

**CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP**  
**Chehalis Tribe “Lucky Eagle” Casino**  
**Rochester, Washington**  
**February 27, 2009**  
**9:30 a.m.**

**Meeting Summary**

**MEMBERS, ALTERNATES & GUESTS PRESENT**

Bonnie Canaday, Chair, City of Centralia	Terry Harris, City of Centralia
Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County	Patrick Wiltzius, City of Chehalis (Alternate)
Kahle Jennings, City of Centralia (Alternate)	Glen Connelly, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation (Alternate)
Ron Averill, Lewis County	Ann Wick, Department of Agriculture
Phil Rupp, Lewis County	David Rountry, Department of Ecology (DOE)
Bob Burkle, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)	Lonnie Crumley, Streamworks Consulting
Janel Spaulding, Grays Harbor College	John Penberth, Citizen, Pe Ell
Don Loft, The Evergreen State College (TESC)	Valerie Gow, Puget Sound Meeting Services
Terry Willis, Grays Harbor County	Mark Swartout, Thurston County
Lyle Hojem, Citizen, Lewis County	Jim Hill, Citizen, Lewis County
Rich Carlson, US Fish and Wildlife	Brad Murphy, DOE
Chuck Caldwell, Port of Grays Harbor	Teri Liomin, Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force
Mark Burch, HDR Engineering	Tom Bougher, Surfrider Foundation, South County Chapter
Benjamin Greue, Sierra Club	Amy Iverson, WDFW
Margarita Villegas, Citizen	Victor Villegas, Citizen
Dave Vasilauskas, City of Chehalis	

**GENERAL PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS**

**Welcome, Introductions and Roundtable Comments**

Chair Bonnie Canaday called the February 27, 2009 meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) to order at 9:33 a.m.

**Discuss and Adopt Draft Meeting Summary for January 23, 2009**

The January 23, 2009 minutes were accepted as presented.

**SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

**Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority Update and Discussion**

Lewis County Commissioner and Flood Authority Chair Ron Averill provided an update on the work of the Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority. In the late 1990s because of historic occurrences of flooding, Lewis County began studying what measures could be taken to mitigate flood damage. During that process, the Executive Flood Committee was formed. Work was completed by Pacific International Engineers on flood damage reduction research and project development work for the Chehalis River Basin. With that information and after spending \$12 million, discussions began with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on a project to build levees around the cities of Centralia and Chehalis and the I-5 corridor. That project ended in 2003 with a proposed study, which moved forward to Congress for funding. The Administration at that time vetoed all bills under the Water Resource Development Act (WRDA) beginning in 2004. The Katrina hurricane hit in 2005, diverting all funding from flood control projects. The project languished from 2003 until 2006, when it was re-examined. At that time, city and

county officials began considering the costs, scope, and design of a future project and met with the Corps and the Governor's Office to begin efforts to include the project in the WRDA bill. That occurred in November 2006. However, many people believed flooding was no longer a problem as many buildings were elevated and no flooding occurred for 12 years. The primary interest at that time was maintaining an open freeway. In 2007, the project was approved by Congress and included in the WRDA bill. In December 2007, the basin was hit with a major flood, which some would characterize as a 500-year flood. In Lewis County, damage was assessed at \$166 million.

When the original study was completed by Lewis County, mitigation opportunities were broad and included a number of different projects. Several of the projects met with objections. Predominately because of objections in the development of the project and because of the availability of funding, a levee system was the recommended project around the cities of the Centralia, Chehalis, and the I-5 corridor and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) railroad line.

