams from the steep hillsides show evidence of past slides in their channels with the potential for further slide. A deep seated slide occurred sometime in the past on the southern ridge which impacted Elk Creek and moved its channel migration zone to the north.

Providing adequate buffers to these fish bearing streams, wetlands, correctly assessing the channel migration zone, and preventing clear-cut on unstable slopes will require an intensely complex forest harvest plan. There are no passable roads going into or out of the valley and new road building or helicopter logging would be required to access the timber on these very steep hillsides. There is an abandoned road grade that has washed out or slid in several places. All of the original stringer bridges utilized in the 1930's harvest have washed out and are part of the large woody debris forming deep pools and refugia. Re-utilization of this stream bordering road grade would require increasing its width, further road building through wetlands, multiple bridge crossings, multiple culverts and other potential fish impacting measures.

III. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The objective of the Elk Creek Acquisition grant proposal is a direct conservation purchase from ITT Rayonier. ITT Rayonier has expressed interest in this conservation purchase and has been helpful to the applicant in exploring funding options. This project proposes a direct purchase from Rayonier with a transfer of deed to WDFW for land management and long-term protection of fish and wildlife habitat. This would remove the risks associated with a commercial timber harvest in this riparian corridor.

The Elk Creek Acquisition project directly addresses WRIA 20 limiting factors analysis for data gaps including:

1. "updating and mapping and typing of all streams and wetlands" (WDFW as contributing partner will accomplish this)
2. "more complete salmon and trout distribution" and "measurements that link fish production to freshwater conditions" (This will be accomplished by The Wild Salmon Center using their snorkel and habitat assessments research surveys.)
3. "Floodplain mapping is needed in all basins in WRIA 20," "Assessments are needed to map the entire channel migration zone / 100 year floodplain throughout WRIA 20. This will help enforce regulations to protect shoreline habitat" (WDFW – partner contribution)

The Elk Creek Acquisition project also directly addresses limiting factors

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SALMONID HABITAT RESTORATION ACTION IN WRIA 20

- 1 "Efforts to purchase intact floodplain habitat for conservation should be a high priority"
- 2 "Large wood within the floodplain should not be removed. Increase enforcement of current regulations is needed."
- 3 "Maintain and conserve off-channel habitat and associated riparian. More protection is needed for floodplain habitat"
- 4 "Riparian surrounding wetlands should be protected to insure ground water recharge"

IV. PROJECT APPROACH

- a) Elk Creek Acquisition Project targets a Class I, Tier I waterway in the Quillayute River System and involves 1.8 miles of contiguous freshwater salmon spawning and rearing habitat as well as extensive (unmapped) wetlands, spring-fed side wall channels and flood plains. It functions primarily as a very productive Coho spawning and rearing habitat as well as providing suitable habitat for steelhead and a large number of cut-throat trout. Year-round habitat is provided by the extensive and diversified wetland areas including large flood plains and side channel streams.
- b) Individuals who have provided information and support for this project include:
- Frank Geyer, TFW Biologist, Quileute Natural Resources
(multiple site visits, preliminary stream typing, redd counts supervisor, matching funds)
 - Bill Peach, Forest Manager, ITT Rayonier, Forks
(information, maps, assistance with understanding conservation acquisitions)
 - Katie Krueger, Environmental Attorney, Quileute Natural Resources
(site visits and photographs, technical questions and information, letter of support)
 - John McMillian, Salmon Ecologist, Wild Salmon Center
(multiple site visits, data collection, technical information assistance)
 - Dave King, Fish Habitat Enhancement Biologist, WDFW
(supervisory support, site visits, matching funds partner)
 - Theresa Powell, Fish Habitat Biologist, North Coastal Field Station, WDFW
(site visits, technical information, assistance with maps)
 - Terra Hegy, Watershed Steward – WRIA 20, WDFW
(site visit, coordinator for technical data information, assistance with habitat resource information and coordination of matching funds)
 - Jennifer Nixon, NOPLS Salmon Recovery Coordinator
(Invaluable assistance with helping applicant put forth this project proposal. Very helpful in coordinating and understanding the SRFB process. Site Visit)
 - Dan DaFoe, Area Habitat Biologist, WDFW
(information and resource assistance)
 - Pat Crane, Clallam County Biologist
(site visits, information and assistance with completing SRFB application)
 - Carl Chastain, Pacific Salmon Coalition, Forks
(site visit, information on salmon habitat, SRFB information, restoration project considerations)
 - Dick Goin, Local Fisheries Expert
(multiple site visits, presentation at preproposal to NOPLS, habitat information, redd count information, SRFB application assistance, coordinate technical resource information)

