	FFF IOC Meeting Agenda – Single Purpose meeting March 8, 2023 3:00 AM – 4:30 PM TEAMS	
	Meeting Goals: Finalize the King County Comp Plan update recommendations. Identify concepts for a letter to the Executive in support of FFF and to recommend the updated comprehensive plan policies.	
3:00-3:05	1. Welcome, Introductions and Service Recognition	Joan Lee
3:05-4:00	<ul> <li>2. Comprehensive Plan Update <ul> <li>a. Recommended consensus language from Comp Plan Subcommittee, Angela Donaldson, Chair</li> <li>b. Statement of consensus recommendation (Angela)</li> <li>c. Brief review of changes that brought to consensus (Murph)</li> <li>d. Motion/Second to recommend</li> <li>e. Discussion</li> <li>f. Decision</li> <li>g. Raise a cup of coffee or tea or wholesome water if we get to consensus!</li> </ul> </li> <li>Materials: Draft comp plan policy and brief table of changes</li> </ul>	Michael Murphy & Joan Lee
	<ul><li>3. Next Steps</li><li>a. Deadlines (Murph)</li><li>b. Letter to the Executive</li><li>Materials: Draft letter to the Executive</li></ul>	Michael Murphy & Joan Lee
4:15-4:25	4. If time: Ex-Officio Member Updates/Around the Table	Ex Officio Members/IOC members
4:25- 4:30 4:30	Public input Adjourn	Joan Lee

# Snoqualmie Fish, Farm, Flood 2.0 Implementation Oversight Committee

# **DRAFT MEETING NOTES**

Wednesday, December 7, 2022 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm (scheduled) Zoom Video Conference Call

Committee Members Present (Y/N)  * = denotes caucus co-chair						
Fish Caucus		Farm Caucus		Flood Caucus		
Cindy Spiry, Snoqualmie Tribe* (proxy: Matt Baerwalde - Y)	Y	Bobbi Lindemulder, farmer*	Y	Angela Donaldson, Fall City Community Association*	Y	
Denise Krownbell, Snohomish Forum	Y	Lauren Silver, Snoqualmie Valley Preservation Alliance	Y	Lara Thomas, City of Duvall	N	
Micah Wait, Wild Fish Conservancy	N	Meredith Molli, Agriculture Commission	N			
Daryl Williams, Tulalip Tribes (proxy: Kurt Nelson – N)	Y	Libby Reed, Sno Valley Tilth	Y			
Rick Shaffer, Snoqualmie Forum	Y	Liz Stockton, King Conservation District	Y			
Ex Officio Members Present (Y/N)						
Gary Bahr, WSDA	Y	Kirk Lakey, WDFW	Y			
Josh Baldi, KC DNRP	Y	Tom Buroker, WDOE (proxy: Joe Burcar – Y)	Y			

# I) Call to Order & Welcome Activity / Updates

Facilitator Tamie Kellogg began the meeting at 12:35 pm.

# a) Welcome

Kayla Eicholtz of the state Department of Ecology was introduced as the new regional floodplain planner, who also helps with national flood insurance program.

# b) FFF Written Updates - Questions

There were no questions posed by those present.

#### c) Updates and Ouestions – Josh Baldi

- King County's River and Floodplain Management Section (RFMS) team has updated Councilmember Sarah Perry on their work in the Snoqualmie Valley on behalf of the Flood Control District (FCD).
- A group including Lauren Silver, Wayne Gullstad, and Beth leDoux provided an update last week on the buffer task force to Ruth Musgrave, Natural Resources Senior Policy Advisor in Governor Inslee's office. There is a keen interest in FFF work in this space. Musgrave was impressed, but made it clear something that requires this much work may not emerge in legislation anytime soon and this discussion may go on for a while. Musgrave was offered a field visit to the Snoqualmie Valley and expressed interest in doing so.
- Baldi singled out Angela Donaldson's leadership, specifically on work on the King County Comprehensive
  ("Comp") Plan. Baldi thanked Donaldson and all who have contributed input on the plan and corresponding
  letter to the Executive. Anyone with feedback for the floodplain citizen partner group should also contact
  Donaldson.

# II) Comprehensive ("Comp") Plan Update, Future FFF Engagement, and Letter to Executive

Angela Donaldson has led a subcommittee to propose updates to the King County Comp Plan – specifically policies R649, R650, and R650A – in relation to FFF. The group has met several times since February and looks to send their work to the Executive with a clear consensus. This will include a motion to approve the comp plan narrative and policy revisions as written or amended, then moving on.

Donaldson motioned that the IOC approve the narrative and policy language updates as written. Cindy Spiry seconded the motion, which was followed by a lengthy discussion.

Discussion first focused on a perceived discrepancy in R650 between narrative and policy on the matter of the Multi-Disciplinary Review Committee (MDRC), a non-permitting collaborative project review process: whether the MDRC would be just for projects in the APD, or in any unincorporated area of the county where habitat or floodplain restoration projects may reduce farmland. Michael Murphy of DNRP offered to clarify language to state the MDRC

would apply in all areas of King County. There was a concern voiced that the County would struggle with setting up a land use tracking system to document farmland outside of APDs.

Discussion shifted to concern voiced by several IOC members, that the County may be "overstepping" in policy language asking to extend the MDRC beyond the Snoqualmie Valley. Murphy said the MDRC would apply to unincorporated areas where the three "fish, farm, and flood" interests converge, but not everywhere in the county. Josh Baldi added this is not intended to impose, but to create an option; to try to operationalize best practices and be more thoughtful and engaging earlier in the project process. A concern was also voiced on increasing difficulty in getting habitat projects permitted outside of APDs, that the IOC isn't looking to do MDRC reviews outside of APDs. Donaldson explained current R650 language already applies to all APDs, not just the Snoqualmie, that the only issue being broadened in the subcommittee's requested language change is to go beyond APDs.

Donaldson asked for a show of IOC hands on how many members wanted the MDRC process relevant specifically to APDs, not other parts of unincorporated King County. Three fish caucus members raised their hands. A few farm caucus members noted there is power in taking what's learned from the Snoqualmie FFF process and applying it elsewhere, that the MDRC can help move projects forward and find benefits to all three "Fs" in areas outside the APDs. It was also noted that about 40% of farming in King County happens outside the APDs and that having a place to farm outside the APDs is key for agriculture.

