

CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP
Chehalis Tribe “Lucky Eagle” Casino
Rochester, Washington
February 22, 2008
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Meeting Summary

MEMBERS & ALTERNATES PRESENT

Bonnie Canaday, Chair, Mayor Pro-Tem, City of Centralia
Chanele Holbrook-Shaw, Citizen, Thurston County
Bob Macleod, Thurston County
Steve Kalinowski, Department of Fish and Wildlife
Kahle Jennings, City of Centralia (Alternate)
Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County (Alternate)
Terry Harris, City of Chehalis
Richard Graham, Lewis County
Ellie McMillan, Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force
Lyle Hojem, Citizen, Lewis County
Jim Hill, Citizen, Lewis County (Alternate)

Art Lehman, Port of Centralia
Ron Schillinger, City of Montesano
Mark White, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis
Reservation (Alternate)
Bill Schulte, Lewis County Farm Bureau
Bob Beerbower, Grays Harbor
Bill Zachmann, Department of Ecology (Alternate)
Mark Swartout, Thurston County (Alternate)
Chad Stussy, Department of Fish and Wildlife
(Alternate)

OTHERS PRESENT

Valerie Gow, Puget Sound Meeting Services
Randy Lehr, Grays Harbor College
Glen Connelly, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis
Reservation
Robbi Smith, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation
Dr. John Henriksen, One Voice
Lonnie Crumley, Streamworks Consulting
Bart Gernhart, WA Department of Transportation
Kevin Farrell, Department of Ecology
Kathy Jacobson, Chehalis Basin Education Consortium
Karen Larkin, Community, Trade, and Economic Development
Patrick Wiltzius, City of Chehalis
Steve Berggreen, CBFTF
Jerrie Johnson, Citizen
Karen Klocke, Department of Health – Drinking Water
Gordon White, Department of Ecology

John Penberth, Citizen
Corinne Tobeck, Lewis County
Theresa Julius, Grays Harbor Council of
Governments
Margaret Rader, Chehalis River Council
Jerry Louthain, HDR Engineering
David Skinner, HDR Engineering
Steve Hallstrom, Citizen
Dan Sokol, Department of Ecology
Eric Schwartz, The Chronicle
Nola Leyde, US Army Corps of Engineers
Ted Perkins, US Army Corps of Engineers
Jozsef Bezovics, Department of Health
Tim Browning, City of Centralia

GENERAL PARTERSHIP BUSINESS

Welcome, Introductions and Roundtable Comments

Chair Canaday called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. Everyone present provided self-introductions.

Discuss and adopt draft-meeting summaries for January 25, 2008

The Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) deferred approval of the January 25, 2008 minutes.

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SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PRESENTATIONS

Post Flood Update/Feedback – Role of the CBP with respect to flooding

Chair Canaday reported the most prominent issue of concern today of most people is the recent flooding during the December storm. It's important for the issue to retain its prominence if something is to be accomplished. The informational briefing includes several speakers. Members will have an opportunity to ask questions of each speaker.

Lee Napier distributed a list of the Partnership membership and reviewed how the organization was established. Ms. Napier reported she works for Gray Harbor County and has been with the county since 1991. Her current job is Community Development Director and she has been the Project Manager for the Chehalis Basin Partnership since 2000. Grays Harbor County assumed the lead agency and fiscal agent role from Lewis County for the Partnership.

The Partnership consists of four counties (although eight counties are located within the Water Resource Inventory Area). The four member counties include Lewis, Grays Harbor, Thurston, and Mason. Four counties opted out of the Partnership because their land within the Chehalis basin includes private forests, commercial forests, or national forests, which were already regulated under other jurisdictions. The four counties did not want to stand in the way of the Partnership approving the plan but state law required their membership in the Partnership. State legislation changed the requirement allowing the four counties to opt out. The four counties include Clallam, Jefferson, Pacific, and Wahkiakum. Three out of the four counties went on to become involved in their own respective watershed planning efforts. The Partnership also includes the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation and the Ports of Chehalis, Grays Harbor, and Centralia. The ports are represented by one member, the Port of Centralia. City and town members include Aberdeen, Chehalis, Centralia, Montesano, Hoquiam, McCleary, Ocean Shores, Napavine, and Pe Ell. Two water purveyors located in the upper and lower basin – Grays Harbor Water District #2 and Boistfort Valley Water Company are also members. Citizen representatives from each of the four counties are also members of the Partnership. Member state agencies include WA Department of Agriculture, WA Department of Ecology, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife, and WA Department of Natural Resources. Stakeholder group representatives include Weyerhaeuser, Lewis County Farm Bureau, Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force, and one at-large business member.