Dave Parks, Hydrologist/Geologist, DNR
(information regarding DNR review of Forest Practice Applications and WAC rules pertaining to wetlands and unstable slopes)

Cathy Lear, Clallam County Salmon Coordinator
(site visit, habitat information, matching funds information)

Charles Toal, Dept. of Ecology
(information regarding review of Forest Practice Applications)

Paul Kennard, Staff Scientist, Washington Forest Law Center
(information regarding WAC regulations)

Dave Warren, Pacific Forest Trust
(information regarding matching funds)

Rod Fleck, City Attorney and Mayor Nedra Reed, City of Forks
(letter of support- member of WRIA 20)

Clallam County Stream-Keepers
(monitoring assistance, donated labor and equipment for matching funds)

C) Elk Creek Acquisition Project plans to monitor long-term protection by its partners contributions.

1) Quileute Natural Resources, Quileute Tribe will continue their redd count surveys for Coho and Steelhead in Elk Creek as it is a significant Coho component of the Calawah River System in the Quileute Usual and Accustomed Area.

2) The Wild Salmon Center will be performing professional fish and habitat survey work by Salmon Ecologist, John McMillian and Field Biologist, James Starr. They will be conducting ongoing fish surveys using snorkel diving techniques for both adult and juvenile salmonids, as well as habitat characteristics surveys and monitoring using current, scientifically approved methods and protocols. These surveys will take place during several seasonal periods to provide a more complete description of the fish use over time. This work will occur in 2002 and 2003.

3) Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife personnel, Theresa Powell, Fish Habitat Biologist, North Coastal Field Station, will complete a thorough inventory of all off-channel habitat in the Elk creek system. This inventory will map and record undocumented habitat, verify documented habitat, record fish observations and verify and/or update current water type information

If the Elk Creek Acquisition Project is funded, land title will be transferred to WDFW for long-term stewardship of this valuable fish and wildlife habitat.

4) Stream Keepers of Clallam County will set up four reach sites on Elk Creek for long-term monitoring of water quality including macroinvertebrate collection and fecal coliform counts. Data will be collected four times a year and entered into a data management inventory system which can be accessed at the Clallam County Courthouse.

5) The Dickson Family will donate a conservation easement of their riparian area which borders 1000' of mainstem channel as well as a cash donation. It is at this property site where suitable spawning gravel begins to appear in this tributary. It is their commitment to protect this valuable resource and provide what assistance they are able in accomplishing the goal of this worthy project.

Site access is easily gained at this property via an abandoned road grade that can be utilized by all monitoring personnel.

D) Consequences of not conducting this project at this time include a high, almost certain risk of increased sedimentation of Elk Creek and its prime spawning habitat. On the southern ridge that borders Elk Creek the convergent headwalls of the steep channeled drainages fill with torrents of water at times of high winter rains. At the bottom of these drainages an alluvial pattern of debris and piles of alder are present. On the hillsides that border these drainages are steep, almost cliff-like banks with mature stands of hemlock; some with pistol butted trunks. Removal of these hemlock and their protective canopy could cause mass sheeting, erosion and potentially even a land-slide that would directly impact Elk Creek. (Naturally occurring deep seated slides have occurred in the past in this area).

WRIA 20 Limiting Factors Analysis has documented the slope failure of this sub-basin due to its geomorphic features making it "particularly susceptible to such erosion and degradation." The heavy rain fall (120 inches / yr average) and the occasional rain on snow occurrences at the ridge tops creates the potential for a cumulative impact of run-off from the multiple drainages that enter into Elk Creek in the acquisition property.

The overall extensive complexity of the drainages, the large quantity of drainages, the fish presence in these drainages, and the documentation of unstable slopes make the prospect of a forest clear-cut in this area difficult to conceive. While Fish and Forest Regulations and WAC rules would apply to a harvest proposal in this region, concern over the ability of DNR to thoroughly assess and evaluate total impact in this complex watershed and enforce the rules is of concern. WRIA 20 limiting factors address data gaps for this watershed including mapping of floodplains, updating stream typing, and inventorying and mapping wetlands. This project proposes to address these limiting factors.

The Elk Creek Acquisition project proposes to acquire this property and thereby remove the risk of irreparable harm to this high quality, productive Coho spawning and rearing habitat by eliminating the potential for inadvertently missed seeps, drainages,

unstable slopes, springs and wall based side channels with fish presence that have not been adequately typed. Acquisition of this property would leave protected an area that provides one-third of all redd counts for the entire Calawah Basin. It would protect the best spawning habitat, the adjacent floodplains (prevent large tree removal in floodplains – WRIA 20 limiting factors), wetlands, and spring-fed side wall channels that provide optimal rearing and over-winter habitat for juvenile salmonids.

e.) PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

A formal timber cruise and land value determination is pending as per Bill Peach, Forest Manager for Rayonier.

