

CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP
Chehalis Tribe “Lucky Eagle” Casino
Rochester, Washington
June 27, 2008
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Meeting Summary

MEMBERS & ALTERNATES PRESENT

Bonnie Canaday, Chair, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Centralia	Bob Macleod, Thurston County
Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County (Alternate)	Terry Harris, City of Chehalis
Lyle Hojem, Citizen, Lewis County	Patrick Wiltzius, City of Chehalis (Alternate)
Bob Beerbower, Grays Harbor	Ann Wick, Department of Agriculture
Mark Swartout, Thurston County (Alternate)	Art Lehman, Port of Centralia
Charles Caldwell, Port of Grays Harbor	Kahle Jennings, City of Centralia
Bill Schulte, Lewis County Farm Bureau	Glen Connelly, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation (Alternate)
Bill Zachmann, Department of Ecology	

OTHERS PRESENT

Randy Lehr, Grays Harbor College	Margaret Rader, Chehalis River Council
Janel Spaulding, Grays Harbor College	Valerie Gow, Puget Sound Meeting Services
Don Loft, The Evergreen State College	Jerry Louthain, HDR
Mike Kelly, Grays Harbor College	Tim Walsh, DNR
John Penberth, Citizen, Pe Ell	Susan Bogni, Thurston County
Janet Strong, Chehalis River Basin Land Trust	Lonnie Crumley, LCD Consulting
Taylor Pittman, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	Chuck Klinger, Montesano
Isabell Sarikkan, Department of Natural Resources (DNR)	Narendran Kodandapani, Grays Harbor College

GENERAL PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS

Welcome, Introductions, and Roundtable Comments

Chair Bonnie Canaday called the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) meeting to order at 9:33 a.m. Everyone present provided self-introductions.

Discuss and Adopt Draft Meeting Summary for May 23, 2008 Meeting

The May 23, 2008 minutes was approved by consensus.

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PRESENTATIONS

Watershed Festival Update – September 27, 2008 at the Morrison Riverfront Park, Aberdeen

Janel Spaulding reported the Watershed Festival is scheduled on September 27, 2008 at Morrison Riverfront Park in Aberdeen. The first festival committee meeting was recently held with Kathy Jacobson and several other volunteers. Ms. Spaulding asked for several volunteers to help run a video of a presentation Jim Hill prepared last year. Commissioner Macleod suggested contacting Thurston County for a brief presentation on the festival during the Commission’s regular meeting. Lee Napier advised that sample proclamations will be prepared for each jurisdiction to issue as well.

Taylor Pittman said she assisted in some publicity for the festival last year. She offered to provide ideas on different venues to present information on the Partnership and the festival. Volunteers have been working to partner with farmers to involve them in the festival as a complement to the harvest celebration.

Margaret Rader reported that “Watershed Awareness Week” is one week prior to the festival. Since the festival is in Aberdeen, the Chehalis River Council will plan an event in the upper basin for the days leading up to the festival. She asked for input on ideas for an upper basin event that could be included as part of “Watershed Awareness Week.”

Ms. Napier advised that the first festival was held in Centralia with the last two held in Aberdeen. The venue in Aberdeen provided very good visibility at Morrison Park, which resulted in increased attendance at the event. The fiberglass salmon, “Fin” was also very visible and very popular with children. That’s one reason for conducting the event in Aberdeen. She encouraged scheduling other events in conjunction with the festival.

Bill Zachmann arrived at 9:42 a.m.

Chair Canaday reported the City of Centralia also has TV telecast capabilities to play the video. She suggested kicking off the festival in Centralia and continuing the festival in Aberdeen.

Anatomy and Outcomes of the December Storm – Presentation – Mass Wasting in the Basin

Ms. Napier reported the briefing is a continuing series of educational briefings on the December 2007 flood. She introduced Tim Walsh, Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The first presentation was presented in January covering the hydrology “Hot Wash.” Since the January meeting, more information is available to share.

