



Chehalis Basin Partnership

Meeting Summary – December 21, 2001

A. GENERAL PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS

Introduction

Chairman Spahr welcomed everyone and opened the meeting. Fifteen of the Partnership's thirty-two member organizations had a representative or alternate at the meeting. Twenty-four additional citizens, alternates, or visitor attended.

Citizens' Advisory Committee

Margaret Rader briefly reviewed the November/December activities of the committee. A summary of the November meeting was included in the meeting packet for the December 21 Partnership meeting. Members hope to play a real supportive role in study area meeting being planned for the first half of 2002.

Steering/Technical Advisory Committee

The STC met on December 6th. A summary of that meeting was included with the meeting packet for the December 21 Partnership meeting. Much of the meeting was spent working with Triangle Associates on the organization, structure and details of the study area meetings planned for the first half of 2002. Other topics that were discussed include the summary of the Level 1 assessment, prioritizing Level 2 technical studies, water rights and in-stream flows. The proposal to form a water quality sub-committee also received attention. The proposal is a good one, but several questions remain: what is the exact role of the water quality sub-committee, how it will work within the Partnership, and most importantly who will be on the committee that is not already involved in the Steering/Technical Committee. The originator of the proposal will be asked to work with the STC on those issues. Jim Fleming from the City of Centralia will be joining the STC.

Annual Plan of Work

A draft Annual Plan of Work for 2002 distributed with the meeting packet was reviewed in brief. Not all of the things planned for 2001 were accomplished because of unforeseen workload associated to Phase 3 planning. These work items have been rolled forward into the 2002 Annual Plan of Work. After discussion it was agreed that the 2002 Annual Plan of Work is a "working document," and that everyone realizes that changes will probably have to be made along the way. The Partnership approved the 2002 Annual Plan of Work.

By-Laws

Work on revising the by-laws is one of the 2001 Annual Plan of Work elements that were delayed. The last chapter on "Membership" in the Partnership still must be reviewed. Work on this Chapter should be completed in early 2002. At that point the revised by laws will be brought to the full Partnership for discussion.

Chehalis Basin Partnership Meeting Location

Renovation work on the Lucky Eagle Casino planned for the first half of 2002 means that the **Partnership will have to find a new location to meet**. The Partnership has planned to hold the four study area meetings during that period, but we will still have to find a new location for other Partnership meetings starting in January. Several suggestions for alternative meeting locations were suggested.

NOTE: LOOK FOR A NOTICE WITH THE JANUARY MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT A NEW CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP MEETING LOCATION

B. SPECIAL PROJECTS

Watershed Planning under RCW 90.82

During the last month the Partnership's Lead Agency for watershed planning (Grays Harbor County) and Triangle Associates met with the Chehalis Tribe, Boistfort Valley Water Company, John Penberth, and Grays Harbor Water District #2 to explain the Partnership's approach for the study area meetings and gather information on the interests of these groups. Similar meetings with other groups will continue into January.

Triangle associates presented the Phase 3 watershed planning elements the Partnership will be working on for the next several months.

Level 2 Technical studies – the time remaining for gathering additional information needed for watershed planning is short. A two-stage approach is recommended for beginning new technical studies. The first stage is to begin studies that we know will need to be done. Then, based partially on the results of the study area meetings a second round of studies can be initiated depending on the amount of resources that remain.

There was some discussion of the appearances of beginning some Level 2 technical studies before the four study area meetings are held. Will people feel we have already decided what has to be done before asking them what their issues are? The answer to this is that the legislature wrote certain "minimum" requirements into the Watershed Planning Act (RCW 90.82 section 070) that have to be done in each planning area. The first stage of technical studies will focus on achieving those minimum requirements. If we don't start now, we won't have time to complete the work so it can be used to develop the plan before the October 2003 deadline.

Summary of the Level 1 Assessment of existing information – The summary is not expanding the scope of the Level 1 Assessment; it will condense it, and simplify/interpret some of the more technical parts. A brief overview of the proposed approach was presented (attached). The Level 1 Assessment contains a lot of good information. The Partnership has accomplished a lot over the last two years, and now it is clear that some important issues and considerations were

not addressed. Examples include the existing regulatory environment, related planning efforts, in-stream flows, and a water balance for the basin (required).