Baldi explained the MDRC process will happen in WLRD internally regardless of FFF. Baldi further clarified the intent of FFF is not to impose on all of King County, but offer a recommendation for the Snoqualmie, and beyond that would be in the hands of WLRD. WLRD can make recommendations to the Executive about what should be implemented elsewhere. Tamie Kellogg clarified to the IOC that the recommendation on the table was that the collaborative review process would happen in any unincorporated area of the county. Kellogg noted any points of disagreement could be called out in the Executive letter or referred to caucus co-chairs for separate discussion.

After further discussion, it was agreed to vote on the R650 language as originally proposed, with none of the edits offered by the fish caucus prior to today's meeting.

Angela Donaldson made a motion to approve R650 as written. Bobbi Lindemulder seconded the motion. The motion passed with a vote of six yeas to three nays.

It was noted the three "nay" voters would likely have approved the motion if the language on unincorporated areas in the first paragraph of R650 had been removed. A concern was voiced about how the MDRC process could increase delays for habitat restoration projects.

Discussion then moved to the R650A language. Much of this discussion focused on the setting of acreage targets for protecting farmland and for habitat projects, as indicated in the original FFF agreement. However, details for this goal were not clearly outlined in language of the original 42 FFF actions. Angela Donaldson explained not much is changing here, but the IOC does have a duty to update the language. This language states the IOC wants support/funds for FFF to continue, and that acreage targets for protecting farmland – but not necessarily habitat restoration – need to be determined, as guided by policy R649, and the County should support this for other APDs if needed.

There was some discussion as to the benefit toward larger FFF goals to try to define specific acreage targets now, especially given the ongoing effects of climate change. Further discussion from the fish caucus leaned toward removing a targeted habitat restoration acreage, that it isn't really a significant issue for them. Farm caucus members supported this revision as long as they still got farmland acreage targets from the agriculture strategic plan task force, citing this is key to tracking farmland loss. Joan Lee, acting DNRP FFF project manager, stressed that a fundamental point in the original FFF agreement was agreeing that everyone at the table would come to agreement at some point on farm acreage.

Before agreeing to switch discussion to the Executive transmittal letter, Donaldson asked for a motion to approve R650A as written. Libby Reed made the motion, with Donaldson seconding. The motion passed with two nays and one abstention. The nay voters explained their sticking point against voting "yea" was discomfort with putting maximum acreage targets on farmland used for habitat restoration projects.

Donaldson noted a voiced concern about voting by majority as opposed to the IOC's traditional consensus method, explaining this vote was largely to gauge where the IOC stands and document what language specifically needs to change. Donaldson expressed reservation about moving disagreement points into the transmittal letter until a clear intent was determined, but felt good about R650 and R650A due to the vote and clear guidance on the language. A few others voiced concern about moving the Executive transmittal letter forward today without a full IOC consensus.

Michael Murphy explained the comp plan timeline, that there is time to revise the language. Policy language needs to be 95% dialed in by April 10, for transmittal to King County Regional Planning. The hope was to get a jump start on this letter to give the Executive time to respond to it before then. What's due on April 10 is all narrative and policy, with no accompanying code. The hard deadline for the language is September, to transmit to Regional Planning for the Executive to transmit to King County Council (KCC). The IOC agreed to schedule one more meeting of the comp plan subcommittee as soon as possible, before the end of the year if feasible, to hash out the remaining disagreement points in this language. Donaldson requested any changes to policy language be specific in what needs to change.

# III) Ex Officio Member Updates

- **Kayla Eicholtz** gave an update on the <u>Flood Control Assistance Program</u> (FCAP). Applications for the 2023-2025 cycle run from mid-February through the end of March. The focus for FCAP this year is competitive planning projects. Workshops on January 11 and 19 will detail more about what is eligible. Priority funding is to be given to projects for underserved or overburdened communities.
- **Daryl Williams** reported on two yet-to-be-filed bills for next month's legislative session, both addressing voluntary stewardship programs (VSP). One bill would allow non-VSP counties to opt into the program late, which if this were to happen with FFF would mean restructuring FFF to fit the VSP mold. The second bill would apply to counties with VSP programs similar to FFF, and require them to file a plan with the conservation commission for approval, which could also mean more access to state funds. **Gary Bahr** agreed to track these bills as well.
- **Josh Baldi** reported the SEPA scoping comments for the King County flood plan are due this Friday, and asked Joan Lee to send out info to FFF members who wish to comment on this. Baldi noted that while the conversation at today's IOC meeting didn't necessarily land where they all wanted, these discussions still very much influence the way of thinking about this work under WLRD.

# IV) Public Input/Adjourn (Tamie Kellogg)

There was no public input.

The meeting ended at 2:32 pm.

### From Agricultural Strategic Plan Draft as of 03-08-2023

Farmable classification is land that can be readily farmed. Farmable includes the sub-categories of currently farmed, fallow, and agriculture infrastructure.

*Currently Farmed* - Actively being farmed by the 214 commercial farm operations in the SVAPD primarily for forage, livestock, crop, and flower production.

Fallow is designated as farmable ground that is idle and currently not being farmed due to owner or management transition. Owner may need assistance to find farmers to operate on this land. Additional infrastructure improvements may be needed to make this ground productive when it has been fallow over time.

Farm infrastructure includes farm buildings on farm properties such as homes, barns, loafing sheds, manure lagoons, farm access roads, etc.

The river valleys in King County are important natural resource areas for agriculture, salmon habitat, and natural floodplain processes. In compliance with the Growth Management Act, portions of several of these valleys were designated as Agricultural Production Districts to protect land for long term commercial agricultural uses – including the highest quality soils for food production – and to limit conversion of the land to uses that would be incompatible with viable, long-term, commercial agriculture. Because many areas of farmland within Agricultural Production Districts are within floodplains, floodways, or other low-lying areas, the ability to manage drainage and infrastructure to support farming is an important aspect of retaining farmable land and supporting continued agricultural uses within the Agricultural Production Districts.