Mr. Walsh reported he works for the Division of Geology of DNR. The division is the state’s geological survey and performs geology work for the public’s interest. The department is not tied to any regulatory responsibilities. Part of the department’s legislative mandate is maintaining assessments of earthquakes, tsunami, landslides, and volcano hazards and communicate those hazards to local governments to assist in implementing measures to mitigate hazards. The department investigated the December 3, 2007 flood event. After learning the flood spawned many landslides, the department determined reconnaissance would be advisable to determine what occurred, what the overall scope of the landslides entailed, how they might have been triggered, and whether there were any mitigating factors to implement to prevent future occurrences.

Mr. Walsh said the first briefing was presented in early January at the “Hot Wash” conducted by Dan Sokol, Department of Ecology, as part of the disaster response. Much of the data were collected and communicated to the disaster field office in Lacey as part of the preliminary damage assessment for the federal disaster declaration.

The team conducted aerial reconnaissance as quickly as possible after the storm. The team photo documented as many of the areas as possible. Following the aerial work, the team conducted site field visits to verify some of the triggers that were documented during the aerial reconnaissance.

Because the effort was a rapid reconnaissance and because it was in December and into January when the weather was still severe, aerial reconnaissance is incomplete because of weather conditions affecting the ability to fly. Several flights managed to document many areas as well as marking the areas through GPS to relocate them on the ground as well as mapping the areas in a GIS database. Most of the December storm events occurred in the Chehalis basin.

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Mr. Walsh introduced Isabell Sarikkan, who is assembling the report DNR will publish on the event. Ms. Sarikkan provided a review of the information collected to date and shared some preliminary conclusions to be published.

Ms. Sarikkan reported the department mapped over 1,600 landslides, which likely only represents 30% to 50% of the total number of landslides that occurred during the storm. As more landslides are categorized on the ground, the number of landslides will increase. Predominantly, the landslides are relatively shallow. Currently, not all the answers are available to determine why the landslides occurred. However, landslides failed in areas with shallow soils on an impenetrable substrate.

Bill Schulte arrived at 9:49 a.m.

Rainfall from large storm events is always a major factor in landslides. Most of the landslides from the December 3 storm correlate to the areas with the most intense rainfall with some exceptions. Often when analyzing landslides the geology is overlooked. However, geology is very important with respect to the December 3 event. Rainfall was highest in Stillman Creek and the Chehalis basin. Most of the slides occurred where rain was prolonged and intense.

Ms. Sarikkan described the December 3, 2007 storm event. The National Weather Service said it was a storm which included all winter season hazards. The storm consisted of strong winds, heavy rain, major flooding, landslides, avalanches, high coastal surf, and coastal flooding. Record wind gusts were recorded on the coast and sustained hurricane strength winds were in excess of 80 miles per hour.

Ms. Sarikkan said there were discussions on whether the storm was either a 100-year or a 500-year storm.

Winds may have played a role in where landslides occurred. However, at the present time there is no evidence to support that assertion, but discussions on how the wind before the big rain event aided in landslides by tipping trees causing clogged roads and debris flow may explain why many of the landslides involved roads.

Ms. Sarikkan displayed video images of the weather pattern off the coast. A graph of rainfall across the state reveals a rainfall concentration across the I-5 corridor.

Ms. Sarikkan reported in one observation during an aerial reconnaissance over the Willapa Hills to observe the number of landslides, it was noted the Chehalis River was sediment heavy while none of the surrounding rivers revealed no heavy sediment. That observation provided an area of focus.

Ms. Sarikkan shared a series of aerial photos of the Willapa Hills. She described how, with a series of maps and photos, sites were identified and marked on maps. During the aerial reconnaissance, the observers could see bedrock beneath many of the landslides, which led to many questions, such as surrounding shallow soil and possible compaction of water between the soil and bedrock. Field visits were conducted shortly after the storm. The trend was observed in Mason County where there were shallow soils, water, and bedrock. Some of the landslides appeared not to have bedrock, but closer observation revealed there was bedrock. There appears to be an important connection with water, shallow soils, and bedrock causing landslides.