In prior floods, major devastation did not occur in the upper basin. During the 2007 flood, the upper watershed was devastated. The flood created interest in the upper basin on what should be done for the entire basin to control flooding. Consequently, the Corps project was reviewed to ascertain whether it would provide adequate protection, which led to an effort to consider impacts from flooding to the entire basin and not just a part of the basin. Those efforts led to the creation of the Flood Control Authority. Additionally, because the Corps project was authorized, it was necessary to identify the non-federal share of the project cost. Large Corps projects generally have a 35/65 share. A bill was passed by the state Legislature in 2008 providing the non-federal share. The bills are HB 3374 and HB 3375. HB 3374 created a bonding authorization of \$50 million to help fund a basin-wide solution. HB 3375 provides the mechanism for allocating funds to the project. Based on work currently completed, approximately \$45 million of the \$50 million is needed for the non-federal share, leaving additional funds for other projects. A basin-wide study is proposed using \$2.5 million of those funds. Subsequently, the Flood Authority was established comprised of jurisdictions with land decision authority within the basin. Members include:

- Lewis, Thurston, and Grays Harbor Counties
- Cities of Centralia, Pe Ell, Chehalis, Oakville, Montesano, Aberdeen
- Town of Bucoda
- Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation

Each member has one vote and is represented by an elected representative. The Flood Authority has no regulatory responsibilities or authorities. The Flood Authority is based on an interlocal agreement allowing the Authority to enter into a compact with the state to use the \$2.5 million for a basin-wide study. The Authority is looking at the entire basin and not just the levee project in Centralia and Chehalis or the retention project on the upper reaches, but other projects needed down the river. Members are gathering projects from various jurisdictions to consider in terms of developing a final plan for flood mitigation. Eventually, a set of projects needs to be determined. However, another issue is funding for those projects.

One other objective is considering the formation of a flood control district to implement, operate, and maintain flood mitigation projects. Existing levees are not providing their original functions because of maintenance neglect. Commissioner Averill described some of the ongoing work on the levee system during the summer, which helped protect the cities during the last flood in January.

Congress earlier in the week appropriated funds for the Corps' project totaling \$1.2 million for the Corps' project and \$570,000 for the basin-wide study. Up to this point with no federal funding, not much work

occurred on the Corps' project. Joint meetings are planned between the Flood Authority, state agencies, and the US Army Corps of Engineers to review the project and determine when to move forward with the design phase of the project. Funding for the basin-wide study will be allocated to the Corps because it's a federal agency. Commissioner Averill said he anticipates discussions with the Partnership, as one natural outfall is the expansion of the General Investigation Study that the Partnership is currently undertaking with the Corps.

Earlier in the month, several open houses were held in several locations throughout the basin to discuss the Authority and receive feedback from citizens on the types of projects that should be considered. There are different viewpoints between the counties because of the different kinds of impacts experienced by citizens living within the basin.

Commissioner Averill commented on a claim in the PUD study that he believes should be investigated. During the latter part of the summer, the Chehalis River becomes stagnant with water quality issues. There are assertions that by providing water retention during heavy rains and then releasing water during summer; water quality in the river could improve. More input is needed for areas downstream and other jurisdictions are considering projects, such as the City of Oakville and the Tribe.

The consultant firm of ESA Adolfsen was hired to assist the Authority. A survey is underway of citizens within the basin for feedback on flood mitigation projects, practicality of projects, willingness to pay for projects, and whether the respondent would support a flood control district. Results will include 600 completed scientific surveys proportionally representing the entire basin.

Commissioner Averill reported there have been criticisms about the number of studies and limited progress. The Authority is concerned about pursuing some proactive efforts. One effort is improving the emergency system along the basin to provide sufficient warning to citizens of potential flooding to prepare citizens. Some rainfall and rain flow gauges were repaired that were destroyed during the 2007 flood. Currently, efforts are underway to examine areas where gauges are needed for early warning to emergency operations centers and the Tribe.

Lyle Hojem suggested the survey should include the hour of the call to the survey respondent.

Commissioner Averill reviewed current law governing flood control districts and legislation submitted during the current session to expand the membership of the flood control district board from three to five members because of the size of the basin. Engineers from the three counties are looking at the boundary of the flood control district. Under current law for forming a flood control district, the voters for the district are property owners. Additionally, they are allocated two votes per parcel. Parcels larger than 10 acres are afforded an additional two votes for each increment of 10 acres up to 40 votes. The Chehalis basin is 90 miles long with an estimated population of 150,000 people. An election under current law would be very difficult for the auditor as well as costly. Legislation has been submitted and passed by the Senate for a provision to allow a large three-county flood control district to use registered voters as opposed to property owners.

