Motivating Snow Creek Landowner Riparian Stewardship

Evaluation and Final Report

September 4, 2014

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Contract Number: 2013-58; Task 4

This project has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Environmental Protection Agency, nor does mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.
Acknowledgements

The North Olympic Salmon Coalition and WSU Jefferson County Extension are grateful for the support of the organizations and individuals who participated in this project.

Special thanks to the Washington Conservation Corps Crew and leader, Owen French, for their support and hard labor removing huge areas of Himalayan blackberry from the banks of Snow Creek.

Also thanks to all who provided background information and resources throughout the project including staff from the Hood Canal Coordinating Council, the Jefferson County Conservation District, the Jefferson County Weed Control Board, the Jefferson Land Trust, the Point No Point Treaty Council, and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Special thanks to the Chumsortium group for their ongoing feedback.

The landowners who helped with the research phase and especially those who participated in the site visits and weed removal deserve special recognition.

Thank you to project consultants Nancy Lee and Marc Bolan, and Emily Sanford, Social Marketing Coordinator for the Puget Sound Partnership, for guidance throughout the project.

And finally, thanks to the Puget Sound Partnership and the Strait ECOnet for allowing us the opportunity to explore social marketing through this project.

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Cover photo: Snow Creek, Jefferson County Washington. Credit - Sarah Doyle
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Supporting Documents Prepared For Motivating Snow Creek Landowner Riparian Stewardship

• Situational Analysis and Market Research Strategy, October 23, 2013; updated December 31, 2013
• Research Finding Report, January 10 2014
• Social Marketing Strategy and Evaluation Plan, February 28, 2014
Executive Summary

The activities of private landowners on Snow Creek, a small rural creek in Jefferson County Washington, are critical to the recovery and sustainability of Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed salmon species. Reception from private landowners to restoration activities and land acquisition in the Snow Creek area has been mixed, with some landowners welcoming the opportunities and others hostile to activities proposed on their land. Of the 46 private landowners in the study area, 20% (9 landowners) have expressed unwillingness about some aspect of restoration in the past; 35% (16) have completed projects or been willing but unsuccessful to date; and nearly half - 45% (21) are unknown and have not been approached recently if ever.

The North Olympic Salmon Coalition (NOSC) undertook an effort to determine how to encourage more landowners to participate in restoration using the social marketing process. The original goal was to restore 1,250 linear feet of streambank and reach 10% of the landowners. Audience research showed that the removal of noxious, invasive weeds could provide a foot in the door to further restoration. Weed removal appeared to be a motivator. Weeds must be removed before planting can occur; it fit the budget and it could lead to future funding for complete restoration. Noxious weeds, especially Himalayan blackberry, are choking the creek in areas where ESA listed salmon species spawn.

Ten adjacent landowners within the study area were selected for the audience because their land is a high priority for restoration for ESA listed summer chum, their attitude was not known to be negative, and the location of their property is adjacent to other restoration projects on public land.

A short one-page letter was mailed to the 10 landowners, asking them to invite staff from NOSC to conduct a site visit on their land to explore with them opportunities to remove noxious weeds. During the site visit, landowners were invited to sign up for a free weed removal by the crew.

Forty percent (4) of the landowners allowed a site visit and 20 percent (2) agreed to a weed removal. Noxious invasive weeds were removed from 2,400 linear feet of streambank - nearly twice the amount of the original goal. The other two landowners who agreed to a site visit also agreed to a weed removal if their land, which was for sale, did not sell. [Their land has not sold as of this date.]

This project should be considered a pilot project due to the small number of participants. However, new processes and products were developed for use in the future. In addition, a great deal has been learned about the Snow Creek area that has not been documented in the past that will be useful in future projects.

Substantially similar materials and processes were used by NOSC in a nearby watershed shortly after the Snow Creek project was implemented. The result to date is a 31% (43) return on a mailing to 140 landowners asking them for a site visit to discuss removal of noxious invasive weed species. This is a considerable improvement over past efforts.
Background

Snow Creek provides spawning grounds for two endangered salmon species: Hood Canal Summer Chum and Puget Sound Steelhead. The creek has been severely degraded by human activities over the last 150 years. The area was cleared of native vegetation and Snow Creek was split from neighboring Salmon Creek. It was straightened and moved to a valley wall. The large wood was removed from the system, reducing instream habitat for salmon.

Riparian degradation has been identified as a significant limiting factor for summer chum salmon in the Summer Chum Salmon Recovery Plan, in the WRIA 16 and 17 Management Plans, and in the Summer Chum Salmon Conservation Initiative. Locally, the Lead Integrating Organization, the Strait Ecosystem Recovery Network, ranked ‘Salmon Recovery Plans’ as their second highest priority among their 2012 Action Agenda items.

Restoration efforts in the Snow/Salmon watershed have been significant since the listing of the summer chum salmon in 1999. Large scale, highly visible activities along Highway 101 in the estuary and along Salmon Creek have been conducted by a variety of agencies and non-profit organizations. Activities include land acquisition followed by stream remeandering, estuary restoration, noxious weed removal and riparian plantings.

Most of the restoration work has been conducted on public land and restoration groups have worked with all known identified willing landowners. Restoration of Snow Creek riparian habitat is one of the last remaining restoration tasks to be carried out in this watershed and much of the potential for restoration is on private property. Many private parcels on Snow Creek lack healthy riparian areas and are dominated by noxious invasive weed species primarily Himalayan blackberry and some knotweed, holly and Scotch broom. Much of the native vegetation present consists of sparse bands of mature deciduous trees and shrubs with an invasive understory, which will not provide important riparian components such as large woody debris necessary for quality salmonid habitat.

