

Chehalis Basin Partnership Steering/Technical Committee Meeting

February 8, 2002

WDFW, Montesano

Present: Mark Swartout, Lea Napier, Bob Wheeler, Lee Daneker, Kahle Jennings, Lori Morris, Margaret Holm, Cynthia Carlstad, John Sims, Kitty Gillespie, Terra Hegy.

Study Area Meetings

Participants reviewed their plans for presentations at the study area meetings. Discussions focused on ways of getting people interested enough to attend the meetings without alarming them so that they come in a defensive frame of mind. A list of local contacts for the Ocean Shores meeting was developed. The approach will be to develop publicity on a local study area basis, while retaining some basin-wide outreach. Bob emphasized that the purpose of the meetings is to get feedback from citizens on how to frame watershed issues.

Lee Napier asked that everybody who distributes materials provide a copy to her and to Triangle Associates so that if requests for information are received after the meetings it will be easier to identify what is being asked for.

Detailed Summary of the Level 1 Assessment

TetraTech/KCM provided copies of a draft detailed summary of the Level 1 Assessment to STC members at the January Partnership meeting so that they could review it before this meeting. A general discussion of the draft was held with some specific recommendations being made. For example, under the Water Quality section the group agreed it is important to show both water bodies that are on the state list of impaired waters and those water bodies that are still impaired but are not on the list of impaired waters because a TMDL has been approved by EPA.

Although the detailed summary of the Level 1 assessment is still quite lengthy, the group complimented TetraTech/KCM for how the information is presented. March 1 is the deadline for STC members to get comments on the detailed summary of the Level 1 Assessment to TetraTech/KCM.

Level 2 Project Priorities

Bob summarized the group's discussion about criteria for evaluating Level 2 projects. One set of criteria is based on the likelihood of success and the benefits that would be achieved by the study. A high likelihood of success, combined with a high benefit would result in a project showing up as a high priority. Another set of criteria was developed based on Level of knowledge about the subject and the risk of not doing the study. Using this set of criteria, projects where the least is known and that pose the highest risk would be the most valuable. A point ranking system was also reviewed and discussed.

The minimum requirements of the Watershed Planning Act were reviewed. The CBP could achieve most of the minimum requirements identified in the law using existing information and data, but the results would include a great degree of uncertainty. The more certainty the Partnership wants to have that the recommendations of the plan will achieve what they are intended to achieve, the more detailed the information the plan is based on needs to be.

The group discussed approaches to developing a "water balance" for the basin. Water right decisions are made on a sub-basin level so modeling options that are developed on a basin-wide scale may not provide much actual benefit in terms of managing water. The trade off is cost. A water balance based on individual sub-basins would be much more expensive. One way to get around the high cost would be to focus on those sub-basins first where the need is greatest. That brings us right back to the issue of how to prioritize.

The Next meeting of the Steering/Technical Committee will be on March 7th in Montesano at the WDFW office.