



Chehalis Basin Partnership

Meeting Summary – April 9, 2004 (Special Meeting)

A. GENERAL PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS

Introduction

This special meeting was called for the single purpose of reaching agreement on those portions of the watershed plan that were not resolved during the regular meeting on March 26th.

Chair Bob Spahr opened the meeting. Grays Harbor County presented a letter from Ocean Shores appointing David Weiser as the City's representative to the Partnership and Mr. Weiser introduced himself.

Nineteen of the Partnership's twenty-eight member organizations had a representative or alternate at the meeting. Thirteen additional citizens, alternates, or visitors were at the meeting.

The agenda was reviewed and there were no changes. Jean Gayle asked a question about decision making by consensus "Consensus means everyone agrees and one person can block consensus. What happens then?" The response was that the group would continue to work on the issue until the person who is blocking agreement has either had their concerns addressed or decides for some other reason to change their position.

Review of the draft watershed plan

A revised draft of the watershed plan dated April 8, 2004 was distributed with the meeting announcement for this Partnership meeting.

Section 1, page 2 was modified to address concerns raised at the March meeting by Pe Ell and others. The changes are underlined. The focus is not on the issue of over allocation not on the process of adjudication, which is an approach to resolving the issue of over allocation. The Partnership may choose at some point in the future to make a recommendation regarding how over allocation of water resources should be resolved, but at this time it is not.

Representatives of the Partnership (Lee Napier, Terry Willis, Kahle Jennings) met with representatives of Pe Ell (The mayor, John Penberth and council member Jerry, Bryant) on April 1 to discuss issues that were preventing agreement on the plan. There were several issues that needed to be resolved. Additional information was faxed to the mayor of Pe Ell Friday April 2 and Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County, talked with the mayor the same day. Based on the meeting held on the 1st and follow-up discussions, the town of Pe Ell is not going to continue to block consensus on the watershed plan and supports the process the Partnership has used to develop the plan.

Issues raised by J. Roach were discussed in detail at the April 8 Steering/Technical Committee meeting. Mr. Roach had three concerns: 1) the plan failed to address the issue of over

allocation of water in the basin, 2) Gauging on Black Lake was not included in the plan as he had requested, and 3) the plan did not speak to the potential impact of climate variability.

The over allocation issue was addressed as described above, the draft plan was modified to include the gauge location and Mr. Roach provided a couple of articles that discuss climate variability that would be added to the plan approval section of the appendices with the understanding that the subject of climate variability has a wide range of opinions. The articles included represent the opinions of the authors and are included to encourage discussion of the issue. The Partnership has not at this time developed a position on climate variability.

Representatives from the Partnership (Lee Napier, Mark Swartout, and Kahle Jennings) met with the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Business Council to review the planning process, decision making process and how issues raised have been resolved.

If the plan is approved today it will be turned over to the four counties that must meet jointly to approve the plan. The counties will hold hearings and a joint county meeting will be scheduled to have them formally vote on approving the plan. By law, the counties can not change the plan. They can approve it, or they can send it back to the planning unit (the Partnership) with suggestions on how it be modified. If the Partnership approves the plan today it is making the decision to send the plan to the four counties for final approval.

It is important to remember that the plan before us today does not create specific obligations for any Partnership member. Those obligations will be created if and when the Partnership decides to apply for implementation funding from the state in a required detailed description of how the plan will be implemented.

At this point each Partnership member present was asked to state their position on the plan.

Bob Beerbower, Grays Harbor County Commissioner: He has some concerns but he accepts the plan. We have to sit down, we have to plan, and we have to do it together.

Craig Swanson, Lewis County: Lewis County is in favor of moving the plan forward.

Brian Thompson, Lewis County Farm Bureau: the Lewis County Farm Bureau board has instructed him to support the plan.

Jim Haslett, Napavine City Council: he supports the plan with reservations because it doesn't do enough to address the issue of over allocation and providing adequate water for population growth.

Bob Macleod, Thurston County Commissioner: He is satisfied that the CBP has done the best job it could do working through a very complex process. He endorses the Partnership's work, supports the plan and is in favor of it going forward.

Chad Stussy, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife: The WDFW supports the plan. We have reservations about the nature of obligations which will be worked out in the next phase of plan implementation.

David Weiser, City of Ocean Shores: The City of Ocean Shores agrees to the plan with reservations. It identifies issues and problems but the details in the details of how it will be implemented and that will be determined in the next phase.

