

**FAUNTLEROY WATERSHED COUNCIL**  
**Meeting #42, September 10, 2009, 7 PM, Fauntleroy Church**

**ATTENDEES**

Watershed volunteers: Judy Pickens, Steev Ward, Steve Bomkamp, Dennis Hinton

Fauntleroy Church: Randy Sleight

Fauntleroy Community Association: Phil Sweetland

Seattle Public Utilities: Kathy Minsch

Seattle Parks: Carol Baker

Department of Ecology: Sinang Lee

Guest: Paige Heggie, People for Puget Sound

Facilitator: Randy Sleight

Scribe: Dennis Hinton

**NOTES:**

**1. Introductions**

**2. March minutes**

Approved as circulated.

**3. Treasurer's report**

Dennis Hinton reported \$2,051.69 in the Council checking account. He summarized research over the summer confirming that our getting an interest-bearing checking account is not feasible at this time.

**4. In the media**

Dennis reported watershed mentions in the West Seattle Blog over the summer, the most recent concerning stench in Fauntleroy Cove.

**5. Agency updates/news**

Seattle Parks: Carol Baker reported as follows:

- The kiosk destined for the 97th Street entrance to Fauntleroy Park has not been installed because of budget cuts but she is hoping it can be moved yet this year.
- Parks is involved in a coastal clean-up program this month that will include Alki but will not go as far as Lincoln Park.
- Regarding wayfinding signage in the park, Parks' carpentry shop estimated a cost of \$350 to provide each post ready for the installation of text plaques. Cost for the six we have planned would be \$2,100, plus the cost of getting plaques that fit recessed areas on each post. We have no budget for this project. Carol mentioned the possibility of a Department of Neighborhoods grant; based on recent experience, Judy advised going that route only as a last resort. She said that David Follis is looking for a local supplier of the posts, in hopes of saving the cost of shipping from back east.

*NOTE: David reported the day after the Council meeting that a similar post made of recycled material is available locally but the cost would be similar to what Parks quoted.*

Seattle Public Utilities: Kathy Minsch updated the council on a variety subjects:

- The city's Shoreline Master Program is being updated, with Maggie Glowacki as lead planner. For the first time, it will include a characterization of shorelines and a restoration plan. A draft for public comment should be available by November.

***Action item: Judy Pickens will put the draft Shoreline Master Program update on the November agenda to begin Council comment.***

- The Stormwater Code update has gone to City Council committee, with a public hearing to follow soon.
- Like other city departments, SPU staff will take 10 furlough days this coming year, one of many cost-cutting measures. In lieu of supporting the work of WRIA 9 with cash, SPU will provide a staffing team, including Kathy and Katherine Lynch.
- Upcoming events noted in the first edition of the Restore Our Waters e-newsletter:
  - *Puget Sound Starts Here*, a regional outreach campaign focusing on car washing, pet waste, and natural yard care including reducing pesticide use.
  - Green Seattle Day on November 7.
  - Idea out of the Watershed Forum to post minutes of all watershed councils on a FaceBook or similar site. Judy noted that someone needs to choose one and provide a primer on using it securely.

***Action item: Judy will contact Susan Harper about choosing one site for exchange of minutes with other watershed councils.***

State Department of Ecology

Sinang Lee reported on planning toward crafting the Saltwater Algae Program funded with \$140,000 from the last legislative session. Similar to the state's program for freshwater algae, half the money has been earmarked for research and half for seaweed removal, using a grant process. Grant applications for removal must come from beach management districts, a process established by an earlier legislative session whereby local residents would establish a district and tax themselves for its activities. Municipalities or districts would need to provide a 25-percent match.

Judy pointed out that creating such a district assumes that those being taxed are responsible for the excess nutrients that cause algae blooms, an assumption that cannot be made where currents flow freely in the Sound. As a consequence, she does not foresee that Fauntleroy Cove residents will be interested in investing time and money in establishing a district. Sinang suggested that the Council and community association could support research applications that will enlarge scientific knowledge *and* have a haul out component.