The activities of private landowners on Snow Creek are critical to the recovery and sustainability of salmon. Reception to the restoration activities and land acquisition has been mixed in the watershed, with some landowners welcoming the opportunities and others hostile to activities proposed on their land.

To begin to address this problem, the North Olympic Salmon Coalition (NOSC) undertook an effort to determine how to encourage more landowners to participate in restoration using the social marketing process. NOSC works only with willing landowners and has no regulatory authority. Based on audience research, the project was defined to be obtaining permission from landowners for NOSC to conduct a site visit; followed by obtaining permission to conduct weed removal along their streambank. The audience was reduced from 46 to a group of 10 adjacent landowners. NOSC has contracted with WSU Jefferson County Extension to conduct the research phase of this project.
Selected Audience and Promotional Strategy

Of the 46 private landowners in the study area, 20% (9) have expressed unwillingness about some aspect of restoration in the past; 35% (16) have completed projects or been willing but unsuccessful (Groups 1, 2, 2a and 3a in Table 1; 45% (21) are unknown and have not been approached recently if ever.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Landowner Behavior</th>
<th>Total Number (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Have completed projects in the past (alone or with help) and thought to still be willing.</td>
<td>6 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Willing but unsuccessful to date (discussed easements, land purchase, bridge replacement and erosion control.)</td>
<td>5 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>Completed projects in the past but unsuccessful in current project; present attitude unknown.</td>
<td>1 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a</td>
<td>Seem willing but haven’t been approached.</td>
<td>4 (9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>No action – Unknown attitude</td>
<td>21 (46%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Have indicated an unwillingness to participate</td>
<td>9 (20%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Landowner Past Behavior toward Restoration

The original audience of all 46 landowners was not selected as the focus audience for this project because research showed that the 20% of the landowners that are opposed to restoration work are scattered throughout the study area. The concern was that they could negatively influence others nearby. NOSC and other restoration and preservation groups will be able to use this research to develop messages and outreach materials when they do decide to approach this audience. A one-on-one approach is recommended with a focus on those whose views are unknown or positive.

Within the audience of 46 landowners, there are 19 on Snow Creek who belong to the Snow Creek Ranch Homeowners Association (SCR HOA). They were viewed as a unique audience and were not selected for this project because they:
- have smaller lots and fewer restoration opportunities
- are not contiguous with other restoration work
- are not enough in budget to fully restore
- are not as attractive to restoration funders
- can be approached as part of NOSC outreach program

Selected Audience
Out of the 46 private landowners along Snow Creek, ten were selected for the audience for this project. The ten are adjacent landowners on both sides of Snow Creek (5 on each side). The criteria for selecting this audience included:

1. High priority for restoration:
   a. Land is contiguous with other restoration projects downstream
   b. Nearly all of the stream bank has been identified as requiring a full planting in a 2009 assessment
   c. There are many invasive plant species in the riparian area that must be removed before native plants can be planted
   d. Summer chum and steelhead, both listed species, use this reach of the creek
e. There is a high likelihood of future funding for a full planting, including maintenance, if invasive weeds are removed and the landowners are willing

2. Landowners attitude (based on research conducted in 2013)
   a. All the landowners appear approachable or are unknown
   b. No landowners have indicated unwillingness
   c. Of the 10 landowners:
      ▪ 2 have done work already, on their own or with help
      ▪ 7 are unknown; of those 2 seem willing based on research
      ▪ 1 is pursuing an erosion control project

3. Location
   a. The area is discrete, is easily defined and can logically be explained to landowners why it was selected
   b. It is believed that some of these landowners can see one another’s property across the creek which may provide motivation (norm)
   c. 4 or 5 landowners access property from a common lane (very unusual in this area)
   d. The area is geographically compact and could help build community among neighbors

Promotional Strategy & Behavior Change
The key behavior desired was for landowners to contact NOSC after receiving a letter and invite staff to conduct a site visit. The core product was an opportunity for landowners to receive individualized information on their land so they can evaluate an offer of labor to remove noxious weeds. The actual product was the site visit.

The second behavior was for the landowner to sign up for a free weed removal by the crew. The core product was a landscape free of noxious weeds and an opportunity for a fresh start on maintaining the area along the creek. The actual product was crew labor to remove noxious weeds within 30 feet of the creek.

Augmented products included future opportunities for technical assistance, low cost/free plants, labor for planting, and long-term maintenance. In addition, three free native trees or plants were offered in exchange for access to their land and for participating in a short exit interview after the weed removal.

The main promotion for this project was a letter to landowners, which was developed and thoroughly tested with selected landowners and resource professionals. The goal, based on audience research, was that the letter be jargon-free, very short and straightforward. A stamped postcard was included with the letter as a reply device (Appendix F Product 1 and 1a.) Recipients could also call or email NOSC to schedule a site visit.

Language usage was important in this project. The word “restoration” did not test well with the landowner audience and was avoided. The word “weeding” and “weed removal” were used interchangeably with landowners. The word “weeding” sounds much more benign than the actual process, which involved a crew of 6 using removal machines. The process was explained during the site visit so landowners were not taken by surprise.
The letter was mailed April 9, 2014. On April 21 the first postcard prompt was sent to those who had not yet replied to the letter. The postcard headline was “We’ll be in your neighborhood” (Appendix F Product 4.) A second postcard prompt was sent on May 8 headlined “It’s not too late” (Appendix F Product 5.) Finally a closing letter was sent on June 5 with a reply postcard to those not responding (Appendix F Product 7 and 7a.)