During the general discussion some final points about the four Study Area meeting were made:

- The Partnership needs to capture people's interest for them to show up.
- The Partnership needs to get the word out about the four study area meetings.
- Local Partnership members need to be prepared to play a key role in the four study area meetings.
- Emphasize the Partnership's mission statement on the announcements.

Salmon Recovery RCW 77.85

The application for Chehalis Basin Salmon Recovery Projects has been submitted to the Salmon Recovery Funding (SRF) Board. A meeting with the SRF Board's Technical Review Panel is scheduled for February and the final results should be available in April.

The next round of applications will be out in July and interested parties should begin developing their projects now. Technical help from fish biologists associated with various agencies and organizations is available.

Brian Peck from the US Fish and Wildlife Service reviewed the status of funding for salmon habitat restoration available from that agency. Eighteen letters of intent were received from various organizations and the USFWS is expecting to receive 16 full applications by the January 2002 deadline. The USFWS is looking for people who would be willing to spend one or two days reviewing and scoring projects in late January. If you are interested please contact Brian Peck at (360) 753-8084.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Work in the Chehalis Basin

Flood Damage Reduction Project sponsored by Lewis County

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is going through the process of selecting the preferred alternative by December 31, 2001. The Partnership will receive a report describing the decision in January.

Ecosystem Restoration Study sponsored by Grays Harbor County

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been contacting people about sources of data and looking at how to make that information available.

C. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

A special presentation was not scheduled due to the full agenda.

D. OPEN COMMENT

Surface Water Temperature Standards

Ron Wisner (Grays Harbor Conservation District) provided some information on proposed federal guidance and state changes to water temperature standards. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has extended the comment period on its draft guidance on temperature

standards for surface waters in Region 10 (Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Alaska) through February 22, 2002. (A copy of EPA's October 2001 information on the draft guidance is included in the packet with this meeting summary).

The Washington State Department of Ecology is evaluating the proposed EPA standards and how they will relate to state standards. A Focus sheet on changes that are being considered to state water quality standards for temperature should be released by the end of 2001 (a copy of that Focus sheet has been included in the packet with this meeting summary). Public hearings on the proposed changes are anticipated to be held by Ecology in the spring of 2002.

Information on each of these proposed changes are available on the following web sites:

- EPA standards: www.epa.gov/R10earth/water.htm (scroll down to surface water standards and then to Draft EAP Region 10 temperature standards)
- State standards: www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/swqs

Ron encouraged members of the Partnership to look at the proposed changes to the temperature standards and comment to Ecology and EPA.

Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force

Doug Fricke presented a request from the CBFTF for Partnership support of the Task Force's application to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board for \$1.4 million dollars to provide basic support for the Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force so it can continue to carry out its role as a Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group. This one time grant will replace federal appropriations that we cut from the federal FY2002 budget. (A copy of the request is attached).

WDFW representatives present at this meeting supported the request but expressed some concern about the wording of the letter. The Task Force was asked to directly contact WDFW if they have concerns about permits necessary to work within the ordinary high water mark of state waters.

It was also noted that although Doug is designated as the CBFTF alternate representative to the Partnership, a regular member has not been appointed by the CBFTF since John Penberth resigned earlier in 2001. The Partnership agreed on providing a letter of support on the condition that the CBFTF formally name a member to the Partnership.

The next meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership will be at 9:00 a.m. on January 25th IN THE AUDITORIUM OF THE WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & INDUSTRIES BUILDING LOCATED AT 7273 LINDERSON WAY SW IN TUMWATER WASHINGTON. A MAP TO THIS NEW MEETING LOCATION IS INCLUDED IN THE MEETING PACKET THIS SUMMARY IS PART OF.

Decisions

- **Approved the 2002 Annual Plan of Work**
- **Agreed to provide a letter supporting the Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force request to the SRF Board for a one-time grant of 1.4 million to replace federal funds that were cut.**