



CAPITOL LAKE – DESCHUTES ESTUARY

Long-Term Management Project Environmental Impact Statement

Meeting Summary

Date: July 15, 2021

Time: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Location: Zoom

Topic: Community Sounding Board Meeting

Meeting Participants

Community Sounding Board Members in Attendance

- Sandy Cashman
- Joel Hansen
- Clara Hard
- Jack Havens (alternate for Robert Wubben)
- Jeanette Laffoon
- Doug Mah
- Allen Miller
- Jack Mongin
- David Nicandri
- Gretchen Nicholas
- Sue Patnude
- Kathi Rafferty
- Steve Shanewise
- Nancy Stevenson
- Meg VanSchoorl
- Jenny Wilson
- Nancy Zabel

Community Sounding Board Members not in Attendance

- Alanna Matteson
- Cory Miller
- Drew Phillips
- Stuart Reed
- Alicia Rose
- Robyn Wagoner
- Bruce York

Department of Enterprise Services

- Carrie Martin, Project Manager

EIS Project Team

- Tessa Gardner-Brown, Floyd|Snider
- Ray Outlaw, Floyd|Snider
- Karmen Martin, ESA
- Susan Hayman, Ross Strategic
- Tori Bahe, Ross Strategic

Meeting Summary

Opening Comments and Review of Agenda

Carrie Martin, Washington Department of Enterprise Services (Enterprise Services), welcomed the participants to the Community Sounding Board (CSB) meeting. Susan Hayman, facilitator, [reviewed the agenda](#), provided reminders on virtual meeting conduct, and emphasized that Enterprise Services and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Project Team were not taking Draft EIS public comments during the meeting.

Project Area and Long-Term Management Goals

Ray provided an overview of the project area (Slide 3), which includes the 260-acre Capitol Lake that is managed by the Department of Enterprise Services under long-term lease with the Department of Natural Resources and extends to the northern point of West Bay of Budd Inlet.

Ray then described recent work Enterprise Services has performed around development of the EIS (Slide 4). The alternatives should improve water quality, manage sediment accumulation and future deposition, improve ecological functions, and enhance community use of the resource. The alternatives should also be economically and environmentally sustainable. Phase 2 began in 2018 and has included development of the Draft EIS.

Elements Common to All Action Alternatives

Ray provided an overview of the elements common to all action alternatives, as detailed in [Chapter 2 of the Draft EIS](#) (Slide 5). Action alternatives refer to the Managed Lake, Estuary, and Hybrid Alternatives collectively.

Ray also reminded the group that formal swimming facilities are not included in any of the action alternatives. Operating swimming facilities does not align with the mission of Enterprise Services, and that is not expected to change in the future. The swimming facilities present from 1964 to 1986 were operated by the City of Olympia. The project does not preclude an entity from negotiating a lease to operate swimming in the future, should water quality be suitable and following separate environmental review.

Overview of Action Alternatives

Ray overviewed the Managed Lake, Estuary, and Hybrid Alternatives, which are described in detail in [Chapter 2 of the Draft EIS](#) (Slides 6 through 8).

Ray provided an overview of tidal conditions under the Estuary and Hybrid Alternatives (Slide 9). Tidal conditions would be similar to Budd Inlet. An inundation curve was developed to determine the amount of time the estuary would be covered in water (approximately 80%). Representative tidal charts were also developed to show typical winter, summer, and fall days. From these it was

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determined the lowest water levels would typically occur in the day in summer and the night in winter.

Draft EIS Contents

Ray provided an overview of the [chapters of the EIS](#) (Slide 10), and which information would be covered in this meeting.

The following question was received regarding the Draft EIS contents.

Question (via chat): Is it accurate that all three of the alternatives retain the rail crossing / trestle that separates the North and Middle Basins and as a result retains the existing "channeling" of the river? If it is, perhaps that should be included in the presentation.

