

Chehalis Basin Partnership

Meeting Summary

MARCH 27, 1998

Introduction

The meeting was called to order by Chair Dick Nichols. He then provided some introductory remarks about the purpose of the Chehalis Basin Partnership (formerly called the Chehalis Basin Council), the status of the group, and the selection of a lead agency (Lewis County) for purposes of administering watershed grants. As Chairman Nichols explained, the Nisqually River Council provides a model for the Chehalis Basin, one that has been successful "for longer than I have been a county commissioner."

I. Intergovernmental Agreement

Chair Dick Nichols stated his intention to reach tentative approval for the intergovernmental agreement which establishes the Chehalis Basin Partnership. He proposed amending the agreement to include citizen participation, otherwise we risk "sending the wrong message". As Chairman Nichols explained, the Nisqually River Council would not work without citizens. Following some discussion, it was agreed to amend the document to include 4 citizens – one from each county. The process for selecting those representatives will be taken up at the next meeting. There was also some discussion about Section 3 – *Chehalis Basin Partnership Meetings*. The section (2nd sentence) was amended to read - "The parties will meet regularly to share information." The next step is to have the attorneys from local government look at the document and advise on Sections 6-8. The group approved a motion to forward the document to the Thurston County prosecuting attorney's office.

II. Procedures for Operation

Chairman Nichols suggested the following operational procedures:

- All meeting notices to be sent to individuals on mailing list and publicized via press release to area radio stations and newspapers
- Preparation of a meeting agenda
- Distribution of materials beforehand
- Preparation and distribution of a meeting summary

He also recommended the following meeting format:

- Introductions
- Business items
- Updates
- Legislation/ funding
- Information exchange
- Public Comment

Mayor Spahr requested in addition, that the group look at proposed legislation, projects, and mandates (and consider support or opposition). Mayor Penberth was concerned about the timing of meeting notices – that they not be printed too early. Others were concerned about having adequate notice. It was decided to mail out materials 1 week in advance.

III. Update on Ecology Activities

Brian Walsh provided copies of a new Ecology internet page which provides assistance to project developers about permit requirements. He suggested that this might also be useful to local governments, tribes, and citizens. Brian has contacted the WA Department of Agriculture and received a commitment from Lee Faulconer to participate as the agency representative on the council. (This was requested by Debra Dickey at the last meeting.) Brian also added the *Mason County Journal* and radio station KMAS to the press release distribution list, per Commissioner Cady's request.

IV. Update on Legislation & Funding

Brian Walsh provided copies of ESHB 2514 – Watershed Planning Grants. The bill had passed during the session and was awaiting the Governor's signature. Brian walked the group through the bill and provided a perspective on what the bill might mean for the Chehalis watershed. Chairman Nichols described a "fork in the road" for the Chehalis Basin Partnership, i.e. the decision whether the partnership should pursue the new planning grant funds. He asked Ecology to help develop two scenarios – one future without the funding, and another with.

V. Roundtable/ Future Topics

A number of topics were suggested for future meetings, including:

- Total Daily Maximum Load (TMDL)
- Flood Control
- Pe Ell Moratorium
- Endangered Species Act (Salmon and Steelhead)
- Water Resources

VI. Public Comment

Ron Wisner (Grays Harbor Conservation District) suggested Mike Grady come to speak to the Partnership about the listing of salmon under the ESA. Scott Chitwood (Quinault Tribe) stated that he liked what he was hearing. However, he was very concerned about the health of the watershed and the dramatic decline in the salmon. For example, the Humptulips sub-basin has been closed for the first time. He sees the need to minimize impact on wild fish. For the tribes, "fishing is not just a job, but a way of life." Karen Knudsen (Chehalis River Council) expressed concern about the make-up of the group. She sees a serious omission in the lack of environmental representation. Dave Palmer (Chehalis River Council) submitted prepared comments also concerning representation on the partnership, the model, and the name of the organization. (In response, the name was changed at the meeting to *Chehalis Basin Partnership*.)

VII. Wrap-Up/ Adjourn

The next meeting is scheduled for April 24 at 9:00 AM at the Chehalis Indian Reservation. Everyone who entered their name on the sign-up sheet will be added to the mailing list.