Commissioner Averill affirmed his support of a proposal to install Doppler radar capabilities along the coast as an early warning measure, which is a federal project proposed by Senator Cantwell.

Terry Willis thanked Commissioner Averill for attending the Montesano public meeting and briefing citizens on the issues. She asked about the process for prioritizing projects. Commissioner Averill said all jurisdictions have flood hazard management plans. Of the 11 plans within the basin, some measures

are inconsistent. Part of the project is developing a model flood hazard management plan and the type of mitigation to occur. The most difficult work is identifying projects. It's likely prioritization will be a political process. The goal is to have an initial list developed by June.

Don Loft spoke of his opposition of levees as a solution for flooding. He advocated for requiring rain gardens and bioswales as ways to mitigate flooding.

Ms. Willis shared information on some ideas offered by citizens in Montesano and encouraged everyone to think creatively and submit ideas.

Mark Swartout reported on the Corps project to modify the Skookumchuck Dam. During the 2007 flood, there was 10 feet of capacity available in the Skookumchuck reservoir, which helped Bucoda and Centralia. The project modifies the dam by increasing the height and implementing flood control measures.

John Penberth referred to a 1966 newspaper article about the delay of a five-year study on the possibility of a 115-foot holding dam on a creek and another storage reservoir on the south fork of the Newaukum. He questioned how officials will be able to convince residents downstream to pay a district tax to protect the economic development of Lewis County when Lewis County will have two votes on the district board. Commissioner Averill said Lewis County has the largest footprint and would have two votes as well as Grays Harbor County. Thurston County would receive one vote. A provision in the legislation would allow a vote to the Tribe as well.

Tom Bougher inquired about the status of updating Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) and that it could provide for some buffers and human behavior modification that could fit with the eco-based management approach. Ms. Willis reported Grays Harbor County recently hired a facilitator to assist the county with public outreach for changes to the CAO.

Ms. Willis said the Wynoochee Dam also serves as water retention during flooding. She suggested the Authority also consider sediment deposit to ensure the dam's capacity is not compromised.

Bob Burkle commented on sedimentation in the Wynoochee Dam and impacts to salmon.

Kahle Jennings reported on a scheduled presentation by TransAlta on the proposed reservoir to the Centralia City Council. He offered to provide a copy of the televised meeting.

Lee Napier reviewed and clarified roles and expectations between the Flood Authority and the Partnership. There are some similarities between the groups. There are some things that the Partnership can contribute to the Flood Authority as well as things the Authority can contribute to the Partnership's Watershed Plan, implementation, and implementing things in the work plan for the habitat work schedule. She asked members to shared information on similarities and expectations.

Lewis County is the fiscal agent for the Flood Authority as well as the project sponsor for the Corps or the twin cities projects. Within that area, work is underway on flooding issues, with some mitigation projects. Within the Partnership, members are working on watershed plan implementation, lead entity program for habitat restoration, and the Steering Technical Committee (STC), which is responsible for assessments and guidance documents implementing the watershed plan, such as the USGS groundwater characterization project and other presentations. Grays Harbor County is the sponsor of the Corps' Ecosystem Basin-wide Study. The Habitat Work Group is also working with them. Each of these entities

is doing important work, and the work is interrelated. Ms. Napier said she often feels conflicted because of the feedback she receives for sharing information, such as recent information pertaining to the PUD's retention pond. She asked members to provide feedback on how to work together better as the groups have more in common. She indicated she will take the input to the STC to discuss ways to improve working together more effectively.

Mr. Swartout commented on the number of members who also serve on the Flood Authority as well as other groups. The Partnership has considered itself to be an educational forum and has invited speakers to share information. The goal is for information to flow to and feed back to the Flood Authority.