Shortly after the 1996 flood, many people met and discussed how to address flooding. The group realized they had more in common than just flooding and began to organize themselves on a watershed scale. Legislation soon followed forming the Chehalis Basin Partnership through an interlocal agreement in 1998/1999. The work began on developing a watershed plan, projects, and strategies for improving salmon habitat.

The Partnership meets once a month on the fourth Friday of each month. The Partnership has several standing committees consisting of the Steering Technical Committee (STC), which receives assignments from the Partnership. The STC is chaired by Mark Swartout with Thurston County. A Water Quality Committee is chaired by citizen appointee from Grays Harbor, Terry Willis. The Water Quality Committee addresses water quality issues associated with the watershed plan and TMDL implementation. The Habitat Work Group is chaired by Bob Amrine, Lewis County Conservation District. The Habitat Work Group focuses on watershed planning involving the habitat component and habitat projects. The subcommittees meet monthly and members commit to time and efforts. All members are volunteers. The Partnership's primary source of funding is grants from Department of Ecology (DOE). The Partnership matches the grants through volunteer hours by members.

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Ms. Napier commented on activities surrounding the flood and how members felt as the flood affected the watershed. She said she received numerous phone calls from people checking on the welfare of members, friends, and families. It became apparent shortly after the December event that there was much concern for everyone's well being. Meetings soon became consumed with what occurred during the flood and recovery efforts for flooding victims. The Partnership initially discussed the flooding issue at its December meeting. At its January meeting, it became apparent that the Partnership needed to discuss the issue in conjunction with continuing to work on its plan and implementation efforts. The consensus was to continue exploring how the Partnership can become of a part a flood-planning project.

Ms. Napier said the Partnership operates on a consensus basis. She outlined the process the Partnership undertakes to reach decisions and approve implementation activities. Because of the structure of the group and the composition of the group in conjunction with how it conducts itself, the Partnership believes it can play a significant role in flood planning in the Chehalis basin.

Commissioner Beerbower provided an update on a meeting he and several other members attended with Governor Gregoire. Governor Gregoire called the meeting and made it clear that everyone needs to work together to determine what occurs in the Centralia-Chehalis area. Her concern was the flooding and what needs to occur for residents in the flooded areas. Governor Gregoire initiated the meeting to have officials begin organizing for developing a plan. The Governor's concern at this time is efforts for this year. Commissioner Beerbower said he doesn't believe it's possible to accomplish the problem this year given previous flooding recovery efforts over the years. He cited his involvement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project ending in 2004, which did not result in any significant accomplishments. Lewis County and the cities of Chehalis and Centralia want to develop a plan and are looking at forming a flood district. The issue is how will the district be formed and how quickly can it be established. That is one of the concerns. There are concerns about the project and what it entails. The Corps has indicated more study is necessary regarding the flood. However, everybody needs to sit down to ensure that everyone is on the same page. Commissioner Beerbower reported he and Ms. Napier visited with citizens from Adna, and they have indicated they want to move forward as quickly as possible. There is some legislation that will provide funding for flood relief efforts. Representative Alexander has submitted legislation for funding of a tri-county flood district.

Commissioner Beerbower said his concern is how to start and how to make it work. There has been many studies already conducted to date, the Corps also has much information, but the issue is how to take all that information together to develop a plan for the area. The effort will be difficult because there are many individuals involved. Currently, there are two legislative bills in the Legislature. The Governor has pledged \$50 million to the effort. Senator Swecker's legislation designates the Partnership as the recipient of the funding. Commissioner Beerbower said the Partnership wants to assist whatever group is organized as well as being a component of the organization. The Partnership has much information, but not nearly as much as he said he hoped there would be in terms of flood data from the latest event. The Partnership is willing to help in any manner, regardless of what group moves forward.

