



Chehalis Basin Partnership

Meeting Summary – September 28, 2001

A. GENERAL PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS

Introduction

Chairman Spahr welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

Gordon White from the Department of Ecology presented the agency's top Environmental Excellence Award to Dave Palmer. Mr. Palmer, who lives near Oakville, has been an active advocate for water quality, flood management and habitat restoration in an effort to preserve the quality of life that basin residents enjoy.

Chairman Spahr reported on a news article describing a recent court decision in Oregon denying the difference between hatchery and wild fish.

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

Citizens' Advisory Committee

Rob Schanz reported for the Citizens Advisory Committee that August vacation schedules had made it difficult for them to meet, and the group would meet right after the Partnership today in order to plan its next steps.

Steering/Technical Advisory Committee

Mark Swartout reported for the Steering/Technical Committee (STC). He first thanked them for their hard work, then urged the Partnership to consider the STC's recommendations on watershed planning (to be outlined later in the meeting) before encouraging all CBP members to attend the STC meetings on the first Thursday of every month (exception, October's meeting is Thursday, October 11th).

B. SPECIAL PROJECTS

Watershed Planning under RCW 90.82

Lee Napier reported on her visit with Water District #2 regarding the water resources planning effort in the Basin. The district would like to be involved but has only one staff person so availability is limited. They want to continue to be kept up to date and promise to attend meetings where their attendance is crucial. They support the effort and are pleased to see the recent progress.

Bob Wheeler (Triangle Associates) then gave the group an overview of the watershed planning process under Washington State ESHB 2514 and read an article from the *Peninsula Daily News* on cooperation in water resources planning before reviewing the agenda for the day's discussion. The focus of the meeting would be the outline of the Watershed Management Plan, with the goal for the meeting being consensus on the outline plus the mission and goals if possible.

Bob Wheeler then walked the group through the outline and led the CBP in discussion of questions and issues as they arose. After questions regarding use of the term "regulatory" in the outline, the group agreed to use "legal" instead, with the reminder that the Partnership has clearly expressed a preference for cooperative and voluntary approaches over regulatory. On further discussion, the Partnership agreed to use the term "cooperative" instead of "voluntary," since "voluntary" leaves open a clear possibility of inaction, while cooperative describes the manner in which it is hoped agreements and actions on water resources will be made.

Other changes focused on making data available and accessible to citizens and including the Limiting Factors Analysis on the list of "Data and Information Used to Make Recommendations." The issue was raised of meeting State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requirements; how will this be handled? Mark Swartout responded that the Plan will meet SEPA requirements, and after the CBP approves the Plan, it must be adopted through a joint meeting of all involved county commissioners after each county holds a public hearing on the Plan. If the CBP only approves part of the Plan, the other sections must be reworked to the satisfaction of the Partnership before it is submitted to the county approval and public hearing process (the counties can only approve or reject the entire Plan, not sub-sections of it). The deadline for CBP approval is October 2003.

The question of how salmon restoration efforts will fit into the Plan was raised. The response is that there will be habitat recommendations both WRIA-wide and by sub-basin. Bob Wheeler asked for consensus approval from the Partnership. Before 100% consensus was granted, the comment was made that efforts to compile and standardize data must be acknowledged, and that data must be available and accessible to all. With the above-mentioned change to that effect, 100% consensus approval of the outline was granted.

Goals and Objectives Statements for Chehalis Basin Watershed Management Plan

Bob Wheeler referred the group to the one-page list of goals that emerged from the STC meeting after efforts to condense the list compiled from Partnership interviews. After some discussion in favor of expanding the list of water quality objectives and including language about preventing degradation of water quality and habitat, wording was

proposed that addressed these concerns. The group reached 100% consensus on the attached list of goals and objectives for the Chehalis Basin Watershed Plan (the mission statement had been approved at the last CBP meeting). Mr. Wheeler reminded the Partnership that the mission and goals statements would provide an important foundation for the Watershed Plan and would be available for guidance later in the process.

Next Steps in Watershed Planning: Sub-Region Divisions & Meetings

Mark Swartout referred the Partnership to the “Next Steps” document mailed out prior to the meeting, which recommends holding Chehalis Basin Partnership meetings in each of the four sub-basins with Partnership members who live in a particular sub-basin taking responsibility for spreading the word and bringing folks out to each meeting. The STC recommended that the Partnership approve this document as a guiding tool for the next six months of watershed planning. Sue Patnude pointed out that an overall communications strategy would be helpful.

John Sims asked if Sub-basin #1 (including all rivers/streams draining into Grays Harbor) included Grays Harbor itself. A brief discussion yielded tentative agreement that some consideration must be given to the Grays Harbor estuary in the Plan, and Mr. Sims pointed out that there are organizations available to assist the CBP with information and strategies regarding the estuary. After a bit more discussion, the Partnership granted consensus approval to use the “Next Steps” document to guide the watershed planning effort in the Chehalis Basin for the six-month period from October 1, 2001 to March 31, 2002.

Consultant Contract

Lee Napier informed the Partnership that the contract with Triangle Associates ended that day (September 28, 2001). Triangle included extra, optional items in the contract, some of which are included in the newly adopted Next Steps. Lee asked the group if they wanted to amend the contract to keep Triangle on board to assist with the additional items. A Partnership member asked what all this would cost, and Lee explained that of \$40,000 Phase 3 funds allocated overall for work with Triangle, the base contract included \$28,000 and approximately \$24,000 of this was used.

Some surprise was expressed that this was the first the CBP had heard that finances would be discussed at this meeting, and some reservation was voiced about allocating more money. However, Lee clarified that with approximately \$16,000 remaining on the Triangle contract, an amendment to that contract could keep Triangle on board for another few months without allocating any more funding.

So the question was put to the group: should the contract with Triangle be amended to allow for work on “Next Steps” with the Partnership through the end of 2001 as long as the work did not exceed \$40,000. Kahle Jennings (Ecology) spoke in favor of the Partnership looking longer-term, towards the remainder of Phase 3. He pointed out that a search for consultants to write the Plan would cost the group at least three to four months and considerable momentum, and it might be worth considering hiring Triangle’s team with technical consultants TetraTech/KCM for the remainder of Phase 3. The

Partnership directed the Lead Agency and the STC to review a draft scope of work from Triangle. A suggestion was made that it should be twofold and include a description for immediate next steps and a description of long-term next steps up through the development of the actual Plan. The Partnership would review the items during the October meeting.

Salmon Recovery RCW 77.85

Lee Napier reported on Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) applications, which will total approximately \$2.8 million. The meeting to prioritize the projects for submission for funding will be held October 17 and 18. The resulting list of projects will be presented to the Partnership for approval on October 26th before submission to the SRFB.

TMDL Updates

Dave Rountry (Ecology) presented information to the Partnership on components of DOE's work to establish Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) limits for Grays Harbor fecal coliform bacteria and Upper Chehalis River temperature. He stressed that addressing TMDLs and non-point source pollution requires planning from local governments and communities. He stated that although plans have been developed and are on the way to implementation, it will take a while before the results of the planning are measurable.

C. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

The special presentation was the watershed planning portion of the meeting described above.

D. OPEN COMMENT

The next Steering/Technical Committee meeting will be on Thursday, October 11th at 1:00 p.m. in Montesano and all Partnership members are welcome. The meeting will be held in the small conference room of the Fish and Wildlife building at 48 Devonshire Road.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30. **The next meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership will be at 9:00 a.m. on October 26th at the Lucky Eagle Casino.**

**Chehalis Basin Partnership
September 28, 2001 meeting**

Decisions



Recommendations

Future Agenda Items

Notes