Response: Tessa responded that it is correct that all three alternatives retain the rail crossing / trestle in its current configuration. Tessa also noted that the EIS Project Team could make a note to mention this in future presentations. Information on the analysis for each discipline and key findings was summarized from Chapters [3.0](#), [4.0](#), and [5.0](#).

Technical Evaluations & Key Findings

Tessa noted the presentation would provide highlights for each of the elements evaluated and reminded the group that this briefing was meant as an overview and to look to the Draft EIS for more in-depth discussion ([Slide 12](#)). Tessa and Karmen Martin reviewed the analysis and key findings for each of the 14 environmental disciplines then responded to clarifying questions from CSB members.

Elements: Hydrodynamics and Sediment Transport, Navigation, Water Quality, and Aquatic Invasive Species

Tessa provided an overview of Hydrodynamics and Sediment Transport, which are discussed in Sections 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1 (Slides 13 through 17). Tessa provided an overview of Navigation, which are discussed in Sections 3.2, 4.2, and 5.2 (Slides 18 through 20). Tessa provided an overview of Water Quality, which are discussed in Sections 3.3, 4.3, and 5.3 (Slides 21 through 24). Tessa provided an overview of Aquatic Invasive Species, which are discussed in Sections 3.4, 4.4, and 5.4 (Slides 25 through 27).

After the review of the four elements, CSB members had the following additional questions.

Comment/Question: Dr. David Milne completed a water quality analysis 2-3 years ago that was criticized. It turns out that his work was validated. Additionally, invasive species are present at the South Basin near Tumwater Historical Park. The project proposes water access, so would there be a decontamination area near the park?

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Response: Tessa noted the EIS Project Team found the water quality in Capitol Lake was relatively good and that they did not do a point-by-point review of Dr. Milne’s analysis relative to criticizing or validating that work. Tessa also noted there would be a decontamination station near Tumwater Historical Park under all action alternatives.

Comment: It would be nice to have a trend line for the New Zealand mudsnail, as it would be critical related to the plan costs.

Elements: Fish and Wildlife, Wetlands, Air Quality and Odor, Land Use, Shoreline, and Recreation, and Cultural Resources

Karmen provided an overview of Fish and Wildlife, which are discussed in Sections 3.5, 4.5, and 5.5 (Slides 29 through 31). Karmen provided an overview of Wetlands, which are discussed in Sections 3.6, 4.6, and 5.6 (Slides 32 through 33). Karmen provided an overview of Air Quality and Odor, which are discussed in Sections 3.7, 4.7, and 5.7 (Slides 34 through 35). Karmen provided an overview of Land Use, Shorelines, and Recreation, which are discussed in Sections 3.8, 4.8, and 5.8 (Slides 36 through 38). Karmen provided an overview of Cultural Resources, which are discussed in Sections 3.9, 4.9, and 5.9 (Slides 39 through 41).

Question (via chat): What does the word "significant" in describing impact mean? With reference to significant impact to bats, but in general, what makes you call something significant?

Response: Karmen explained that under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), an impact is considered significant if it would have more than a moderate effect. Each discipline has unique criteria that defines what constitutes a significant impact.

Comment: At one of the last CSB meetings it was asked that if the estuary had never been changed and a group were to request an opportunity to create a lake, that such a request would not have been considered. I just wanted to share this observation.

Question (via chat): Were different types of vectors in estuarine habitats as bat forage analyzed? I have worked with estuary restoration efforts and estuarine habitat can have a lot of vectors. It should be looked at.

Response: Tessa noted that the Fish and Wildlife Discipline Report describes primary prey of bats but does not discuss species specific to estuarine habitat. The significance criteria relative to potential fish and wildlife impacts are described in [Section 3 of the Fish and Wildlife Discipline Report](#).

Question (via chat): What about the Steh-Chass as a historical designation? It is the native name for the Lower Deschutes Budd Inlet area. It is well documented, but it was not mentioned in the D[raft] EIS and that seems like a huge oversight. It needs to be talked about.

