



# *Chehalis Basin Partnership*

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Meeting Summary – November 15, 2002

## **A. GENERAL PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS**

### **Introduction**

Chairman Spahr welcomed everyone and opened the meeting. Sixteen of the Partnership's thirty-two member organizations had a representative or alternate in attendance. Sixteen additional citizens, alternates, or visitors were at the meeting.

### **Citizens' Advisory Committee**

Lee Napier reported that the Citizens' Advisory Committee may meet in early December to discuss and develop the citizen's portion of the local criteria for habitat restoration projects for consideration by the SRF Board.

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

A summary of the two November STC meetings was handed out (copy attached). The issues the STC focused on in November will be discussed later during this meeting. The next meeting of the STC will be on December 5th.

### **Water Quality Committee**

The Water Quality Committee reviewed the scope of work for the supplemental water quality project and defined the role that the Committee would take. This project combines some elements of an assessment of existing information for Grays Harbor and development of a comprehensive basin-wide, long-term water quality monitoring plan.

The Water Quality Committee also reviewed the October discussion of the state water quality standards and EPA's draft guidance on water temperature. This discussion resulted in a draft letter to EPA on the temperature guidance that the committee recommended the Partnership send. There was a lengthy discussion of the language of the proposed letter and the positive and negative implications of the Partnership sending such a letter. In the end, although not everyone at the meeting agreed, the Partnership members agreed by consensus to send a modified letter to EPA.

The final issue discussed by the Water Quality Committee was in response to a citizen's request that the committee look into the water quality implications of the Briggs Nursery container plant growing operation that is being developed near Porter. There are concerns that ground water contamination could occur. The committee agreed to try and organize a meeting in December so that interested citizens could meet with Department of Agriculture Pesticide Management Division to discuss the steps that are being taken to protect ground water.

## **Other Business**

Nominations of officers – At the November Partnership meeting Bob Spahr (representing the City of Chehalis) was nominated for another one-year term as Chair of the Partnership and John Hare (representing the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation) was nominated as Vice-Chair. The Partnership approved these appointments.

Operating Procedures – A revised draft of section 5.4 “Managing Partnership Membership” was distributed and discussed. Several comments were made that portions of this draft seem to be based on the planning requirements of the Watershed Planning Act (RCW 90.82) and that we should not lose site of the fact that the Partnership was established as a basin coordination body. Watershed planning under RCW 90.82 is only one of the projects the Partnership has taken on and it should not be the sole driver of how the Partnership operates. The Partnership agreed that the draft of section 5.4 needs additional work.

DataViewer CD - J. Roach announced that the Watershed Planning Data Viewer CD is available and that he has copies to hand out to those that are interested.

## **B. SPECIAL PROJECTS**

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

Water Quality and Multi-Purpose Storage - The scopes of work for the supplemental water quality and multipurpose storage grant-funded projects were reviewed and approved in concept by the Partnership. Both these projects directly support elements of the Watershed Planning Act passed by the Legislature.

Issue Papers – The Steering/Technical Committee has been working with Triangle Associates to identify and prioritize issues relevant to watershed planning. These issues have been identified in a variety of ways – at Partnership meetings, the Level 1 Assessment of existing information, the four public study area meetings, Committee meetings, etc. New issues continue to surface as the planning process moves forward. In order to help focus the watershed plan and address the most important issues first, the Steering/Technical Committee has developed a list of issues, recommended priorities, developed a structure and outline for issue papers to follow, and identified potential lead and contributing authors. After discussion the Partnership agreed that the STC should proceed with the development of Issue Papers.

In-Stream Flow Study – The automatic flow measuring equipment was taken out of the streams being monitored because water levels were rising enough to be a concern. The results of the flow monitoring will be evaluated and reported to the Partnership at the December meeting. So far, the project is under budget so it may be possible to do additional monitoring or more analysis. This project must be completed by June 30, 2003.

Plan Approval Process - The Lead agency for the Partnership’s Watershed Planning effort (Grays Harbor County) handed out copies of the letter sent to the Legislature. This letter requests that the Legislature look at the requirements that every county with territory in a planning area hold a public meeting and participate in a joint plan approval meeting. The letter points out that this requirement may complicate the plan approval process because some counties have such a small territory in a planning area.

### **Salmon Recovery Project**

The prioritized list of habitat restoration projects that will be submitted from the Chehalis Basin for Salmon Recovery Funding Board consideration was approved at the October Partnership meeting. The initial review of these projects has been favorable. The Lead Entity for Salmon Recovery (Grays Harbor County) will meet with the SRF Board review panel in February and a final SRF Board decision is expected in April.

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

Flood Damage Reduction Project sponsored by Lewis County: For a bit of humor....and to utilize a quote of a favorite author....."the rumors of my demise have been greatly exaggerated". The Corps is still moving forward with Lewis County to finalize the GRR and EIS reports. The status of completing and submitting the final documents is not dependent on R51. The final EIS and GRR will be developed after the Corps Headquarters comments have been reviewed and responded to. Ultimately the construction of this project depends upon authorization of the project from Congress and funding, both federal and local share. Authorization from a Water Resource Development Act (WRDA) in 2002 will not likely occur, status of the next WRDA in 2003 or 2004 is unknown. The project team is working to finalize the reports to be prepared for submission to Congress when a WRDA action would occur. The WRDA bill is where the project would get authorized by Congress.

Ecosystem Restoration Project sponsored by Grays Harbor County: The Corps is still pursuing and pushing for completion of EDT (Ecosystem Diagnostic Treatment) in the basin and hope to have new contracts in place and a date for completion of EDT by this time next month. The Basin Characterization is nearing completion and should be completed by the end of 2002. Funding for the project is minimal right now since President Bush has not signed a budget, but once a budget is secured, we hope to accomplish getting EDT completed, and setting up an evaluation technique using the Basin Characterization information being compiled by Battelle. Lori Morris is planning on setting up a habitat restoration evaluation committee in 2003 to evaluate projects recommended for restoration.

### **C. SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

Due to the extensive discussion needed on the topics above a special presentation was not scheduled for this meeting.

**The next meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership will be at 9:00 a.m. on December 20th at the Lucky Eagle Casino.**

### **Decisions**

- Agreed to send a letter to EPA commenting on the draft temperature guidance.
- Bob Spahr was appointed Chair and Jon Hare was appointed for the position of Vice-Chair.
- Agreed that the draft of section 5.4 of the Operating Procedures needs additional work.
- Approved in concept the scopes of work for the supplemental water quality and multipurpose storage grant-funded projects.
- Agreed that the STC should proceed with the development of Issue Papers.