



Chehalis Basin Partnership

Meeting Summary – November 21, 2003

A. GENERAL PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS

Introduction

Chairman Spahr opened the meeting by sharing that he had received a draft report from EPA on the status of the Nation's air, water, etc. The report included the statement that only indicators judged to be scientifically sound are included in this report. Spahr's concern is "who makes the decision about scientifically sound?" That decision, along with how the information in reports like this is used, determines our future. We should be weighing in on issues that will affect our future in the watershed plan we are working on. An example is global warming. It may or may not be a real problem, but it should be looked at in the plan.

Sixteen of the Partnership's thirty-one member organizations had a representative or alternate at the meeting. Fifteen additional citizens, alternates, or visitors were at the meeting.

Steering/Technical Advisory Committee

The discussion later in this meeting will focus on work the STC has been doing. The next meeting of the STC will be on December 4th in Olympia.

Water Quality Committee

The Water Quality Committee did not meet in November. The next meeting will be December 11 in the City of Montesano Forestry Building from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Topics of discussion will include the coordinated water quality monitoring plan for the basin and a ground water pilot project under way for the area approximately between Napavine and Grand Mound.

Other Business

Nomination of Chair and Vice-chair for 2004: Nominations for next year's chair and vice-chair are made in November and appointed in December. Bob Beerbower, Commissioner for Grays Harbor County suggested that we retain the current chair (Bob Spahr, Mayor for the City of Chehalis) and vice-chair (Jim Haslet, Napavine City Council Member) to maintain consistency. There were no additional nominations.

B. SPECIAL PROJECTS

Watershed Planning under RCW 90.82

The Chair of the Steering/Technical Committee used a PowerPoint presentation (copy attached) to explain the proposed new format for the Chehalis Basin Watershed Plan. It will be similar to the plan prepared by the Nisqually River Council in 1987. That plan is 18 pages long and is supported by technical documents and references as an attachment.

A copy of the proposed revised plan was distributed for review and discussion.

During the review the following comments were noted:

- There is a shaded area on page 15 that provides an example for an approach to capturing the Partnership's thinking about suggested actions that are not agreed to. The idea is to include something similar to, but simpler than, the voter's pamphlet statement for and statement against voter's initiatives.
- Three different approaches for presenting all the actions considered for the plan were discussed. The first approach would keep the actions in numerical order in the plan and note which had been agreed to and which had not (the proposed revised plan format uses this approach). The second approach would be to list all the actions under each plan topic, but list the ones that had been agreed to first and the ones that had not been agreed to second (page 29 is an example of this approach). The third approach would be to just show the actions that had been agreed to under each plan topic and place all the actions that had not been agreed to in an appendix to the plan.
- The statement under V-b. on page 30 is unclear. Is this meant to be the status of all 143 recommended actions as a group (i.e. "we reached agreement on this many and did not reach agreement on this many")?
- Section IV contains the basic elements of the plan that the Partnership has committed to addressing: Quantity, Quality, Habitat and Instream Flow recommendations. Section V includes all the other elements such as Land Use, Flooding, Stormwater, etc.
- Many actions will have statewide implications. Some members have expressed concern about being too specific in some recommendations. For example, recommendations that a water master position be created or recommendations that effect the "use-it-or-lose-it" provisions of state water law should be framed in more general terms: "Ecology should convene a work group to address the issue of irrigation practices."
- A counter point was made that we should remember that the state legislature specifically limited Ecology's ability to change the watershed plans developed at that local level. It is clear that the legislature wanted local solutions and innovative ideas. Also, timing is an issue: Weighing in now on a specific issue could influence legislative changes, whereas waiting could mean that the legislature might make changes without our input.
- Linkages between the revised plan and the draft plan will be clearly identified. We might want to think about addressing the confusing numbering method that is being used.
- Partnership members should get together in small groups to discuss this suggested new format and come back to the next meeting with suggestions.
- The Habitat actions shown on page 19 are inter-related. Is there any thing that would prevent us from reorganizing this section later (or even now) to capture those inter-relationships?
- Some comments made on the previous draft seem to have dropped out of this revised plan format (Habitat 3.3) – suggest revising or deleting additions based on consensus.
- Label issues that have not been agreed to yet as "unresolved."

Recap:

The Partnership adopted the new format with the understanding that the new format will clearly reference pertinent sections of the draft plan. The revised format will focus on the four elements in the law (Quantity, Quality, Habitat and Instream Flow); other elements will be dealt with later. The format for actions shown on page 29 of the revised plan format will be used for the time being, but examples of the other two formats should be prepared for the December meeting. The revised plan format will be arranged like this:

- I. Executive Summary
- II. Why do we need a plan?
- III. Watershed and Plan Development
- IV. Issue Statements, Recommendations and Suggested Actions
 - Introduction
 - Element (Quality, Quantity, Habitat, Instream Flows)
 - Subsection of the major element
 - Issues Statement
 - Recommendation
 - Suggested Actions (arrangement of these will be decided in December)
- V. Next Steps and Future Actions (including unresolved issues)
- VI. Appendices

A short statement of the opinions for and against unresolved actions under the four plan elements (Quantity, Quality, Habitat, and Instream Flow) will be prepared using the information available.

Following the discussion of the revised plan format the Partnership discussed the recommendations and actions for these elements:

Water Quantity (Water Rights)
Water Quality
Habitat
Instream Flows

This discussion resulted in the revision of and consensus on some recommendations/suggested actions:

Water Quantity (Water Rights)

- The recommendation was modified and agreed to.
- Suggested action 1.5 was revised and agreed to.
- The first sentence in the "SIDEBAR" was revised.

Water Quality

- The recommendation was agreed to.
- Suggested Action 2.2 was modified and agreed to.
- The language in Suggested Action 2.11 will be revised.
- The language in Suggested Action 2.18 was revised. This action had been agreed to previously.

Habitat

- The “(agricultural, timber, etc.)” language was stricken from the second sentence of the issue statement.
- The language of suggested Action 3.3 will be worked on.

Instream Flows

- The recommendation was revised and agreed to.
- Suggested Action 4.1 had previously been agreed to.
- Suggested Actions 4.2 through 4.10 will remain unresolved for the time being.

Salmon Recovery Project

The lead Entity for the Chehalis Basin will try to arrange a meeting of the Salmon Recovery Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to talk about issues related to the 5th round of applications for funding from the Salmon Recover Funding Board.

The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife is looking for interested people to sit on the Regional Fisheries Enhancement Board.

The next meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership will be at 9:00 a.m. on December 19th, 2003 at the Lucky Eagle Casino.

Decisions

- Adopt the new plan format with changes discussed.
- Modification of some items previously agreed to.
- Agreement on additional plan recommendations and suggested actions