



# *Chehalis Basin Partnership*

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## Meeting Summary – June 22, 2001

### **A. GENERAL PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS**

#### **Introduction**

Vice-Chairman Sodhi welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

Twenty of the Partnership's thirty-two member organizations had a representative or alternate at the meeting. Thirteen additional citizens, alternates, or visitor attended.

#### **Citizens' Advisory Committee**

Rob Schanz, chair of the CAC, announced that they will be meeting at the offices of the Chehalis River Council in Oakville after the Partnership meeting. The committee has been working on a public involvement plan for the Partnership. During their meeting they will be looking at a draft brochure that describes the Chehalis Basin Partnership and what projects it is involved in.

Grays Harbor County announced that it has appointed three new citizens to the Advisory Committee. One of the recent appointees has determined that they will not be able to serve. The remaining two new appointees are Terry Willis and Michael Quigg. Grays Harbor County will appoint a fourth CAC representative and a Citizen to sit on the Chehalis Basin Partnership.

#### **Technical Advisory Committee**

Mark Swartout, the new chair of the TAC, presented a brief report on the meeting held June 7<sup>th</sup>. A full summary of that meeting was included in the meeting packet for this meeting. The draft Operating Procedures Manual that will be discussed later today provides a good review of the roles and responsibilities of the Steering/Technical Committee. The committee requests that Partnership members review the roles and responsibilities in the draft Operating Procedures Manual and comment.

The TAC has used the Partnership's Annual Plan of Work to develop a six-month agenda that shows the relationship between TAC meetings and Partnership activities.

## **Annual Plan of Work**

Clarifications and modifications to the Annual Plan of Work that has been recommended since the May 25<sup>th</sup> Partnership meeting were reviewed. Basically, the changes will move the elements that do not have a specific completion date into a category called "Future Initiatives" so it is easier to track the issues that do have completion dates.

During the general discussion the following comments were made:

- Add a category where activities carried out by Partnership members or other organizations are recorded. These activities need to be tracked and coordinated with Partnership activities, and this would be one way to help accomplish that.
- It is important that Partnership members stay informed about, and involved with, the two separate flood control projects. Those projects will be important to all Partnership members in one way or another as they develop.

The proposed additions and modifications were approved and have been incorporated into the version attached.

## Record of Decisions

One of the elements of the Annual Plan of Work is to develop a record of decisions. This record will help ensure that the work of the Partnership is efficient and effective. A draft record of decisions has been developed for the meetings between December 1999 and May 25, 2001. Currently the record is organized by month, but once all the past meeting summaries have been reviewed the record will be organized by activity – watershed planning, salmon recover, general Partnership responsibilities, etc.

The four types of information being included in the record of decisions are "Decisions," "Recommendations," "Future Agenda Topics," and "Notes."

There are questions about how to make information such as the Record of Decisions readily available to Partnership members and even the general public. The discussion led to the following ideas:

- ◆ When the Record of Decisions is completed for all meetings to date, a copy could be distributed to each person on the mail list.
- ◆ On-going up-dates would be printed at the end of each meeting summary and it would be the responsibility of each individual to update their own copy of the Record of Decisions.
- ◆ The Record of Decisions could be posted on an Internet site along with other Partnership Documents such as the Level 1 Assessment, agreements, etc.

One recommendation that came out of this discussion was to include the web address of web sites related to Partnership activities or where Partnership information is stored somewhere on the meeting agenda. It was agreed that this is a very good suggestion. Web sites will be listed on the back of the agenda.

## **B. SPECIAL PROJECTS**

### **Watershed Planning under RCW 90.82**

Triangle Associates is beginning the process of interviewing Partnership members to find out their thoughts on the scope for the Phase 3 watershed plan, and the watershed planning process in general. Several one-on-one interviews are scheduled for today. A joint meeting of the Steering/Technical Committee and Citizens' Advisory Committee is scheduled for June 28<sup>th</sup>. There will be a special workshop on July 13<sup>th</sup> specifically to work on the scope (outline) for the Phase 3 Plan. The schedule calls for completing the scope and approving it at the September 30, 2001 Partnership meeting.

Bob Wheeler (Triangle Associates) said that the interviews are going well and that they are providing helpful information. He introduced Chris Page who will be compiling and interpreting the information collected. Triangle has developed surveys they are using for the different target groups. They will work with Kahle Jennings to get the appropriate survey to the state caucus. There was a question from the audience about whether agricultural interests are being sought out. The Department of Agriculture will be interviewed as part of the state caucus. The Cattlemen's Association is represented on the Partnership and will be contacted directly.

