



Chehalis Basin Partnership

Meeting Summary – January 28, 2000

Introduction

Mayor Spahr welcomed members and opened the meeting. Sue Patnude informed the group that she has taken a position with the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife and introduced Terry Vietz, City Council Member from Ocean Shores, who will be representing the City on the Partnership. Randy Neff, representing Mason County introduced himself.

Mayor Spahr informed the group that Ed Moerke, a citizen representative from Lewis County had passed away during December. Ed Moerke owned a well drilling business and had also been serving on the Lewis County Water Conservancy Board.

Attendance: Nineteen designated members or their alternates signed the attendance roster at this meeting. There were seventeen additional partners, citizens, or visitors that attended.

Lead Agency/Lead Entity (Agenda Item #1)

Mike Daniels introduced Lee Hansmann. Lee is the Deputy Director of Community Development - Utilities and Development Division, and will be serving as the primary Grays Harbor County contact for all matters relating to the functions of 2514 Lead Agency and 2496 Lead Entity.

Lee informed the Partnership that she is working with Lewis County and Ecology to close out the 2514 contract between Ecology and Lewis County and negotiate a similar contract between Ecology and Grays Harbor County. The contract with Lewis County must be closed out before a new contract can be signed. She also discussed the need to amend the Intergovernmental Agreement and by-laws to record the change in Lead Agency. A short discussion followed about other changes that may be appropriate to consider at this time. Since there are about 50 signatures on the agreement and it states that changes can only be made if there is written consent by all parties, there may be some benefit to reconsidering how future updates to the agreement would be handled.

Lee finished with a discussion of the resolutions recognizing the change in Lead Agency status that had been sent out by Lewis County to the parties to the Agreement. She thanked Lewis County for their work to make the transition go smoothly.

Update on 2514 Level 1 Data Assessment Project (Agenda Item # 2)

Grays Harbor County, with assistance from the TAC and individual Partnership members, has been meeting with Envirovision to negotiate a scope of work for the second stage of the Level 1 Assessment they were retained to do. The first stage was to gather available information, compile a list of the information, and hold a workshop to identify how they should proceed to evaluate that information to identify gaps that need to be filled. The evaluation of the information to identify gaps will occur under the second stage of the Level 1 Assessment. The highest priority information gaps identified under the Level 1 Assessment will be filled under a separate "Level 2" Assessment.

Priorities identified in the workshop that were not included in Envirovision's original proposal and delays due to the transition in lead agency will result in increasing the cost of the Level 1 Assessment. Right now, there appear to be two basic options: 1) Scale back the scope of the Level 1 Assessment and stick to the original budget, or 2) Spend more on the Level 1 Assessment and live within the remaining budget for the Level 2 Assessment (filling information gaps). The difference would amount to approximately \$20,000.

A general discussion about various aspects of the issue followed including the need for flexibility, the need for clear direction to Envirovision, and concerns about sticking to the budget. In the end the Partnership referred the issue back to Grays Harbor County with the instructions to develop a recommendation on the final scope of work and budget for consideration at the February meeting.

Salmon 2496 Fish Biologist Position (Agenda Item #3)

When Grays Harbor County agreed to assume the responsibility of acting as 2514 Lead Agency and 2496 Lead Entity they said they would carry out the responsibilities by partnering with Columbia Pacific RC&D and Grays Harbor Regional Planning Commission. The biologist will be an employee of CPRC&D who will in turn contract with Grays Harbor County to work on behalf of the Partnership on the 2496 Salmon Recovery grant. The Tasks the biologist will be working on are clearly defined in the 2496 grant contract with WDFW. CPRC&D has taken the lead in the process to hire the fish biologist and will provide other direct support such as supervision and possibly office space. CPRC&D will not receive any type of reimbursement from the 2496 grant for administration or supervision of the fish biologist. Grays Harbor County actually directs the work of the fish biologist on behalf of the Partnership.