Ms. Sarikkan displayed photos of a landslide in Pe Ell.

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Ms. Sarikkan commented on the importance of documenting damage to help citizens prepare for future events. The team documented nearly 20 houses that were damaged or destroyed by landslides.

Ms. Sarikkan displayed numerous aerial photos of landslides in the Chehalis basin. The density of landslides is great in many areas. She shared information on possible reasons for landslides concentrated in specific areas. Some possible factors examined included heavy and prolonged precipitation, geology, and timber harvest factors. Very few landslides involved young stands of timber. In order to determine the impact timber may have on landslides, some of the timber age data will need to be normalized. She noted the scope of the project was reconnaissance related and not focused on timber. There are studies underway by others to address the questions of timber's impact on landslides. The team observed that most of the landslides are below the rooting depth and involved a connection between soil and bedrock. There were not many tree roots anchored deep into the soil. Landslides might not be associated with rooting and is likely not the driving factor. One observation of clear cuts involves the loss of canopy coverage. British Columbia is looking at the loss of canopy coverage. However, much more research and data are needed to render any conclusions.

Ms. Sarikkan displayed and described graph illustrations before and after landslides. Landslides were constrained in areas with specific soil and bedrock types. Over 1,300 slides were inventoried in two areas. DNR mapped over 1,600 landslides. Forest management likely plays an important role in the storm; however it might not be the primary mechanism. It's likely a combination of geology, thin soils, bedrock, and heavy precipitation will provide clues for predicting where landslides might occur in the future and where resources should be concentrated.

DNR's website includes much of the reconnaissance information. She asked members to contact her at isabell.sarikkan@dnr.wa.gov for a link to the website.

Art Lehman reported Weyerhaeuser has indicated that it will review logging practices on steep slopes. He said he believes Weyerhaeuser was referring to the Boistfort area where many of the landslides occurred because of clear-cut logging. He asked whether damage would have been less if clear-cut logging had not occurred. Ms. Sarikkan said there is insufficient data to document a link. It's a question that will take much more study to determine whether harvesting is related to landslides. DNR and Weyerhaeuser have been communicating and sharing data.

Mr. Walsh said his division is not formally involved in the process of forest practices review, which is under the authority of the department's Forest Practices Division and governed by the Cooperative Monitoring, Evaluation, and Research Committee (CMER). A special appropriation in the last legislative session augmented funds. A report is due in December and the team will contribute data to the report, but is otherwise not involved in the data collection efforts.

Commissioner Macleod commented on the confusing terminology used during the presentation describing landslide failure. Mr. Walsh explained that the process of landsliding is called "failing" where a slope fails. A landslide is the deposit of the slope that failed.

Ms. Rader asked whether it's fair to say that a possible outcome of the review of timber practices, taking in consideration the data, is more careful attention to the geology when permits are approved for logging on steep slopes. The data to date has revealed that shallow soil and bedrock appear to be a huge factor in the slides. It might be possible that one of the changes that results from the research is stricter permitting on slopes having those characteristics. Ms. Sarikkan said the department is reviewing the available data

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to determine whether geology should be included as a factor. No positive conclusions have been depicted, as more investigative research is required for more finite data before any conclusions are rendered. Mr. Walsh added that the process amending Forest Practice Rules is outside the scope of his division and is the responsibility of the Forest Practices Board. The study funded by CMER is studying in detail whether the Forest Practices Rules are adequate. The report is scheduled for release in December and will be used in the decision-making process for any proposed changes to the rules.

John Penberth said the age of the basalt might be important if landslides are interchanged with avalanches because it will reoccur whether the ground is bare or timbered. It may be the topography of land that causes the failure. Mr. Walsh responded to the comment and described the age, condition, and chemical composition of rocks and soils and how they factor in landslides.