A formal appraisal by an independent contractor will be necessary to determine final valuation of the acquisition property and is a requirement of the project sponsor (cash contributor) as outlined in attached letters of support. Consideration of value of trees not available for harvest in the riparian buffers, the floodplains and the unstable slopes will be an important factor in determining the property value.

Other approaches and considerations that were given to achieve the project's objectives included contacting the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Nature Conservancy, Audubon Society,, North Olympic Land Trust, and Pacific Forest Trust for direct conservation purchase. DNR was contacted and information sent for consideration in the state Heritage Program. IAC was contacted regarding possible recreational site designation and WDFW land management personnel were contacted regarding money available for direct land purchase.

Project Partners: (Please see attached letters of support outlining each partners participation)

The Wild Salmon Center (Applicant)
Quileute Natural Resources
Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
Clallam County Stream-Keepers
Sol Duc Medical Clinic - Dr. and Mrs. Richard Dickson

V. TASKS AND TIME SCHEDULE

List and describe the major tasks and time schedule you will use to complete the project.

- 1) Ongoing communication with Bill Peach, Timber Manager for Rayonier regarding timber cruise and land valuation.
- 2) Continue communication with WDFW Land's Management Personnel, Alice Beals, to coordinate land acquisition with WDFW. Region 6.
- 3) If SRFB grant is awarded, contact John Halberg, Appraiser (360-928-3341) for independent appraisal. Mr. Halberg works with Jim Vadnais, Timber Cruiser (360-457-9533).
- 4) Negotiate fair market value with Rayonier.

VI. CONSTRAINTS AND UNCERTAINTIES

Constraints:

Determining buffer requirements based on up-dated stream typing, mapping of floodplains and wall based channels, and determining location of steep and unstable slopes on maps will be important criteria upon which a formal appraisal can be based.

Uncertainties: How will timber value in these areas be determined and how will it affect the purchase price?

VII. STRATEGY

The North Olympic Peninsula is an exceptionally large and diverse region containing approximately 215 miles of marine shoreline and 90 independent watersheds flowing directly into the Pacific Ocean or Straits of Juan de Fuca. The Quillayute Basin is one of these watersheds and is rated as a Tier 1 because of its high productivity in regards to salmon habitat and numbers of fish.

Elk Creek, a Tier 1 stream, is very deserving of this ranking as its production of redd counts and importance as a spawning sub-basin have been demonstrated by data collected from 1996-2000 by WDFW and Quileute Personnel. (please see attached graph and data information gathered for Calawah Tributaries) .

The Elk Creek Acquisition project targets the most important spawning habitat in this sub-basin where the combination of the low gradient floodplain habitat, spring-fed wall based channels and wetlands provide a full suite of spawning and rearing habitat for salmonids. It is unlike the mouth of Elk Creek which is more confined and the upper reaches of Elk Creek which are more incised. This project proposes to protect "the best of the best" intact, functioning and productive salmon habitat in this basin. It addresses WRIA 20 limiting factors as outlined in the Project Objectives and addresses NOPL strategy to "protect the best" and "main or strengthen the strong stocks".

Protecting the high quality habitat that exist in this acquisition project makes this a straight-forward and worthy project. Preventing the degradation of habitat, as outlined in the consequence of not conducting this project at this time, makes it particularly timely as we face overall loss of our salmon stocks.

Calawah River critical habitat manuscript
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32 prioritize the same streams as the summer juvenile metric. In addition, we were able to
33 successfully identify 'hotspots' in salmonid abundance at the reach scale, something that
34 was impossible to do with spatially fragmented redd surveys.

35

36 **IMPLICATIONS:** Because of the complex prioritization patterns, each tributary and
37 main-stem river section was prioritized among the top two streams in at least one metric
38 hierarchy. These results underscore two important points. First, it can be difficult to
39 prioritize one place over another when multiple species and life stages are considered.
40 Thus, conservation actions based on prioritization are only likely to be effective if they
41 are meshed with efforts to maintain and restore watershed-scale processes. Second,
42 existing data and habitat assumptions were generally ineffective in prioritizing streams
43 for juvenile salmonids. This means it is imperative to clearly define conservation
44 objectives and to match them with an appropriate metric, which may require collecting
45 new data to fill information gaps. A reliance on mismatched metrics or poorly defined
46 goals may lead to prioritization efforts that unintentionally mislead decision-makers.

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