Summer Instream Flow Study – Ecology and WDFW met with the Steering/Technical committee for guidance on how to target the study of in-stream flows this summer. Based on the results of that meeting and a field survey of potential sites, flow monitoring will occur at six locations in the basin: The Upper Chehalis River, Skookumchuck River, Black River, Satsop River, Hoquiam River, and Humptulips River. Each of these sites will be measured three times to determine flow levels – once each during May, June, and August/September. The information from the study will help determine if the existing minimum flows set in 1976 using older methods limit fish production or are higher than they need to be. Comments during this discussion included:

- ◆ Ecology should schedule the people actually doing the study to come and discuss the results with the Partnership.
- ◆ People should not leave here today thinking that flows are the only thing affecting salmon. Flows are a key piece, but just providing adequate flows will not “solve the salmon problem.”
- ◆ It is important that when the word “closure” is used in reference to not allowing any future new surface water withdrawals from an area, that it be used carefully, and that attention is paid to involving the public in the discussions and the decision.

### **Salmon Recovery RCW 77.85**

Grays Harbor County has applied for \$230,000 from the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife so it can continue to carry out its responsibilities as Lead Entity for salmon recovery during the next biennium. The funds would pay for: 1) a portion of county staff time and contract work to oversee the development of a salmon recovery

strategy and annual Salmon Recovery Funding Board project solicitation/ranking process, 2) a biologist to perform biological review of projects, 3) and a GIS analyst.

In addition to this support through the Lead Entity, WDFW also provides about six-tenths of an FTE for salmon recovery activities in the form of the Watershed Steward assigned to the Chehalis.

The Limiting Factors Analysis report is done. A handout on how to obtain a copy of the report on CD from the Conservation Commission was handed out (copy attached). Grays Harbor County would like to work with the Conservation Commission to arrange to place the report on a web-site so that it can be accessed over the Internet. It is important to remember that even though the LFA report has been written, it identifies many data gaps that need to be filled over time. The LFA report is one part of a salmon recovery strategy that will continue to develop and change over time.

Now that the LFA report is done for the Chehalis, Carol Smith has moved on to do similar work for other basins. The Partnership agreed that a letter should be sent to Carol and the Conservation Commission thanking her, and commending her for the work she completed in the Chehalis. Grays Harbor County will prepare the letter for signature by the Chair of the Partnership.

Salmon Recovery Funding Board – Applications for the next round of salmon habitat projects will be out in early July. The applications will be available on the Internet at the IAC/SRF Board web-site. The IACC/SRF Board will be holding workshops throughout the state to go over SRF Board application procedures, discuss individual projects with project proponents and provide an opportunity to link up proponents for related projects. The workshop for the Chehalis Basin will be held July 17<sup>th</sup>. Applications will be due to the Lead Entity September 28<sup>th</sup>. A schedule for the entire 2001 grant cycle was handed out (copy attached).

Grays Harbor County, the Lead Entity for salmon recovery in the Chehalis Basin, sponsored a workshop for interested salmon recovery project sponsors Thursday evening June 21<sup>st</sup>. The turnout was good (26 people) including a number of new faces. At the current time, the recovery strategy for the Chehalis Basin is to address the priorities identified in the Limiting Factors Analysis. It is becoming more and more important to link individual salmon recovery projects to the LFA and a basin-specific salmon recovery strategy. A more detailed salmon recovery strategy for the Chehalis Basin will be out in mid-July and should be used by project applicants to focus and support their projects.

USFWS Salmon Restoration Funding – the packet for the June 22<sup>nd</sup> Partnership meeting included information on this source of funding. Applications are due to the USFWS July 6, 2001.

## **Flood Control**

### **Centralia Flood Damage Reduction Project**

No report.

## **Chehalis River Basin Ecosystem Restoration Study**

A draft work plan for the Chehalis River Basin Ecosystem Restoration Study should be available for review in July.

### **TMDL Updates**

Grays Harbor Fecal Coliform Bacteria - The public comment period for the DRAFT Grays Harbor Fecal Coliform Bacteria TMDL ended on June 11<sup>th</sup>. The report summarizes the technical study of bacteria conditions in the basin, and includes recommendations on how to reduce fecal coliform bacteria loading to Grays Harbor.

Grays Harbor County Commissioners, City of Hoquiam, Weyerhaeuser Company, Grays Harbor Conservation District, and USEPA Region 10 provided comments on the draft report. Some new and substantive information was provided within these comments, which deserves careful review. As a result, Ecology has decided to delay submittal of the report to EPA until it completes a responsiveness summary to the comments and revise the draft cleanup plan sometime this Fall.

In the meantime, voluntary cleanup efforts and more effectiveness-monitoring will continue. This work will provide us more information that will be used to continually refine cleanup priorities and actions. In reality, planning and implementation for this TMDL will be a work-in-progress for some time. Approximately twelve months after the initial cleanup strategy is approved by EPA a Detailed Implementation Plan must be submitted to EPA.

