



# Future of the Lower White Salmon River Online Public Meeting Summary

June 27 – July 21, 2014

## **Notification and attendance:**

About 35 people accessed the meeting, which had been publicized through direct emails to stakeholder and interest groups from Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group, forwarded emails to interest group mailing lists, news release to six papers and one radio station, and an announcement and fliers at the White Salmon River Fest held July 9. Meeting announcements were published in the Columbian and Hood River News. Mid-Columbia Fisheries had a notice on the home page and project web page.

Of the 35 people who attended, 30 appeared to be new to the project, including those who provided online comments. The people who provided comments during the online meeting did not sign in at the in-person meeting.

## **Format:**

The software MeetingSphere was used to present the meeting information, track comments and promote discussion. The software allowed all information presented at the in-person public meeting from May 17, 2014, to be presented. This included:

- Welcome
- Fish habitat assessment findings (slides and narrated PowerPoint)
- Development suitability assessment (slides only)
- Discussion questions

## **Dialogue and Comment Results:**

### **In 2025, what does the project area look like?**

- I hope the area is a combination of intelligently and respectfully regulated public and private landholdings, allowing easy public access to this incredible resource. We need to balance the need for economic and population growth with the need to preserve a very special environment. There are currently a number of residential structures on the river and there will undoubtedly be increasing pressures in this direction. But we need to maintain the quality of the environment and the viewscape for which thoughtful regulation and enforcement will be necessary.

### **In 2025, what social, ecological, and economic benefits is the project area providing?**

- Hopefully, threatened fish species are in healthy numbers, tribal legacy fishing rights have returned, recreational river users are providing both economic and social benefit, and development guidelines protect the river from adverse impacts.
- Since we are a long way from the vision above, we all have to be willing to respect the rights of others and strive to agree on guidelines and terms that honor each other's visions for the river.

- I would like to see the remains of the covered bridge that spans the river below the Condit powerhouse either removed, or better yet renovated and made useful as a connection point for pedestrians, equestrians, and cyclists, from the Underwood side (which already has a nice trail leading up to the bridge) then connecting to Powerhouse road or potentially a foot trail that runs the length of the former Stave pipe that connected Condit Dam to the powerhouse before it was removed. A couple of fishermen's access trails coming off a main trail could provide some access off that main trail for fishing and kayak access/egress. Thanks for your consideration and for making the meeting happen.
- Hopefully the area will provide benefits of access for public recreation (rafting, kayaking, fishing), small-scale boutique lodging, low-density housing, strong ecological health (water, fisheries, forests, viewscapes) through careful regulation, and a strong and united community intent on thoughtful preservation of this remarkable place.

**In 2025, what is the project area ownership? (public, private, mix)**

- I believe the mix will be largely determined by topography and access. I hope it will be about a 60/40 private/public ownership, and that the public lands will reflect unbuildable extreme topography and adequate public access to the river resources.

**Which areas of/along the river are most important to focus on to meet fish habitat goals?**

- Careful regulation of the developed and developable areas will be critical to maintaining a healthy ecosystem. Responsible development that will be respectful and supportive of healthy fish habitat must be accomplished or social and environmental conflicts may destroy this resource.

**What are reasonable goals to achieve within the project area in the next ten years?**

- I see 6 major goals:
  - Goal 1 - Determine when river is at its normal seasonal behavior for sedimentation, large woody debris, flow, etc. post dam removal.
  - Goal 2 - Identify prime habitat for key salmonids for spawning, rearing and migration in the White Salmon and its tributaries.
  - Goal 3 - Establishment agreements among recreational river users, tribal and agency fish biologists to protect prime fish habitat.
  - Goal 4 - Identify where the tribal fishing sites will be located.
  - Goal 5 - Clarify what groups have legal claims to activities in the White Salmon and the precedence of these claims
  - Goal 6 - Establish working relationships (ideally enforceable agreements) among the river users (tribe, fishery agencies, recreational users, river adjacent property owners) for shared use of the river and respect for each others use of the river.
- I would like to see the recovery of the Northwestern Park area and the regeneration of the post lake community in the area. In regards to this I could imagine the neighborhood of the CONLA cabins being known as Northwestern Park; renaming of the roads; Northwestern Park Road / Parkview Road; and the Wild and Scenic White Salmon area be extended all the way to the mouth at the Columbia. Recovery of the habitat on tributaries is a good goal and focus. Culvert replacement on Mill Creek at Lakeview road is a priority that UCD is working on ... more education and collaborations as well as enhanced recreational use of the park. Informational signage and some commemoration of the history of the First Nations people as well as the era

of the lake along with native plant signage and revegetation. Perhaps the park is publicly owned or by a stewardship group along with a Wild and Scenic green corridor along the lower White Salmon. I look forward to more discussion and collaboration toward these goals through SHARE and other opportunities. Riverfest at Northwestern Park in 2015! Thank You.

**What questions do you have about the project?**

- How long do geomorphologists, hydrologists, etc. think it will take for the White Salmon to establish normal river dynamics - seasonal flow, sedimentation, etc. post removal of Condit Dam?

**Do you have any general comments or feedback?**

n/a