



Chehalis Basin Partnership

Meeting Summary – February 27, 2004

A. GENERAL PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS

Introduction

Chairman Spahr welcomed everyone and opened the meeting. Eighteen of the Partnership's twenty-eight member organizations had a representative or alternate at the meeting. Nineteen additional citizens, alternates, or visitors were at the meeting.

Dean Parsons introduced himself as the newly appointed representative from Hoquiam. Robert Cross is the City's alternate. Jerry Bryant introduced himself -- he is sitting in today for the Town of Pe Ell.

Steering/Technical Advisory Committee

The February meeting of the STC focused on review and revision of the draft watershed plan that will be discussed by the Partnership later during this meeting. The next meeting of the STC will be on March 4th from 10:00 until noon in Olympia.

Water Quality Committee

Two announcements were made. First, there was a meeting between some concerned citizens and the Department of Ecology to discuss the possibility of invoking the agency's TMDL Dispute Resolution procedure for the Grays Harbor Fecal Coliform Bacteria TMDL. There are concerns about Ecology relaxing the permit limits for the Weyerhaeuser Cosmopolis pulp mill and whether this could lead to further impairments of water quality in the harbor. Second, the Chehalis River Council is sponsoring a workshop on the proposed Upper Chehalis River Fecal Coliform Bacteria TMDL on March 11th from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

The next meeting of the Water Quality Committee will be March 11th from 9:00 until noon in Montesano. The agenda will include local prioritization of State water quality grant/loan applications, which the Partnership must forward to Ecology after its March meeting.

Citizens' Advisory Committee

Chanele met with a couple of groups this month to educate them about the proposed watershed plan. Terry Willis also met with a group in Grays Harbor County. If these meetings are any indication, there are still a lot of individuals and groups in the basin that are not aware of, or do not understand watershed planning.

Other Business

Local prioritization of grant and loan applications submitted to the state must be completed by March 30th. The Water Quality Committee will review and rank the projects for each WRIA and bring their results to the Partnership in March.

B. SPECIAL PROJECTS

Watershed Planning

Since the January Partnership meeting, briefings on the plan were held with County Commissioners from Grays Harbor County and Mason County.

The Partnership reviewed the organization of the current draft of the plan. In response to a question about obligations under this plan it was made clear that recommendations or suggested actions in the watershed plan do not create an obligation on the part of any member to implement an action. Obligations will be worked out in the Phase 4 Implementation Plan.

The Partnership went completely through Section IV (Accepted Issue Statements, Recommendations and Suggested Actions) one last time to resolve any outstanding issues.

After completing its final review of Section IV the Partnership turned to Section V – unresolved issues. Agreement was reached on the following:

Suggested action # 56: This action was reworded and was approved with the changes recommended. It will be moved into Section IV under “Water Quantity - Water Rights” (Table 2).

Suggested actions # 61: This action was approved and will be placed into Section IV under “Habitat” (Table 6).

At the close of the discussion the Partnership reached consensus and approved Section IV – Accepted Issue Statements, Recommendations and Suggested Actions and Section V – Unresolved Suggested Actions.

Following the approval of Sections IV and V the Partnership quickly reviewed Sections 1, 2 and 3 to identify areas that need further work. These sections will be the focus of the March Partnership meeting with the intent that approval on these sections will be reached. This will mean that the Partnership has approved the whole watershed plan.

Next Meeting

Approval of the remaining sections of the watershed plan for the Chehalis Basin will be discussed at the March Partnership meeting. The meeting will be scheduled for 9:00 until 12:00 at the Lucky Eagle Casino.

The May meeting falls on the Friday before Memorial Day weekend.

The June meeting falls on a day when many County Commissioner’s have a statewide meeting scheduled.

Decisions

- The Partnership modified several suggested actions and then reached consensus on approving Section IV – Accepted Issue Statements, Recommendations and Suggested Actions.
- The Partnership reached agreement on Suggested Actions # 56 and #61 from the 2-19-04 draft, moved them to Section IV and reached consensus on approving Section V – Unresolved Suggested Actions.