

**Whatcom County  
Council Climate Action and Natural Resources Committee**

**COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
311 Grand Avenue, Ste #105  
Bellingham, WA 98225-4038  
(360) 778-5010**



**Committee Minutes - Draft Minutes**

**Tuesday, December 3, 2024**

**1 PM**

**Hybrid Meeting - Council Chambers**

**HYBRID MEETING (PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON, SEE REMOTE JOIN  
INSTRUCTIONS AT [www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil](http://www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil), OR CALL  
360.778.5010)**

**COUNCILMEMBERS**

Todd Donovan  
Kaylee Galloway  
Mark Stremler

**CLERK OF THE COUNCIL**

Cathy Halka, AICP, CMC

## **Call To Order**

Committee Chair Kaylee Galloway called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. in a hybrid meeting.

## **Roll Call**

**Present:** 3 - Todd Donovan, Kaylee Galloway, and Mark Stremler

Also Present: Barry Buchanan, Tyler Byrd, Ben Elenbaas, and Jon Scanlon

## **Announcements**

### **Special Presentation**

1. [AB2024-672](#) Report from the Parks and Recreation Department

Bennett Knox, Parks and Recreation Department Director, read from a presentation (on file) about completed capital projects, and current and upcoming planned activities. He answered a question about the additional costs to reimburse the Department of Ecology for some of their expenses related to their activities with the Plantation Range project, and stated the amount is \$70,000 to date.

Donovan spoke about the money in the Capital Improvement Plan that is going into the Plantation Rifle Range and asked why it is a priority over other capital projects. He asked where they are going with this project.

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, stated the direction they got in the last several years (before telling Council about the lead problems) is that they should restore the range. The former Parks director had brought up the possibility of lead contamination in the past but they never knew until they got into it. He stated it is a leased property and at this point, even if the County sells it or does not renew the lease, they still have to clean it. If they fix it, they have to decide what to do with the lease and would like Council direction.

Galloway recommended that they schedule about half an hour at the next Climate Action and Natural Resources meeting for this topic.

Knox answered whether he has an update on Smith Creek and Lake Whatcom, and stated Public Works has prepared a draft management plan for Smith Creek, and Parks has reviewed that and provided comments. He spoke about incorporating that plan into Lake Whatcom planning as a whole.

**This agenda item was REPORTED.**

2. [AB2024-758](#) Report from Washington State University Extension

Cheryl Lovato Niles, WSU Extension, read from a presentation (on file) about the two main program areas (sustainable landscaping outreach and support for the Whatcom Watersheds Information Network) that are supported by the County and their respective activities.

**This agenda item was REPORTED.**

3. [AB2024-803](#) Presentation from the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (NSEA) regarding the South Fork River Stewards 2024 Final Report

John Thompson, Public Works Department, introduced the presentation and gave background on the Southfork River Stewards program.

Sarah Brown, Stewardship Program Manager for Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (NSEA), read from a presentation (on file) on the background of the program, data and survey results that were collected for 2024, and recommendations from NSEA based on what they learned.

Scanlon asked if they recommend continuing the recreation ban for 2025 and beyond, and Brown stated the watercraft closure is definitely effective in reducing floaters on the river based on what they have seen. She stated she would leave the recommendations and the reasoning behind the closure to the co-managers that encouraged that review, but it seemed effective.

Scanlon stated he hopes they are thinking about the impact on businesses and what else they can do to bring people into the area so those businesses can do well.

**This agenda item was PRESENTED.**

### **Items Added by Revision**

There were no agenda items added by revision.

### **Other Business**

There was no other business.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1:48 p.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL  
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

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Cathy Halka, Council Clerk

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Kaylee Galloway, Committee Chair

Meeting Minutes prepared by Kristi Felbinger