

Talking Points – September 27, 2006 WA Biodiversity Council meeting and field trip

Habitat Farming Enterprise Concept: Design a pilot riparian habitat incentive program targeting tree fruit growers in Chelan County that would remunerate them for the opportunity costs of converting some specified portion of their holdings into riparian habitat and maintaining that habitat for an agreed upon period of time to support both the tree fruit industry and improved riparian habitat for the area. The program would help growers succeed economically and promote retention of family farms while providing a framework to quantify contributions to improved habitat and biodiversity.

LANDOWNER PERSPECTIVE (Jim Small)

- Positives:
 - **Enhance Agricultural Profitability:**
 - Pilot could provide regulatory certainty/risk reduction for growers, provide win-win route to compliance with existing mandates (e.g. pesticide spray issues);
 - Provide alternative ways to preserve ag land
 - **Enhance Landowner Stewardship:**
 - Increase awareness and use of conservation farming practices
 - Provides growers with way to measure results/outcomes and show their contribution to habitat improvements
 - **Encourage/Sustain Positive Working Relationships:**
 - Increase communication and cooperation among community growers and other stakeholder groups,
 - Creates opportunities for growers to be recognized for their ability to enhance biodiversity and contribute to salmon recovery by doing what they do best -- farming and being good land stewards.
 - **Achieve Innovation and Sustainability**
 - This type thinking is needed to create “paradigm shift” necessary for long-term change and success
 - Pilot effort could potentially be scaled-up or replicated for use across larger areas/ag sectors.
- Challenges:
 - **Overcoming traditional methods and thinking**
 - This is not another “Ag Lease” program -- it’s an enterprise.
 - Traditional appraisal methods of highest and best use will likely not reach the level of compensation needed to encourage grower participation -- Need new methods but can be difficult to develop these.

BIOLOGIC PERSPECTIVE (Phil Archibald)

- Positives:
 - **Helps Achieve Regulatory Standards**
 - Temperature (EPA/WDOE 4(b) -- CWA, Forest Plan),
 - Overall water quality
 - **Address salmonid limiting factors**

- Habitat complexity (promote LWD recruitment, enhance off-channel rearing)
- **Improve overall watershed health**
 - Corridors of connectivity to benefit upland species
 - Adaptation of riparian pilot in future for upland/wildlife benefits
 - Improved function of hydrologic processes such as flooding, channel migration, and woody debris jams; no longer viewed as “threats”
- Challenges:
 - How to measure and value the contribution to salmon recovery and biodiversity
 - Overcoming fears that participation will increase “regulatory burden”
 - Creating sustainable, natural habitat that does not require frequent “maintenance”

WATERSHED PLANNING PERSPECTIVE (Sarah Walker)

- Positives:
 - **Furtheres ongoing work of Entiat Watershed group**
 - Builds on over 12 years of locally-led planning that started with CRM process, grew into state watershed planning process, etc.
 - Maintains tradition of “out of the box” thinking, collaboration to find win-win solutions to issues.
 - **Puts new tools in the toolbox**
 - Shows community that thinking/development of new approaches is occurring so can adapt to deal with changing issues/markets/land uses
 - Pilot, visible on-the-ground efforts essential to sustain and generate new community support and participation
 - **Meets objectives of Entiat Watershed Plan**
 - Enables “implementation accounting” tied to recommendations in watershed plan -- accountability to public, funding entities, watershed planning partners.
 - Provides mechanism for quantifying improvements; tied to effectiveness monitoring and adaptive management
- Challenges:
 - **Funding**
 - Grant opportunities that support pilot initiatives can be limited; partnerships are essential
 - Need to identify how to find long-term funding support, explore options such as clean water credits/mitigation banking, etc.
 - **Human capital**
 - “Innovation isn’t easy” -- more time consuming in the beginning; no road map
 - Need trust and participation of local growers and good technical team -- collaboration/think tank

REGIONAL SALMON RECOVERY PERSPECTIVE (Bob Bugert)

- Positives
 - **Supports implementation objectives of regional recovery plan**
 - **Other...**

Contact Information

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