A Site Visit Toolkit with everything necessary for staff to quickly prepare for and conduct a site visit was developed. It also included forms for staff use, thank you and reminder cards, brochures, fact sheets, information about other organizations and agencies, and other information to provide landowners – at their request. A new brochure about Snow Creek was developed specifically for this project. See Appendix F for all the materials developed for the project.

Course Corrections

There were a few minor course corrections during implementation of the social marketing plan. They included:

Increasing the audience by one: The original audience was thought to be 9 landowners. Upon further research into the County GIS system to locate the taxpayer address it was revealed that one of the owners with several parcels was actually two different people with the same last name. Although they were probably related, they were treated as separate individuals. (They also responded separately in different ways.)

Increasing the incentive: The incentives were increased from just weed removal to include a full package (removal, planting & maintenance). There was not enough funding for the full package when the first letter was sent. Soon after, however, NOSC secured a grant for riparian planting and weed removal work in Jefferson County that could fund planting and maintenance for up to three years.

Increasing opportunities to respond: To conclude the audience interaction another letter along with a stamped reply postcard (similar to what we sent out for the initial contact) was sent instead of a third reminder postcard. This gave landowners a third way to reply, instead of only calling or emailing. This also allowed us to provide landowners with more details to remind them of the project - more than could fit on a postcard. It also allowed us to ask for a response if they were not interested, and provided an easy way for them to reply. This effort did not result in any further response.

Evaluation Methodology
With a small number of landowners included in the audience, the evaluation plan (Appendix A) was very focused, with individual assessments of each landowner. Questions were designed to gauge landowner attitudes and knowledge and were posed in an informal way by NOSC staff when conducting the initial phone call and the site visit (Appendix F Forms 1, 2 and 3.) As a condition of accepting weed removal, landowners were asked to participate in a brief phone interview shortly after the crew conducted weed removal on their property (Appendix F Form 5.) Landowner attitudes and knowledge were again assessed and then compared to their original responses. Motivators and barriers were probed. A third party (WSU Extension) conducted these interviews.

The key behavior evaluated was whether or not property owners allowed the NOSC staff to conduct a site visit and eventually complete a weed removal. Staff worked to build on the landowners’ knowledge about the importance of restoration efforts, while enhancing the belief that they can have a positive effect on the local creek health. It was hoped that they would be open to having NOSC complete a weed removal project, and potentially be agreeable to other restoration efforts in the future including supporting a grant for future funding.

Data was also collected on the various outcomes and outputs including: number of feet of streambank weeded, tracking staff time to secure a landowner site visit, and number of participants willing to be further engaged such as providing support for a grant application for funding to provide trees, planting and maintenance. Information is captured in Appendix B in the Evaluation Reporting Form and in Appendix E.

**Findings**

Forty percent (4) of the landowners allowed a site visit and 20 percent (2) agreed to a weed removal. Noxious invasive weeds were removed from 2,400 linear feet of streambank - nearly twice the amount of the original goal. The two landowners who agreed to a site visit but not a weeding, agreed to a weed removal if their land, which was for sale, did not sell. [Their land has not sold as of this date.]

The majority of the invasive weed removal was dense thickets of Himalayan blackberry. A total of 420 hours were spent conducting the work over 7 crew days working 10 hours days with a 6-person crew. See Appendix D for photos.

Of the 10 landowners, 3 responded to the initial letter mailed April 9, 2014. The 4th landowner responded to the first postcard prompt mailed on April 21. There was no further response to the second postcard prompt or the final letter, even though the letter contained new incentives.

During the initial phone contact with landowners, 3 wanted to schedule a site visit and the fourth wanted to ask further questions. Three of the landowners had primarily blackberries for removal and one didn’t know what weeds she had. The call length ranged from 4 to 10 minutes.

Two of the landowners were present during the site visits. The other 2 are absentee landowners and did not come on the site visit (the 2 selling their property). During the
site visits with landowners we learned that both landowners had a high willingness to steward their land, a high to medium high knowledge of restoration and believed that landowners can make a difference. Neither was aware of the noxious weed list and they were not open to using herbicides.

Table 2 compares the actual response of each landowner to their projected willingness to allow a site visit and weed removal previously assessed in the Research Finding Report.

**Table 2  Perceived Willingness v. Actual Response**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Willingness based on Research Finding Report</th>
<th># in Audience</th>
<th>Response to Site Visit &amp; Weed Removal Opportunity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have done work already, on their own or with help</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 said yes to site visit &amp; weed removal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown; of those 2 seem willing based on research</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3 said yes to site visit and 1 agreed to weed removal; 2 had their land for sale and decided to wait to see if it would sell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pursuing an erosion control project</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Did not respond</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When NOSC was able to increase the incentive to include tree planting and maintenance, landowners were advised of this opportunity during site visits and both participating landowners accepted the offer. NOSC will return to the landowners in the fall to plant the trees.

Three of the four landowners had heard of NOSC and that did make a difference to them. One had worked with NOSC before and the other two had seen a sign or a mention of NOSC – enough to recognize that they were an organization doing work with salmon or restoration. One consulted NOSC’s website after receiving the letter. All felt that knowing who NOSC was helped them make the decision to call.

Evaluations were conducted with the two landowners who received a weed removal within a couple weeks of removal. They both spoke very highly of the process and the result. One reported that the process went fine, and said she was happy to have the project implemented. Another said she was very satisfied, that the crew left no trace – the blackberries were just gone; there were no surprises, everything went as proposed.