Glen Connelly referred to the correlation between the groups and that the CBP has been an effective forum for sharing information that's disseminated. It's a baseline knowledge that everyone shares. It's more difficult to accomplish that during Authority meetings because of the tight agenda.

Mr. Penberth acknowledged there are many positions to consider but that the politicians made a mistake when the Flood Authority was created. The CBP was created to pursue strategies within the Chehalis River basin to include key elements of flood reduction. He suggested the CBP should have been appointed the lead agency for working on the flood issue instead of the Flood Authority

#### **Presentation – Ranked Project List Chehalis Fisheries Restoration Program**

Rich Carlson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, reported Miranda Plumb is replacing Brian Peck. Ms. Plumb is coming from Alaska. Ms. Plumb will be the department's representative for the Chehalis Fisheries Restoration Program through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Mr. Carlson distributed information on the ranking of project proposals for the Chehalis Fisheries Restoration Program grant. The projects by ranking include the continuation of the Satsop River Knotweed Control Phase 2 project, Chehalis Basin Education Consortium Project, Inlet Creek Fish Passage, and Preacher's Slough Fish Passage. The Preacher's Slough project is also included on the department's submission for stimulus funding. Funding may not be available for the Drops of Water Newsletter, which is the fifth ranked project. The department is contributing \$15,000 to the Preacher's Slough project through the Coastal Program freeing up additional funds for the newsletter. However, that decision has not been finalized. He asked members for a recommendation on reducing the funding to the education consortium to provide some funding for the newsletter.

Ms. Napier advised that the Preacher's Slough project was able to secure partial funding from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) grant cycle. She recommends funding the project through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at the full level because the sponsor is already facing a funding deficit.

Ms. Napier advocated for funding at least one or two editions of the newsletter and noted the consortium regularly seeks funding for its program through the grant, and although the program ranks high, new projects are often not funded because of ongoing funding to the consortium. The consortium needs to consider other viable, long-term funding sources rather than seeking funding through grant programs. She described the cost for each edition of the newsletter and how it's distributed. In-kind donations are provided through the submission of articles.

Mr. Carlson asked members to e-mail him with any recommendations.

## **Outreach and Education**

### **Centralia Stream Team Proposal**

Janel Spaulding, Watershed Coordinator, reported the Centralia Stream Team is applying for a Terry Husseman grant through DOE. She presented a draft letter prepared for the Partnership in support of the grant application. She described the project involving China Creek and the removal of debris, vegetation, noxious weeds, and an education and outreach campaign to inform citizens on what they can do to improve water quality in China Creek. The stream team has met three times with the next meeting scheduled on Monday, March 16, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. at the Utilities Building in Centralia. She invited members to attend.

Mr. Jennings said the stream team efforts are sponsored through the City's stormwater utility.

Several members commented on the benefits of a stream team program in generating volunteers and soliciting public awareness of areas where historical flows can be reestablished and flooding impacts can be minimized.

Mr. Harris inquired about the extent of the restoration work planned for China Creek as previous efforts in other areas resulted in some restoration not meeting standards, causing the removal of culverts recently installed. Mr. Jennings advised that the group is taking a minimal approach by raising public awareness about the importance of China Creek. Many people view the creek as a dumping ground. Mr. Harris suggested removing "restored" from the letter as the term can be subjective.

Lonnie Crumley spoke about the benefits of the stream team efforts as outreach and raising awareness within the community and not necessarily restoration. Ms. Spaulding distributed several photos of areas along the creek cluttered with debris.

Ms. Napier reminded members of the phase 4 scope of work and establishment of stream teams throughout the watershed. Centralia stepped up and expressed an interest in establishing a team. Ms. Spaulding has organized other team plantings.

*Members agreed to send the letter under the Chair's signature to support the grant submission for the Centralia Stream Team of \$14,000.*

### **Watershed Festival**

Ms. Spaulding invited members to attend the first planning meeting for the watershed festival on Monday, March 16, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. at Montesano City Hall. Approximately 15 people have volunteered to help plan the festival. Members can also participate through a conference call. The festival is planned for Saturday, September 19, 2009 in Aberdeen. The Harvest Festival and farm tours will be held the following weekend in Grays Harbor County.

