



Chehalis Basin Partnership

Meeting Summary – March 28, 2003

A. GENERAL PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS

Introduction

Chairman Spahr welcomed everyone and opened the meeting. Nineteen of the Partnership's thirty-two member organizations had a representative or alternate in attendance. Seventeen additional citizens, alternates, or visitors were at the meeting. Bruce Jones attended from the Quinault Indian Nation.

Citizens' Advisory Committee

J. Roach is the Vice Chair of the committee and will assume the Chairman's role until a replacement is voted on by the committee.

Steering/Technical Advisory Committee

The STC continues to contact groups involved in the Partnership to review the status of watershed planning. On March 20th several members traveled to Taholah for a productive meeting with the Quinault Indian Nation. Bob Wheeler (Triangle Assoc.) met with Boistfort Valley Water District that same evening. On Friday the 21st the STC met to review issue papers. Members left the meeting with a sense of urgency and a better understanding of what it will take to get 18 different issue papers through the STC and the Partnership in the next three months.

The next meetings of the STC will be on April 4th and 17th.

Water Quality Committee

A meeting summary for the March 13th Water Quality Committee meeting along with the letter to Ecology on proposed WQ standards was sent out with the packet for the March 28 Partnership meeting packet.

The next meeting of the Water Quality Committee will be on April 10, 2003, in the Grays Harbor Forestry Building from 9:00 a.m. until noon. The Detailed Implementation Plans for The Humptulips River Temperature TMDL and Chehalis River TMDLs will be discussed. Local prioritization of grant/loan applications submitted to Ecology will also occur at that meeting. A list of the projects from the Chehalis Basin was included in the March 28 Partnership meeting packet.

Other Business

The member list sent out with the meeting packet for this meeting was reviewed. Robert Cross should be the Hoquiam alternate and Brian Thompson should be added as the member under the Agriculture Major Interest Group. Brian is with the Lewis County Farm Bureau.

B. SPECIAL PROJECTS

Watershed Planning under RCW 90.82

Legislation – The legislature is considering language that would provide limited funding for implementation of watershed plans. Grays Harbor County handed out a status report.

Update on Watershed Planning – Bob Wheeler (Triangle Associates) reviewed the table of issue papers being worked on by the Steering/Technical Committee that was sent out in the March 28th Partnership meeting packet. These issue papers will form the foundation for the watershed plan. A discussion about moving the May Partnership meeting to the 30th due to the Memorial Day weekend was held. It was agreed to change the May Partnership to May 30th and make that meeting a workshop where the watershed plan review process, schedule, report on the various technical studies and instream flow recommendations will be discussed. The May 30th meeting will be longer than normal so all these topics can be covered.

The highlights of two Issue Papers were presented to the Partnership: Protecting High Quality Water Resources and Habitat.

During these presentations the follow points were discussed:

- Who defines high quality waters? Response: High quality waters are those that meet the state water quality standards. But the term as used in this issue paper does not distinguish between the real high quality waters and those that may barely meet state water quality standards.
- What level of detail will the issue papers contain? Response: The STC is looking at the specifics of the issue papers, including how much detail they should contain, and the reaction of the Partnership today will help the committee do that.
- The “Protecting High Quality Water Resources” issue paper appears to concentrate on protecting uplands but doesn’t appear to focus much on addressing the lowlands where most development is concentrated. Response: Other issue papers will address that topic. Follow-up: That needs to be clarified in the background.
- A concern was expressed about having one regulatory approach for some landowners (state lands, forest lands, point sources) and another voluntary approach for others (private non-forest lands, non-point sources).
- The “Habitat” issue paper focuses on aquatic habitat.
- Option “C” in the “Habitat” Issue paper discusses formation of a new organization to oversee implementation once the watershed and salmon recovery plans are complete. How is this different from the existing Partnership structure? Response: The Partnership does not have any legal standing as an organization. It can not apply for grants or administer funds. Either we continue to rely on a county, tribe or municipality that is a member of the Partnership to carry that workload for us, or we take steps to make it possible to do it directly as an organization.
- Are these issue papers intended to resolve specific issues? Response: No, they are intended to explain the issues, focus discussion and lead to recommendations on how the issues should be dealt with in the watershed plan. The actual resolution of the issues will occur during Phase 4 Implementation. Follow-up: Instead of “Solutions” use the heading “Possible Solutions” so that it is clear that there may be other solutions and that not all of them are necessarily going to be recommended.
- The headings should be consistent for all the issue papers. Follow-up: This will be done.

- Partnership members have different needs so each issue paper will be prepared first with a lot of detail and then summarized into a shorter document. The summary version will go into the plan and the long version will go into the appendix to the plan.
- There was a discussion of whether or not the issue papers should even contain recommendations. Some members were against it and others felt a watershed plan without recommendations would only be an assessment and that would not satisfy the intent of the watershed planning act. Follow-up: This will be discussed further by the Steering/Technical Committee.

Although the question was posed, it was never clearly decided whether the Partnership accepted these two issue papers in concept or if they need to go back to the STC for additional work.

Salmon Recovery Project

The SRF Board is meeting May 1 & 2 to decide on which projects will be funded. Grays Harbor County will attend that meeting in its role as lead entity for salmon recover efforts in the Chehalis Basin. Grays Harbor County is considering beginning the next solicitation for salmon habitat projects in April.

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

Flood Damage Reduction Project sponsored by Lewis County: No report.

Ecosystem Restoration Project sponsored by Grays Harbor County: No Report.

C. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Students from Wishkah Valley School made a computer slide presentation showing how they have used the Watershed Planning/Salmon Recovery Data Viewer CD and Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) technology to learn about and record conditions in their local watershed. They started this project after J. Roach and Lee Napier visited their school and introduced the Data CD to them.

The next meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership will be at 9:00 a.m. on April 28th, 2003 at the Lucky Eagle Casino.

Decisions

- Changed the May meeting date to May 30th and agreed it should be a longer meeting using a workshop format.