When asked if they would do more to restore their creekside land they both said yes and both look forward to allowing NOSC to do a fall planting. One wants to reduce the reed canary grass the other plans to care for the trees as directed. She plans to let the trees grow and maybe have a small path to the creek.

Both want more help from organizations. One has a large property and needs help because she has so many competing activities (on her land) and the other wants to learn more about how to care for the land herself. Both said they would be willing to support NOSC or other groups to secure funding to help other landowners.

When asked how to reach other landowners one said she felt the letter was very good and felt that 40% return was a high response, especially from this audience, noting that
people who live in the country want to be left alone and are very independent. She stated, “It is a very big deal to allow people to come on their property.” Both said they were willing to talk to neighbors about the project but neither have close neighbors and don’t see them often. This was consistent with our research.

One recommended that the weed removal program become annual for a few years – letting people know that if they can’t participate this year, there will be another opportunity next year. She feels that a program starting with mechanical weed removal in the spring, a fall spot herbicide application followed by planting in winter/spring would result in complete restoration within 5 years.

There was a shift in one landowner’s acceptance of the use of herbicide. During the site visit to decide whether or not to weed, the landowner stated she did not want to allow herbicide. During the post-weed removal evaluation she volunteered that she would be open to the use of herbicide if we followed a plan of mechanical weed removal in the spring/summer, followed by a careful spot application of herbicide in the fall then planting in the winter and spring. The landowner is very knowledgeable about environmental issues and it was important to her that our project was well thought out and would actually work. Although herbicide acceptance is not our goal, it was good to learn that our approach opened up new options for weed reduction for this landowner.

Increased incentives and the change to make the last mailing a letter, instead of a postcard, did not yield further landowner invitations for site visits. The increased incentives (fall planting and maintenance) were very welcome from the landowners who proceeded with weed removal.

Implications for Endangered Salmon

For more than a decade, Discovery Bay and the Snow/Salmon watersheds have been the focus of salmon recovery efforts, largely due to the presence of ESA-listed summer chum. At the outset of recovery efforts, a suite of actions were identified as critical to recovering ESA-listed species in this watershed. Riparian degradation has been identified as a significant limiting factor for summer chum salmon in the Summer Chum Salmon Recovery Plan, in the WRIA 16 and 17 Management Plans, and in the Summer Chum Salmon Conservation Initiative.

A vast majority of the targeted restoration actions have been carried out, including a Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and NOSC summer chum supplementation program, acquisition and protection of over 365 acres in the lower watersheds, Salmon Creek (adjacent to Snow Creek) channel reconstruction, Salmon Creek estuary restoration, and contaminated fill removal. Restoration of the Snow/Salmon salt marsh and the Snow Creek nearshore are two of the most significant projects that will be occurring in 2014 and 2015.

These restoration efforts have proven successful. According to WDFW staff, the abundance, distribution, and productivity of ESA-listed Hood Canal summer chum and Coho salmon in the Snow/Salmon Creek watershed have improved markedly in recent years. Habitat restoration has played an important role in supporting this recovery. Continued implementation of habitat restoration projects in freshwater and estuarine areas is essential to the long-term recovery of these stocks.
Restoration of Snow Creek riparian habitat is one of the last remaining restoration tasks to be carried out in this watershed. The removal of noxious invasive weeds and planting of native trees and shrubs along 2,400 linear feet of Snow Creek on private land will provide long-term benefits to the riparian corridor along Snow Creek. Healthy, riparian ecosystems perform a number of important functions that affect quality and quantity of salmonid habitat. A properly functioning riparian forest provides shade, cover, and nutrient input/uptake; stabilizes stream banks; controls sediment; reduces flooding; and contributes large woody debris and other forms of organic matter.

Once trees are planted this fall, NOSC will maintain the properties annually for up to three years using other grant funding. It is anticipated that the trees will provide benefits within 5-10 years.

Implications for the Landowners
Both landowners were very pleased with the process and the result. Both are looking forward to receiving trees and maintenance. One landowner reports that she can now see the creek and she could not see it at all before due to the blackberries. She knows the trees, once planted will grow and possibly obscure the view. She didn’t seem bothered by that and was looking forward to learning how to maintain them.

Implications for NOSC
The organization has two new enthusiastic supporters who plan to share their enthusiasm with others when the opportunity arises. The two landowners are also willing to support efforts to secure grant funding.

NOSC views the project as a success, especially because they have been able to use some elements of the process and modified products for use in another neighboring watershed with much more success than they have previously experienced (a 31% return on a mailing of 140 landowners.) Perhaps more importantly there is a shift in the organizational focus from the negative outliers to the more willing audiences or “unknown” audiences. This has resulted in a more optimistic organizational attitude.

NOSC staff have demonstrated an understanding of the social marketing process which will help them as they move onto new projects and watersheds.

While the number of participants in this project is small, new processes and products for NOSC and other ECONet members were developed for use in the future. In addition a great deal has been learned about the Snow Creek area that has not been documented in the past that will be useful in future projects.

Implications for Partner Organizations
This project has engaged multiple partners, utilized existing data and built upon previous restoration efforts. Chumsortium was created years ago to synthesize summer chum restoration efforts. This group allowed us to maximize our research efforts. Members of the Chumsortium include, the North Olympic Salmon Coalition, Jefferson Land Trust, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Jefferson Conservation District, Jefferson County, WSU extension, Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee, Washington Department of Natural Resources, local lead entities, and local tribes.

The Chumsortium members and the Strait ECONet have been briefed regularly throughout the project; both on the social marketing process itself and the project
outcome. Several members of the Chumsortium were not familiar with *social marketing* and, while not evaluated, they now have a basic understanding of the process and will be able to use the research findings in future projects.