Ms. Spaulding distributed copies of the watershed pledge and asked members to submit completed pledges.

### **CBP Letterhead Draft**

Ms. Spaulding displayed the current draft version of the CBP letterhead and requested review and comment to finalize the draft. A new logo is under development. Members offered comments on the color and design and approved the letterhead design.

### **CBP Logo**

Ms. Spaulding presented the color logo created by a student from Olympic College using Adobe Illustrator. Ms. Spaulding described the components of the logo, representing education, Chehalis River Basin, water, and Coho salmon.

Members offered several recommendations to include:

- Reduce size of fish and place in water
- Display the harbor as an outlet with the sun in the background
- Include trees and forest as a representation of the basin
- Increase font size of “Chehalis Basin Partnership”
- Remove “\*” between “Basin” and “Partnership”

*Terry Harris left the meeting.*

### **Work Plan Status Report**

#### **Phase 4**

Ms. Napier distributed a copy of the CBP Work Plan FY 09-10. Headings include grant, tasks (from grant contract), budget, start date, finish date, and deliverables for task.

Ms. Napier reviewed the budget, beginning and ending dates, tasks, and deliverables associated with each of the following grant programs:

- WRIA Phase 4, Year 3 – Basic Operations
- Watershed Council Year 1 (Legislative Appropriation 1)
- Watershed Council Year 2 (Legislative Appropriation 2)
- Planning Unit Support
- Lead Entity Operation
- Salmon Recovery Regional Organizational (WA Coast Salmon Sustainable Partnership [WCSSP])
- Chehalis Basin Ecosystem Restoration Program

Ms. Napier described the relationship between the WCSSP and the CBP as some members have been invited to join WCSSP through an interlocal agreement with many members directed back to the CBP. The organizations are two distinct groups. She recommended joining WCSSP if members have been invited.

Ms. Napier described a possible funding opportunity for the Ecosystem Restoration Program and her work with the Corps’ project manager, Laura Orr, on possible funding for the USGS Groundwater Characterization Project. She is seeking funds from the Corps to make up the difference in funding that was not provided by DOE. Ms. Napier said she is seeking funding for the first two years of the four-year project.

Ms. Napier responded to questions about the Partnership’s funding relationship with WCSSP. Grays Harbor County serves as the fiscal agent for WCSSP, which is a regional organizational created through interlocal agreements. Similar to the CBP, the organization needed a fiscal agent. Funds flow to Grays

Harbor County, which funds the group. The funds are from the State Resource Conservation Office (RCO).

**Lead Entity Program**

Ms. Napier reported Creative Community Solutions has developed a website for the Lead Entity Program on the Grays Harbor County's website. The website provides information about the Lead Entity Program, the Technical Advisory Group, and instructions on how to submit applications for SRFB funding. Letters of intent are mandatory and are due April 3, 2009. Letters of intent are submitted and project applications are entered into the PRISM. The Habitat Work Group meetings includes time dedicated to refining project applications. Field visits occur in June to assist project sponsors. She asked for volunteers to serve on the Technical Review Group. Field visits include a local technical review and technical review by several members of the SRFB technical review. Input is expected to be included in the final proposals that are due at the end of July. The Habitat Work Group will review and rank the applications for presentation to the CBP in August for approval. The project applications are due to RCO and PRISM by September 1, 2009.

The basin has received over \$7 million in funding since 1999 for approximately 40 projects. Ms. Napier said an article will be featured in the *Drops of Water* newsletter about the basin's projects.

**NEXT MEETING**

Ms. Napier noted the March meeting occurs during the Student Congress. She asked members about the potential for a conflict. Members agreed to retain its regular scheduled meeting date in March.

Ms. Spaulding described Student Congress activities.

The next CBP meeting is scheduled for March 27, 2009.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With there being no further business, Chair Canaday adjourned the meeting at 12:06 p.m.