

Lorenzan Creek Feasibility Study

Community Workshop – Summary Notes

March 15, 2023
5:30 – 7:30 pm via Zoom
[Link to Recording](#)

Project Team Participants

Skagit County Project Team

- Emily Derenne, Project Co-Manager, Skagit County
- Jason Quigley, Project Manager Support and Stormwater Lead, Skagit County
- Grace Kane, Director of Public Works, Skagit County
- Jenn Johnson, Natural Resources Division Manager, Skagit County

Consultant Team

- Colleen Mitchell, Consultant Team Lead and Stormwater Design Lead, Herrera Environmental Consultants
- Christina Avolio, Consultant Team Stream Restoration Design Lead, Herrera Environmental Consultants
- Hilary Wilkinson, Workshop Facilitator, Triangle Associates
- Melanie del Rosario, Outreach Team, Triangle Associates
- Ellen McClure, Geomorphologist, Herrera Environmental Consultants

Other Participants

- Peter Browning, Skagit County Commissioner
- Marla Reed, Mayor, Town of Concrete
- Lisa Theodoratus, Local Property Owner
- Jon Gunnarsson, Council Member, Town of Concrete
- Carson Moscoso, Fund Coordinator, WA Department of Ecology
- Duncan Pfeifer, Region 4 Habitat Engineer, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Stephanie Semro, Local Property Owner and Town of Concrete Council Member
- Shelby Giltner, Grant Manager, WA Department of Ecology
- Julia Stinson Ebert, Project Manager, WA Department of Ecology
- Scott Heller, Puget Sound Energy
- Melissa Conger, WA Department of Ecology
- Kevin Cricchio, Planning and Development Services, Skagit County
- Robert Stafford, Local Property Owner

Workshop Objectives

The objectives of the workshop were for participants to:

1. Learn about the project goals and meet project team members.
2. Gain a high-level understanding of the project and its current status, including:
 - a. Project timeline,
 - b. Existing conditions analysis,
 - c. Stakeholder engagement to date, including:
 - i. Stakeholder Workshop #1 held in January 2022
 - ii. presentations to County Commissioners (March 1 and Oct 18, 2022)
 - iii. webpage and other communications
 - d. Development of design alternatives, analysis, and evaluation conducted to identify a preferred alternative.
3. Hear details about the preferred alternative, including benefits and potential challenges.
4. Have an opportunity to ask questions about and share input regarding the preferred alternative.
5. Learn about next steps, including future opportunities for input.

Key Takeaways

- After scoring five alternatives against alternative criteria, Alternative 3 had the highest scores for a majority of the categories. Alternative 3 also matched with the feedback from the first stakeholder engagement meeting and feedback from County Commissioners, which is why it is the preferred alternative.
- The majority of participants (16) were supportive of moving forward with Alt. 3 and two participants wanted more information. No participants responded that they were opposed to the Alternative 3.
- The project listserv and [webpage](#) are the best ways to stay informed about this project as it moves forward. Email emilyjd@co.skagit.wa.us to join the listserv.
- The next step for this project is to move towards 30% design, and the ultimate goal is to advance to 100% design and construction.

Topics Covered

See references to slides from the [Workshop PowerPoint](#) or pages from the [Workshop Packet](#) for images and graphics shared at the Workshop.

Project Overview – Presentation from Jason Quigley, Skagit County

- Jason shared a map of the project location – *see slide 6*.
- Jason provided a brief overview of the project goals, which include:
 - Modernize stormwater infrastructure.
 - Source control - controlling sources of pollution on the exterior of the buildings on the property and eliminating any sources that could potentially pollute the stormwater system.
 - Restore fish passage because this is a fish passage barrier – *see slides 8 and 9*.

- Consider impacts to upstream flooding, the project team doesn't want to amplify any flood concerns – *see slide 10*.
- Jason reviewed the step-by-step process for this project including what has been completed already.
 - **Step 1:** Complete existing conditions, including hydrologic and hydraulic modeling (**DONE**)
 - **Step 2:** Develop draft evaluation criteria to help the project team evaluate among alternatives and select a preferred alternative (**DONE**)
 - **Step 3:** Share draft evaluation criteria with stakeholders via poll and revise evaluation criteria based on input (**DONE**)
 - **Step 4:** Develop draft design alternatives (**DONE**)
 - **Step 5:** Hold stakeholder workshop #1 to share project status and solicit input on draft design alternatives (**DONE**)
 - **Step 6:** Refine design alternatives based on stakeholder input (**DONE**)
 - **Step 7:** Apply evaluation criteria to the revised design alternatives and conduct detailed hydraulic modeling of each alternative to allow a preferred alternative to emerge (**DONE**)
 - **Step 8:** Begin design of preferred alternative
 - **Step 9:** Begin permitting of preferred alternative and secure final design funding
 - **Step 10:** Pursue grant funding for construction costs
- Hilary shared Stakeholder engagement efforts to date, which include:
 - **7/12/21:** Project kickoff/site tour
 - **12/6/21:** [Lorenzan Creek Feasibility Study](#) website went live
 - **12/2/21:** Survey sent out to get input on evaluation criteria
 - **1/26/22:** Community Workshop #1
 - **3/15/23:** Community Workshop #2
 - **Ongoing:** Regular Listserv updates. Anyone interested in receiving updates on this project can email emilyjd@co.skagit.wa.us to join the listserv.