The same geography covered by Agricultural Production Districts provides salmon habitat protection and restoration opportunities of importance to King County, tribes, and other regional partners. Some of both the highest quality and most degraded salmon habitat in King County is in rivers and streams flowing through Agricultural Production Districts. King County continues to work diligently to restore habitat to advance recovery of depleted salmon stocks, including those species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act, and strives to protect and enhance fish stocks, ecological functions and aquatic habitat in all county waterbodies and floodplain areas, including in floodplains, rivers, streams and wetlands in Agricultural Production Districts. Furthermore, King County continues to work toward recovery of all salmonid species given the nexus of salmonid populations and honoring and sustaining the rights held by the State of Washington and Indian tribes as sovereign trustees for fish, wildlife, and other aquatic resources.

Some of King County's Agricultural Production Districts have vast areas of floodways and floodplains. King County is committed to restoring floodplain processes and mitigating flood risks to ensure human health and protect public safety, reduce the risk of property damage, maintain critical infrastructure supporting residents and businesses, and to reduce public and private economic impacts of flood events. As climate change results in more frequent and more damaging floods, agriculture businesses and homes will need increased support for home and agricultural building elevations. Maintaining land use rules that prevent conversions of agricultural land to uses other than habitat restoration or flood protection, will have a co-benefit of limiting new development that may be at increased risk of damage from floods.

King County supports ongoing viability of agriculture, protection, restoration and enhancement of salmon habitat, and actions to reduce flood risks and enhance ecological functions of floodplains, all of which combine to create a resilient landscape in the face of climate change and pressures of population growth. However, because current or proposed land uses supporting one goal may affect advancement of other goals, decision-making about the size and location of habitat and floodplain restoration and agricultural infrastructure projects can be challenging. The 2012 Comprehensive Plan update added policy R-650 that directed the County to develop an approach to improving and balancing the interests of agricultural production, ecological function and habitat quality for salmon, and flood risk reduction and floodplain restoration within each of the Agricultural Production Districts. In response, the County and partners piloted a planning effort focused on the Snoqualmie Valley Agricultural Production District by convening the Snoqualmie Valley Fish, Farm, and Flood Advisory Committee with the goal of understanding

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context and improving balance in King County's work to advance multiple objectives. As a result of the ongoing efforts of the Snoqualmie farm, fish, flood process, the County has begun to operationalize recommendations, 48 including recommendations for a revised administrative process for reviewing proposed projects and programmatic actions in locations where agriculture, fish habitat, and floodplains intersect.

The revised administrative review process will occur in a watershed context by considering information from a variety of sources, including four task forces convened based on recommendations from the Snoqualmie farm, fish, flood effort:

Buffers Task Force and Buffer Implementation Task Force recommendations for use of King County funds to implement voluntary, science-based, variable-width riparian plantings;

- Snoqualmie Valley Agricultural Production District Strategic Plan Task Force to consider strategies to improve the long-term productivity of farmland, bring more acres into production, especially food production, and increase opportunities for farmers to develop the necessary infrastructure to support or increase their farm businesses in the Snoqualmie Valley; and
- Regulatory Task Force, to evaluate and recommend improvements to regulations to promote a viable agricultural economy and maintain and enhance habitat protection and healthy ecosystems.

While these task forces were developed with a specific focus on the Snoqualmie Agricultural Production District, the lessons learned have informed principles which guide how the County works to achieve multiple benefits through projects and programmatic actions implemented in other Agricultural Production Districts and all areas of unincorporated King County where agriculture, salmon habitat, and floodplains converge.

Additionally, the revised administrative review process should consider recommendations from relevant plans completed by King County and partner organizations related to salmon recovery, agriculture, drainage, floodplain management, climate change, forest management, comprehensive and subarea planning, transportation and other relevant plans. The revised administrative review process should incorporate and promote multi-objective thinking wherever possible.

As King County implements and continues to refine its revised administrative process for reviewing proposed projects and programmatic actions in a watershed context, King County should establish minimum acreage targets for both agricultural lands and floodplain and riparian habitat project area, with the goal of ensuring enough land of each type remains available to support ongoing agricultural viability, ecosystem resilience, and species recovery. Targets should be based on best available science and recent relevant planning efforts. King County shall periodically review and adjust as necessary any such targets in the context of climate change, best available science, and recommendations from relevant plans. In conjunction with setting minimum acreage targets, King County should consider means to avoid, minimize, and if practicable, mitigate losses to farmable land commensurate with regulations applicable to aquatic resources.

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Using recommendations from the Snoqualmie Valley Fish, Farm, and Flood Advisory Committee, King County has revised the process for reviewing projects in a watershed context, which is described in revised policy R-650. This process will apply to projects sponsored by the Water and Land Resources Division in all Agricultural Production Districts as well as unincorporated areas outside Agricultural Production districts where fish, farm and flood interests converge, and may be invoked for other projects if requested by project sponsors. Revised policy R-650 outlines the minimum required elements of an administrative review process for habitat and floodplain restoration capital projects and programs sponsored by the King County Water and Land Resources Division where fish, farm and flood interests intersect. When planning and implementing projects of all types, King County should consider watershed context and strive for consistency with recommendations in relevant plans related to salmon recovery, agriculture and floodplains. Specifically, for projects sponsored by the Water and Land Resources Division in areas where farms, fish habitat and floodplains overlap, the review process should:

- Formalize and standardize consistent, transparent, and efficient collaboration among County programs as well as with community partners;
- Incorporate Farm, Fish, Flood principles into King County operating procedures by guiding projects toward maximizing multiple benefits when possible, and providing rationale when projects will likely favor one benefit to the detriment of another;
- Be informed of impacts and benefits to farm, fish, and flood hazard mitigation;
- Engage project sponsors early in the planning phase to fully explore opportunities for increased multiobjective gains; and
- Be conducted as efficiently as possible.

The purpose of the review process shall be to develop recommendations to the Water and Land Resources Division director to inform their decisions about approvals of locations, scope, and scale of proposed projects, with the overarching goal for project outcomes to result in continued gains with respect to the viability of agriculture, ecological benefits, and preservation or restoration of resilient landscapes. Additionally, the County should periodically engage agricultural communities and habitat and flood partners as the review process is implemented to discuss continued refinements to the process.