Commissioner Beerbower said the Governor's meeting ended with a commitment from the group to move forward in some form or another. Lewis County Commissioners as well as the cities have some concerns about the plan that the Corps has developed. These issues need to be examined from the top of Lewis County down to Grays Harbor.

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Mark Swartout said his role is to help facilitate the remaining discussion to ensure everyone who wants to speak is afforded the opportunity. At the end of the discussion the Partnership will be asked what they believe their role should be in terms of the flood issue.

Keith Phillips, Governor's Policy Advisor, thanked the Partnership for the invitation to attend the meeting. In 1997, he had the opportunity to watch two senators, two legislators, and a representative of the Governor negotiate the Watershed Management Act, which developed the watershed planning statute.

Mr. Phillips introduced representatives from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the Assistant Director Carol Larkin, Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED), who is working on the community side of the issue in terms of housing and relocation assistance. The state team wants input from the Partnership as well as ideas on how the state team can be helpful to the process.

When the Governor toured the flood in December 2007 from the air, she saw roads, bridges, houses, businesses, and farms and understood that much harm had occurred to many people because of the flood. However, after visiting with people on the ground, the Governor understood the harm was very personal. It was very heart wrenching to see the pain people were going through at that time as well as today. The Governor convened relief organizations, government agencies, while churches, neighbors, and volunteers from around the state stepped up to perform thousands of hours of work. The Governor developed an Inter-agency Recovery Task Force focusing on four areas involving human needs, debris clean up and removal of mud from homes, roads and public infrastructure, and seeking ways to find funding for businesses and homeowners. The group is also working on a prevention and preparedness plan.

The Governor also wants to look ahead. Flooding occurred in the 1990s and again in 2007. The intent is to prevent a similar tragedy. The Governor believes two steps are necessary. The first is the congressional delegation is willing to invest in the Corps project. The project designed by the Corps is not necessarily the correct fix given the 2007 flood. However, the event offers a chance to learn about the hydrology of the area, the areas that flooded and to what degree, and issues associated with areas not protected by the project. Interstate 5 is an economic problem if it's underwater. Approximately 20% of the Corps project benefit is for protecting the freeway. The levees produce 80% protection for buildings and structures in the two cities. The Governor believes the percentage is the right mix. The Governor asked CTED to be a part of the team lead to provide assistance.

When the Governor toured the December 2007 floods, she noticed the Town of Hamilton was under water in Skagit County. Another town downstream, which had a previous Corps project, was not under water. Subsequently, the Corps of Engineers visited the Governor and shared the top four to five worst flooding areas within the state. At the top of the list is Centralia/Chehalis. Since Lewis County withdrew its support of the Corps project, there is no project to move forward and Congress is ready to authorize funding. The Governor's question at that point is what the area wants to pursue if it doesn't want to pursue a Corps project. Mr. Phillips said he met with city, county, and tribal officials about the next steps if the area doesn't want to pursue the Corps project. In November 2007, Lewis County reinstated its interest in moving forward with some version of the Corps project. When the flood hit, the question pertained to the source of funding. Governor Gregoire has committed \$50 million for moving forward.

Mr. Phillips said he recently testified on Representative Alexander's bill, which allocates a portion of the \$50 million as a match to the federal project and some version of the levee work. The work completed to date by the Corps and the jurisdictions is eligible as a credit of approximately \$6.5 million. Those funds can be allocated to another element. Representative Alexander's bill allocates \$2.5 million of that

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funding to the local group who will work on flood relief leaving another \$4 million for basin-level work, which the Governor recognizes as important. The upper portion of the basin was hit hard. It involves the water system and the logjam as well as work along the basin to ensure no jurisdiction is affected downstream from efforts implemented in the upper basin. Additionally, water storage, wetland restoration, and the work by the Partnership must also be considered.

The Corps of Engineers has another congressional authorization in addition to the project. At this time the Corps is authorized to build a project if local funds can be attained and the federal government provides funding. The Corps is also authorized to undertake a basin-level ecosystem restoration study which is mentioned in Representative Alexander's bill. Federal funding can pay for 50% of any of the basin-level work with the remaining 50% paid at the local or state level. The Governor's Office testified in support of Representative Alexander's bill.

