



# *Chehalis Basin Partnership*

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Meeting Summary – September 24, 1999

## **Introduction**

Mayor Spahr welcomed members and opened the meeting.

Quorum: The Partnership currently has 30 designated membership positions. Three are unfilled leaving a designated membership roster of 27. Fifteen designated members or their alternates were present at the September 24 meeting.

### **I. 2514 Water Planning**

The Envirovision Team provided an update on the status of the data collection portion of the project. So far about 350 various sources of data have been identified. Envirovision has obtained copies of many of these data sources but a significant number are still being sought out. Envirovision will focus on finding copies of information that they determine are necessary. Partnership members are asked to review the list of data sources that was handed out today to determine if there are any important sources that have been missed. Response to the letter requesting data has been fair.

There are three decisions that the Partnership made during the meeting. First was the decision to form a Technical Advisory Committee as called for in the by-laws. The TAC will provide direction to Envirovision during the data assessment portion of the project. Kahle Jennings will contact each Partnership member to obtain designated TAC members. Margaret Rader volunteered to Chair the TAC and was confirmed by the Partnership. The second decision was about whom should attend the October 29<sup>th</sup> workshop. Envirovision needs people with technical expertise in water quality, water quantity and fish habitat at the workshop to make decisions, prioritize data and help determine how the data will be analyzed. There is a concern that if the group gets too large it will not be able to effectively accomplish those tasks. The Partnership decided that it should be the first responsibility of the TAC to decide who should attend the workshop. The third decision was that hiring a formal facilitator for the workshop should not be necessary. Facilitation at the workshop is a responsibility Envirovision should handle.

There will be a report prepared on the workshop. Work on the project will resume once the Partnership has reviewed the report and decided on how to proceed.

## **II. 2496 Salmon Recovery Grant**

The Partnership discussed options for staffing the Salmon Recovery Project funded under a grant from the State Department of Fish and Wildlife. The project provides funds for identifying habitat impediments which negatively affect natural spawning salmon populations (Limiting Factors Analysis) and to develop/oversee a process for identifying and implementing habitat restoration projects in the basin. There is enough in the grant to fund a full-time staff position for two years and provide some supporting GIS work.

The Partnership reached agreement that the best way to staff the project would be to have the lead entity for the contract, (Lewis County) hire a fish biologist. Lewis County plans to begin advertising before the next Partnership meeting. An interview panel will be established including representatives of the Partnership. This panel will interview the candidates and make a recommendation to the full Partnership for approval prior to any job offers being made by the county.

## **III. Citizen's Report**

Margaret Rader summarized the major issues of the August Citizen's Advisory Committee meeting. A summary of that meeting was mistakenly left out of the meeting packet for the September meeting. It will be included in either a special mailing or with the meeting packet for the October meeting.

The Citizen's Committee members have found that many people in the basin don't know that the Chehalis Basin Partnership exists or what its goals are. The Partnership's goals and activities need to be publicized. The Citizen's Committee has reviewed a boilerplate communication strategy provided to Kahle Jennings by the Department of Ecology communication staff. The Committee would like to see more emphasis placed on public communication, and recommends that someone with experience be retained by the Partnership to develop a specific communication strategy for the Partnership. The communication strategy would describe what kind of communication activities the Partnership wants to do. Once the strategy was completed the Partnership could begin to look for assistance from various members to implement specific portions of the strategy.

Individual members of the Partnership expressed interest in receiving a copy of the boilerplate communication strategy. Kahle Jennings will provide copies. Some members are concerned that no matter what we do it will be difficult to get people involved in the Partnership until we have something that will attract their interest.

Members of the Partnership did not reach agreement on how to proceed. Kahle Jennings will check with state caucus agencies to see if they have any resources that could be assigned to help develop the strategy.

## **IV. Update on Chehalis Flood Project**

Commissioner Graham announced that DOT has agreed to provide an additional \$800,000 for the flood control project. There is a possibility the total amount available may decline if Initiative 695 passes. The \$300,000 already received will still be available if the initiative passes.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is starting the Environmental Impact Statement Scoping process for the flood control project. Public meetings on the EIS scoping are scheduled for the week of September 27<sup>th</sup>.

## **V. Data Management**

Members were interested in the history and direction of this effort, particularly how it related to previous interest by members of the CBP in forming a data management committee. The intent of the summit is to get the people together that currently manage data/GIS mapping systems for local government, state/federal agencies, and even private groups. The summit will focus on determining what types of data/GIS mapping is being done, if there are differences among data management systems that make it difficult to share data, and discuss possible alternatives for sharing data and making data available to the public. A likely outcome will be identification of individual participants in a data management committee that will begin to meet regularly. The summit is being developed for early December

## **VI. Salmon Recovery**

Phil Miller handed out the September 1999 summary of the statewide strategy to recover salmon "Extinction is not an Option." A full version of the strategy is under development and the next revision will be available around September 2000. Phil also handed out a summary of the top priorities for state agency salmon recovery actions planned for the 1999-2001 biennium. The Governor's Salmon Recovery Office is soliciting feedback on this "Summary Early Action Plan." The plan looks at salmon recovery on a statewide level; watershed plan being done by the Chehalis Basin Partnership under 2514 and 2496 will address salmon recovery at the local level.

Concerns were raised by Partnership members that potential listings under the Endangered Species Act and the State Salmon Recovery Plan will pre-empt our local process. Phil explained is that it will be a challenge to fit federal, state, and local efforts together, but that the state recognizes that most watersheds are not ready to recommend actions yet and there is a lot of flexibility in the state strategy.

Phil next discussed future salmon recovery funding opportunities. The Salmon Recovery Board will release draft funding guidelines for public comment in October. The draft guidelines call for recovery projects to be submitted by January 14, 2000. The Partnership has an opportunity between now and then to document salmon recovery priorities, determine if the Partnership wants to take the lead in soliciting and ranking project proposals in the Chehalis Basin, and complete the process so that proposals are ready to submit January 14<sup>th</sup>. A general discussion ensued about the need for the Partnership to make comments on the guidelines during the comment period, and it was agreed that we should make comments. Dr. Sodhi expressed an interest in attending

the September 30th Salmon Recover Board meeting in Vancouver, Washington and making some preliminary comments about the cost effectiveness of protecting good salmon habitat compared to restoring degraded habitat. If Dr. Sodhi is able to attend the meeting, copies of his comments will be provided to members of the Partnership.

## **VII. Open Comment**

John Penberth, Mayor of Pe Ell announced that their water treatment system was back up to full operating condition and that the town was proceeding with a river bank protection project with assistance from the Army Corps of Engineers.

## **VIII. Wrap Up/Adjourn**

Due to conflicts with holidays, the **meetings for November and December were changed to November 19<sup>th</sup> and December 17<sup>th</sup>**. They will be held at the regular time at the Casino.

The next Chehalis Basin Partnership meeting will be held on **October 22, 1999 at the Chehalis Tribal Center starting at 9:00.**

### Enclosures

- Summary of September and October Citizen Advisory Committee meetings
- Announcement of the opportunity to comment on Salmon Recovery Board funding guidelines.