The review process may also be conducted for projects sponsored by entities other than the Water and Land Resources Division, including those that facilitate infrastructure and drainage improvement projects on privately owned farmland to support continued long-term commercial agricultural uses within Agricultural Production Districts.

The Snoqualmie Valley Fish, Farm, and Flood Advisory Committee process and associated planning work has been instrumental in King County and partners learning how to balance needs of agriculture, salmon recovery, and floodplain management in a collaborative manner considering watershed context. As a result, implementing targeted

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planning efforts in all Agricultural Production Districts is no longer required for other Agricultural Production Districts.

King County shall continue to support the Snoqualmie Valley Fish, Farm, and Flood Advisory Committee until the level of progress envisioned at the formation of the committee is substantially complete, and King County should consider supporting similar collaborative efforts in other geographies when residents and partners request a localized planning effort. In its ongoing work in the Snoqualmie Valley and other geographies, the County shall seek to develop strategies, plans, and agreements that accommodate multiple methods of achieving balance in benefits to farming, fish habitat and flood risk reduction efforts (e.g. avoidance/minimization of impacts, onsite mitigation efforts, offsite offsets, etc.) King County should use lessons learned from its work in the Snoqualmie Valley to inform planning and decision-making processes in other APDs, with careful consideration given to issues specific to the Agricultural Production District in question. The Director of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks shall determine the level of support King County provides for Snoqualmie Valley Fish, Farm, and Flood Advisory Committee or similar efforts in other geographies. These recommendations are reflected in a revised policy R-650a.

R-649

King County, through implementation of projects and programs, shall ensure sufficient land within Agricultural Production Districts remains available to support long term viability of commercial agriculture and that its programmatic and project actions support the maintenance or improvement of drainage and other agricultural support infrastructure. To the maximum extent practicable, King County should tailor measures to protect threatened or endangered species to support continued operation of working farms within the Agricultural Production Districts, and should strive for outcomes consistent with goals King County may establish for optimal area of productive agricultural lands within the Agricultural Production Districts.

Agriculture must remain the predominant use in any Agricultural Production District and aquatic habitat or floodplain restoration projects, as well as King County Mitigation Reserves Program projects, shall not reduce the ability to farm in the Agricultural Production District. Until the county implements a collaborative planning and review process in a watershed context as described in R-650, such projects are allowed only when supported by owners of the land where the proposed project is to be sited. Criteria to be considered:

a. For a project proposed to be sited on lands that are unsuitable for direct

agricultural production purposes, such as portions of property that have not historically been farmed due to soil conditions or frequent flooding, and which cannot be returned to productivity by drainage maintenance,

b. For a project proposed to be sited on lands suitable for direct agricultural production:

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(1) there are no unsuitable lands available that meet the technical or locational needs of the proposed project, and

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(2) the project is included in, or consistent with, an approved Water Resources Inventory Area Salmon Recovery Plan, relevant agricultural plans, Flood Hazard Management Plan or other similar watershed scale plan; or the project would not reduce the baseline agricultural productivity within the Agricultural Production District.

The county shall administer a collaborative review process considering watershed context for projects sponsored by the Water and Land Resources Division in any unincorporated area of the County where habitat, or floodplain restoration project may result in reducing the amount of land available for farming, as well as for drainage improvement programs or other land-based agriculture infrastructure projects that may affect habitat or floodplain function.

The review process shall be administered by the Water and Land Resources Division and strive for balance in outcomes that achieve co-equal goals of maintaining and improving suitability of land for agricultural productivity, increasing habitat quality, and restoring floodplains and ecological function. The review process should:

- occur early in the planning process for projects, and at regular intervals for ongoing programs;
- consider guidance from relevant plans relating to agriculture, salmon recovery, and floodplains;
- · consider efforts for advancing multiple resource interests;
- track on-the-ground changes in land cover relative to farmland and habitat restoration areas, focused on impacts to agricultural lands and fish populations;
- consider input and recommendations resulting from engagement and input from external partners and subject matter experts; and
- identify and address barriers to efficient implementation.

The review process may be offered for projects and programs sponsored by King County agencies aside from the Water and Land Resources Division, or for projects and programs sponsored by external entities.

King County should continue to refine its process for working in a watershed context and reviewing projects and programmatic actions in Agricultural Production Districts and other geographies within King County where farm, fish, and flood interests converge. In its ongoing implementation and refinement efforts, King County shall consider findings from relevant internal and external plans and seek input from tribes, farmers, agricultural organizations, conservation organizations, salmon recovery organizations, other property owners and community members, and the Snoqualmie Valley Fish, Farm, Flood Implementation Oversight Committee.

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R-650

**R-650a** 

The County shall continue to support the Snoqualmie Valley agricultural production district farm, fish, flood effort through completion of the task forces and establishment of measurable goals for agriculture, habitat restoration, and floodplain restoration for the Snoqualmie Valley Agricultural Production District. The director of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks shall determine King County's level of support. The county shall continue to document lessons learned to guide collaborative planning and review processes in a watershed context for projects and programs in other geographies with the co-equal goals of balancing farm, fish, and flood interests where farms, fish habitat and floodplains overlap, as well as strategies for avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating losses of farmable land, floodplain functions, and habitat functions.

Until the county completes the collaborative process to determine minimum acreage targets for both agricultural lands and floodplain and riparian habitat project area in the Snoqualmie Valley APD develops evaluation criteria including climate change, a tracking system for the amount of agricultural land used for habitat restoration projects, and establishes a decision-making process to guide all future changes of agricultural land to habitat projects, the criteria in R-649 for siting habitat projects in Agricultural Production Districts shall apply.

The county should support planning efforts similar to the Snoqualmie Valley Fish, Farm, and Flood Advisory Committee in other geographies if and when the county and partners choose to pursue such efforts in a particular Agricultural Production District or other area of the county.

