

Chehalis Basin Partnership  
October 11, 2001 Steering/Technical Committee Meeting Summary

Attending: Mark Swartout (chair) Patrick Wiltzius, Kitty Gillispie (Ecology), Margaret Rader, Terry Willis, Kahle Jennings, Sue Patnude, Lee Napier, Chad Stussy, Brian Shea, Bob Wheeler (Triangle Assoc.), Cynthia Carlstad (TetraTech-KCM)

Proposal to create a Chehalis Basin Partnership Water Quality sub-committee

The STC was asked to review a proposal that the Chehalis Basin Partnership create a special Water Quality sub-committee. The new sub-committee would be the Partnership's direct link to Department of Ecology TMDL planning and any other water quality effort affecting large portions of the basin. The complete proposal is as follows:

TO: Mark Swartout, Chair CBP Steering/Technical Committee  
FROM: Brian Shea, Aberdeen  
THROUGH: Kahle Jennings  
SUBJECT: Proposal to Formally Integrate Ecology TMDL Planning into the Work of the Chehalis Basin Partnership

The following proposal is based on a discussion I had with Kahle Jennings, Dave Rountry and Darrel Anderson after the Chehalis Basin Partnership meeting on Friday September 28<sup>th</sup>. I have been concerned for some time that Ecology is organizing TMDL review committees directly without formally approaching the Partnership as the lead coordinating body for the Chehalis Basin. I firmly believe that Ecology and the Partnership need to jointly discuss water quality planning efforts and coordinate directly. This proposal is being submitted for Steering/Technical Committee review with the hope that the committee will forward a recommendation to the full Chehalis Basin Partnership for action.

*The Chehalis Basin Partnership shall establish a Water Quality subcommittee. This sub-committee will be responsible for working with the Department of Ecology on scoping, developing and implementing the Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs or "Water Cleanup Plans") Ecology is required to develop under its delegated authority from the U.S. EPA. In addition, the committee will work with Ecology or any other agency, government or organization that sponsors other non-TMDL water quality initiatives affecting basin residents as may be appropriate.*

*A member of the Partnership will chair the Water Quality sub-committee. Representation on the committee should include interested Partnership members and a cross-section of the basin governments, businesses and communities, organizations, and citizens who could be affected by the outcome. Water Quality sub-committee meetings will be announced, and a representative from the committee will report back to the Partnership at its regular monthly meetings on the status of these TMDLs or other water quality projects, describe the work that is being undertaken and make recommendations for the Partnership to consider. The Chehalis Basin Partnership has the final responsibility for approving recommendations developed by the committee.*

During discussion of the proposal Steering/Technical Committee members agreed that establishing a separate Water Quality sub-committee would raise the visibility of Ecology TMDL activities and provide for more thorough and effective coordination with local communities, other organizations and individuals through their participation in the Chehalis Basin Partnership. Having a Water Quality sub-committee will increase the Partnership's understanding of the TMDL program,

increase direct involvement in the TMDL process, and result in a better product for Ecology. **The STC agreed to recommend that the Partnership form a separate Water Quality sub-committee.**

#### Watershed Planning “Next Steps”

Lee Napier, Bob Wheeler (Triangle Associates) and Cynthia Carlstad (TetraTech-KCM) led a discussion of how the Partnership might continue with watershed planning based on the decisions made at the September 28<sup>th</sup> Partnership meeting (approved plan outline, vision/goals and schedule). A draft scope of work and budget for a contract extension to accomplish the next phase of watershed planning between now and March/April 2002 was discussed in great detail. There was also a general discussion of what a budget for the remainder of the watershed planning effort (March/April 2002 through October 2003) might look like. **Based on the material presented and the resulting discussions, the Steering/Technical Committee recommends that the Partnership authorize a contract extension through March/April 2002 with Triangle Associates/TetraTech-KCM to continue work on the elements of the watershed plan approved at the September Partnership meeting.** The specific scope of work and budget recommended by the STC will be sent to the CBP prior to the October 26<sup>th</sup> meeting, and Bob Wheeler and Cynthia Carlstad will attend to answer questions.

#### DOE Study of Water Rights and Instream Flow Funding

Kahle Jennings introduced Kitty Gillispie to the committee and described a project they are just beginning to develop in support of the Partnership’s watershed planning effort. Section .070 of the Watershed Planning Act describes the minimum requirements that Local Planning Units must accomplish. One of the minimum requirements is “An estimate of the water in the management area represented by claims in the water rights claims registry, water use permits, certificated rights, existing minimum instream flow rules, federally reserved rights, and any other rights to water” (RCW90.82.070). Other minimum requirements described in this section include “ An estimate of the surface and ground water actually being used in the management area” and “An estimate of the surface and ground water available for further appropriation.” This project would look at all the “paper” water on Ecology’s database and attempt to determine what percentage of that “paper water” is really being used. The results of the project would help the Partnership determine if over allocation of water resources in the basin is a real issue. The results will also help determine the kind of water management strategies the Partnership considers. Kahle and Kitty will be looking for direction from the STC and Partnership on how the project is defined and carried out.

There was also a brief discussion of recent legislation that established a special funding opportunity for Local Planning Units that choose to take on the responsibility of recommending Instream flows. The legislation requires that each Local Planning Unit inform Ecology whether or not they intend to take on the responsibility by December 1, 2001. Full discussion of this issue will be held at the STC and Partnership meetings in November.

#### Announcements

Sue Patnude announced that the geographic area of responsibility for Chad Stussy, one of WDFW’s Watershed Stewardship contacts, has been modified. Chad will be working in the Upper Chehalis and watersheds in South Puget Sound and lower Hood Canal. The work Chad has been doing in the lower Chehalis Basin and Willapa Bay will be taken over by a different contact in the Watershed Stewardship program.