***Action item: Judy will review procedures for beach management districts and offer perspective to the Fauntleroy Community Association board.***

## **6. Special projects**

Rain barrel demonstration project: Paige Heggie from People for Puget Sound reported that a grant has been secured from King County for a pilot rain-barrel project in our watershed, aimed at interesting homeowners in helping reduce stormwater flow into Puget Sound. The grant provides 20 rain barrels, plus adapters and soaker hoses, and the project must be completed by year's end. After discussion, the council devised a two-part plan:

- One barrel will be set up at a Fauntleroy Church downspout in a high-traffic area during the Oct. 18 Fauntleroy Fall Festival. Paige will take the lead in demonstrating how it works and encouraging people to attend a subsequent backyard demonstration. We will try to offer folks a discount coupon to purchase barrels on their own. The barrel will be left at the church as ongoing encouragement for using this water-quality technique.
- The remaining barrels will be reserved for homeowners on Forest Court, where residents live directly above a creek tributary and, in an SPU project some years ago, proved to be very interested in natural yard care. One household will be the demonstration site for an event in early November. Paige and the demonstration household will determine how barrels are distributed to participants.

***Action item: Judy will coordinate with Paige and contract Council members Jed and Megan Moore and David and Cathy Follis about hosting the event on Forest Court.***

***Action item: Kathy will check into getting discount coupons through SPU.***

***Action item: Randy Sleight will clear the project with the church's facilities committee.***

Cascade Bike Ride: Judy reported that she and Susan Harper looked into hosting some type of watershed display for a Restore Our Waters ride to come through Fauntleroy on Sept. 20 but the logistics did not work out.

Fall Festival activity and displays: Judy said that space is reserved at the festival for the Council's ever-popular salmon hat-making activity for young children. Sinang reported that she will be bringing a new water-quality game devised by Ecology staff that spotlights such pollutants as pet waste.

## **7. Upper-watershed projects/news**

Fenton Glen restoration: Judy reported that planning is under way, now that the construction season is over for the engineering firm.

## **8. Lower-watershed projects/news**

Feet First wayfinding kiosks: Phil Sweetland reported that three informational kiosks are now in the works for the neighborhood as part of a larger, West Seattle project. All will include information about area history, flora and fauna, and things to do; the one nearest the ferry terminal will contain information about the watershed. Text is still in draft stage. Planned locations are adjacent to the north end of Lincoln Park, near the ferry terminal, and in the commercial area.

Reach-to-beach plant monitoring: As part of city grant requirements, Kathy and Judy recently toured the area with homeowners Elizabeth Butler and Chris Kim. Concerns about the influx of watercress and evidence of reed canary grass near the beach, plus displacement of rocks by river otter, are being addressed, with advice coming from project consultants. Monitoring will continue for another year, until the grant expires in October 2010.

2009 Salmon Watch: Dennis reported that fishers are seeing better-than-average runs of coho following the pinks into the Straits, so the prospects for coho spawners in the creek are good this year. Time to gear up for Salmon Watch 2009! It will be Oct. 26 through about Thanksgiving. Judy noted that Sherry Richardson, who has ably recruited watchers during the fall festival, is not available this year because of illness in the family. Steev Ward stands ready to check carcasses, assuming that the city will not be affording weekly checks by Wild Fish Conservancy (*confirmed*). Judy said that SPU is having a citywide training event but training for specific procedures used here will happen on site.

***Action item: Judy will contact veteran watchers about participating again and use the West Seattle Blog, our website, and other media to call for new volunteers.***

## **9. Education projects/news**

Arbor Heights upper-creek macro study: Judy reported that, in the wake of this summer's untimely death of 5th-grade teacher Lynn Barnicle, continuance of this research by Arbor Heights is somewhat in question. If the new teacher is not interested, Gatewood might want to do it.

***Action item: Judy will contact the replacement teacher and offer assistance if he is interested in continuing the project. If not, she will contact Gatewood.***

Annual research project for Gatewood: Judy followed advice from Parks to check out "nature mapping," a protocol for collecting information about wildlife and including that data in city, state, and national databases. It appears to be the way to go but is too complex and time-consuming for Judy to learn in order to be able to offer it to Gatewood, and technical assistance is not available from Parks.

***Action item: Judy will contact Gatewood to see if something can be worked out to continuing offering students an opportunity to do real science that benefits them and the watershed.***

**10. Events/good of the order**

**Oct. 18: Fauntleroy Fall Festival**, 3-7 PM, at the church/YMCA/schoolhouse

**Oct. 25: Annual drumming** to call the salmon home, 5 PM at the fish-ladder viewpoint, with storyteller Randy Sleight!

**Next meeting: 7 PM, Thursday, November 12, @ Fauntleroy Church**