Design Alternatives Overview – Presentation by Colleen Mitchell, Herrera

- Colleen discussed the work completed to date in more detail:
 - **Existing Conditions** - The project team conducted cultural resource evaluation in consultation with local tribes, a topographic survey of the site, and completed geotechnical work. They also completed wetland and ordinary high-water mark delineations and worked to define the watershed in the area that's contributing flows to the creek.
 - **Hydrologic and Hydraulic Modeling** - The project team created models to understand the conditions in the creek and help to evaluate potential alternatives.
 - **Draft Evaluation Criteria** - The project team developed criteria to help evaluate whether potential improvements would meet goals of the project.
 - **Draft Design Alternatives** - The project team developed five possible design alternatives.

- **Stakeholder Input** – The project team hosted its first stakeholder workshop to get feedback on draft alternatives and evaluation criteria.
- **Evaluate Criteria** – The project team applied the evaluation criteria to the draft alternatives.
- **Selected Preferred Alternative** – The project team selected a preferred alternative based on the scoring from the evaluation criteria.
- Colleen shared a map of the parcel and an outline of the study area – *see slide 15*
 - The yellow box shows the area of detailed assessment, including wetlands delineations, geotechnical evaluations, cultural resources consultation, and land surveying.
 - The purple line shows the portion of the creek channel where the project team took cross sections and collected data to reinforce modelling data and better understand existing conditions and use the data to inform designs as the project team moves forward.
- Colleen shared the **Evaluation Criteria** used to evaluate the design alternatives.
 - The six categories of evaluation criteria are:
 1. Community
 2. Estimated Cost
 3. Flooding/Geomorphologic Hazard
 4. Habitat and Ecological Significance
 5. Implementation and Operational Complexities
 6. Water Quality
 - Within those six categories, the project team had 31 criteria (*see pg. 4 in the Workshop Packet*). *Some examples of criteria include:*
 1. Thinking about the risk to disturbance of cultural resources.
 2. Thinking about improvements to public access or recreational opportunities.
 3. Educational opportunities.
 4. Implementational and operational complexities. Want to consider whether the future site meets future needs for the County. County staff feel like the current facility may not meet needs in the future.
 5. Construction complexity.
 6. Ease of maintenance.
- Colleen reviewed the five design alternatives developed by the project team (*see pg. 2 in the Workshop Packet*).
- Colleen shared:
 - design drawings for each alternative and highlighted the differences between them – *see slides 20-22*
 - the scoring from the evaluation of the design alternatives using the evaluation criteria – *see slide 23*.
- Everything was rated on a scale of 1 - 5. The green boxes show high scores and red boxes show lower scores. Alternative 3 had the highest scores for a majority of the

categories. Alternative 3 also matched with the feedback from the first stakeholder engagement meeting and feedback from County Commissioners.

Questions and Comments

Q: How encumbered is the site with critical areas and associated buffers? Outside of buffers, how usable is it?

A: Currently the creek is contained within a pipe beneath the site, so there are no buffers associated with that portion of the creek, but the project team may design wetlands and water storage capacity into the site. There are critical areas upstream and downstream of the site. The project team will dig into more detail about the impacts of that in the design process. The existing conditions report and analysis included delineation of the wetlands, streams, and buffers upstream and downstream, so that's a consideration of the project moving forward.

Q: Has the project team looked at the site as far as any possible contamination that may be at the site?

A: The project team took some water quality samples at the site. The old fuel tanks were decommissioned 3 years ago, so they are drained right now. They had previously been routinely tested and shouldn't be a risk. The County is storing sand and salt on site, so the risk is there, but so far the site is not a source of contamination.

Q: Will you need to move contaminated dirt?

A: There are strict standards for what you do if you find contaminated dirt. Testing would be required and visual signs can help suggest if things are contaminated. The project team doesn't know of any contamination now, but if the team finds contaminated soil, it would be hauled away and disposed of properly. During the geotechnical exploration there was no any evidence of contaminated soil.

Q: Alternative 3 includes removal of all structures onsite. Does this include the tank, pump, and petroleum contaminated soils?

