



CAPITOL LAKE – DESCHUTES ESTUARY

Long-Term Management Project Environmental Impact Statement

Meeting Summary

Date: May 17, 2021

Time: 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Location: Zoom

Topic: Community Sounding Board Meeting

Meeting Participants

Community Sounding Board Members in Attendance

- Sandy Cashman
- Clara Hard
- Jeanette Laffoon
- Doug Mah
- Alanna Matteson
- Allen Miller
- Cory Miller
- David Nicandri
- Sue Patnude
- Drew Phillips
- Kathi Rafferty
- Alicia Rose
- Steve Shanewise
- Meg Vanschoorl
- Robyn Wagoner
- Jenny Wilson
- Robert Wubbena
- Nancy Zabel

Community Sounding Board Members not in Attendance

- Joel Hansen
- Jack Mongin
- Gretchen Nicholas
- Stuart Reed
- Nancy Stevenson
- Bruce York

Department of Enterprise Services

- Carrie Martin
- Ann Larson
- Bill Frare
- Linda Kent

EIS Project Team

- Tessa Gardner-Brown, Floyd|Snider
- Ray Outlaw, Floyd|Snider
- Karmen Martin, ESA
- Susan Hayman, Ross Strategic
- Tori Bahe, Ross Strategic

Meeting Summary

Opening Comments and Review of Agenda

Bill Frare and Carrie Martin, Washington Department of Enterprise Services (Enterprise Services), welcomed the participants to the Community Sounding Board (CSB) meeting. Susan Hayman, facilitator, reviewed the agenda and provided reminders on virtual meeting conduct.

EIS Process Update and Next Steps

Tessa Gardner-Brown began the discussion by noting the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is anticipated to be published on June 30, 2021. Tessa reviewed the contents of the Draft EIS:

- Project Background and History
- Project Alternatives and Construction Approach
- Existing Conditions and Affected Environment
- Long-Term Impacts, Benefits, and Mitigation
- Short-Term Impacts and Mitigation
- Cumulative Effects
- Planning-Level Costs
- Funding, Governance, Work Groups, and Community Sounding Board
- Permits and Approvals for Implementation of a Preferred Alternative

Question: How is climate mitigation woven in?

Response: Tessa noted that climate mitigation is woven into the Draft EIS. The numerical model, which described how sediment and water are expected to move, incorporated climate change projections and provide the basis for many analyses.

Comment: Is there any data on methane release relative to greenhouse gases?

Response: Tessa replied yes. and at a high-level this will be included in the Draft EIS.

Question: Does the freshwater option for the Hybrid reflecting pool still have a path forward to become the preferred alternative?

Response: Tessa noted that yes, it could be incorporated into the Preferred Alternative. Like the other design components, it would have been evaluated further. It is not currently included in the Hybrid Alternative.

Question: If it is not one of the three current alternatives, how could it become the preferred alternative?

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Response: Tessa further explained that the freshwater reflecting pool is addressed in the Draft EIS and therefore within the scope of the effects analysis. However, the concept would require significant agency review if selected as the preferred alternative, including a draw-down and public interest test with or for the Washington State Department of Ecology.

Feedback Received on Draft EIS Community Engagement Activities

Ray Outlaw provided additional details on outreach strategies for the Draft EIS public comment period. Ray noted that these strategies will be focused in the months of July and August. Enterprise Services has extended the public comment period from the usual 30 days to 45 days. Virtual events such as an online open house and public hearing will occur during the public comment period. The project team will also have online office hours; and keep the public updated with e-newsletters and other notices. The public can also learn more about the Draft EIS with a self-guided open house in the Parkway and Heritage Park Trail Loop. If groups/organizations are interested, they can request a briefing of the Draft EIS in July.

