

Alliance for a Healthy South Sound (AHSS) Executive Committee Meeting
July 1, 2024, 4:00 - 5:00PM
Virtual Teams Meeting



Executive Committee Members

Jani Hitchen, Pierce County
David Troutt, Nisqually Indian Tribe
Daniel Kuntz, Squaxin Island Tribe
Kevin Shutty, Mason County

Additional Attendees:

Tom Kantz, Pierce County
Scott Steltzner, Thurston County
Elizabeth McManus, AHSS LIO
Haley Morris, AHSS LIO

Meeting Summary

The Alliance Executive Committee met virtually on June 1, 2024. Four of six members were present. Discussion was as follows.

1. Priorities for the remainder of the 2023/24 LIO contract year (through September 2024).

Executive committee members directed the following lines of work in addition to core LIO coordination activities.

Non-profit South Sound Science Center Scoping Discussion. The objective is to determine whether a non-profit South Sound Science Center would be beneficial / of interest to AHSS partners and determine what would be involved in establishing such a center, including potential funding sources. A Center might focus on marine and nearshore science needs in the South Sound as a complement to the work that Lead Entities often coordinate in the freshwater systems. The Committee discussed the potential for a new non-profit or the potential to house a center within an existing South Sound nonprofit (e.g., the Nisqually Reach Nature Center or the Estuarian). The [Skagit Co-Op](#) was mentioned as an example

Next steps:

- Framing interviews with key AHSS partners to gauge interest and better define the opportunity / need
- Brief assessment of existing South Sound non-profits or other partners that might be candidates to “house” a science center
- Brief compilation of examples of similar organizations from other places in Puget Sound – how were they formed, what do they do, how are they funded.
- Brief assessment of potential funding sources / pathways (work with PSP Strategic Funding Team on this)
- Compile options for next steps
- Summarize findings and options for presentation to the Executive Committee and further direction

Community forest opportunities. There is increasing interest in the potential to establish additional community forests in the South Sound, building on the Nisqually Community Forest example. Areas in the upper Deschutes and in the upper Kennedy-Goldsborough were mentioned. The objective is to “be ready” if parcels of interest become available.

Next steps:

- Framing interviews with a few key AHSS partners to define the opportunity / need (likely both Tribes, and local land trusts at least, potentially others)
- Identification (on the landscape) of areas of interest for a community forest (if appropriate; or could seek funding for this)
- Brief assessment of potential funding sources / pathways (work with PSP Strategic Funding Team on this)
- Compile options for next steps
- Summarize findings and options for presentation to the Executive Committee and further direction

2. Funding for On-Site Septic Work

The Puget Sound Partnership is going to make approximately \$180,000 available to each LIO to fund high-priority work coming out of the LIO OSS Action Plans. The Executive committee provided the following direction on this funding.

- Focus the funding on work to address hotspots that are impacting Tribal treaty harvest, with a goal of maximizing the difference we can make on the ground to harvest with this investment (Example: Henderson Inlet; other hotspots would also be identified).
- Use the existing South Sound Clean Water Partners agreements as a way to distribute the funding to subrecipients (likely the local health jurisdictions) to be efficient.

Next steps:

- Work with local health jurisdictions and other partners to complete the spreadsheets on OSS needs for PSP
- Work with tribal technical leads and other partners (in the LHJ potentially) on a process to identify hotspots that are impacting Tribal shellfish harvest and a set of criteria (or other process) to identify hotspots to recommend to the Executive Committee for action
- Summarize findings and recommendations for Executive Committee consideration and further direction (we would work to time this so the Executive Committee could give direction on selection of hotspots before the funding is available so we would have a clear path forward for funding distribution)

3. AHSS Leadership.

Commissioner Shutty shared that he will be leaving office at the end of the calendar year so a new chair will need to be elected. David Troutt is the current Vice Chair.

4. Next meeting

- The next meeting is scheduled for September 9 from 3:30 – 4:30
- Tentatively planning for an in-person meeting at Nisqually in October.