Bill Zachmann referred to comments surrounding 100-year and 500-year floods and rainfall and pointed out that a 100-year flood represents a 1% chance of the storm occurring. A 500-year flood represents a .2% chance. It is all based on a historical period of record that is a transitory number because as more data is obtained, the percent of occurrence can change to either a higher or lower figure. Just because a floodplain map has been studied, it's important to note that it's based on the record at the time and that the number can change as more data becomes available. He cited as an example of what is occurring with the Midwest flooding. Additionally, the news media publicized that the levee failed, when in fact it didn't fail. The levee was designed for a specific flood level. The levee was overtopped, but didn't fail. He cautioned everyone to consider the very scientific ways of looking at simple numbers.

Mr. Walsh said the notion of a 500-year or 100-year storm is an extrapolation outside the data, which can be a risky calculation since there is only a record for the Willapa Hills of 70 years.

Terry Harris said it's also unknown how accurate the data is from 70 years ago. He cited the analogy of trying to determine what's occurring in a movie by looking at a snapshot. That will only lead to mistakes because it leads to kneejerk actions by looking at only photos rather than the entire film.

Mr. Walsh referred to Forest Practice Rules and indicated the rules are not designed to prevent landslides but are designed to be a balance by not increasing the background rate of landsliding occurring in the basin. Landslides occur regardless of logging activity. It's a natural occurrence of topography and gravity. The rules are designed to protect against a 100-year storm, not a 500-year storm. That is a policy discussion if it should be changed that is outside the realm of the work scientists undertake.

Randy Lehr asked whether there was any correlation between the azimuth of the slope and frequency of failure. Ms. Sarikkan said the team examined that aspect but it wasn't a major factor in landslide failures. Mr. Walsh added that commonly, that makes some difference because when the storms come in from the southwest, there is an expectation of heavier rainfall concentrating on the side of the hill facing the storm. However, in this event, it didn't make much difference.

Ms. Rader asked whether it's possible to examine the area for previous geological evidence of extreme flood events. Mr. Walsh said it's a tricky issue in terms of geology in forested areas relative to forest practices. In basins that have never been logged, it would be possible to undertake studies to determine the history. However, human activity has occurred in the Willapa Hills that has altered the landscape making it difficult to determine the original geological landscape.

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Lyle Hojem commented that long before forest practices, major companies completed denuded the watershed from one end to the other. Slides occurred then and now, and will continue into the future. Logging practice, as practiced in the state, will likely not have any impact on slides to any degree. In some areas there are many slides each year. The superintendent for logging of one company determined if he sloped the railroad grade out and didn't try to break the surface tension of the soil, water ran over the railroad grade resulting in no slides. He was able to log the entire area without any slides. Another company undertook a mining operation in the same area and wasn't aware of the practice, which resulted in slides immediately. Mr. Hojem said he doesn't believe forest practices have any impact of the outcome of slides. Major logging in the area has occurred since the 1890s. He suggested forest practices should be defended as the state has more trees than it's ever had. Instead of blaming the logger, he suggested finding another way to resolve the problem.

Mr. Walsh said one of the distinctions of the presentation, is that many of the landslides failed on surfaces below rooting depth. One of the things that are of concern in forest practices relative to landslides is the decaying of tree roots after a tree is cut. As new trees are replanted and as they begin to mature, new roots replace root strength, which stabilizes the soil. In the stands where there are three different stand ages, the area that has been clear-cut should still have some rooting strength because decay has not fully occurred. When new trees are between five and fifteen years old, they begin to add root strength. Typically, the most vulnerable period for landsliding that occurs within the rooting depth of trees, happens approximately seven years after logging activity. The ground investigation didn't reveal that characteristic making that much difference. Most of the failures were initiated in the low rooting depth, which implies that the presence or absence of tree roots apparently was not a major factor.

Mr. Penberth commented on the historic Indian village discovered below the City of Centralia at a depth of 14 feet. That speaks to the depth of silt flowing into the area. He suggested history doesn't dictate logging as the cause of landslides.