Ray reviewed a list of CSB feedback received by the project team, and provided responses to the CSB:

- *Question/comment: When and how long will the public comment period be? I think it's great there can be a self-guided tour as a part of the proceeds.*
 - Ray noted that the public comment period will be 45 days.
- *Question: Can you say a bit more about what kind of information will be displayed during the self-guided tour?*
 - Ray said the signs are still being developed but will likely include information about the EIS process, alternatives descriptions, and visual simulations.
- *Question: What signage will be used around the lake to advertise to the public?*
 - Ray described that the signs would advertise that the Draft EIS is available for public review and comment. The current kiosks will be updated, and the project team is seeking other opportunities to install more signs.
- *Question: Is the online open house verbal or just written?*
 - Ray clarified that the online open house does not have a video/audio component. It will be accessible 24 hours, 7 days a week during the comment period.
- *Question: Who will be the "public" targeted? How does the online open house work and what will you offer?*
 - Ray noted that the team has an email list of several thousand stakeholders that they will notify. Ray asked that CSB members reach out to their networks and share the information.

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- *Question: Will questions and comments raised during the online open house and office hours be recorded or documented?*
 - Ray clarified that the online open house will not be recorded, and the platform is not able to accommodate real time responses. Comments submitted through the online open house will be documented with other comments received. Ray anticipates the public hearing will be broadcast on TVW.
- *Question: Could there be opportunities for "technical" discussion concerning the science(s) and methodology used to arrive at conclusions?*
 - Ray noted that there will be opportunities for discussion during the office hours and interest briefings. The CSB and the public can submit technical comments or questions and that is the best way to ensure review by the technical experts on the EIS Project Team.
- *Question: We would like to order several hard copies of the entire Draft EIS through DES. What will be the process, timeline, and cost for that?*
 - Ray noted there will be hard copies of the Draft EIS available for free at the local libraries and at Enterprise Services' office within the Jefferson Building. Due to the high cost of printing, more information will be made available soon on whether we can provide printed copies and the process to receive a printed Draft EIS.
- *Question: For those who did not go through the Scoping Process, please plan to describe how those will work, what will be addressed, etc. Will there be summary presentations and Q&A available in each case?*
 - Ray noted there will not be a formal presentation during the public hearing and the team will dedicate more time to taking public comments. The full record of comments will be made available.

CSB members had additional questions following Ray's review of CSB feedback.

Question: Will the Draft EIS be peer reviewed before or during the public comment period? In particular, a peer review of the engineering and science.

Response: Tessa clarified that an independent review of the water quality and hydrodynamic and numerical modeling, along with the economic analysis, has been completed. The Technical Work Group and Executive Work Group provided input into the selection of the independent expert reviewers.

Question: For the freshwater lake option, did the independent reviewer evaluate the volume of water required for freshwater replenishment?

Response: Tessa replied yes, the expert review included the full water quality analysis for the freshwater reflecting pool concept.

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Question: What is the structure for the briefings?

Response: Ray noted the briefings will be part presentation and part questions and answer period. The presentation will be the same for each group.

Process for Selecting a Preferred Alternative

Tessa reviewed a diagram that depicts the decision-making process, which begins at the Draft EIS development (early to mid-2021) and extends to the funding request (late summer 2022).

Question: I thought the Legislature has fully funded the project, is that correct?

Response: Tessa clarified that the Legislature is fully funding the EIS process and anticipates the next step of design and permitting for the preferred alternative will also be a legislative request. The initial recommendation for the approach to provide construction funding of the preferred alternative is also through the Legislature. Regarding long-term maintenance, those costs could be shared across multiple entities, in addition to the state. There is still a question regarding who and how long-term maintenance will be funded, and this is being evaluated by the funding and governance work group (FGWG).

Question: How does Enterprise Services go about implementing something that is under a lease to them, versus the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR -- landlord analogy)?

Response: Tessa said that at the onset of the project Enterprise Services was determined to be a neutral and objective entity to lead this planning process. This is consistent with the role that Enterprise Services has played in past planning processes. DNR is part of the (FGWG) and has strong influence in these discussions relative to a potential governance model for the preferred alternative. Tessa also noted that DNR is not the only beneficiary. There is a broad group, including local jurisdictions, that could inherit the resource. Carrie noted that the Commissioner of Public Lands also has a seat on the State Capitol Committee, who would be engaged in the decision-making process.

Question: How valued and reliable is this process? Are there examples of similar kinds of complicated processes?

Response: Tessa affirmed that this process could fit within the state environmental policy act and was specifically tailored to this project based on best practices and lessons learned from experiences of the EIS Project Team. This project consistently consults with stakeholders before moving ahead to the next step.

