



## *Chehalis Basin Partnership*

---

### Meeting Summary – April 26, 2002

#### **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-one additional citizens, alternates, or visitors attended.

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

The Citizens' Advisory Committee has completed its work on a Public Involvement Plan. Today's Partnership meeting was supposed to include action on the recommended Public Involvement Plan, but since it was not mailed out in the meeting packet for members to review that action was postponed until the May 21 Partnership meeting.

##### **Steering/Technical Advisory Committee**

The Steering/Technical Committee continues to support the Partnership's work with Triangle Associates/KCM on the study area meetings, the detailed summary of the Level 1 Assessment of existing information and prioritizing Level 2 Assessment studies intended to gather new information critical to the Partnership's planning process. A summary of the Committee's March April 16, 2002 meeting was mailed out with the meeting packet for this Partnership meeting.

##### **Water Quality Sub-Committee**

The Water Quality Sub-Committee met on April 22nd to complete work on the local priority setting process for state water quality grants and loans administered by the Department of Ecology. There was one proposal to the state from WRIA 22 so developing the priority list for that WRIA was simple. There were three proposals from WRIA 23 and each project proponent was invited to make a presentation to the committee before the final priority list the WRIA 23 developed. The resulting letters of local agreed priority are included with this packet.

##### **Other Business**

A letter was received from The Western Washington Property Rights and Water Rights Coalition requesting that the Partnership appoint John Penberth as a member to represent that groups interests in the basin. There was general agreement that before such an action could be taken it is necessary to do three things. First the Partnership needs to know more about the objectives of The Western Washington Property Rights and Water Rights Coalition. Second,

the Partnership needs to review its Intergovernmental Agreement and existing by-laws to see what they say about appointing new members. Third, since the by-laws are being revised, the committee doing the revision should complete its work on the last chapter – “Membership” -- and make a recommendation on a process for appointing new members. It was agreed that this work should be completed by the June Partnership meeting so action one way or the other can be taken.

*Note: a quick review of the Chehalis Basin Partnership’s Intergovernmental Agreement shows that ‘Major Interests’ is identified as a group eligible for membership in the Partnership, and goes on to state that members representing these major interests are “appointed jointly by the counties and the tribes.” The current by-laws refer back to the Intergovernmental Agreement for direction about membership.*

## **B. SPECIAL PROJECTS**

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

Study area meetings: so far three study area meetings have been held and attendance is increasing with each meeting. The next, and final, meeting is scheduled for May 21 at the Chehalis Middle School in Chehalis. Even though an attempt is being made to reach local media (newspapers, radio, television and local newsletters) with our message about the study area meetings it is still important for local citizens to share the word about the meetings with their neighbors in as many ways as possible.

Contract Issues: the current contract with Triangle Associates expires May 1, 2002. The work Triangle Associates has completed under the first contract extension was reviewed and the Lead Agency for the Partnership requested that the Partnership approve an extension of the contract from May 1 through the end of July so that Triangle Associates can carry out the work described in the attached Scope of Work (Attachment “A”). The budget for this additional work is shown in attachment “B.” This amendment will complete the work that is needed to get ready to actually develop the watershed plan.

Triangle Associates was selected for this work because it had two strengths – the ability to provide technical support through its partner TetraTech/KCM and its ability to provide support for the complex process of finding common ground and reaching agreement. Their ability to act as an independent facilitator has allowed Partnership members to focus on the discussions being held rather than trying to manage the meetings where the work is being done. Triangle Associates was selected through a ‘Request for Proposals’ process that involved review of several proposals from different consultants and actual interviews to select the one we felt would work out best.

The Lead Agency is preparing an advertisement for “Statement of Qualifications” (SOQ) for the remainder of the Phase 3 watershed planning work. In a SOQ companies describe how they are qualified to assist the Partnership with the remainder of the Phase 3 work.

The Partnership reached consensus agreement to extend the contract with Triangle through July 31 and to move forward with the Statement of Qualifications.

### **Salmon Recovery**

The list of WRIA 22 and 23 projects that the Salmon Recovery Funding Board proposes to fund has been released. Six projects in the Chehalis Basin will be funded for a total of \$592,083. Two of the projects are culvert assessments that will help determine the magnitude of the problem in Lewis and Mason Counties.

The SRF Board Technical Review Panel said that they have been impressed with the Salmon Recovery work being done in the Chehalis Basin. It appears that the success of the groups competing for salmon recovery dollars is directly related to how well individual projects line up with the priority recovery areas and types of projects identified in a basin's salmon recovery strategy. The Chehalis Basin Salmon Recovery Strategy identified high, medium and low priority sub-basins and prioritized the types of activities that needed to be done in those sub-basins.

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

### Flood Damage Reduction Project sponsored by Lewis County

The Corps is currently finalizing the Environmental Impact Statement and Engineering Report for the proposed setback levees, modifications to the Skookumchuck Dam and State Route 6 bridge. The EIS will be reviewed by an independent panel and revised if necessary. The Corps will have a display on the project at the May study area meeting. There will be a meeting June 13 in Montesano to present the EIS and take comments and a formal public hearing on July 9<sup>th</sup>.

The Washington State Department of Transportation has withdrawn its funding to Lewis County for this project, as well as many other projects across that state, due to the state budget deficit.

There was a general discussion about the role the Partnership can play in this project. It was suggested that the closer the Partnership gets to actually taking a position on issues related to the flood damage reduction project the more influence it may have on the outcome. For instance, asking if there will be opportunities to coordinate watershed planning with the Flood Damage Reduction Project will result in a formal response from the Corps. With this in mind it was agreed that time would be scheduled during the June or July Partnership meeting for the Partnership to discuss the project and make comments directly to the Corps.

The Corps recognized early on that they could not do an effective ecosystem restoration project in the Chehalis without coordinating with the watershed planning being done by the Partnership. An effort is being made to fund the Ecosystem Restoration Project at the same rate as the Flood Damage Reduction Project because they need to be coordinated also.

### Ecosystem Restoration Study sponsored by Grays Harbor County

Grays Harbor County and the Corps are working with Batelle Institute, Ecology and the US Forest Service to develop the outline for a project that would compare current conditions in the basin with conditions prior to settlement by non-Indians. Data on the basin will be put into a database and there is discussion of making that information available over the Web using interactive tools.

There will be a meeting on June 5<sup>th</sup> in Seattle for tribal, state and federal agencies to find out what they would like to see the project accomplish. A similar meeting for local governments and other local interest groups could be scheduled if there is sufficient interest.

### **C. SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

Lee Daneker (EPA Region 10) presented a slide show with the results of the work he has been doing using GIS maps to show generally where water rights are located in the Chehalis Basin and how large the quantity of water represented by those rights is. Lee has been doing this work in support of the Steering/Technical Committee and this is the same presentation that he made to that committee earlier in April. His work shows that, in general, most of the water rights and the greatest quantity of water are 'clustered' within the basin. Since the whole purpose of Lee's work has been to portray information taken from complex data sources it would be difficult to provide a detailed review in this summary. An attempt will be made to make the presentation available through on of the Partnership Members' web sites.

### **D. OPEN COMMENT**

**The next meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership will be combined with the fourth and last second study area meeting scheduled for May 21<sup>st</sup> at the Chehalis Middle School in Chehalis.**

### **Decisions**

- Instructed the group working on developing proposed changes to the by-laws to finish its work by the June Partnership meeting.
- Extended the contract with Triangle Associates through July 31, 2002.
- Agreed that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers should be asked to meet with the Partnership at the June or July meeting to discuss the Flood Damage Reduction Project and take comments from the Partnership on the Project.