Mr. Walsh noted the department is very careful about not drawing conclusions and is striving for objectivity. The department is collecting landslide information because geologists are pursuing assessments of geologic hazards. He noted forest practices can exacerbate a landslide, which is one reason for Forest Practice Rules. In the 1920s and 30s there was an increase in the rate of landsliding because of poor forest practices. The department constantly reviews the rules as well as having a program on Landslide Hazard Zonation that looks at watersheds and factors that lead to slope instability in basins to implement sensitive forest practices in areas more sensitive to landsliding.

Ms. Napier provided an update on the activities of the Flood Authority. The next meeting of the group is on July 1, 2008. The Authority will review and approve bylaws and select the Authority's facilitator/coordinator for the project. A tri-county meeting is scheduled for July 22, 2008 at Thurston County. At the last tri-county meeting, commissioners directed prosecuting attorneys to develop a flood control district report.

Ms. Napier invited members to notify her of any future topics on the storm event that they would like presented at a future meeting. At the July CBP meeting, Patricia Olson, Department of Ecology, will present information on the storm's debris flow and time of travel. Gary Graves, DNR, will present information on forest practices. The CBP will continue its role in relationship to the Flood Authority as a forum for people to receive and share information. Additionally, the group, One Voice, is on hold pending the formation of the Flood Control District. If the commissioners agree to move forward with the formation of a district, One Voice will assist in public outreach in the promotion of the district.

Clarifying Water Rights and Uses

Kahle Jennings reported the project is related to implementation of one of the action items within the Watershed Plan on the clarification of water rights. A funding application was submitted to DOE to begin implementation of the task. The task originally wasn't very well defined. The STC reviewed the task and determined there was insufficient funding allocated to map water rights in the entire basin. Instead, the focus is on a specific area. Concurrently, the City of Centralia was also reviewing in terms of the City's water rights in the Skookumchuck basin. An agreement was pursued with Grays Harbor County for the City to oversee the work to avoid undertaking a duplicative Request for Proposal process. Grants funds must be expended by June 30, 2008.

Mr. Jennings introduced Jerry Louthain, HDR, who presented the results of the project.

Mr. Louthain referred to the map of the project area and a copy of the technical memorandum, summarizing the results of the project. A spreadsheet included identification of individual water rights plotted on the map. Mr. Louthain referred to a scope of work for assessment of water right claims in the Chehalis basin, which is the second phase of the project.

Mr. Louthain summarized the work performed. All records from the DOE database of existing water rights were obtained. Records were selected for water rights only in the Skookumchuck basin, based on their location by section, township, and range. Each right was assigned a unique ID number for each record. An Excel spreadsheet was prepared listing all records of water rights and water right applications with pertinent information from each record. The map includes three designations – ID number, an indicator identifying the location of the point of diversion, and place of use of the water. The map identifies surface water rights, groundwater rights, and reservoir rights. Two additional codes include pending applications and surface water applications.

Mr. Louthain reviewed the categories and quantity of water rights. Groundwater rights total 14,031 gallons a minute or 12,321 acre feet per year. Acre feet is a measurement for assessing an annual quantity removed from the river. One acre feet per year equals one acre of land covered with one feet of water. The City of Centralia and Town of Bucoda have approximately 8,000 gallons a minute of the total for domestic supplies leaving approximately 5,900 gallons a minute for other uses. The majority of other uses are for irrigation. Irrigation in the basin totals 1,576 acres in water rights with the majority in surface water rights.

Mr. Jennings reported that all the information is available through a public records request from DOE. There were some concerns that the effort identified people and possibly put them at risk for either not using or using water rights. No contacts were made. That was not part of the scope of work as the work involved identifying only authorized water rights in the Skookumchuck basin.