The Governor's Office also supports Senator Swecker's bill, which includes an overall package of bills and funding to help with flood relief in the basin. Both bills mention basin-level work and the Governor is committed to pursuing that work. As to whether it is the Centralia Basin Flood Authority, which is the language in Representative Alexander's bill or the Tri-County District or some other local authorized group, the Governor does not have a position at this time. The Governor wants to work with whatever organizational structure is determined. The Governor's Office is not choosing the organizational vehicle but wants the partners to determine the organization. There is however, an opportunity to receive federal funding and it's important to provide the federal government with an answer about how much money is necessary and for what purposes. The Governor also believes there's an obligation not to move forward on a project that does not have the support of citizens living within the basin. Representative Alexander's bill stipulates no construction can be pursued unless there is local, state, and federal agreement.

John Penberth said he is a former charter member of the Partnership and former Mayor of Pe Ell. One of the terms that have been referenced quite frequently is the Chehalis Basin Flood Group and there has been much discussion about funds and organization of affected entities. A flood district would only be comprised of citizens living in the floodplain and they would be taxed for any improvements. The last Corps project was approximately \$220 million, half of which would have to be paid for by citizens living in the flood district. No one at this point is indicating citizens will have to pay. He suggested the first step is to ask citizens to vote on the issue so they are informed about the cost. Many senior citizens living on fixed incomes are selling their possessions just to maintain their standard of living based on his experience as an auctioneer. He cautioned against moving forward on any actions without involving citizens who will be directly impacted. He suggested citizens who will be impacted the most should be the ones making the decisions.

Mr. Phillips responded to the comments and indicated he has not reviewed legislation for the flood district. The Governor, at this time, has not taken a position on the establishment of a flood district one way or another. However, the Governor has offered \$50 million in general obligation bonds to be paid for by the taxpayers of the state over a 20-year period. The Governor understands citizens in Lewis County cannot afford to pay. Corps projects are often constructed with county and city funding matching federal money. Federal funding will be approximately \$74 million and \$50 million will be from state funding, not local funds. There will be no local funds involved in building a levee/dam/household relocation project in Centralia and Chehalis. One issue is the funding for operations and maintenance of the levee or the dam over time. Proposed legislation stipulates not moving forward on any construction until funding for operations and maintenance is identified. That decision must be determined.

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Mr. Penberth stressed that whatever authority is established in moving forward, citizens must be involved especially if they need to pay additional taxes or assessments

Commissioner Beerbower reported that during the meeting with the Governor, she volunteered WSDOT and CTED representatives as co-chairs if no one locally wants to work on the project. He suggested the group should be a local group to ensure locals are involved and local issues are addressed. The effort needs to move forward and involve local entities. The entire financial burden will likely not be on local citizens. However, citizens will have to share some of the funding burden because many of them live in a floodplain.

Chanele Holbrook-Shaw said planning for the future is critical. One of the issues is that many homes are damaged by water and many people are paying mortgages on homes that they can't live in because of water damage. She asked whether the Governor is working on plan to assist homeowners and farmers who are paying for homes, farms, and equipment they can't use because of flood damage. Mr. Phillips replied that the issue is of the highest importance. At this point, there is no housing stock to move people into and no one wants to bring in FEMA trailers. There are no easy answers but there are ongoing discussions at the Governor's Office on how to deal with the housing shortage in the basin.

Ms. Holbrook-Shaw commented on the struggles people are facing and asked about the possibility of a one-stop shop to assist people. Mr. Phillips offered to provide information on different groups that are organizing to offer assistance with services. The challenge is connecting citizens with the organizations. A website is available to help provide direction to people.

Dan Sokol noted the State Emergency Management Department's website at www.emd.wa.gov provides information on all the assistance available from various state and federal agencies. After the federal disaster declaration was issued, a disaster recovery center was opened for one-stop services in each county affected by the flood.

A member of the audience asked whether any attempts were made to contact the large timber companies. Mr. Phillips said timber companies have not been contacted because the Governor directed efforts to the Centralia/Chehalis/Lewis County area first. Basin-wide, most everyone will need to be involved.