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23-Jan-23 Line numbers

Line numbers	A :		
(in 'All Markup' view) 18-19	Original language King County continues to work toward recovery of all salmonid species given the nexus of salmonid populations with tribal treaty rights.	New language King County continues to work toward recovery of all salmonid species given the nexus of salmonid populations and honoring and sustaining the rights held by the State of Washington and Indian tribes as sovereign trustees for fish, wildlife, and other aquatic resources.	Rationale for change Agreed upon language after discussions among King County tribal liaison and Snoqualmie Tribe staff, with input from other tribes, as well.
26-27	Maintaining land use rules preventing conversions of agricultural land to other uses will have a co-benefit of limiting new development that may be at increased risk of damage from floods.	Maintaining land use rules that prevent conversions of agricultural land to uses other than habitat restoration or flood protection will have a co-benefit of limiting new development that may be at increased risk of damage from floods.	clarifying edit re benefits of preventing certain uses on ag land
46-50	including three task forces convened based on recommendations from the Snoqualmie farm, fish, flood effort:  •Buffers Task Force, to develop science-based recommendations for a policy that encourages voluntary riparian plantings using variable-width riparian recommendations;	including four task forces convened based on recommendations from the Snoqualmie farm, fish, flood effort: •Buffers Task Force and Buffer Implementation Task Force recommendations for use of King County funds to implement voluntary, science-based, variable-width riparian plantings;	Added buffer implementation task force and revised language for clarity
70 and 74-75	As King County implements and continues to refine its revised administrative process for reviewing proposed projects and programmatic actions in a watershed context, King County should establish acreage targets for both agricultural lands and floodplain and riparian habitat project area  In conjunction with setting acreage targets,	As King County implements and continues to refine its revised administrative process for reviewing proposed projects and programmatic actions in a watershed context, King County should establish minimum acreage targets for both agricultural lands and floodplain and riparian habitat project area,	Adds word "minimum" to reflect that targets may change through time (e.g. we could realize we need more). Also adds climate to context considered.
82-83	reviewing projects in a watershed context, which is described in revised policy R-650. This process will apply to projects sponsored by the Water and Land Resources Division in all Agricultural Production Districts	reviewing projects in a watershed context, which is described in revised policy R-650. This process will apply to projects sponsored by the Water and Land Resources Division in all Agricultural Production Districts as well as unincorporated areas outside Agricultural Production districts where fish, farm and flood interests converge,	Clarified in narrative that review of WLRD projects will occur in all geographies where overlaps exist, not just in APDs
164-167	R 650The county shall administer a collaborative review process considering watershed context for projects sponsored by the Water and Land Resources Division in any unincorporated area of the County where habitat or floodplain restoration project may result in reducing the amount of land available for farming.	R 650The county shall administer a collaborative review process considering watershed context for projects sponsored by the Water and Land Resources Division in any unincorporated area of the County where habitat, or floodplain restoration project may result in reducing the amount of land available for farming, as well as for drainage improvement programs or other land-based agriculture infrastructure projects that may affect habitat or floodplain function.	Clarification regarding how drainage programs participate in the review process.
178-180	•track cumulative on-the-ground changes in land cover relative to acreage targets for farmland and habitat restoration areas;	•track on-the-ground changes in land cover relative to farmland and habitat restoration areas, focused on impacts to agricultural lands and fish populations;	Removes "cumulative" requirement, which would raise questions about when to start; specifies land cover is of interest; removes mention of acreage targets.
195-197	In its ongoing implementation and refinement efforts, King County shall consider findings from relevant internal and external plans and seek input from tribes, farmers, agricultural organizations, conservation organizations, salmon recovery organizations, and other property owners and community members.	In its ongoing implementation and refinement efforts, King County shall consider findings from relevant internal and external plans and seek input from tribes, farmers, agricultural organizations, conservation organizations, salmon recovery organizations, other property owners and community members, and the Snoqualmie Valley Fish, Farm, Flood Implementation Oversight Committee.	Adds specific mention of SVFFFIOC in list of who should be involved in onging refinement of review process
211-215	Until the county completes the collaborative process to determine the maximum amount of agricultural land that may used for habitat restoration projects in the Snoqualmie Valley APD, and considers habitat recovery goals, develops evaluation criteria, a tracking system for the amount of agricultural land used for habitat restoration projects, and establishes a decision-making process to guide all future changes of agricultural land to habitat projects, the criteria in R-649 for siting habitat projects in Agricultural Production Districts shall apply.	Until the county completes the collaborative process to determine minimum acreage targets for both agricultural lands and floodplain and riparian habitat project area in in the Snoqualmie Valley APD, develops evaluation criteria including climate change, a tracking system for the amount of agricultural land used for habitat restoration projects, and establishes a decision-making process to guide all future changes of agricultural land to habitat projects, the criteria in R-649 for siting habitat projects in Agricultural Production Districts shall apply.	Adjusts language to be consistent with minimum acreage targets terminology for target setting.

The river valleys in King County are important natural resource areas for agriculture, salmon habitat, and natural floodplain processes. In compliance with the Growth Management Act, portions of several of these valleys were designated as Agricultural Production Districts to protect land for long term commercial agricultural uses including the highest quality soils for food production - and to limit conversion of the land to uses that would be incompatible with viable, long-term, commercial agriculture. Because many areas of farmland within Agricultural Production Districts are within floodplains, floodways, or other low-lying areas, the ability to manage drainage and infrastructure to support farming is an important aspect of retaining farmable land and supporting continued agricultural uses within the Agricultural Production Districts.

The same geography covered by Agricultural Production Districts provides salmon habitat protection and restoration opportunities of importance to King County, tribes, and other regional partners. Some of both the highest quality and most degraded salmon habitat in King County is in rivers and streams flowing through Agricultural Production Districts. King County continues to work diligently to restore habitat to advance recovery of depleted salmon stocks, including those species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act, and strives to protect and enhance fish stocks, ecological functions and aquatic habitat in all county waterbodies and floodplain areas, including in floodplains, rivers, streams and wetlands in Agricultural Production Districts. Furthermore, King County continues to work toward recovery of all salmonid species given the nexus of salmonid populations and honoring and sustaining the rights held by the State of Washington and Indian tribes as sovereign trustees for fish, wildlife, and other aquatic resources.