Mr. Harris commented on potential gaps resulting from users who have no water rights. Mr. Jennings said such an effort would involve fieldwork. Mr. Louthain added that a similar project was completed in the Skagit basin in the delta area for irrigation. He worked with the Western Washington Agriculture Association to match the water rights with water used for irrigation. An aerial reconnaissance was undertaken documenting the size of fields and irrigation. The data was compared with DOE's data to sort out the actual use in the delta area.

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Chair Canaday asked whether water rights are attached to the property. Mr. Louthain confirmed water rights are attached to the property. For example, the names on the water rights are the names of the people that the water right was issued to initially. If a property is sold and the water right is not listed in the deed, the water right is automatically attached with the property. It can be excluded, but it involves a process to change the water right.

Mr. Zachmann commented on the issue of non-use of a water right after five years and how the water right can be lost if not utilized. It's important especially for agriculture land to use the water right beneficially to avoid losing the water right. Mr. Jennings referred to a recent court case ruling on municipal water rights. Mr. Zachmann reported the case involved private developers with 15 or more connections considered as a municipality for purposes of administering the water code. The court found that to be unconstitutional and DOE is discussing the next steps. The law was originally passed by the Legislature, which has now been deemed by the court as unconstitutional.

Mr. Penberth asked about Indian water rights. He referred to a letter from the Quinault Indian Nation in August 2006 concerning their waters rights reserved for fish. He asked if there is any indication on the amount of that water right. Mr. Louthain advised that the study only involved Skookumchuck basin and there are no recorded Indian water rights in the Skookumchuck basin. He noted the tribe has no state issued water rights. However, the Quinault's claim rights and that involves an adjudication process. Mr. Jennings said, as he understands the issue, the claim is not quantified. However, the tribe claims an historical right to enough water to support fish in the basin.

Glen Connelly provided information concerning an intertribal argument between the two tribes over fishing and water rights related to the issue.

Ms. Rader said instream flows were established in the 1970s and the flows constitute the water rights from the 1970s. She asked if that was considered in the study because instream flows are also water rights. Mr. Louthain confirmed instream flows were established at several control points in the basin. One is located on the Skookumchuck at the Bucoda gauge. DOE set the flows as minimums for any water rights issued after the effective date of the regulation in the early 1970s. Any water rights issued after that date are subject to those instream flows. Those rights are not included in the study's numbers. He noted any water rights issued prior to the early 70s are not subject to instream flow regulations.

Mr. Rader asked if there is a problem in meeting instream flows within the basin. Mr. Louthain confirmed there are problems in meeting instream flows in several places throughout the basin.

Mr. Louthain reported the second part of the study is developing a scope for assessing water right claims in the Chehalis basin. An initial review for the Skookumchuck basin was undertaken. The work involves requesting records from DOE of all water right claims in the Chehalis basin, of which there are approximately 8,568 water claims. Approximately 5416 are located in WRIA 23 and 3152 are located in WRIA 22. Within the Skookumchuck basin, there are 509 water right claims. The majority of the water right claims are for groundwater. Generally, the early claims period opened in the early 1970s by DOE provided for a provision for anyone with an exempt well. A large part of the claims filed in the early 70s with DOE are for exempt groundwater uses, which are typically domestic, stock watering, or minor uses equaling less than 5,000 gallons a day.

Mark Swartout asked whether a claim must have been in existence prior to 1945 to be a legitimate claim. Mr. Louthain said the groundwater code was enacted in 1945. If water was used prior to that date, a

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person could legally use the water by filing a water right claim. The surface water code was enacted in 1917. The same rule applies for surface water rights.

Mr. Louthain described the intent of the pilot project and how a similar undertaking could be pursued for the Chehalis basin. The process could help the Partnership obtain an idea of how much water is actually used.