Comment: This process diagram gives no indication of an instance where you might get a decision to return to portions of the analysis—it appears the deliverable is the Final EIS with no actionable decision on the diagram.

Response: Tessa acknowledged that, while no arrow points to a decision, the decision by Enterprise Services would be elevated to the Legislature with the request for funding. She

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noted that such a process is consistent with others, and that the project team has worked diligently to keep legislators informed to create support for action once a decision on the preferred alternative is made.

Proposed Selection Criteria

Susan introduced the review of preferred alternative selection criteria. Before Tessa's review of the criteria, Susan asked the CSB to name one key issue they felt strongly should be considered in the decision-making process. Below are the CSB responses:

- Climate adaptation and resiliency
- Economic viability (e.g., downtown businesses, an attractive draw for the downtown core, and community use)
- Ecosystem restoration for a healthy economy
- Ecosystem services
- Effects of sediment on Budd Bay
- Environmental protection
- Estuary health
- Healthy estuary and public access and use
- Impact to the Wilder and White design of the State Capitol Campus with an open public recreational reflecting lake
- Maintaining or increasing recreational opportunities for the community
- Returning water rights and access to tribal communities
- Salmon health and survival
- Sediment management costs under alternative and economic impact on the marines, port, and other working waterfront entities
- Seeing the river and lake used and enjoyed
- Water quality and climate change resilience

With the CSB identified issues in mind, Tessa provided an overview of the six preferred alternative selection criteria. She noted that many if not all the CSB key issues were embedded within the six criteria.

- A. Performance Against Project Goals
- B. Other Environmental Disciplines with Significant Findings
- C. Environmental Sustainability
- D. Economic Sustainability
- E. Construction
- F. Regional Sustainability

Tessa noted that each selection criteria has a set of more specific sub-criteria. The CSB was asked if their key interests were represented in the selection criteria and to provide any feedback.

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Question: In the Environmental Sustainability criteria, it says “within and outside of Capitol Lake Basin” but the Economic Sustainability criterion does not have that same distinguishing level. When looking at Economic Sustainability, what is the scale?

Response: Tessa noted that for economic impacts, the team is looking at downtown Olympia, the port district, greater Thurston County, and the Capitol Basin.

Question: For the economic impact levels, are they equivalent to the environmental criteria in scope?

Response: Tessa noted the question, and that the team will have an internal discussion and circle back with a response if needed.

Comment: Many of the water quality issues are created in the upper watershed (Deschutes watershed). The interest in downtown housing is increasing, and the lake is a recreational waterfront. We should anticipate further needs, not just evaluate based on current conditions.

Response: Tessa noted that there is a comprehensive water quality review, which recognizes how water quality has changed in the upper watershed. The downtown housing and recreational aspects are referred to in the economic analysis.

Question: Are the ecosystem services in the Draft EIS fully vetted in terms of the economic value of the environment? If the environment does not allow for public access, the economy suffers.

Response: Tessa noted that there is overlap in the analysis regarding ecosystem services and economic impact.

Comment: The “complexification” of this process may result in loss of stakeholder support. These criteria seem highly interpretive, illusive, and may be difficult to build consensus around.

Susan thanked CSB members for their comments and Tessa for her presentation and moved the CSB on to the relative importance activity.

Relative Importance Activity

Susan introduced an activity that would enable the CSB to rank the relative importance of the selection criteria. Two breakout groups reviewed each selection criteria in a pairwise exercise. CSB members determined whether Criteria A or B was most important, then Criteria A or C, and continued until each pair of criteria was evaluated. While consensus was not an intended outcome, there were areas where members in each group converged around the importance of certain criteria. Each breakout group’s individual pairwise exercises can be viewed in the Appendix. As seen in Figure 1, the two groups selected Criteria A (Performance Against Project Goals) most often when comparing importance in the pairwise exercise. Criteria C (Environmental Sustainability) and Criteria D (Economic Sustainability) were among the most frequently selected.