Gordon White, Department of Ecology, reported part of the area he manages is the floodplain. He said he worked on the flood in 1996 and was an employee of Thurston County at that time. He complimented the Partnership on the work it has accomplished to date. A number of measures have been adopted in the basin to include several designated floodplains. A grant from the Department of Ecology was recently awarded to the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation for flood mapping. The Governor appointed over a 1,000 employees to help on flood recovery efforts. Another important effort was a hydro hot wash, an after action meeting to determine the hydrology of the December 2007 storm. The meeting involved a number of representatives from Department of Natural Resources (DNR), US Geological Survey (USGS), National Weather Service, state climatologist, local representatives, and Partnership members. It will take some time to reach a consensus but data is emerging from the group, which will be shared with any group that is formed as a result of the flood. In the upper basin, the flood has been characterized as a 500-year event, which hasn't been seen before. Mr. White reminded everyone that in 1996, preliminary data from USGS at Grand Mound indicated it was a one in 600 event. However, six months later after reaching some consensus after reviewing the data, it was deemed to be a one in 80-year event. The Corps' hydrologist is working with DOE proactively to ensure accurate data is provided to any group looking at solutions. As the consensus is developed by technical experts and scientists on the event the information will be shared.

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Mr. White reported another critical issue is debris on farmland. Farmers need to plant season crops and until the debris is removed, it affects the farmer's readiness to plant. The Washington State Department of Agriculture and DNR are both working on the issue. Mr. White said he's attended local grange meetings on the issue. There are no permits required to remove debris from farmland. DOE's main goal is to provide technical assistance and helping flood victims. Because of the flooding, there are many hazardous waste issues. DOE knows that under debris piles, there are other things other than wood. As the piles are cleaned, DOE is ready to assist in assessing hazardous materials. The Department of Agriculture has already visited several farms to assess the quality of sediment. In terms of logjams, DOE experts are assessing jams in the south fork and identifying problem areas and are ready to work with the Department of Fish and Wildlife and others.

Discussion followed about the difficulties associated with removal and storage of sediment.

Mr. White added that there will be issues for many years. The region still experiences impacts from the ice storm in the 1990s. The volume of sediment moving down the river is substantial and it's impossible to remove all sediment. The challenge is learning how to adapt and taking the right approach.

Lyle Hojem shared some historical facts on the length of time it takes to construct projects. He cited the time involved in constructing the Cowlitz Dam and Interstate 5 as examples. Building a dam takes time. It takes time to buy the material, purchase the land, and establish an organization to oversee the project. Building a dam or dykes will require a program before any efforts are initiated. Floods have occurred in the basin forever and everyone should understand that it will not be possible to prevent floods from reoccurring. Future floods will occur, but the goal is to work on reducing the impacts.

Dr. John Henricksen, One Voice, said he was born and raised in Chehalis. Mr. Henricksen shared information on his efforts he's undertaken since the flood in exploring how to move a joint process representing all interests forward. He said he's involved in the recovery efforts and has decided something must change. There are two things that appear necessary. The first is addressing the issue on a basin-wide approach from the Chehalis headwaters to Westport. Second, there must be one voice overseeing the process. There are many good people and organizations who all want to do something. In 1998, a project was developed but was never pursued because there was no entity in charge of the process.

Mr. Henricksen said he was asked to chair an effort to join everyone together. During his initial research he said he was surprised to discover that politics has been set aside and no one is trying to make a power play or protect turf. Subsequently, the effort has been named "One Voice."

Mr. Henricksen reported Senator Swecker's flood mitigation bill does not exist at this point and is attached to a budget item. Instead of the Partnership as the interim authority, a legal entity already exists called the Chehalis River Flood Reduction Executive Committee formed in 1998. The committee has the ability to receive funds. The committee includes representatives of all the municipalities and tribes and is willing to take the responsibility as the interim mitigation agency in terms of overseeing minor projects that the Corps might pursue.