Mr. Swartout referred to adjudication as a way to determine valid water rights. He noted DOE at this time cannot adjudicate however there have been times when the Legislature and Governor have looked at ways of streamlining adjudication. He asked if there is any interest by the state to pursue that avenue to clean up claims. Mr. Zachmann referred to one case through a watershed planning effort involving DOE staff and the county undertaking a preadjudication process involving a review of claims to ascertain current usage. The watershed group has a much better handle on the actual water use in contrast to water rights and claims. Short of the DOE asserting it will go into a basin and start an adjudication effort either from a work plan or from legislation, the preadjudication activity is an avenue that can be pursued without having to undertake a legal adjudication process.

Mr. Swartout said he understands that DOE considers all claims as valid claims. He asked whether DOE would be able to adjust its stance on water availability if the Partnership undertook a preadjudication evaluation of claims and was able to eliminate 6,000 claims. Mr. Zachmann acknowledged the question and the need to follow up with a response, but expressed reluctance in answering the question.

Mr. Jennings pointed out that the group never reached agreement on a recommendation that adjudication should be pursued. The group agreed to continue discussing the issue. The major issue is that the Tribes believe that they have a government-to-government relationship, their rights are federally guaranteed, and their rights should not be adjudicated in a state court. That was one of the major issues. He noted there has been no agreement to move down that path.

Request from the Water Quality Committee – Comment on Letter to Grays Harbor County on the Draft Critical Areas Ordinance

Ms. Napier referred to a letter provided to members. Grays Harbor County released its draft Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) update. The Water Quality Committee learned in April the document was available for review and was asked to consider providing some comments. The committee began discussions in May and June. Based on the comments by members of the Water Quality Committee, Ms. Spaulding drafted a letter to Grays Harbor County commenting on the draft CAO.

Ms. Spaulding reported she developed the letter based on comments from the Water Quality Committee at its June meeting. Many of the comments pertain to the document and clarification issues. Floodplain is also not clearly defined in the ordinance. Another comment concerns buffers and the difference in the guidelines between DOE and Grays Harbor County. She noted other entities are also providing comments on the draft ordinance.

Ms. Napier said the Water Quality Committee focused its comments on the committee's perspective of water quality impacts. The draft ordinance was released for a 60-day review and the review period expires on June 30, 2008.

Mr. Jennings said it appears the letter doesn't include many positions on the ordinance but mostly addresses clarifying questions and responsibilities of landowners.

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Ms. Napier said if the Partnership is comfortable with letter, the letter will be sent under Ms. Spaulding's signature.

Ms. Napier said the Water Quality Committee also recommends the county conduct more public outreach in addition to the public hearings on the proposed ordinance, which will also be included as a recommendation in the letter.

Mr. Louthain observed that although the letter indicates it's written on behalf of the Water Quality Committee for the Partnership, it should be clear that the letter does not represent the views of the entire Chehalis Basin Partnership as it is only speaking for the Water Quality Committee members and not Partnership members.

Mr. Penberth said the ordinance is for Grays Harbor County and it's not the role of the Partnership to make recommendations or changes to the county's ordinance as the Partnership's role is not of a legislative process to introduce, alter, or change legislation of another government entity. As pointed out, many members may not support the letter but are associated with the Partnership. If the Partnership is providing input on changing, rewriting, or rewording of legislation for a specific jurisdiction, that points to the unlimited power of the Partnership. He said if he had a vote as a member of the audience, he would block the action. It's not the role of the Partnership to provide comments. The Partnership has sufficient issues of water quality concerns to address.

Mr. Louthain said he's reviewed many critical areas ordinances and there are many other aspects of the ordinance other than water quality issues, such as flooding and floodplains. He said that although he may partially share the same concerns, submittal of comments on a CAO is a major undertaking because it involves many areas of the environment. The letter reflects only a small response to the larger issue of a CAO.

Mr. Swartout agreed and indicated it's not the Partnership's role to weigh in on the policies of any of the jurisdictions represented within the Partnership. The Water Quality Committee is a forum for discussion and those members who are on the committee and who live within the jurisdiction can comment on the CAO independently. He suggested exercising caution of having the Partnership submit a letter especially under Ms. Spaulding's signature as it puts her position in a role that the Partnership may not have intended. Mr. Swartout said in terms of Thurston County's CAO, the county prefers to receive input from citizens who live in the county and who will be impacted by the CAO.

