

## **Chehalis Basin Partnership Steering and Technical Committee Meeting March 7, 2002**

Present: Lee Napier, Bob Wheeler, Lonnie Crumley, Chad Stussy, Kahle Jennings, Lee Daneker, Cynthia Carlstad, Mark Swartout, Lori Morris, Terry Willis, Ron Wiser, Jim Fleming, Kitty Gillespie

### Area Meetings

The group discussed the first “study area” meeting that was held in Ocean Shores on February 26th. Bob Wheeler handed out a summary of that meeting. There was a general disappointment in the overall turnout of new people at the February 26<sup>th</sup> study area meeting, but there was a good turnout of current Partnership members and good interaction among them. An effort is being made to get greater media coverage prior to the next meeting. A draft of an article announcing the next study area meeting was handed out.

### Water Use

Lee Daneker presented his work mapping the larger water use permits and instream flows by sub-basin. The group discussed the recommendation that the next step would be for the Chehalis Basin Partnership to contact large water users to inquire about the extent of their actual water use. It was decided that before any contacts are made the Partnership needs to establish some context for the contacts.

Sometime soon, the Partnership will have to provide some direction on how information collected on water rights will be used so that the correct information is assembled. This will avoid wasting time chasing down unnecessary information.

### Instream Flows

Kahle discussed the grant application for funds to gather flow data in sub-basins where none is available. Flow data needed to develop hydrographs for 15 of the 31 control points established in the 1976 flow regulation is unavailable. Accepting the state grant obligates the CBP to make recommendations regarding instream flows, but those recommendations can be for voluntary flows not regulatory flows. The group discussed the need to secure funding without committing to amend the existing instream flow regulation. Some were uncomfortable with recommending flows with only one year of flow data. The group discussed the need to develop target flows for planning purposes. Kahle recommended moving quickly ahead with the application and contract so the group can collect flow data this summer. Without that information it will be very difficult to satisfy the requirements of the Watershed Planning Act (RCW 90.82.070). The watershed plan is a work in progress and it was suggested that any gages need to be permanent so they can be used to begin gathering long-term flow data and to measure progress over time.

The committee also discussed how the Partnership should contract to get the flow monitoring work done once a decision is made on whether or not to move forward. In order to gather flow data representing a reasonable amount of time covering low flow conditions flow monitoring should begin in May if possible. That doesn't leave a lot of time for contracting to do the actual work. For this reason the STC recommendation will be for the Partnership to direct Grays Harbor County to amend the contract with Triangle/KCM to include the flow monitoring and analysis. That will save a minimum of six weeks time and make it possible to begin measuring flows in May.

This approach is also consistent with the Partnership's decision to select a consultant that could provide support throughout the entire planning process and to contract with them in phases.

### Level 2 Projects

Bob Wheeler (Triangle Assoc.) talked about the Level 2 Assessment project selection process (gathering new high-priority information). The committee discussed the projects that are on the current list under consideration and how they relate to Watershed Planning. The committee discussed the approaches of doing basin-wide or sub-basin-specific water balances versus working on the individual components of a water balance such as hydraulic continuity, water use, water availability, etc. In view of limited funding, one or two water balances that would address a broad range of issues for limited geographic areas would provide the most detailed information for a small portion of the basin. Choosing that approach, however, would leave many sub-basins without the benefit of having basic information available until additional funding could be found. It is an issue of looking at a wide geographic area but only looking at the surface, or looking at a narrow geographic area in great detail.

To move the discussion of Level 2 projects forward, Triangle Associates will send out a chart that lists potential projects and provides information on projected population growth rates, priority salmon recovery areas, numbers of pending water applications, and other factors representing "high risk" that will be used to help determine priorities.

### Next Meeting:

April 16<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. At the April meeting, the group will evaluate the results and recommend specific projects for Level 2 funding, and continue to move forward on flow monitoring.