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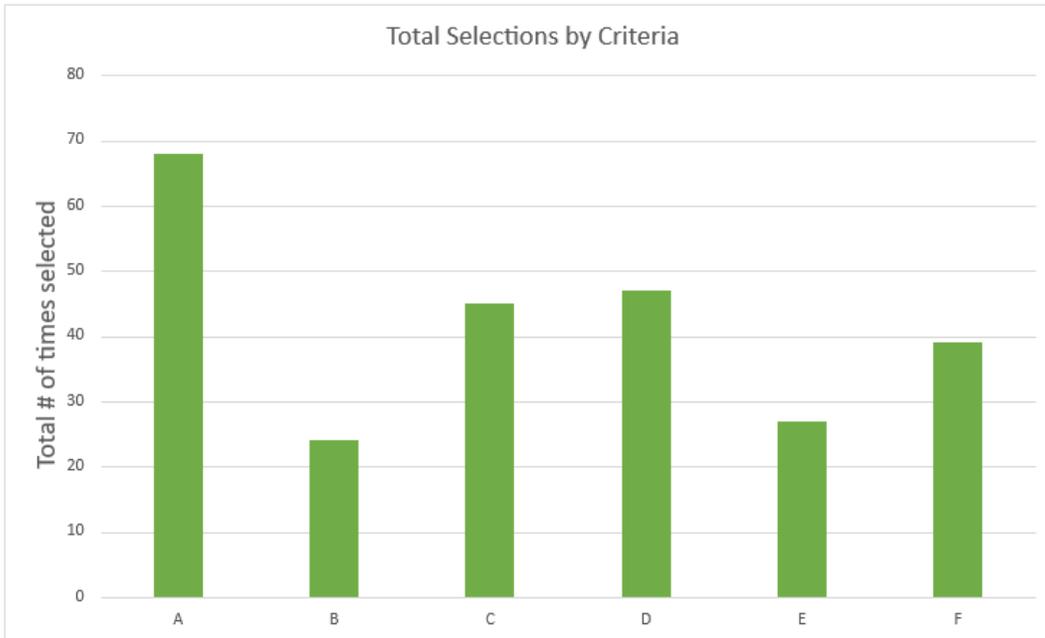


Figure 1: Total selections by criteria from both groups

Susan and Ray reviewed total selections by each group as seen in Figure 2. Overall, the two groups chose similarly in Criteria A and C and diverged with Criteria C, D, E, and F. In terms of overall selection, Criteria A was selected most often followed by Criteria D and C.

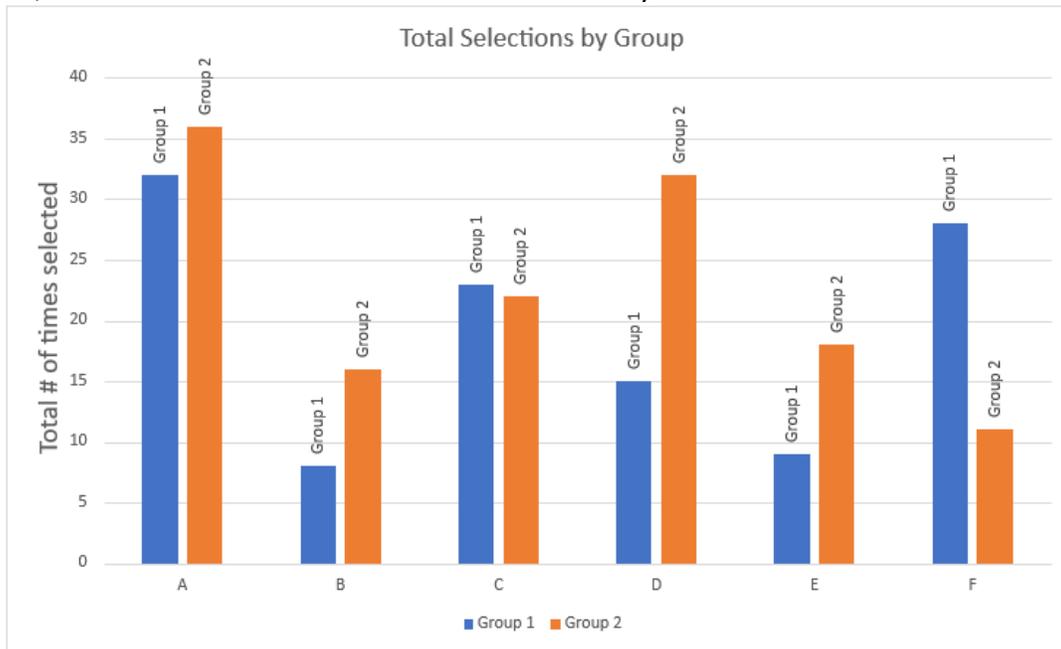


Figure 2: Total selections by each group

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Susan and Ray shared the following key discussion points from their respective groups:

Group 1

- This exercise was challenging for some, due to the overlap among criteria (especially A, B, and C).
- Criterion A was generally thought of as measuring overall project performance across topic areas. Think of overall performance, not a single item. Is the lake performing in a proper way?
- Criterion B seemed specific to certain resources, and in terms of overlap tended to result in A or C being selected as having greater importance.
- Criterion C seemed less connected to performance, and with an evaluation window that felt too long (30 years) to some members. Others supported C because they felt it better emphasized performance over time.
- Criterion D: This criterion was seen as fairly closely connected with Criterion A and C, due to the economic value of ecosystem services.
- Criterion E: Concerns for this criterion were generally respective to duration more than magnitude of the construction impacts.
- Criterion F: This criterion was compelling for many because, regardless of the decision, if the community/stakeholders don't support the decision it won't be successfully implemented, and the project goals won't be realized.

Group 2

- Criterion A was selected the most as the group felt like it was overarching all other criteria; this is also a factor in gaining legislative support.
- Criterion B seemed to encompass a broad range of topics that are potentially related to other topics and therefore was selected less.
- The group agreed that Criterion D was very important because of the history of the project not moving forward; sustaining momentum is critical.
- A and D were selected often, in part, because they were seen as fixed parameters that most stakeholders would understand.
- Criterion E, although selected less often, reflected the opinion that construction costs may be a barrier towards action. However, many agreed that if other criteria are achieved then costs would be less of a challenge.
- Many in the group felt that if other criteria are met then regional sustainability (F) would somewhat naturally occur. For example, if an alternative achieves all four goals in Criterion A and its costs are low, then the region is likely to support the alternative.

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CSB members then shared their thoughts on why certain criteria were or were not selected as frequently.

Comment: Criteria B (Other Environmental Disciplines with Significant Findings) is interesting because the one variable that I consider important, salmon health, is under this criterion. Parts of B are already in A. Criteria A (Performance Against Project Goals) is broader and provides general performance.

Response: Susan noted that Criteria B was important for some members based on specific subtopics.

Comment: Based on the total selections, Criteria A and C were emphasized because they are fixed parameters that stakeholders can understand.

Comment: There is a great deal of faith on what has already been researched and investigated. We would be surprised if something unexpectedly came up, such as a severe crash in salmon health. A great deal of research has already been done. We trust what you have been doing. I think that's why Criteria A came out strongly.

Comment: The group needs to keep in mind that once the EIS process is over, if the decision does not gain widespread community support, I do not think it will get funded through the Legislature. There needs to be support to get funding.

Comment: We should consider Criteria F closely because it opens the process to the subjective opinions of politicians and elected bodies. There can be a lack of commitment with specific outcomes.

Comment: With more complexity and fractured nature, you lose community support. Criteria A is commonly accepted because it is easy to understand. Once you get beyond it, the other criteria are highly complex, and it is harder to build consensus.

Public Comment

Susan provided an opportunity for public comment. There were no public comments offered.

Closing Remarks

Carrie provided closing remarks and thanked the group for attending and the great discussion.

Adjourn

Susan adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

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Appendix

Group 1 Pairwise Exercise

Criteria	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.
A. Performance Against Project Goals						
B. Other Environmental Disciplines with Significant Findings						
C. Environmental Sustainability						
D. Economic Sustainability						
E. Construction						
F. Regional Sustainability						

Group 2 Pairwise Exercise

Criteria	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.
A. Performance Against Project Goals						
B. Other Environmental Disciplines with Significant Findings						
C. Environmental Sustainability						
D. Economic Sustainability						
E. Construction						
F. Regional Sustainability						