



Chehalis Basin Partnership

Meeting Summary – August 27, 2004

A. GENERAL PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS

Introduction

Chairman Spahr welcomed everyone and opened the meeting. Brian Thompson, the Partnership's Agricultural representative introduced Ron Mael who is with the Lewis County Farm Bureau and is a member of the Lewis County Water Conservancy Board. Brian is stepping down as the agricultural representative to the Partnership and Ron will be recommended as his replacement by the Lewis County Farm Bureau. Brian will stay involved with the Partnership on behalf of the Thurston Conservation District, a non-voting participant.

Twelve of the Partnership's twenty-eight member organizations had a representative or alternate at the meeting. Seven additional citizens, alternates, or visitors were at the meeting. (See attendance list on the last page of this summary)

Steering/Technical Advisory Committee

At its August meeting the STC prepared to lead a discussion of watershed plan implementation options later during this meeting. The next meeting of the STC will be on September 2nd from 10:00 until 3:00 in Olympia.

Water Quality Committee

Flow Monitoring – Ecology has some resources to assist with flow monitoring that may include the establishment of three new continuous monitoring stations. Based on several local contacts three sites are under consideration: near the mouth of the Black River, the Hoquiam River and the Wishkah River. There was a brief discussion during which Lewis County suggested that the upper Chehalis River and Newaukum River be considered. A presentation for the Partnership on where flow data is available and where flows are currently monitored on a regular basis will be developed for September or October.

Monitoring Plan – The Chehalis River Council has agreed to allow the Partnership to use the quality assurance project plan they developed as a starting point for a Chehalis Basin comprehensive monitoring plan and quality assurance project plan.

TMDL Detailed Implementation Plan – This was previously discussed at the July Partnership meeting. In July the Water Quality Committee recommended that the Partnership incorporate the TMDL Detailed Implementation Plan into the Watershed Plan. The following questions were asked and discussed by Partnership members:

- What are we agreeing to? *We are being asked to endorse the Detailed Implementation Plan dated August 27, 2004. That plan contains actions various Partnership members have said they could carry out to support implementation of various Chehalis Basin TMDLs. Since TMDL implementation is not static and can change over time as conditions change, if changes to the Detailed Implementation Plan are proposed in the*

future the Partnership would have an opportunity to evaluate the proposed changes and endorse them as part of a new Detailed Implementation Plan.

- *What will happen after it is approved? Ecology will submit the Detailed Implementation Plan to EPA. Organizations that have identified actions they could take will evaluate their budgets and resources to see what they can actually undertake. They may also develop grant proposals for various sources to fund the things they want to do. Ecology will track and report actions that are implemented as they occur.*
- *How will changes to the State Water Quality Standards affect the Detailed Implementation Plan? The two are linked, but indirectly. Changes to State Water Quality Standards may result in new TMDLs which would require new Detailed Implementation Plans. However, with the backlog of existing impaired water bodies in Washington State that need to have TMDLs developed for them it is not likely that Ecology will have the resources for revising existing TMDLs until the backlog is cleared up. With new water bodies being added to the list of impaired waters each time it is updated, clearing up the backlog will take many years. Ecology currently has no plans to revise, update or otherwise add to the existing TMDLs for the Chehalis Basin. The Partnership always has the option of commenting on proposed changes to the State Water Quality Standards as it did during the recent update (which has not yet been approved by EPA).*

Individual Partnership members expressed several reservations they continue to have about Ecology and how it implements its TMDL responsibilities. After a brief discussion of some of these reservations, Partnership members agreed to send any reservations they may have about the Detailed Implementation Plan, or Ecology actions related to water quality regulation and TMDLs that result in Detailed Implementation Plans, to Kahle Jennings at Ecology. Kahle will bring the reservations he receives to the Water Quality Committee meeting on September 9th and based on the discussion at that meeting he will prepare a draft endorsement letter for the Partnership's consideration at its September 24th meeting (attached).

Possible Water Quality grant applications – The Water Quality Committee is discussing a funding proposal that would sustain Partnership activities related to water quality.

