

Chehalis Basin Partnership
Steering/Technical Committee

January 2, 2003 Meeting Summary

Announcements:

USFWS salmon habitat projects – applications are due January 21 and will be reviewed mid-February. Brian Peck is looking for people who are willing to sit on the review panel.

There will be three STC meetings in January. Today's meeting is the first one, the second one will be on January 16th, and the final one, which is scheduled for January 30th, replaces the meeting that would normally be held on February 6th.

Review of the Chehalis Basin In-Stream Flow – Fish Habitat Study

Dr. Hal Beecher, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife and Brad Caldwell, Department of Ecology attended to present an overview of the Chehalis Basin in-stream flow – fish habitat study they are working on. The study uses field data and computer models to predict the effect of various flows on fish habitat for different life stages. This study gives information on the effect of flows on fish habitat but it doesn't establish a particular flow level as "ideal."

The method used in this study is called "IFIM" which is short for "In Stream Flow Incremental Methodology." IFIM is a good method and provides more information than other simpler/faster methods. It isn't used exclusively in Washington State, but is the preferred method in complex situations. It shows how fish habitat increases or decreases with flow and allows comparisons of the quality of that habitat. This study evaluated the upper Chehalis River (above PeEll), Skookumchuck River, Black River, Satsop River, West Fork Hoquiam River and Humptulips River.

A discussion of issues and possible alternatives related to flow and fish habitat followed the presentation. An electronic copy of the presentation is available from Kahle Jennings 407-6310.

Issue Papers

Triangle Associates and TetraTech/KCM have developed a list of alternative solutions to begin discussions about what tools may be available to apply to the various issues being evaluated. These will be discussed at the next STC meeting.

Next meeting:

The next meeting is scheduled for January 16th. Don Davidson, Department of Ecology's water right permit manager for the Chehalis Basin, will attend to discuss water rights and

how they are administered in Washington State. Kahle will send out an e-mail to the STC members calling for questions so that Don can prepare for the meeting on the 16th. The draft list of alternative solutions will also be discussed.

January 16th Meeting Summary

Don Davidson, Department of Ecology water right permit manager for the Chehalis Basin attended to talk about water rights and water regulations. Prior to today's meeting STC members provided a list of questions for Don to review. A copy of this list is available from Kahle Jennings 407-6310.

A compilation of the questions discussed, including Don's responses is being prepared and could be included as part of the watershed plan. The compilation will be available once it is completed.

At the close of the time allotted for this agenda item a considerable number of questions remained to be discussed. The committee agreed that Don should be invited back to finish the discussion and he said he would be glad to do so.

Issue Papers:

The target date for completing the first 8 Issue Papers is February 20th. The remaining 10 Issue Papers should be done by March 6th.

Triangle Associates and Tetra Tech/KCM led a discussion of potential alternative solutions they have developed to go along with the committee's work on issues. The STC began discussion the material for each issue and completed about one-quarter of them. The remainder of the review will be done at the January 30th STC meeting along with a discussion of a process the STC could use to decide which alternative solutions to recommend for the watershed plan.

Announcements:

Brian Peck, USFWS, handed out information on a culvert test bed that is being constructed in the upper Skookumchuck River. This testing device will allow different types of culvert designs to be evaluated for fish passage. Brian will attend a presentation and report back to the STC.

A paper discussing historical presence of smelt in Black Lake was distributed along with a report on the effects of gravel removal on fish habitat and stream channel shape.