Jim Walls of CPRC&D informed the group that there were 30 applicants for the position. A screening committee narrowed this down to 5 applicants that would actually be interviewed. After the interview process it was clear that all five candidates were qualified. The interview panel narrowed the list to three candidates and Jim is contacting references. Jim and Lee ask the Partnership for approval to offer the biologist position to the most qualified candidate and negotiate a salary/benefit package within the allowable budget. After a general discussion of all the issues outlined above,

the Partnership agreed that CPRC&D should proceed to hire the most qualified candidate they can within the budget provided by the grant.

Salmon Recovery Funding Applications (Agenda Item #4)

Lee outlined the Process used to solicit for, evaluate, and rank habitat restoration projects that the Partnership would submit to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board for consideration. The Partnership Technical Advisory team met with Grays Harbor staff several times to define the process and identify the technical staff that should be on the evaluation/ranking team. One of the important discussion points was how to avoid potential conflicts of interest since some of the members of the evaluation/review team might also be involved in submitting projects for consideration. It was decided that team members would not evaluate and rank any project they were submitting. All scores were averaged for each project, based on the number of people who submitted a score or ranking for that project. This ensured that a “zero” score or ranking for a project did not skew the results and that someone didn’t artificially inflate the final score of their own project.

Eighteen projects were submitted and the team did a great job of evaluating and ranking the projects in a very short time. The evaluation/ranking team is forwarding eight of the projects to the Partnership with the recommendation that they be submitted to the SRFB for funding (see attached list). The team felt that most of the remaining ten projects would be appropriate to submit at a later date if they were able to address issues that the team felt needed to be addressed. To facilitate this the team scheduled a debriefing session for Tuesday February 8th and each project proponent would be invited to attend and discuss their project with the people who evaluated it.

After general discussion, the Partnership accepted the list as proposed. The list of projects and the Partnership’s application for funding will be delivered to the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (which is handling the contracting work for the SRFB) Monday January 31. The final step will be to attend an interview session with the SRFB project evaluation panel to explain the process used to identify specific projects.

Citizens report (Agenda Item #5)

The Citizen’s Advisory Committee did not meet in December. J. Roach, one of the CAC members, used this time to explain the work he has been doing to support the Partnership’s interest in assuring that access to basin information is available to all parties. Mr. Roach has spent a lot of time meeting with agencies and other groups that gather and/or manage “information” or “data” to find out what they are doing to assure that the information can be shared and that it is accessible to the public. He has found that there are no universal standards at this time to ensure that data can be shared, but that work is progressing towards compatibility. He has spent quite a lot of time meeting with individual legislators and legislative staff to support the need for legislative action in support of information compatibility and accessibility. There is a possibility that the legislature will fund several local pilot information management efforts, and he has been

working to get some funds added to that program so that a pilot can be done in the Chehalis Basin.

Mr. Roach was thanked for his efforts and members of the Partnership were reminded that we should all be grateful for his work in support of something we are all interested in.

Update on Flood Projects (Agenda Item # 6)

Rick Turnbull updated the Partnership for Commissioner Graham who could not attend. A handout covering the information he presented is attached to this summary.

Open Comment (Agenda item #7)

The US Army Corps of Engineers has issued public notice on its Environmental Assessment regarding efforts to relocate Caspian Terns from Rice Island in the Columbia River. This relocation effort could result in large number of terns showing up in Grays Harbor. This might be reason for concern and the Partnership expressed interest in having someone come to the February meeting to discuss the issue. The opportunity for public comment ends February 18th.

Jim Walls informed the group that CPRC&D has recently found out that there is a lack of recognized standard accounting practices that state agencies apply uniformly to non-profit corporations. This creates problems for non-profits working under state grants. CPRC&D will be meeting with Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation in the next couple of weeks to discuss this issue and will report back to the Partnership what it learns.

The next Chehalis Basin Partnership meeting will be held on **Friday February 25, 2000 at the Chehalis Tribal Center starting at 9:00.**

Due to the extensive agenda, the February meeting may go up to one-half hour beyond the normal 11:30 adjournment time.