A: Yes

Q: What is planned for the east side of Sauk Valley Road? This participant expressed concern that an 8-foot-high culvert would create a hole next to her privately-owned commercial building, and that there could be a large pile of silt blocking the drainage.

A: A requirement for addressing these culverts is to do no harm, so there will not be a large hole left or any silt left behind that would block drainage. This project needs to stay within the road right of way, so anything constructed would be in that footprint. If, for some reason, the County needed additional room right-of-way would be acquired. There may be impacts during construction but nothing long term. Concrete Sauk Valley Rd is the border between the Town of Concrete and Skagit County-owned area, and the sediment in the ditch is within the Town of Concrete. The project team has done a handful of studies that shows that the Skagit County culvert is like the drain of the bathtub. While the downstream crossing is being designed an evaluation of upstream impacts will also be done. One possibility is a larger opening that allows

for sediments to flush through that couldn't before. This will all be assessed in more detail during the design phase.

C: A participant stated that they were told they can't touch anything in the ditch and so the sediment keeps building up and there are a lot of grasses/brush/shrubs. This participant believes they own the property up to 20 feet off the edge of Highway 20. Where you see the green (*slide 22*), is on their property.

A: Later in this presentation when the project team walks through the design process, you'll see that these diagrams are just artistic renderings. It's possible that nothing happens on your property, or it could be that we have discussions about that down the road. Those bigger discussions and final drawings are to come, nothing is set in stone. The design process is where we could get into specific answers.

C: The participant would like to talk more offline to get a better understanding of this process.

Q: Will the modelling of flood impacts be part of the next phase of design?

A: A preliminary model for each alternative has been done to see flood impacts. These were presented at the first workshop, and Christina will go into more detail for Alternative 3 later in this presentation. [The Alternative Analysis Report](#) on the project webpage has more detail.

Alternative #3 Deep Dive – Presentation by Christina Avolio, Herrera Environmental Consultants

Alternative 3: Abandon site use; remove existing infrastructure and impervious surface and maximize the habitat and water quality improvements of the site.

Alternative 3 Scoring

- Christina presented a summary of the scoring for Alternative 3 – *see slide 28*.
 - Alternative 3 scored the highest in 4 out of 6 categories. It had the same score as Alternative 4 for the *implementation* category and scored below Alternative 4 in the *cost* category.
- **Community Category:** Scored high because of opportunities for education and recreation.
 - Because of the level of excavation, there is some risk of cultural resources being exposed. However, the site has been excavated and filled so the overall risk is relatively low. An archaeological monitor will be onsite during all land disturbing activities. If cultural resources are found, work will stop and the project team will follow the guidance outlined in the Cultural Resources Report as well as all applicable State and Federal requirements
 - Shows overall consistency with local plans for promoting environmental access to open space area, so it scored very well here.
 - Images showed artistic renderings of what a park could look like here – *see slide 29*
- **Flooding and Geomorphic Hazard:** Overall this alternative scored well because of its ability to open things up and improve conveyance overall and work with the natural processes of the creek system.

- The project team looked at the hazards posed to structures and properties in the vicinity of the project area, as well as how roadways might be impacted and whether or not the project would potentially improve or increase risk of flooding and erosion along areas like the roadways or embankments.
 - They wanted looked at the potential of the project to impact erosion or impoundment of floodwater against the embankment on Sauk Valley Road.
 - Benefits of this alternative are reduced flooding and improved geomorphic conditions in the reach of Lorenzan Creek immediately upstream. It would give the creek more opportunity to store water and sediment in that area.
 - Christina shared hydraulic modeling results – see *slide 31*. The model shows a 10-year occurrence event, something that happened recently. The top image shows existing conditions and the bottom image shows conditions with Alternative 3 in place. Darker colors show decrease in flood depth, red shows increase in flood depth compared with the baseline conditions shown above. Alternative 3 would not change conditions upstream of the road crossing. The Concrete Road culvert just downstream of the project site has been identified as a barrier for fish passage as well, and will need to be replaced in the future in order to further improve drainage and fish passage goals in the area.
- *Habitat and Ecological Significance Category:* Overall, this alternative is the best opportunity to provide improvements to habitat area and function.
 - Alternative 3 includes daylighting (removing the partial fish barrier) in a portion of the creek so it scored well from a fish passage point of view.
 - Replacing the culvert with a fish passable structure also helps fish passage.
 - Alternative 3 would maximize ecological uplift by restoring the site and recreating floodplain.
 - Other benefits include:
 - placing habitat structures.
 - reduced culvert length, and
 - increased creek channel length and aquatic habitat area.
 - Alternative 3 is most consistent with natural processes.