During the discussion that followed this update, both Aberdeen and Grays Harbor County expressed their desires that Ecology hold a separate public review process in the fall when the revised report is available. In addition, other members expressed a desire that Ecology bring the revised fecal coliform TMDL to the Partnership for review.

Upper Chehalis Temperature – Ecology is still preparing a response to the comments received on this TMDL

Humptulips River Temperature TMDL -- A suggestion was made that a presentation to the Partnership on the proposed Humptulips River Temperature TMDL should be scheduled in the near future.

### **C. SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

This portion of the meeting was focused on a discussion of the draft Operating Procedures that were mailed out with the meeting packet. The Operating Procedures are structured to reflect the way the Partnership operates. They are less formal than the existing by-laws, but are arranged to provide a complete description of how the Partnership and its Committees operate. They reflect how complex the Chehalis Basin partnership has become. One thing that has not changed is the decision making process. Decisions are still made using a consensus process.

Comments:

- ◆ The Citizens' Advisory Committee has developed its own description of how it operates. The information in the draft Operating Procedures needs to be reviewed to make sure the two say the same thing. It may be best to reference the CAC procedures as an attachment so as it changes only the updated attachment needs to be changed.
- ◆ Add a description of how decisions are made at the Steering/Technical Committee and the Citizens' Advisory Committee.
- ◆ Add a section covering the "state caucus."
- ◆ The original structure and composition of the Partnership has been adapting continuously as new issues become active. One result is that organizationally, things have become somewhat muddled. The Operating Procedures should make it clear what the separate roles are and how they are coordinated. Combined with the new agenda format and Annual Plan of Work, these changes will help keep things much clearer.
- ◆ The Partnership needs to put together a presentation "toolbox" for members to use. This "toolbox" can be used to explain what the Partnership is doing and how those actions connect to the issues important to the constituent groups of different Partnership members. Many of those constituents don't really know what the Partnership is doing or how it may affect them in the future. The brochure the Citizens' Committee is working on could be part of the necessary information.
- ◆ The chapter on managing membership still needs to be worked on. Will any of the questions Triangle is asking in its survey help us determine why people are not attending and what would it take to get them attending on a regular basis? We don't want members skipping 2 years of meetings and then showing up near the end of the process to object to the outcome.
- ◆ We should neither forget, nor minimize, that the Partnership meetings are a good way to stay informed about what is going on in the basin and learn about the things that will affect basin residents. In addition to the educational role Partnership meetings have, they are also an excellent place for professional relationships among the various people involved in the basin to be developed.
- ◆ People are here because they don't want the requirements of the Watershed Planning Act (RCW 90.82) decided without having a say in those decisions. The decisions being made are very important to the future of our communities.

At the close of the discussion the City of Aberdeen requested that Grays Harbor County acting as Lead Agency contact the Grays Harbor Water District and the Boistfort Water District to arrange for discussions about their involvement with the Chehalis Basin Partnership. Once the discussions are arranged, Aberdeen volunteers to go to those discussions and support their active involvement in the Partnership.

Aberdeen also requested that a meeting of the attorneys of the Initiating Governments be organized so that a discussion about the legal concerns related to managing water in the Chehalis Basin can begin. The Partnership is moving forward based on scientific information. However, local governments rely heavily on their legal advisors to protect their interests. If the legal advisors do not understand what is being proposed in the plan they may not feel that the local government they represent can safely participate in a consensus decision on the plan that is developed.

#### **D. OPEN COMMENT**

None noted

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30. **The next meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership will be at 9:00 a.m. on July 27th at the Lucky Eagle Casino.**

#### **Decisions**

- ◆ Approved additions and modifications to the Annual Plan of Work that will be reflected in the version sent out with the July 27<sup>th</sup> meeting packet.
- ◆ A letter should be sent to Carol Smith and the Conservation Commission thanking her for her excellent work under difficult conditions.
- ◆ Web sites that provide information related to the work of the Partnership should be listed somewhere on the meeting agendas.

#### **Recommendations**

- ◆ Ecology should hold a second public review and comment period in the fall when the revised Grays Harbor Fecal Coliform Bacteria TMDL is available.
- ◆ Several additions or changes to the draft operating procedures were recommended.
- ◆ The Lead Agency should contact the Grays Harbor Water District and the Boistfort Water District to arrange for discussions about their involvement with the Chehalis Basin Partnership.
- ◆ A meeting of the attorneys of the Initiating Governments be organized so that a discussion about the legal concerns related to managing water in the Chehalis Basin can begin

#### **Future Agenda Items**

- ◆ A report on the summer flow monitoring study.
- ◆ A presentation on the Humptulips temperature TMDL

#### **Notes**

Meeting notices are currently published in the Aberdeen World and paid for by the City of Aberdeen.