Some of King County's Agricultural Production Districts have vast areas of floodways and floodplains. King County is committed to restoring floodplain processes and mitigating flood risks to ensure human health and protect public safety, reduce the risk of property damage, maintain critical infrastructure supporting residents and businesses, and to reduce public and private economic impacts of flood events. As climate change results in more frequent and more damaging floods, agriculture businesses and homes will need increased support for home and agricultural building elevations. Maintaining land use rules that prevent conversions of agricultural land to uses other than habitat restoration or flood protection, will have a co-benefit of limiting new development that may be at increased risk of damage from floods.

King County supports ongoing viability of agriculture, protection, restoration and enhancement of salmon habitat, and actions to reduce flood risks and enhance ecological functions of floodplains, all of which combine to create a resilient landscape in the face of climate change and pressures of population growth. However, because current or proposed land uses supporting one goal may affect advancement of other goals, decision-making about the size and location of habitat and floodplain restoration and agricultural infrastructure projects can be challenging. The 2012 Comprehensive Plan update added policy R-650 that directed the County to develop an approach to improving and balancing the interests of agricultural production, ecological function and habitat quality for salmon, and flood risk reduction and floodplain restoration within each of the Agricultural Production Districts. In response, the County and partners piloted a planning effort focused on the Snoqualmie Valley Agricultural Production District by convening the Snoqualmie Valley Fish, Farm, and Flood Advisory Committee with the goal of understanding

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context and improving balance in King County's work to advance multiple objectives. As a result of the ongoing efforts of the Snoqualmie farm, fish, flood process, the County has begun to operationalize recommendations, 48 including recommendations for a revised administrative process for reviewing proposed projects and programmatic actions in locations where agriculture, fish habitat, and floodplains intersect.

The revised administrative review process will occur in a watershed context by considering information from a variety of sources, including four task forces convened based on recommendations from the Snoqualmie farm, fish, flood effort:

Buffers Task Force and Buffer Implementation Task Force recommendations for use of King County funds to implement voluntary, science-based, variable-width riparian plantings;

- Snoqualmie Valley Agricultural Production District Strategic Plan Task Force to consider strategies to improve the long-term productivity of farmland, bring more acres into production, especially food production, and increase opportunities for farmers to develop the necessary infrastructure to support or increase their farm businesses in the Snoqualmie Valley; and
- Regulatory Task Force, to evaluate and recommend improvements to regulations to promote a viable agricultural economy and maintain and enhance habitat protection and healthy ecosystems.

While these task forces were developed with a specific focus on the Snoqualmie Agricultural Production District, the lessons learned have informed principles which guide how the County works to achieve multiple benefits through projects and programmatic actions implemented in other Agricultural Production Districts and all areas of unincorporated King County where agriculture, salmon habitat, and floodplains converge.

Additionally, the revised administrative review process should consider recommendations from relevant plans completed by King County and partner organizations related to salmon recovery, agriculture, drainage, floodplain management, climate change, forest management, comprehensive and subarea planning, transportation and other relevant plans. The revised administrative review process should incorporate and promote multi-objective thinking wherever possible.

As King County implements and continues to refine its revised administrative process for reviewing proposed projects and programmatic actions in a watershed context, King County should establish minimum acreage targets for both farmable agricultural lands and floodplain and riparian habitat project area, with the goal of ensuring enough land of each type remains available to support ongoing agricultural viability, ecosystem resilience, and species recovery. Targets should be based on best available science and recent relevant planning efforts. King County shall periodically review and adjust as necessary any such targets in the context of climate change, best available science, and recommendations from relevant plans. In conjunction with setting minimum acreage targets, King County should consider means to avoid, minimize, and if practicable, mitigate losses to farmable land

commensurate with regulations applicable to aquatic resources.

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Using recommendations from the Snoqualmie Valley Fish, Farm, and Flood Advisory Committee, King County has revised the process for reviewing projects in a watershed context, which is described in revised policy R-650. This process will apply to projects sponsored by the Water and Land Resources Division in all Agricultural Production Districts as well as unincorporated areas outside Agricultural Production districts where fish, farm and flood interests converge, and may be invoked for other projects if requested by project sponsors. Revised policy R-650 outlines the minimum required elements of an administrative review process for habitat and floodplain restoration capital projects and programs sponsored by the King County Water and Land Resources Division where fish, farm and flood interests intersect. When planning and implementing projects of all types, King County should consider watershed context and strive for consistency with recommendations in relevant plans related to salmon recovery, agriculture and floodplains. Specifically, for projects sponsored by the Water and Land Resources Division in areas where farms, fish habitat and floodplains overlap, the review process should:

- Formalize and standardize consistent, transparent, and efficient collaboration among County programs as well as with community partners;
- Incorporate Farm, Fish, Flood principles into King County operating procedures by guiding projects
  toward maximizing multiple benefits when possible, and providing rationale when projects will likely favor
  one benefit to the detriment of another;
- Be informed of impacts and benefits to farm, fish, and flood hazard mitigation;
- Engage project sponsors early in the planning phase to fully explore opportunities for increased multiobjective gains; and
- Be conducted as efficiently as possible.

The purpose of the review process shall be to develop recommendations to the Water and Land Resources Division director to inform their decisions about approvals of locations, scope, and scale of proposed projects, with the overarching goal for project outcomes to result in continued gains with respect to the viability of agriculture, ecological benefits, and preservation or restoration of resilient landscapes. Additionally, the County should periodically engage agricultural communities and habitat and flood partners as the review process is implemented to discuss continued refinements to the process.

The review process may also be conducted for projects sponsored by entities other than the Water and Land Resources Division, including those that facilitate infrastructure and drainage improvement projects on privately owned farmland to support continued long-term commercial agricultural uses within Agricultural Production Districts.

The Snoqualmie Valley Fish, Farm, and Flood Advisory Committee process and associated planning work has been instrumental in King County and partners learning how to balance needs of agriculture, salmon recovery, and floodplain management in a collaborative manner considering watershed context. As a result, implementing targeted

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planning efforts in all Agricultural Production Districts is no longer required for other Agricultural Production Districts.