Dean Parsons, City of Hoquiam: He does not have a problem with the plan. It is better to have it than to not have it. Although he is agreeing to the plan for the City of Hoquiam, he can not speak for the City Council.

Ann Wick, Washington State Department of Agriculture: the Department has some concerns about how the plan will address water rights/ property rights, but is willing to go forward with the plan.

Dennis Rhodes, City of Centralia: the City of Centralia has some issues it wants to raise, but they are related to implementation and it supports what the Partnership is doing.

J. Roach, voting citizen representative from Thurston County: presented a letter he had prepared (attached) and read the first couple of paragraphs for the Partnership. He stated that his consensus position on the plan will be one of formal disagreement, but he is willing to go along with the majority on the decision.

Terry Willis, voting citizen representative from Grays Harbor County: I fall somewhere between “I like it” and “Basically I like it.” I want to send it forward to the counties for approval. It is time for the rest of the citizen’s to have a look at it through the public hearing process. We spent over a million dollars on the plan and the technical studies in the assessment and we should show them what they got for that money.

Jean Gayle, Grays Harbor water district #2: I represent three water district commissioners and between us one is against, one abstained from the decision and I’m for it, so I won’t block consensus agreement on the plan.

Jim Hotvedt, Washington State Department of Natural Resources: DNR supports the plan and I thank the private citizens who spent so much of their own time over the last five years working on this plan.

Bob Fink, Mason County: Mason County supports the plan.

Art Lehman, Port of Centralia - representing port districts: the port endorses the plan.

Raman Iyer, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis: The Chehalis Tribe is willing to move forward with the plan. On Monday April 5th the Business Council approved a resolution stating that they agree with the plan with some reservations. I would like to acknowledge my colleagues at the Chehalis Tribe who worked on this over the years: Dr. Sodhi, Jon Hare, Mike McGinnis and Harry Pickernell.

Kahle Jennings, representing Washington State Agencies without a representative at the table: the state supports the plan with reservations.

Bob Spahr, City of Chehalis City Council and Chair of the Chehalis Basin Partnership: I agree to the plan with reservations – I can live with it. As you all know, the City of Chehalis has a lengthy history of being regulated by the State Department of Ecology. The whole emphasis of this

planning process as set forth by the legislature was to give citizens a chance to have a say in how water is managed in the future. I would like to thank all the people who put so much time and effort into this plan. I am also a little surprised that we could actually reach agreement on something so complex and controversial.

John Mudge, private citizen: I am not a voting member of the Chehalis Basin Partnership so I don't have a formal vote in approval of this plan. I am concerned that there is not a lot counties can do on their own to implement this plan without additional financial resources. I am also concerned that the result of the plan will be more layers of government and regulation, so if I did have a vote, I would vote against it.

Since there were no votes against approving the watershed plan for the Chehalis Basin among members of the Chehalis Basin Partnership present at the meeting the Chehalis Basin Watershed Plan is APPROVED by consensus agreement. The next step will be for Grays Harbor County, acting in its role as lead agency for the watershed planning process under RCW 90.82, to submit copies of the final plan approved today by the Partnership to the four counties (Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason and Thurston) that must participate in final approval of the plan. Each of the four counties will set a date for a public hearing on the plan in that county.

The Partnership agreed to not meet at its normally scheduled meeting April 23rd. The May 28th meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership will be cancelled so that the four counties can meet on that day to consider action on the plan. Grays Harbor County, because it is the designated lead agency for watershed planning under RCW 90.82 will chair the joint county meeting on the 28th and provide a clerk to record the meeting. Thurston County will provide equipment to record the meeting.

In closing, Bob Beerbower, Commissioner from Grays Harbor County, thanked everyone that stuck with the Partnership through this lengthy process. He expressed special thanks to the private citizens and city council members that didn't get paid for the time they spent on this work. He also thanked the agencies that provided so much technical assistance. He closed the meeting by saying "whether I agree or disagree with them on a particular issue, I believe people's opinions need to be heard."

Next Meeting

The regularly scheduled April meeting of the Partnership will not be held. The May Partnership meeting date will be set aside for a joint county meeting to consider the plan. The Partnership will meet as scheduled on June 25, 2004 at the Lucky Eagle Casino.

Decisions

- *The Partnership approved the Chehalis Basin Watershed Plan.*
- *The Partnership agreed not to hold its regularly scheduled meeting on April 23.*
- *The Partnership agreed that the May 28th regular meeting date should be set aside for a joint county meeting to consider the plan.*