Water Quality Category: Overall, Alternative 3 scored well because it removes the pollutant source and all impervious surfaces.

- Also minimizes or eliminates the potential for pollutants in runoff from County shop parcel in the future.

Participants were asked to respond to the following question: *After hearing the details of Alternative #3, is there anything else you think the project team should be considering?*

Q: One participant shared that he used to fish Lorenzan Creek many years ago as a child, and for many years hasn't seen any fish upstream of the project area because of the grass. He shared that it used to be a wetland area and that he didn't see any flooding near homes. The water naturally drained. He shared that he consistently sees water runoff from the roads with

oil and garbage and that it's all going into the creek. **How might the town be able to address this without a bunch of hassle? Do we need to pull in DOE to address this situation?**

A: The project will be removing the source of potential pollutants from the site itself. The restoration and ecological components as part of the channel will provide water quality benefits for the water moving through the channel. There could definitely be some opportunities for water quality improvements from the Town of Concrete, that would not need to be in the creek channel (like improving runoff from the roads).

Participants had an opportunity to ask clarifying questions from Christina's presentation. There were none.

Participants were asked to complete a one question poll. The question and results are below:

Q: Are you in support of the project team moving forward with Alternative #3?

Yes: 16

No: 0

I would like more information: 2

Participants who responded that they wanted more information were asked to follow up after the workshop to share what information would be helpful.

Alternative #3 Detailed Design Overview – Presentation by Christina Avolio, Herrera Environmental Consultants

Christina described the future steps of this process from design to construction.

- The path to reach 30% Conceptual Design – *see slide 38*
 - The first step will be to incorporate all the feedback from this stakeholder engagement process and collect any necessary additional information.
 - The project team might need to do supplementary data collection in the field to supplement existing information. Examples of possible data collection include a survey, critical areas assessment, cultural assessment, or geotechnical assessment.
 - Confirm key components to be included, want to know if there are any other elements that should be incorporated. May be opportunities to include other aspects we haven't thought of.
 - The project team would like to hone in on the basic geometry of the site and make sure it is tackling all of the requirements and being consistent with the standards.
 - Additionally, the team would like to refine the concept and develop geometry to support initial conceptual design and cost estimates.
 - The goal is to develop something that can be referenced in future conversations in order to seek design input into the process.
- After 30% design, the project team will move to 60% design or permit level design – *see slide 41*

- There will be enough information from 30% design to begin holding permit preapplication meetings. The team will start to get an idea of any other considerations that need to be incorporated into the project.
 - The project team will address 30% design comments and update modeling if needed.
 - Then, the project team will advance design to 60% level for permit submittal and also look at environmental impacts.
 - Additional considerations include making sure there are no offsite impacts or additional risks associated with flooding.
 - The analysis will be captured and documented, then the team will develop a draft basis of design, a list of special provisions, and update the cost estimate.
- Design and Permitting Process – Permit Submittal – *see slide 42*
 - There are many permits required for this project and so permitting is a big part of the design process.
 - Some permitting would happen during 60% design, some would happen later.
 - The path to 90% Draft Final Design – *see slide 44*
 - The project team will capture all the components that would be necessary for construction and address comments from the permit review process.
 - The project team will edit the 60% design to advance it to 90%.
 - The path to 100% final design – *see slide 46*
 - 100% design is the ultimate goal for the design phase of the project.
 - The project team will address all the comments made during 90% design and edit the 90% design to advance it to 100%.
 - The 100% design package would be the package the County would advertise for bids with.
 - Will include complete set of plans, special provisions, 100% cost estimate

Summary of what we have heard from the project team so far:

- Where we are going next in terms of getting to 30% design, then 60%, 90% then 100%. Alternative 3 scored really well compared to the other 4 alternative and is the preferred alternative.
- Most participants are supportive of moving forward with Alternative 3, with two requesting additional information.

Next Steps – Presentation by Emily Derenne, Skagit County

- Emily walked through the timeline and shared that currently, the project team has funding through 30% design. The plan is to reach back out to stakeholders after 30% design.
- She sends monthly updates to the Listserv. Email Emily to join, or going to the website and click a link – *see slide 50*.

- Part of the permitting process is waiting for feedback from permitting agencies. This should take about 6 months, and there is no funding for this process yet.
- The road operations and County staff currently use this facility and will need a new one. This is all happening concurrently with this process and will drive this timeline.
- Construction is the final goal and is the fun and “easy” part.

Comment: Thank you from the Commissioners, this is really great stuff. It’s nice to see this level of organization, this level of community input, and this level of being aware of all the possible issues. I’m very grateful and will report back to the other Commissioners. If they were here right now, they’d be as happy as I am.

Hilary thanked the participants and adjourned the meeting.