Mr. Henricksen said he researched how flood control has been successfully accomplished throughout the U.S. There is no successful flood control mitigated for a major basin in the U.S. except for those basins that have a flood control district. A website describing the organizational structure of a flood control district is the Sacramento Flood Control District, which experiences similar flooding as the Chehalis

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basin. A flood control district does not supplant the authority of local jurisdictions but is the governing authority for all planning and implementation of flood mitigation efforts. Flood control districts were established by Congress in 1932. Flood control districts are fairly easy to set up but it will take much investigation and planning to establish because of the number of counties and local jurisdictions/tribes involved. It cannot be established without the vote of citizens living in the floodplain. Flood control districts do have taxing authority but only through a ballot measure approved by the voters. He agreed it's not possible for citizens living within the floodplain to finance what it will take to mitigate flood impacts. Once established, the district's sole purpose is mitigation of the flooding problems. One of the first duties is formulating a comprehensive flood plan. The district consists of commissioners who are initially appointed by local jurisdictions. Subsequently, commissioners are elected. A typical district has three commissioners who represent one county. For the Chehalis basin, there are three counties involved and it's likely that there are many flood districts that encompass more than one county. Currently, one flood control district exists in Lewis County. However, it only oversees one area, Dillenbaugh Creek that is involved with the Port of Chehalis. A tri-county flood control district would likely have more than three commissioners.

One Voice is an effort to inform everyone so that a joint effort can move forward to address the issues. At this point, the cities of Centralia and Chehalis as well as Lewis County have either passed resolutions or signed letters of intent committing to the concept of a flood control district. One Voice has had discussions with Grays Harbor County. There appears to be no opposition for a flood control district, but most people want more information prior to making a commitment. The Governor is also not opposed to the concept. Senator Swecker has indicated he will also support a district. One Voice is not against anything or anybody. One Voice is a steering committee at this point and after legislation has been passed, One Voice will expand for informational purposes to ensure it has representatives from Pe Ell to Aberdeen to ensure all areas are represented. One of the next steps involves Lewis County Commissioner Ron Averill meeting with other county commissioners to begin discussions on the concept.

Commissioner Macleod asked about the timing for establishing a district to respond to the event. Mr. Henricksen said the issue of timing is one of the major issues in moving forward. If everyone agrees with the concept, the actual design of the district shouldn't take too long because there are many examples of successful districts that could serve as a template. An accurate footprint of the floodplain will need to be determined as well as designing the district and pursuing an election. The first opportunity is likely in August 2008. Mr. Henricksen stressed the importance of ensuring the process is completed right and is representative of all interests.

Mr. Henricksen responded to questions about the membership of One Voice. Mr. Henricksen said he mainly has been the person contacting legislators. Denny Waller has been involved as well. René Raymond and Jay Vanderstoop have provided some advice but have limited their involvement because they have been politically aligned and do not wish to sabotage the process. Commissioner Ron Averill is also involved. The group's focus is bringing all the stakeholders together and many of the members have been advisors in that process. Mr. Henricksen shared information on some of the meetings the group has attended to present the concept. The endeavor is a grass roots effort. The group's next meeting is on Monday, February 25, 2008 to determine the next steps. The primary goal of initiating the effort has been for the most part, achieved. He invited everyone to attend the meeting. The February 25 meeting is at 6:30 p.m. at the Kit Carson Restaurant.

Art Lehman asked why a temporary early warning system cannot be installed in the river basin area. Mr. Henricksen advised that it can. Flood control districts can construct as well install warning systems. Mr. Lehman said during his assistance in flood recovery efforts many people shared that if they had a 24 to

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36-hour notice, they could have moved their belongings and livestock to higher ground. Mr. Henricksen said he hopes the district will include a similar system as a major part of its efforts.

Terry Harris commented on the early warning system. Because of information obtained by the DOE and other groups, Lewis County Sheriff's Department viewed the weather reports before the storm hit and began calling for helicopters on Sunday, December 2, 2007. The science and technology are available for an early warning system. Mr. Henricksen suggested an early warning system is something that an interim organization could begin working on.

Mark White reported he's discussed the issue with Representative DeBolt who's in discussion with USGS about installing more monitors along the river.

Discussion ensued about some of the pitfalls associated with early warning systems because many people decide not to take action for one reason or another. Additionally, it's not a perfect science and there are issues associated with people responding and moving their belongings and livestock to higher ground only to find the storm has failed to appear or moved off course.

Randy Lehr asked whether there have been any discussions about establishing a broader geographic flood boundary. Mr. Henricksen said there have been and there is precedence already established. For example, homes and businesses that are not directly impacted by the flood but are isolated because of the flood could be included.