NOSC staff has been able to share the resulting products and lessons learned with other partner organizations that are conducting multi-landowner outreach projects in the region. Partners have found the information to be very useful in their efforts.

**Recommendations and Next Steps**

**Next Steps For Snow Creek**

As a next step NOSC should review the *Research Finding Report* and supporting documents prepared during this project for opportunities and the next group of “most willing” landowners. They should continue to be assessed strategically based on highest restoration value and willingness.

Since the *Research Report* was completed, several new stores have opened at the base of Discovery Bay and there is new energy in the area. Whether locals gather at these spots remains to be seen, but there are now more opportunities to post information to help get the word out about future opportunities.

As NOSC has more landowner contacts and successful projects in the area, word will spread to others, albeit slowly given that many neighbors do not talk frequently.

Recommended next steps include:

- Continue to avoid landowners who have been indentified as not interested
- Identify additional, small pockets of landowners who are unknown or willing
- Use the newly opened general store as an opportunity to post signs and information
- Continue to use signs and visit local businesses and raise awareness of NOSC

Nineteen of the 46 landowners own land within the Snow Creek Ranch Homeowners Association (SRC HOA). These landowners should continue to be considered as a separate audience from those landowners not in the homeowners association. Recommended next steps for this audience include contacting the SRC HOA and interviewing the board to see what assistance they would welcome. Possibilities include a presentation at a homeowners meeting, technical assistance, tours, free or low cost native trees and plants, or a workshop to build a kiosk or interpretive sign and community bulletin board. This appears to be a self-starting group if provided with proper tools and assistance.

Table 3 highlights some of the opportunities in Snow Creek.
## Table 3: Landowner Past Behavior toward Restoration Detail
*Table 1 from Research Finding Report*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Landowner Behavior</th>
<th>Total # LO’s*</th>
<th>Comments**</th>
<th># in HOA**</th>
<th># Not HOA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Have completed projects in the past (alone or with help) and thought to still be willing. (13%)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Projects completed include planting trees, CREP enrollment, fencing, knotweed treatment and other weed removal. These 6 landowners own 16 parcels on the creek. It is possible that more planting could be done.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Willing but unsuccessful to date. (11%)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Owners have discussed easements, land purchase, bridge replacement and erosion control. Unsuccessful to date due lack of consensus on method of restoration and/or lack of funding.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>Completed projects in the past but unsuccessful in current project; present attitude unknown. (2%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Successful knotweed removal; Sought help for Erosion issues but differed on method. Result was no ability to fund hard armoring.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a</td>
<td>Seem willing but haven’t been approached (9%)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>There has been some contact and it has been positive. Encounters include volunteering for restoration, friendly encounters in the field, positive discussions about other projects.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>No action – Unknown attitude (46%)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Landowners in this category were not mentioned by any interviewees and are not known to have done any projects. They likely received a letter in 2009 but did not respond.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Have indicated an unwillingness to participate (20%)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Reasons for not participating have included disagreement with methodology, do not think restoration is needed at all, cost (amount of government spending), or do not want others on their land. A few have allowed projects (flood control) in the past but are unsupportive now.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*LO’s are Individual landowners.
**HOA is Snow Creek Ranch Home Owners Association
**Projects are primarily planting trees, CREP enrollment, knotweed treatment and other weed removal. Where known, fencing and erosion control projects are included. Does not count previous land acquisitions but has reflected those interested in selling.
Recommendations for NOSC

With limited funding available to do full social marketing plans for every project, some key steps include:

For projects with a marketing component:
- Spend at least 2 hours reviewing market research pertinent to the project
- Be specific – focus on one behavior
- Save time by agreeing on a purpose
- Identify exactly who the priority audience is for the behavior change
- Conduct at least 3 interviews with the priority audience to find out their barriers and motivators
- Develop the 4P’s – Product, Price, Place Promotion
- Test any messages with the audience prior to “going to print”

When seeking funding:
- Write audience research into grants where appropriate
- Look for funders that allow formative research to be conducted

Continuing outreach efforts:
  Three of the four people who contacted NOSC had heard of them before. Continuing to raise awareness is important. NOSC should continue to be as visible as possible in the areas they work. Newspaper articles, signage where they are working; even the bingo games bring recognition and familiarity. Ask landowners if a banner or sign can be placed when the crew is working. “Another landowner supported project by NOSC.” Use the side of the truck for temporary signage.

In preparation of a project:
- Before, during and after the project, brief staff so they are aware of who the audience is, what the behavior change is, the key messages and the timing of the project
- Include the crew or other project implementers that may come into contact with the audience so they are able to deliver key messages if needed
## Appendix A