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Response: Karmen noted that it is described in the [Cultural Resource Discipline Report](#). Tessa also stated that the Draft EIS describes the cultural, historic, and economic significance of the Deschutes Estuary (Steh-Chass). The project consulted with the Squaxin Island Tribe to evaluate whether the Deschutes Estuary would be considered a traditional cultural property, which would be the formal designation. That consultation is also described in the Cultural Resources Discipline Report.

Elements: Visual Resources, Environmental Health, Transportation, Public Services and Utilities, and Economics

Karmen provided an overview of Visual Resources, which are discussed in Sections 3.10, 4.10, and 5.10 (Slides 43 through 48). Karmen provided an overview of Environmental Health, which are discussed in Sections 3.11, 4.11, and 5.11 (Slides 50 through 51). Karmen provided an overview of Transportation, which are discussed in Sections 3.12, 4.12, and 5.12 (Slides 52 through 54). Karmen provided an overview of Public Services and Utilities, which are discussed in Sections 3.13, 4.13, and 5.13 (Slides 55 through 56). Karmen provided an overview of Economics, which are discussed in Sections 3.14, 4.14, and 5.14 (Slides 57 through 59).

Following the review of the five elements, CSB members had the following questions:

Question: How is the widening of the 5th Avenue opening to 500 feet incorporated into the utilities evaluation?

Response: Karmen confirmed that the potential utility impacts from dam removal and bridge construction are incorporated in the Draft EIS but they were not covered during the presentation. Karmen also explained that utilities along 5th Avenue would need to be relocated, causing a temporary disruption.

Comment: The current spillway is less than 500 feet and two of your alternatives require widening the spillway.

Response: Tessa clarified the alternatives do not require the spillway to be widened. Tessa noted that with the removal of the 5th Avenue Dam, the combination of the 80-foot tide gate and the 420-foot earthen dam, would equal approximately 500 feet.

Question (via chat): What is the basis for concluding that the 4-5 years of construction adjacent to the downtown, the marinas, and major route to the westside have no significant adverse economic impacts? Were economic benefits of recreational boating considered?

Response: Karmen recommended that the CSB member refer to the [Transportation Discipline Report](#) for discussion on the transportation impacts, which are described as significant, and [Economic Discipline Report](#) for potential economic effects to downstream resources during construction and operation, and regarding the value of recreational boating.

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Question: Following up on the 500-foot opening question, just wanted to reiterate that this is the mouth of the river flowing into Budd Inlet. Additionally, when you all did key informant interviews, did you talk with cities with estuaries around Puget Sound such as Seattle, Vancouver, etc.? It would be interesting to get ideas from folks outside of south Puget Sound.

Response: Karmen started that the key informants were local municipal planners and professionals but did not extend beyond the local area. Carrie also noted that they talked with an informant in Portland as an outside reference point. Tessa noted the informant questions could be found in an appendix to the [Economics Discipline Report](#).

Construction Impacts

Tessa discussed the duration of construction, significant impacts, and mitigation of the action alternatives as described in [Chapters 2](#) and [5](#) (Slides 61 through 63).

Following Tessa’s review of construction impacts, CSB members had the following questions:

Question: Did you take into account the economic impact of the chilling effect of people not wanting to go downtown due to construction?

Response: Tessa and Karmen could not recall if it was noted in the Economics Discipline Report. They urged the member that if the chilling effect was not addressed in the report to please submit a comment.

Planning-Level Costs

Tessa provided an overview of the planning-level cost estimate provided in (Slide 65). Costs include estimates for design, permitting, and construction; and then sediment management over 30 years after construction.

[Chapter 7](#) also includes a recommendation from the Funding and Governance Work Group around the potential allocation for these costs. The table also notes potential impacts if there is a lapse in funding after construction. The final column provides potential significant additional costs not associated with construction and maintenance dredging.

Tessa recommends that the EWG members read [Chapter 7](#) for a full understanding of the cost estimates shown here.