King County shall continue to support the Snoqualmie Valley Fish, Farm, and Flood Advisory Committee until the level of progress envisioned at the formation of the committee is substantially complete, and King County should consider supporting similar collaborative efforts in other geographies when residents and partners request a localized planning effort. In its ongoing work in the Snoqualmie Valley and other geographies, the County shall seek to develop strategies, plans, and agreements that accommodate multiple methods of achieving balance in benefits to farming, fish habitat and flood risk reduction efforts (e.g. avoidance/minimization of impacts, onsite mitigation efforts, offsite offsets, etc.) King County should use lessons learned from its work in the Snoqualmie Valley to inform planning and decision-making processes in other APDs, with careful consideration given to issues specific to the Agricultural Production District in question. The Director of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks shall determine the level of support King County provides for Snoqualmie Valley Fish, Farm, and Flood Advisory Committee or similar efforts in other geographies. These recommendations are reflected in a revised policy R-650a.

R-649

King County, through implementation of projects and programs, shall ensure sufficient land within Agricultural Production Districts remains available to support long term viability of commercial agriculture and that its programmatic and project actions support the maintenance or improvement of drainage and other agricultural support infrastructure. To the maximum extent practicable, King County should tailor measures to protect threatened or endangered species to support continued operation of working farms within the Agricultural Production Districts, and should strive for outcomes consistent with goals King County may establish for optimal area of productive agricultural lands within the Agricultural Production Districts.

Agriculture must remain the predominant use in any Agricultural Production District and aquatic habitat or floodplain restoration projects, as well as King County Mitigation Reserves Program projects, shall not reduce the ability to farm in the Agricultural Production District. Until the county implements a collaborative planning and review process in a watershed context as described in R-650, such projects are allowed only when supported by owners of the land where the proposed project is to be sited. Criteria to be considered:

a. For a project proposed to be sited on lands that are unsuitable for direct agricultural production purposes, such as portions of property that have not historically been farmed due to soil conditions or frequent flooding, and which cannot be returned to productivity by drainage maintenance, or

b. For a project proposed to be sited on lands suitable for direct agricultural production:

(1) there are no unsuitable lands available that meet the technical or locational needs of the proposed project, and

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(2) the project is included in, or consistent with, an approved Water Resources Inventory Area Salmon Recovery Plan, relevant agricultural plans, Flood Hazard Management Plan or other similar watershed scale plan; or the project would not reduce the baseline agricultural productivity within the Agricultural Production District.

The county shall administer a collaborative review process considering watershed context for projects sponsored by the Water and Land Resources Division in any unincorporated area of the County where habitat, or floodplain restoration project may result in reducing the amount of land available for farming, as well as for drainage improvement programs or other land-based agriculture infrastructure projects that may affect habitat or floodplain function.

The review process shall be administered by the Water and Land Resources Division and strive for balance in outcomes that achieve co-equal goals of maintaining and improving suitability of land for agricultural productivity, increasing habitat quality, and restoring floodplains and ecological function. The review process should:

- occur early in the planning process for projects, and at regular intervals for ongoing programs;
- consider guidance from relevant plans relating to agriculture, salmon recovery, and floodplains;
- · consider efforts for advancing multiple resource interests;
- track on-the-ground changes in land cover relative to farmland and habitat restoration areas, focused on impacts to farmable agricultural lands and fish populations;
- consider input and recommendations resulting from engagement and input from external partners and subject matter experts; and
- identify and address barriers to efficient implementation.

The review process may be offered for projects and programs sponsored by King County agencies aside from the Water and Land Resources Division, or for projects and programs sponsored by external entities.

King County should continue to refine its process for working in a watershed context and reviewing projects and programmatic actions in Agricultural Production Districts and other geographies within King County where farm, fish, and flood interests converge. In its ongoing implementation and refinement efforts, King County shall consider findings from relevant internal and external plans and seek input from tribes, farmers, agricultural organizations, conservation organizations, salmon recovery organizations, other property owners and community members, and the Snoqualmie Valley Fish, Farm, Flood Implementation Oversight Committee.

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R-650

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**R-650a** 

The County shall continue to support the Snoqualmie Valley agricultural production district farm, fish, flood effort through completion of the task forces and establishment of measurable goals for agriculture, habitat restoration, and floodplain restoration for the Snoqualmie Valley Agricultural Production District. The director of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks shall determine King County's level of support. The county shall continue to document lessons learned to guide collaborative planning and review processes in a watershed context for projects and programs in other geographies with the co-equal goals of balancing farm, fish, and flood interests where farms, fish habitat and floodplains overlap, as well as strategies for avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating losses of farmable land, floodplain functions, and habitat functions.

Until the county completes the collaborative process to determine minimum acreage targets for both agricultural lands and floodplain and riparian habitat project area in the Snoqualmie Valley APD develops evaluation criteria including climate change, a tracking system for the amount of farmable and unfarmable agricultural land used for habitat restoration projects, and establishes a decision-making process to guide all future changes of farmable agricultural land to habitat projects, the criteria in R-649 for siting habitat projects in Agricultural Production Districts shall apply.

The county should support planning efforts similar to the Snoqualmie Valley Fish, Farm, and Flood Advisory Committee in other geographies if and when the county and partners choose to pursue such efforts in a particular Agricultural Production District or other area of the county.

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# **Snoqualmie Fish Farm Flood Implementation Oversight Committee**

March 8, 2022

The Honorable Dow Constantine King County Executive 401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 800 Seattle, WA 98104

RE: Support for King County Comprehensive Plan Update and Commitment to Ongoing Work of the Snoqualmie Fish Farm Flood Implementation Oversight Committee

Dear Executive Constantine:

The purpose of this letter is to request that our consensus recommended revisions to Comprehensive Plan Policies R-640, R-650, and R-650a be included in your recommended 2024 update.

The Snoqualmie Fish, Farm, Flood (FFF) Implementation Oversight Committee (IOC) is a collaborative watershed planning process that was first contemplated in the 2012 Comprehensive Plan and convened by you in late 2013. The IOC is comprised of thirteen individuals of diverse backgrounds and perspectives, including local farmers as well as representatives of the Tulalip and Snoqualmie tribes, the King Conservation District, the Wild Fish Conservancy, the City of Duvall, the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum, the Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Forum, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington State Department of Ecology, and Washington state Department of Agriculture, the King County Agriculture Commission and the Snoqualmie Valley Preservation Alliance.