### Evaluation Plan

#### Motivating Snow Creek Landowners - Riparian Stewardship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Activities/Strategies</th>
<th>Expected Outcomes</th>
<th>Data Collection Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Request site visits of 9 landowners. | **1. Increased knowledge of importance of riparian stewardship, restoration.** Restoration is the best way to treat impaired streambanks. Weed removal is a good start. Native plants are beneficial to water quality and fish. Invasive noxious weeds are bad for the environment and a few, such as poison hemlock, are required to be removed by law. After my streambank is weeded, it will need replanting and maintenance to reduce the amount of weeds that come back. I know where to go for help and what to do next. | **OUTCOME DATA**  
- Program records (tracking number of site visits conducted, number of weed removal activities on properties, number of feet of streambank weeded).  
- Baseline assessment completed with property owners by the NOSC staff during initial site visit with the owner to decide on plan for weed removal (small sample of less than 9 landowners)  
- Follow-up interview completed with those property owners who allow for weed removal about 1-2 weeks after the completion of the project; performed by third-party WSU staff member (about 3-5 landowners). These interviews will tap into data on knowledge and attitudes and owner perceptions of process and willingness to conduct future restoration efforts. |
| Offer a Field Trip – the 9 landowners and others will be invited to come | **2. More positive attitudes about the importance of local property restoration efforts.** Noxious weeds should be removed. Each landowner on Snow Creek can make a big difference to stream health. | **OUTPUT DATA**  
- Count of outreach/marketing efforts - e.g., number of letters, phone calls, meetings etc. with target audience to secure site visits and weed removal project |
| Schedule and conduct site visits. | **3. Increased willingness to allow property site visits** (target of five landowners) |  |
| Follow up as necessary with landowners who do not respond | **4. Increased willingness to allow weed removal on property** (target of 3-4 landowners) |  |
| Weed (primarily blackberries) | **5. Increased willingness to take additional steps for restoration of the property.** Plant trees. Support a grant application for future funding |  |
| Offer free trees. |  |  |
| Conduct phone interview after weed removal. |  |  |

Does your project have internal capacity and/or external support for conducting the evaluation activities? **YES**
Appendix B   Evaluation Reporting Form
Puget Sound Partnership – Social Marketing Grantees

PROJECT: Motivating Snow Creek Landowner Riparian Stewardship
PERIOD OF EVALUATION:  April – July 2014

Please discuss the process your program used to gather information or assess data for use in the development of your implementation strategies.

Data was collected through interviews with 15 individuals including key partners, agency (7), tribal (1), and nonprofit (4) representatives (12); and landowners (3) in the area. In addition, existing public records and reports, analysis of past outreach efforts and review of the 2009 Hood Canal Coordinating Council Habitat Assessment.

What was more or less successful about this process:

+ Concern about working in this area was high due to past incidents. The research revealed that while 20% of the landowners had expressed negative opinions about restoration; 35% had completed or tried to complete a project and 45% were unknown. This was very important information for resource professionals to learn and will help them in the future.

+ Shifting organizational focus from the negative outliers to the more willing audiences or “unknown” audiences. This has resulted in a more optimistic organizational attitude and was reinforced by recent success using the tools developed in this project in a nearby watershed.

+ Collected a body of formative research about the community and its history, including a timeline that resource professionals can refer to prior to starting a new project.

+ Developed processes and tools for use in other projects including language that tested well for direct mailings, a site visit form that requires a landowner signature, a toolkit with everything needed to conduct a site visit and new processes to follow. This will increase staff efficiency and allow for easier recordkeeping and data collection.

+ Recently repeated elements of the project in a nearby watershed. Result is that 31% of the 140 landowners contacted agreed to accept a site visit.

+ Shared lessons learned about the social marketing process and the project results with numerous organizations, many with members who had never heard of social marketing before

+ Brevity of the Social Marketing Plan is a strength. It was easy to simply move the purpose and focus forward into the next product from the Situational Analysis to the Research Findings to the Plan.
The area and audience were very small to begin with and through research analysis, became even smaller. Ideally a larger audience would be more suited to the amount of effort that went into the project. However, we recognized the goal of the project was to learn about the process and were very pleased with the outcome and benefits gained.

+/- The unknown and unknowable factors in this project were significant. It was unknown how many people would agree to a weeding and, until the site visit, it was difficult to ascertain how much time would be required to remove weeds. For example, it took 5 crew days for one property and 2 for the other. Funding for the project was inadequate to complete weed removal without outside funding. Fortunately other funding was secured and we were able to proceed.

About how you used the data to create an implementation strategy:

The research significantly informed the implementation strategy. Originally stated, the purpose of this grant was to secure permission from private landowners for NOSC to conduct a riparian restoration project on their land. The original audience was 46 landowners along Snow Creek.

Based on our research we refined the activity to be: obtaining permission from landowners for NOSC to conduct a site visit; followed by obtaining permission to remove noxious weeds along their streambank. We reduced the audience from 46 to a group of 10 adjacent landowners because of their perceived willingness, the high need for restoration, and location contiguous to other restoration projects and one another; and also to avoid potential negative influence from landowners known to have expressed a bias against restoration in the past.

How the experience might affect the way you would conduct this process in the future.

Staff has already employed elements of the project with excellent success in another watershed with many more landowners in the target audience.

With limited funding available to do full social marketing plans for every project, some key recommended steps include:

- Spend at least 2 hours reviewing market research pertinent to the project
- Be specific – focus on one behavior
- Save time by agreeing on a purpose
- Identify exactly who the priority audience is for the behavior change
- Conduct at least 3 interviews with the priority audience to find out their barriers and motivators
- Develop the 4P’s – Product, Price, Place Promotion
- Test any messages with the audience prior to “going to print”
- Train all staff, including the crew, who may be in contact with audience
- Write audience research into grants where appropriate
- Look for funders that allow formative research to be conducted
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Outcomes (those agreed upon from evaluation plan)</th>
<th>Data Collection Plan (original plan for collecting data from evaluation plan document)</th>
<th>Program Results (specific results for the stated outcome)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Number of site visits conducted, number of weed removal activities on properties, number of feet of streambank weeded. | Original audience: 46; number in target audience:10  
Goal for calls from landowners 5  
Goal for number of Site Visit 5  
Goal for number of properties weeded 3-4  
Goal for Feet of streambank weeded 1,250 | Actual calls from landowners 4  
Actual number of Site Visits 4  
Actual number of properties weeded 2  
Actual Feet of streambank weeded 2,400 |
| Increased knowledge of importance of riparian stewardship, restoration. | Baseline assessment completed with property owners by the NOSC staff during initial site visit  
Follow-up interview completed with those property owners who allow for weed removal after the completion of the project. | Average knowledge of restoration & benefits of the 4 landowners was 4.25 out of 5.  
2 did not know about the State/County noxious weed list the other 2 seemed vaguely familiar with it.  
One interviewee was already very knowledgeable about the importance of stewardship and restoration. The other was not as informed but still fairly knowledgeable. |
| More positive attitudes about the importance of local property restoration efforts. | Follow-up interview completed after the completion of the project, with those property owners who allow for weed removal . | Both interviewees had positive attitudes and that did not change. |
| Increased willingness to allow property site visits. | Number of people accepting offer of a site visit. | 40% of target audience allowed a site visit.  
3 of the 4 landowners who responded, called to schedule a site visit  
1 called to ask questions and was convinced to schedule a site visit. |
| Increased willingness to allow weed removal. | Number of people accepting offer of weed removal after site visit. | 40% were willing to allow weed removal although 20% of those wanted to wait until property transaction occurred. |
| Increased willingness to take additional steps for restoration of the property. | Follow-up interview completed with those property owners who allow for weed removal after the completion of the project. | 100% of the landowners (2) were very willing to take additional steps toward restoration. Both have accepted an offer of tree planting and maintenance this fall.  
Both would support future grants that would secure more funding. Both said they would talk in positive terms about NOSC and the weed removal to their neighbors if given the opportunity. |
Please discuss what the outcome results tell you about the impact and success of your program activities. In thinking about this please discuss:

What were some of the successes and challenges in carrying out the evaluation?
- The small number in the target audience resulted in only qualitative information. Significant conclusions cannot be drawn from such a small number.

+ The small number of participants allowed for one on one interviews which allowed for more free form comments and opportunities for probing than a survey might have. For example: both of the landowners interviewed asked how the rest of the neighborhood responded to the offer. One was very impressed with the number of respondents, noting that people who live in the country want to be left alone and are very independent. “It is a very big deal to allow people to come on their property.” The other hoped her next door neighbor would be persuaded and that she would try to do so. Both noted that they do not see their neighbors often.

What does the data tell you about the specific activities implemented in the project?
An offer of a free weed removal appears to be a good way to get a “foot in the door.”

While our target audience was small, the response of 40% was high. While 60% did not respond, we did not get any negative comment – unusual, perhaps unprecedented for the area. The strategy of avoiding known landowners who have expressed negativity toward restoration in the past may have played a role.

What other data have you gathered to help understand the program impact?
We inquired if the landowners who accepted a weed removal had talked with any neighbors about this project. Both said they didn’t have close neighbors but both said they would, given the opportunity. One owner said she plans to talk to a neighbor with whom she shares a fence. The neighbors’ blackberries are now very evident and leaning over toward her property. She hopes to convince him to call. She will tell other people what a good job the NOSC staff and the crew did as opportunities arise.

We learned of a shift in one landowner’s acceptance of the use of herbicide. During the site visit to decide whether or not to weed, the landowner stated she did not want to allow herbicide. During the post-weed removal evaluation she stated that she would be open to the use of herbicide if weed removal was conducted mechanically in the spring/summer, then followed with a careful spot application of herbicide in the fall then planted in the winter and spring. The landowner is very knowledgeable about environmental issues and it was important to her that our project was well thought out and would actually work. Although herbicide acceptance is not our goal, it was good to learn that our approach opened up new options for weed reduction for this landowner.

NOSC staff have embraced the social marketing process and are using the products developed in this project in a neighboring watershed with much more success than they have experienced in the past. They recently mailed 140 letters with the same offer as this project and 31% have said yes to a site visit.
We asked the participants if they thought other landowners would appreciate this service. Both said yes. One thought the offer was wonderful and jumped on the opportunity.

While the number of participants in this project is small, we have developed new processes and products for NOSC and other ECONet members to use in the future. In addition a great deal has been learned about the Snow Creek area that has not been documented in the past that will be useful in future projects.

What would you change about your program activities or program evaluation in the future?

Funding and scope of projects: Invasive plant removal is often very expensive, especially when a site has heavier infestations of invasive plants than expected. A larger budget for project implementation would have provided us with the opportunity to conduct both weed removal and riparian planting without the need to depend upon other funding. The project and landowners benefited from the riparian planting grant received from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board during the project period. However, if this grant was not available the project may have been reduced in scope and some landowners (if we had more than the four that were interested) may have not been able to receive invasive removal treatment.

Outreach: One difficulty faced in this project was a lack of ways to reach people in the area. Recently the small store in the area reopened which could provide an opportunity to post information about the project. When the crew is working, they could have more visibility when appropriate, such as a sign advertising the project and a supply of the new brochures on hand if people inquire.