Following Tessa’s review of planning-level costs, CSB members had the following questions:

Question: Under the “Maintenance Dredging Costs Over 30 Years” column, the Managed Lake Alternative is at a higher range. In Chapter 7 of the DEIS, there are a couple of footnotes that say if the sediment is contaminated that would result in greater cost for the Estuary and Hybrid Alternatives. It also says that for the Estuary alternative, the upper range of construction and

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maintenance dredging over 30 years would increase to \$660 million. I am curious why these disposal costs are not shown in the chart.

Response: Tessa responded that the suitability of sediment for in-water disposal is governed by the [Dredged Material Management Program](#) which evaluates sediment suitability on a range of factors. The program looks at chemical suitability and presence of invasive species. As part of the EIS, the project team collected representative sediment samples from Capitol Lake. The samples showed good chemical quality. Secondly, the dredged material would be fresh material from Deschutes River in the deeper portion of West Bay. The project team does not anticipate presence of New Zealand mudsnail because mudsnail prefer to live in shallow areas. Based on the best available information, it is assumed that dredge material in Budd Inlet would be suitable for in-water disposal but the footnotes provide additional cost considerations for a worst-case scenario, where the material would need to be disposed of upland and the costs subsequently increase.

Question: In Chapter 7, it notes that whoever pays for the project would be determined after the Preferred Alternative was selected and the beneficiaries identified. These are key questions and should be considered when determining the Preferred Alternative. What is the rationale for waiting?

Response: Tessa noted the Funding & Governance Work Group had extensive discussions on potential beneficiaries. They collectively provided initial recommendations on funding and agreed these recommendations would be finalized after the Preferred Alternative was identified. Their recommendations assume the state would be responsible for construction for all alternatives, as the party responsible for constructing the dam. There could be opportunities for federal funding for construction depending on the alternative selected. For long-term management of the Managed Lake Alternative, they recommended the state provide funding for long-term maintenance costs. For long-term management of the Estuary and Hybrid Alternatives, they recommended some form of shared funding and governance through an interlocal agreement that would describe the funding and governance conditions.

EIS Project Timeline and Outreach

Ray provided a reminder on the EIS Project Timeline (Slide 67). He reminded the CSB members that the comment period extends through August 13. **[Following this meeting the comment period was extended through August 29, 2021.]** The Final EIS is expected in 2022, pending additional analyses required.

Ray also reviewed opportunities to comment and access additional project information.

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Public Comment

Susan provided an opportunity for public comment and noted that public comments made during the CSB meeting will not be considered as formal comments on the DEIS. No one requested to provide public comment.

Additional CSB Questions

With the remaining meeting time, Susan invited any final CSB questions. Several members responded with questions or comments.

Question: What is the time limit for providing public comment during the public hearing?

Response: Each person will have up to three minutes to provide public comment.

Question: Some people may be interested and entertained by the construction process. Would there be a viewing platform to see the construction and interpretative signs that describe the process?

Response: The EIS Project Team noted that this could be considered in the permitting process.

Comment: I noticed today that there is graffiti on the interpretive displays around the lake.

Response: Carrie thanked the CSB member for the information and asked that they send any photos.

Question: Will dredging costs cause the marina(s) to go out of business? Is there an economic impact to shoreline businesses? Could the dredge material contain New Zealand mudsnail, if so, can they be put in the watershed if the dredge materials and snails are dried out over time?

Response: The funding and governance recommendations do not assume there would be an increase in costs for the marinas and Port of Olympia; but that those entities would continue to contribute the level of funding consistent with what would be required for maintenance dredging under a No Action Alternative. There could be a transition to a shared governance structure which is described in Chapter 2. Additionally, drying out dredge material is one way to address the mudsnail problem, but it would require a lot of available space and time and is not assumed in the Draft EIS.

Comment: I believe the analysis is well prepared and suggest that CSB members review the Executive Summary that has helpful links to certain portions of the DEIS.

Response: Thank you for your comment.

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Comment: I want to congratulate the project team in completing the Draft EIS and express my appreciation for the Community Sounding Board Process.

Response: Thank you for your comment.

Closing Remarks

Carrie provided closing remarks and thanked the group for attending and the great discussion.

Adjourn

Susan adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.