Mr. Harris said he could support listing the members of the Water Quality Committee as sponsoring the letter but not as proposed on the Partnership's letterhead.

The CBP agreed not to endorse sending the letter to Grays Harbor County on the Draft CAO. Water Quality Committee members can comment on the Draft CAO individually as long as they don't represent the committee or the CBP.

Mr. Connelly asked whether the Partnership has previously responded to another jurisdiction's policies or regulations. Ms. Napier said she's unaware of the Partnership responding, but that the Water Quality Committee had commented on the state's Water Quality Standards. There have been some occasions where documents were reviewed and comments were provided, but in the context of the document affecting the Partnership's work. She suggested there is a connection between the CAO and land use but

is uncertain what the connection is and it is likely an outreach gap needs to be bridged with respect to working with local jurisdictions.

Watershed Plan Implementation and the Role of Grays Harbor College

Ms. Napier reported on the efforts of Randy Lehr and Grays Harbor College in assisting the Partnership in its implementation plan. Mr. Lehr is leaving the college to accept another position in the Midwest. Mr. Lehr will provide an overview of activities the college has been working on in support of the Partnership as well as the transition of staff to fill his position.

Mr. Lehr reported he is leaving later in the day to the Midwest. He thanked members for the enjoyable and beneficial experience of working with the Partnership over the last four years. He said all of his efforts have been well supported by all members.

Mr. Lehr said his position at the college evolved over time and as projects emerged from the Partnership. He introduced Narendran Kodandapani and Don Loft, a former Grays Harbor College student who is working on the water quality testing program. The college is hiring two new faculty position involved in various aspects of natural resource management. One position will focus on forestry and the other position is his replacement with the expectation that involvement will continue with the Partnership. The changes in faculty reflect the college administration's position in terms of community involvement in natural resources and the benefit the college receives from participating.

Mr. Lehr reviewed a current list of projects and their status:

The Water Quality Monitoring Program will be managed by Don Loft, a recent graduate from The Evergreen State College who is pursuing a masters degree at The Evergreen State College.

The GIS/Clearinghouse project is managed by Narendran Kodandapani. Currently, many of the technical issues associated with the online application have been solved making it possible to update and refine the online tool. Soon, it will be available on the web and will include different links and different layers of the Chehalis basin.

Janel Spaulding recently joined the college in the last month as the Chehalis Basin Watershed Facilitator.

Mr. Lehr reported he has spoken with a number of the candidates for his position as well as their references. There is a very strong pool of applicants. He conveyed that he believes the college will find a quality replacement to continue the strong work of the Partnership.

Mr. Lehr acknowledged the assistance he received from Lonnie Crumley on fish passage projects.

Mr. Zachmann inquired about the status of the mapping of water quality data project. Mr. Lehr advised the project is moving quicker than anticipated. Mr. Loft is working on water quality data and has developed a color-coded scheme in relationship to different water quality parameters at various sites and how they meet or do not meet water quality standards. The information is in a GIS format that will eventually be accessible through the Clearinghouse.

Mr. Lehr introduced his supervisor, Mike Kelly, Grays Harbor College.

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Mr. Kelly shared information about Mr. Lehr's work over the last four years and his involvement within the community. Mr. Lehr laid the foundation for the relationship between the college and the Partnership. He noted how much Mr. Lehr will be missed for his creativity and ability to think outside the box. As a good leader, he built foundations and involved others to ensure the work continues in his absence. He invited members to participate on the interview panel for Mr. Lehr's replacement.

Ms. Napier presented Mr. Lehr with a gift basket and card. The basket was made by a member of the Quinault Indian Nation. Mr. Lehr thanked everyone for the gift and the unique experience of working with the Partnership.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for July 25, 2008.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Canaday adjourned the meeting at 12:09 p.m.

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