Applicability of transferring products: While there might be a tendency to use the language in the letters and post cards “off the shelf” for a similar audience, research should be conducted to determine if the audience is indeed similar to Snow Creek. This should, at a minimum, include research into when and what outreach was done in the past in new area and what the result was. This research can be used to evaluate the applicability of using the products and language developed in this project.
Appendix D

Photos

Photo credit: Sarah Doyle

Before

After
## Appendix E  Raw Data

### Snow Creek Landowner Call & Site Visit Evaluation Matrix

*Collected from Landowner Call Form & Site Visit Form*

| Landowner Code | Initial Reason for Call | Responded to | Weeds of Concern | Knowledge of NOSC | Call Length | Willingness to do /allow stewardship work  
| **RL5** | Schedule Visit | Letter | BB | Yes; worked with before | 6 min | 5 |
| **RL2** | Schedule Visit | Letter | BB | Yes; Hilltop Bingo | 4 min | 5 |
| **RL3** | Ask Questions | Letter | Unknown | Yes; Kilisut Harbor project | 10 min + 3 min | 5 |
| **RL4** | Schedule Visit | 1st postcard reminder | BB | No | 10 min | 5 |
| **Total** | 3 visit 1 ask ?s | 3 letter 1-1st prompt | 3 BB | 3 yes 1 no | 33 min | Ave 5 |

**BB= Blackberry; RCG = Reed Canary Grass**  
*Not present during site visit – information gathered from phone call*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Visit</th>
<th>1 is low --- 5 is high</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge of restoration</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landowner can make a difference</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aware of Noxious Weed List</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seen Fish in Creek</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge of benefits of restoration</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Open to Herbicide Use</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ave 5**  
**Ave 4.25**  
**Ave 4.5**  
**1.25**  
**2 Yes 2 No**  
**Ave 4.5**  
**2 No 2 Unk.**
## Evaluation Summary
### Motivating Snow Creek Landowners

### Outcome Data Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total calls from landowners</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Nearly reached goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of Site Visits</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Nearly reached goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of properties weeded</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1) 5/7-8 (2 days) 2) 6/23-30 (5 days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feet of streambank weeded</td>
<td>1,250</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>Exceeded goal by 1,150 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of total landowners participating in site visit</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10% of original audience; 40% of adjusted target audience</td>
<td>Exceeded goal by 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of total landowners participating in weed removal</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Exceeded goal by 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number responding after letter</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 yes; one yes if property doesn’t sell</td>
<td>Letters sent to all 10 on 4/9/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number responding after Postcard #1 “we’re in your neighborhood”</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>called, yes if property doesn’t sell</td>
<td>Sent 4/21 to 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number responding after Postcard #2 “it’s not too late”</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sent 5/7/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number responding after final letter with reply postcard</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sent 6/5/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number saying yes to weed removal after site visit</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 of 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total not responding</td>
<td>Out of 10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number saying no to weed removal</td>
<td></td>
<td>0 – although 2 said they had to wait to see if their property sold</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>Dates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of initial letters with reply postcards sent to landowners</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4/9/14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of postcard #1 “We’ll be in your Neighborhood” sent</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4/21/14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of postcard #2 “It’s not too late” sent</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5/7/14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of final letter &amp; reply postcard sent</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6/5/14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time spent fielding initial phone calls</td>
<td>4 landowners; 30 minutes</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time spent on site visits</td>
<td>7 hours on 4 site visits (2 w/o landowner); one visit was 3 hours; 30 min. preparation time for each site.</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of Data from initial phone call  
# of calls = 4

| Reason for calling          | 3 Schedule site visit  
|                            | 1 Ask Questions       |
| Responded to               | 3 Letter              
|                            | 1 Postcard #1         |
| Weeds of concern           | 3 Blackberries        
|                            | 1 Doesn’t know        |
| Heard of NOSC              | 3 Yes (worked with before; Hilltop Bingo outreach events; Kilisut Harbor project)  
|                            | 1 No                  |

Summary of Data from Site Visits  
1 is low; 5 is high

| Willingness to do stewardship work | 2 said 5 |
| Knowledge of restoration          | 1 said 4  
|                                    | 1 said 5  |
| Can a landowner make a difference | 2 said 5  |
| Aware of Noxious Weed List        | 2 said no |
| Seen fish in creek                | 2 said yes (one said not recently due to weeds) |
| Knowledge of benefits of restoration | 2 said 5  |
| Open to herbicides                | 2 said no  |

Summary of Recommendations to Landowners

| Types of weeds to remove         | 2 Blackberry  
|                                  | 1 Reed Canary Grass |
| Crew days needed                 | 2; 4-5        |
| Follow up recommendations        | Remove weeds then plant trees then maintain |
| Landowner decision to weed       | 2 said yes    |
| Follow up requested by landowner | NRCS to provide info on windbreak |
| Evaluation call ok               | 2 said yes    |
| Incentive offered for call       | 5 trees      |
Appendix F  Materials

A toolkit (a durable case with a handle for taking in the field) contained the forms below as well as information about a variety of weeds and handouts from partner organizations. This information provided to landowners as appropriate.

Materials Table of Contents

Forms for Staff Use

Form 1  When Landowner Calls Form – initial contact from landowner
Form 2  Log Sheet for Landowner Contacts – tracking contacts
Form 3  Site Visit Form – for use in the field – landowner signs
Form 4  Site Visit Preparation checklist
Form 5  Post Weed Removal Evaluation Form

Products for Landowners

Product 1 & 1a:  Initial letter to landowners with stamped return postcard

Product 2:  Weeding Day Reminder Card (if they say yes) – left with landowner during site visit

Product 3:  Thank you card – if they say no or maybe – left with landowner after site visit

Product 4:  Postcard: “We’ll be in your neighborhood” – sent after 1st landowner site visit is scheduled or about 2 weeks after 1st letter. Sent to those who have not responded.

Product 5:  Postcard: “It’s not too late”- sent 2 weeks after the “We’ll be in your neighborhood” postcard if no response

Product 6:  Postcard: “Last Call” sent 2 weeks after the “It’s not too late”- if no response [note: this was not sent – sent final letter instead]

Product 7 & 7a:  Final letter to landowners who have not responded with stamped reply postcard

Product 8:  New brochure about Snow Creek specifically for landowners (NOSC)