A member of the audience asked whether a flood district has authority to make land use decisions. Mr. Henricksen said flood districts do not have any land use authorities. The district does not supplant other regulatory authorities, but it can render recommendations.

Jim Hill asked about the next steps in terms of a charter and bylaws. Mr. Henricksen said the next step is working with the counties and the tribes to agree on the concept of a flood control district.

Dan Sokol pointed out that there are three countywide flood districts in the state. They include Whatcom, Yakima, and King County. The only multi-jurisdictional district is the Inter County River Improvement Commission of Pierce and King Counties. He suggested inviting representatives from the districts to advise and assist in establishing a district.

Mr. Zachmann offered examples of Red River Valley in Minnesota and North Dakota because it impacts Canada. They have spent time working on an international joint commission that includes both the states and Canada and multiple counties.

Ms. Holbrook-Shaw asked that Mr. Henricksen continue to attend and update the Partnership on efforts as they evolve.

Members of the Chehalis River Flood Reduction Executive Committee were identified.

Bart Gernhart, WSDOT, provided additional information about the committee's role at that time. The committee last met in September 2007. The group supported working with the Corps on the project and Lewis County rescinded its letter of withdrawal from the Corps project.

Kathy Jacobson commented about the environmental aspects of the issue in terms of projects and early warning systems and that everyone is an environmentalist to some degree because humans drink water,

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breathe air, fish, and hunt. It's important to recognize the importance of living in nature, understanding the power of nature, and learning to mitigate some of the impacts.

Commissioner Beerbower commented on his involvement with Lewis and Thurston counties during previous flood efforts. He expressed concerns with the Partnership assuming responsibility of the flood efforts because it will sidetrack the Partnership's current projects. However, he said he wants to understand who the players are. The Partnership needs to continue with its work and provide information to whatever group is established to pursue flood mitigation efforts.

Mr. Swartout suggested the Partnership needs to discuss its role since much has changed since the January meeting. He introduced Nola Leyde, US Army Corps of Engineers.

Ms. Leyde said she's heard much information expressed about the Corps project in many different meetings. The information that is being presented is not always accurate. Ms. Leyde reported she is a Public Affairs Specialist with the Corps and is a resident of Thurston County. She said she lived through the 1996 flood and lost her home. By living through a flood event she learned two important things. One is the impossibility of knowing how someone feels in a flood event because it's so personal and disastrous to the individual and second, victims need accurate information. Accurate information is very important when people are involved in a flood event.

Ms. Leyde offered contact information for contacting the Corps to provide accurate information about what occurred with the prior project and what the study involves. She asked to be invited to public meetings so that accurate information can be shared. Other issues involve questions especially the ones pertaining to how the 2007 event invalidates the previous study. She said it's untrue as the study has been completed and includes valid information. The design work is 35% completed but another review of the current information is required.

Ted Perkins, US Army Corps of Engineers, provided copies of information on the Corps project. He stressed the importance of ensuring accurate information is conveyed about the project. Because the Corps program is a national program, criteria must be followed involving statistical analysis. The December 2007 flood event was unusual because it hit two basins very hard. The Corps will need to look at the analysis and some changes will be likely. There is still much work remaining to determine what exactly happened. Some of the misunderstanding pertaining to the Corps project involves the analysis of the 1996 flood, which was considered a 100-year event. The distribution was close to a 100-year flood. However, the 1996 flood wasn't the entire basis for the project. The work involves developing a National Economic Development Plan, which determines what provides the greatest benefit cost ratio. The other plans may not have included the greatest benefit cost ratio but it doesn't mean it couldn't be used as a locally preferred plan. He encouraged members to ask questions.

Bill Schulte commented that one of the issues with modeling is determining typical contributions. However, there are several different river systems involved. He questioned how a typical contribution can be factored when there are different snowpacks in different areas, three mountain ranges affecting the rivers, sedimentation variances in the river, and river debris. Each one of the floods has been different. They may be similar, but they are different. He questioned how the Corps can document a typical contribution based on the various events.

Chair Canaday thanked everyone for providing input and noted the Partnership will need to discuss its next steps in terms of the Partnership's involvement. She said the Partnership wants to be updated as changes occur

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Mr. Swartout acknowledged Mr. Sokol for establishing the meeting of scientists, meteorologists, and hydrologists. He suggested allocating some time at the March meeting to receive information from scientists on the models.