The next meeting of the Water Quality Committee will be September 9th from 9:00 until noon in Montesano.

Other Business

Partnership Membership: The Partnership discussed Chapter 5 of the draft Operating Procedures that was sent out with the meeting packet.

It was suggested that “and its corporate status” be added to statement “a)” under “application Process” in section 5.3 1. (This has been added – see attached)

How many meetings can a member miss? The current draft does not specify a number. The Partnership agreed that the draft be modified to state that if a member misses three meetings they or the organization they represent should be contacted. It is important to make the groups that are members of the Partnership responsible for ensuring their representative is attending meetings and representing them. (This was added to the fourth paragraph of section 5.4)

It was suggested that perhaps a member should not be allowed to vote on a decision if they missed three meetings in a row. It is especially important for members to attend meetings and be fully informed when consensus is used to make decisions because any one person who has fallen behind can block agreement. The Partnership did not agree to include this restriction on voting. Some members felt that although it is important to attend regularly, limiting a members ability to vote is too restrictive because members could stay informed through the meeting summaries and talking to other members that were at the meeting. Other members disagreed and feel that you could not stay informed without hearing the actual discussions.

Currently the sign-in sheet for each meeting is kept on file and the number of Partnership members that attended each meeting is noted in the meeting summary. The Partnership agreed that a list of members who attend each meeting should be included in the summary of each meeting. The Partnership also agreed that the Operating Procedures should be modified to include an annual review of meeting attendance (completed, see section 5.4).

The Partnership agreed that adopting these changes will make us more aware, more responsive and more accountable.

The changes noted above will be incorporated into the draft Operating Procedures and sent out with this summary before the next Partnership meeting (attached). The Operating Procedures will replace the Interim Bylaws if/when they are approved. The first four chapters have previously been reviewed by the Partnership.

Other comments made about membership: The forestry representative is one very large timber company. Can they really represent the host of small forest landowners in the Chehalis Basin? Boistfort Valley Water has not attended very many meetings during the last 5 years. Chehalis and Centralia are actually the largest water suppliers in the upper basin so why is Boistfort Valley Water even a member?

Future Partnership Meeting Locations: Today's meeting will be the last one at the Labor and Industries Building until December 2004. The Partnership agreed to meet in Montesano at the City Hall in September. Locations for the October and November Partnership meetings have not been identified.

EPA Participation on the Partnership – In August the Partnership reviewed a draft letter to EPA requesting that EPA designate a staff person with similar skills to those that Lee Daneker had to provide EPA support for Partnership activities. That letter has been sent.

B. SPECIAL PROJECTS

Watershed Planning

Status of the Intergovernmental Agreement and the Partnership – now that the watershed plan is complete there has some discussion of whether or not the Partnership has a reason for continuing. According to the Intergovernmental Agreement that formed the Partnership, the purpose of the Partnership is broader than just Watershed Planning. Section 2.0 states: "This agreement shall designate a planning unit and a lead agency for purposes of assessing and managing the water resources of the Chehalis River Basin and to pursue strategies within the Chehalis River Basin which include the key elements of flood reduction, fisheries, recreation, water quality and water quantity and examine their relationship to economic health and sustainability."

In addition, the very last paragraph of the GOALS section (3.0) states that “The Chehalis River Basin Partnership may also develop a watershed plan consistent with the requirements of”

Further, termination language from section 11.0 says that “This Agreement may be terminated only by written consent of all signatories to this Agreement.”

Based on this language in the Intergovernmental Agreement the Partnership concluded that clearly the groups that formed the Partnership did not feel it would automatically cease to exist when the watershed plan was completed and approved.

The Partnership agreed that any discussion of changing the Intergovernmental Agreement and the structure of the Partnership should be tabled until a good reason for considering such a change comes up. Until then, the Partnership should focus on implementing the Watershed Plan.

