



**Technical Advisory Group Meeting
March 3, 2020
Meeting Summary**

A meeting of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) for the Farming in the Floodplain Project (FFP) was held on March 3, 2020 at the Puyallup Library. About 19 people participated, including Clear Creek area farmers and residents, Pierce County staff, Farming in the Floodplain Project staff, and regional experts. The meeting was led by ESA, the technical contractors working on the project.

Topics discussed at the meeting included ESA's Literature Review for the Clear Creek Agricultural Resilience Action Plan, Puyallup Watershed Gap Analysis and a summary of Agriculture Resilience Plan for Snohomish County.

Literature Review

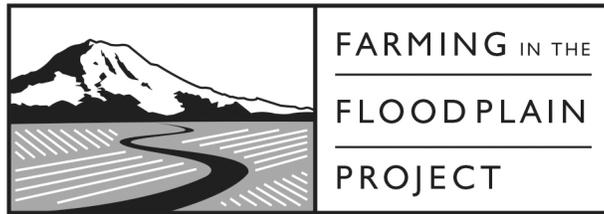
Spencer Easton from ESA presented on the preliminary findings of the Literature Review. The Literature review focused on seven questions relating to future climate change conditions and its effects on agriculture, the impact of future development on agriculture, agricultural resilience and barriers to resilient agriculture.

Questions and comments on the literature review from the TAG included:

- How many of the articles were directly related to agriculture in the watershed?
- Many farmers in the watershed do not have crop insurance because their farm operations are small scale.
- Literature about resilience is often based on large commodity groups or systems. Agriculture within the Puyallup Watershed is very diverse making it difficult to create broad scale changes because adaption will look different on every farm.
- TAG members stated that they believed some focus on regulation is important.
 - This includes drainage management regulations and water rights regulations.
 - Water rights in the watershed could be a sleeping giant if Ecology or other parties begin to take more charge on enforcing/regulating them.
- A TAG member suggested splitting out the impacts of climate change to be more specific to certain areas and risks.

Agricultural Resilience Plan for Snohomish County

Spencer Easton presented on the Snohomish County Agricultural Resilience Plan for Snohomish County, which is an interesting example for agricultural resilience work in the Puyallup Watershed. The Agricultural Resilience Plan for Snohomish County is available online at: <https://snohomishcd.org/ag-resilience>.



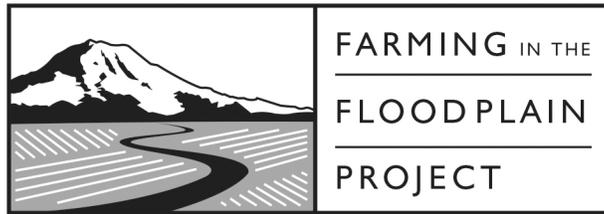
Gap Analysis and Study Plan for the Puyallup Watershed

Spencer Easton presented initial findings from a gap analysis of information about the physical conditions that affect agricultural viability in the Puyallup Watershed. The ESA team found extensive information about physical conditions, but none of it has been synthesized and applied to agriculture. The ESA team presented a preliminary draft study plan for the next phase of FFP work. The draft study plan includes:

- An Existing Conditions Report that would synthesis existing information and apply it to agricultural viability in the Puyallup Watershed.
- Three to five technical memos on specific topics that require more detailed research and analysis. Topics for technical memos would be identified over the course of the work. Topics already identified for technical memos include:
 - Historic River Management Actions and Sediment Management Options
 - Soil Compaction (Plow Pan)

TAG questions and comments on the gap analysis and study plan included:

- Topics the farmers felt were the most intriguing were historic river management, flooding, and water infrastructure.
- Increasing pressures from wildlife such as coyotes and elk were identified as another potential gap. Encroachment from these species increases as development takes over their habitat and this poses risks to farmers in the Puyallup Watershed.
- Farmers also identified market infrastructure as a potential gap.
- TAG members were not concerned with land subsidence.
- Some TAG members were interested in the potential impacts of lahars. The FFP project team could potentially develop a map of agriculture overlaid with lahar risk areas to asses which agricultural areas are at the highest risk to address this gap.
- The TAG liked how the Snohomish County Plan addressed topics like groundwater and water rights by first looking at the agricultural needs like irrigation.
- TAG members discussed whether the plow pan was a topic worth pursuing with a technical memo. Several participants expressed curiosity about the plow pan, which could have negative effects on drainage.
- TAG members recommended having a section on soil health.
- A drainage network analysis (separate from the study plan) is being conducted to look at an overlay of different drainages to see where they are impacting agriculture and where they could be improved.



Next Steps and Action Items

- Jordan will send out a link to the crop impacts tool associated with the Agriculture Resilience Plan for Snohomish County, which covers the entire Puget Sound region.
- The next TAG meeting will be in Fall 2020.
- ESA is expecting to have the literature review and gap analysis completed by the end of March 2020 and will share the findings with the TAG.