Initially, the FFF focus was on achieving your charge that we develop a balanced set of recommendations that would guide progress across critical priorities of protecting farmland, restoring habitat, and reducing flood risks in a shared landscape. Those recommendations were shared in June of 2017 and continue to influence our work and the County's efforts. Central to those recommendations was the "bundling" of fish and farm progress to ensure that both areas progressed commensurately and received sustained County investment. Since 2018, the IOC has focused on ensuring such balanced implementation continues, with available resources focused on top IOC priorities.

The recommended Comp Plan policy revisions are based on our experience since 2018 and are intended to provide greater clarity toward restoring habitat to aid salmon recovery, preserving farmland to support farm operations, and reducing flood risk for farmers and other Snoqualmie Valley residents. To arrive at consensus recommendations, the FFF IOC convened a sub-committee that met over 7 times since 2022 to conduct a thorough assessment of the Comprehensive Plan narrative and policies that have guided the IOC effort. The subcommittee's consensus recommendations were subsequently reviewed and adopted by the FFF IOC (Attachment A).

For the polices to result in positive outcomes, there are several aspects of County service provision that we would like to call to your attention:

 A way to compare progress for both fish and farms is through the nexus language of acreage lost or gained. While measuring acreage imperfectly captures impacts to functions for either farms or fish, it does provide a way to measure and analyze progress. We recommend the County establish a **process to set minimum acreage targets** for agriculture and habitat and establish a tracking process to monitor and communicate changes over time.

- There were over 40 action items recommended in the initial FFF 2017 recommendations. We would appreciate a work plan that provides clarity on the County capacity and commitment to make sustained progress to complete those actions. Of particular interest are the following:
  - Ability to implement recommendations of the soon to be completed Agricultural Land Resource Strategic Plan
  - o Complete the Buffer Implementation Task Force now underway
  - o Establish a comprehensive funding strategy for implementation of FFF recommendations
  - Continue to support the Integrated Drainage Program building on the success and lessons learned from the Griffin Creek Pilot Project
  - Request the Executive consider appointing a representative from the Watershed Improvement District (WID) as an official IOC advisory committee member and a commensurate addition of membership from the fish community per the 2017 agreement
  - Request the presence of an FCD representative
- The County obtained federal funding and is now in the process of completing a 2Dimensional Hydraulic model for the entire Snoqualmie Valley. We appreciate County staffing and effort to complete that work. We also recommend that findings of the modelling effort be included in the County's Flood Hazard Management Plan currently underway.
- Commitment that the Snoqualmie FFF process will continue to have support through the next biennium, including at a minimum two annual meetings: one to present CIP concepts, designs or upcoming construction in or affecting the Snoqualmie Valley, and to review FFF progress on recommendations.

Getting to agreement around priority recommendations and guidance language was a rewarding effort and seeing implementation of these actions is even more meaningful. The Committee wishes to thank you for the privilege of serving on the IOC and commends and appreciates your ongoing commitment to these critical priorities. The dedication from the Executive branch and leadership at WLRD spurs the IOC members to remain enthusiastic toward balanced solutions and innovation in the watershed planning context. We would particularly like to recognize the work of two individuals: Tamie Kellogg who served as a consultant to the County from the first meeting in late 2013 through 2022; and Michael Murphy whose remarkable skill allowed the intent of the IOC to be woven into the words of the recommended policies.

Sincerely,

The Honorable Dow Constantine December 7, 2022

Angela Donaldson, CFM
FFF Flood Caucus Chair, FFF Comp Plan Sub-Committee Chair

Bobbi Lindemulder FFF Farm Caucus Chair

Cindy Spiry, Snoqualmie Indian Tribe FFF Fish Caucus Chair

cc: Christie True, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)

Josh Baldi, Division Director, Water and Land Resources Division (WLRD), DNRP Megan Smith, Deputy

Director, WLRD, DNRP

Joan Lee, Manager, Rural and Regional Services Section (RRSS), WLRD, DNRP Curt Crawford, Manager, Stormwater Services Section (SWS), WLRD, DNRP John Brosnan, Strategic Planning Manager, SWS, WLRD, DNRP

Janne Kaje, Regional Partnerships Unit Supervisor, RRSS, WLRD, DNRP Richard Martin, Environmental Programs Managing Supervisor, WLRD, DNRP

# FFF IOC Members - Updated 12/2/22

	IOC		
Name	Member?	Organization/Affiliation	Email Address
Angela Donaldson	Yes	Flood IOC Rep	kcfloodgirl@gmail.com
Josh Baldi	Yes	KC DNRP/Ex Officio	josh.baldi@kingcounty.gov
Bobbi Lindemulder	Yes	Farmer	chucknbob@aol.com
Cindy Spiry	Yes	Snoqualmie Tribe	cindy@snoqualmietribe.us
Daryl Williams	Yes	Tulalip Tribes	darylwilliams@tulaliptribes-nsn.gov
Denise Krownbell	Yes	Seattle Public Utilities	denise.krownbell@seattle.gov
Gary Bahr	Yes	WSDA/Ex Officio	gbahr@agr.wa.gov
Lara Thomas	Yes	Flood IOC Rep	lara.thomas@duvallwa.gov
Meredith Molli	Yes	Ag Commission rep	MeredithMolli@gmail.com
Micah Wait	Yes	Fish IOC Rep	Micah@wildfishconservancy.org
Rick Shaffer	Yes	WRIA 7 Forum/City of Duvall	rick.shaffer@duvallwa.gov
Lauren Silver	Yes	SVPA	Lauren@svpa.us
Kirk Lakey	Yes	WDFW/Ex Officio	kirk.lakey@dfw.wa.gov
Libby Reed	Yes	Sno Valley Tilth	libby@snovalleytilth.org
Tom Buroker	Yes	WA DOE/Ex Officio	Thomas.buroker@ecy.wa.gov
TBD	Yes	King Conservation District	