Commissioner Beerbower said everyone involved in the Partnership should be proud of its efforts and that the Partnership is recognized as the forum for bringing everyone together to discuss the issues.

Terry Harris referred to his previous meeting comments about the Partnership as the organization to lead the effort. He acknowledged that it was likely an emotional response because everyone is involved personally in the flood. It will take much work and likely by a mirror group, but not necessarily the Partnership. It's important for the Partnership not to lose focus on its mission as well as being informed about continuing efforts.

Jim Hill suggested the flood control group should continue to work on its organization. Memorandum of agreements should be transacted between the different players for each group to remain informed and involved without necessarily heading the effort. .

Mr. Hojem commented on the STC's role in the formation of the group acknowledging that it adds more work to a committee that is currently overloaded with work. He suggested there ought to be a direct line between the Partnership and the group.

Mr. Swartout commented that it appears members want the Partnership to provide the forum for discussions and continue to build on it in terms of establishing a direct link of communication with other groups. The STC meets on the first Thursday of each month from 9 a.m. to as long as 3 p.m. depending on the length of the agenda. The STC spent some time last month discussing the flood district. Laura Orr, a project lead for the Corps also attended the STC meeting. He suggested it appears the Partnership wants to continue as the main forum and a communication link.

Ms. Holbrook-Shaw commented on the importance of publicizing efforts through various methods from newspapers to newsletters. Mr. Henricksen concurred and shared that efforts are expanding to establish more committees to pursue communication and public outreach.

Mr. Hill suggested the Partnership could also establish a flood control committee, which could be a member of the group spearheading flood control efforts.

Commissioner Beerbower asked about the tribe's position on the issue. Mr. White said he's attended most of the meetings. The tribe's position is more of a wait and see approach. Nobody has contacted the tribe, visited the tribe, or invited the tribe to attend meetings except for Mr. Phillips and the Governor's meeting. He said the tribe is in a holding pattern to see how everyone views the tribe. The tribe is a member of the flood control group. The tribe is not against anything the cities and counties need to do to protect citizens. The tribe has different rules and viewpoints and wants an invitation to the table sooner rather than later. Mr. White said he attends as many meetings as possible. At this point, the tribe is in a wait and see mode. However, the tribe will ensure that it's protected.

Commissioner Beerbower commented on the importance of everyone becoming involved. Fortunately, during the last flood, Grays Harbor County didn't suffer as much as it usually does during a flood. There was some flooding but it wasn't as severe as anticipated.

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Mr. White stressed the importance of everyone being involved and suggested that any project that will affect Grays Harbor, Lewis, Thurston, the cities, and the tribe should involve all representatives.

Commissioner Macleod said unless there is a breakdown in communication there has been an assumption that Thurston County is actively at the table and present at each discussion. He said this is the first time he's heard of One Voice and the efforts of the group. He pointed out that there is a breakdown in communication and that a more thorough line of communication is warranted. He said he's not prepared to speak for Thurston County regarding One Voice. Chair Canaday affirmed that all the jurisdictions need to be at the meetings. Mr. Henricksen has advised the next meeting involves the commissioners from the three counties. She recommended including the tribe at the same meeting. Mr. Henricksen said the meeting is being coordinated by Mr. Averill and not One Voice. He said he will advise Mr. Averill of the Chair's request.

Commissioner Beerbower said the concern is how a flood district will be established and who will be affected. If it's too big and people are not affected, actions may not result. It's important to involve people who are affected by the floods. Everyone needs to work together as a tri-county group. Grays Harbor County will be at the table with Lewis County because whatever occurs will affect Grays Harbor.

Next Meeting

Mr. Swartout offered an agenda item for the March meeting to include an informational hot wash of technical information involving meteorology and hydrology.

Mr. Hill suggested including an update on progress by One Voice.

Kahle Jennings reported that if anyone has questions about drinking water and drinking water systems, Department of Health is available to provide technical assistance. He provided contact information.

The next meeting of the CBP is March 28, 2008.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Canaday adjourned the meeting at 12:14 p.m.

Prepared by Valerie Gow, Recording Secretary/President
Puget Sound Meeting Services