Watershed Plan Implementation – The discussion started with the question “Is there some group that is a member of the Partnership that could not participate if the Partnership chooses the more structured Phase 4 pathway for watershed plan implementation with all its requirements?” No one indicated that they could not participate. Next, information the Steering/Technical Committee prepared on the pros & cons of various implementation approaches was reviewed (copy attached). The discussion that followed included these points:

- We need to take our time and not rush to obligate ourselves until we fully understand the commitment we would be making. If we decide to apply for Phase 4 funds we only have twelve months to complete the initial development of an implementation plan so we need to be ready to start as soon as we sign the contract with Ecology. We may even want to do some of the preparatory work before we sign the contract so we have a head start.
- The material prepared by the STC can be used in our discussions with Ecology about Phase 4 requirements. We need more detail from Ecology on what Phase 4 requires us to do.
- The finding provided by the legislature for Phase 4 is not enough to implement our watershed plan; it is basically enough to sustain administrative support for the planning unit as it completes a Phase 4 implementation plan.
- Ecology initiated formation of the group that eventually became the Chehalis Basin Partnership through its Local Action Team initiative around 1997. Ecology has been contacted regarding continued support for the Partnership now that the funds for watershed planning have been spent. This support would be in addition to Phase 4 funds and would allow the Partnership to continue to function and do some things to implement the plan as part of its regular business. Other implementation actions would still need special funding.
- Many members joined the Partnership to keep informed about what state agencies (primarily Ecology) were doing and to protect their interests. If we can move forward on Phase 4 and continue to do these other things we should do so.

- What happens if we start on Phase 4 and find that the funding provided is not enough? What are the requirements for Partnership members, especially local governments?
- When the Legislature amended the Watershed Planning Act and added Phase 4 implementation planning, it added requirements that we never agreed to do in the watershed plan. For example, it incorporated new elements of municipal water use and supply into the Phase 4 implementation planning process.
- Partnership members may want to contact their state elected representatives and explain the situation and the need for additional funding. Legislative staff should also be considered an important group to contact and inform since they play a very important role in the legislative process.
- If members of the Partnership can agree on a plan the state should be able to fund implementation.
- The Partnership gives us a forum to work on these issues into the future.
- A topic of future discussion should be how Partnership members can contribute to the support of administrative functions currently provided by Grays Harbor County.

The next meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership will be held on September 24, 2004 from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. at the Montesano City Hall.

Decisions

- **The Partnership requested a presentation on where flow data is available and where flows are currently monitored on a regular basis so it can consider developing a recommendation to Ecology on where three new stations might be placed.**
- **Partnership members agreed to send any reservations they may have about the Detailed Implementation Plan or Ecology actions related to water quality regulation and TMDLs that result in Detailed Implementation Plans to Kahle Jennings at Ecology. Kahle will bring the reservations he receives to the Water Quality Committee meeting on September 9th and based on the discussion at that meeting he will prepare a draft endorsement letter for the Partnership's consideration at its September 24th meeting.**
- **The Partnership agreed upon additions and changes to the Membership section (Chapter 5) of the draft Operating Procedures.**
- **The Partnership agreed that a list of members who attend each meeting should be included in the summary of each meeting. The Partnership also agreed that the Operating Procedures should be modified to include an annual review of meeting attendance.**
- **The Partnership agreed that any discussion of changing the Intergovernmental Agreement and the structure of the Partnership should be tabled until a good reason for considering a change comes up and until that time the Partnership should focus on implementing the Watershed Plan.**

August 27, 2004 Chehalis Basin Partnership Attendance Record	
Name	Organization
Bob Beerbower, Lee Napier	Grays Harbor County
Richard Graham, Craig Swanson	Lewis County
Mark Swartout	Thurston County
Harry Pickernell	Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis
Bob Spahr	City of Chehalis
Dean Parsons	City of Hoquiam
Jim Haslett	City of Napavine
Terry Willis	Grays Harbor County Citizen Representative
Lyle Hojem	Lewis County Citizen Representative
Jim Hill	Lewis County Citizen Advisory Committee member
Kahle Jennings	WA ST Department of Ecology
Chad Stussy	WA ST Department of Fish and Wildlife
Brian Thompson	Agricultural: Lewis County Farm Bureau
Ron Mauel	Citizen, future agricultural representative
Brian Peck	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mike McGinnis	Citizen
John Mudge	Citizen