

Chehalis Basin Partnership Steering/Technical Committee  
January 30 Meeting Summary

**January 30, 2003**

Present: Mark Swartout (Chair) Chad Stussy, Bob Wheeler, Chris Page, Lee Napier, Jon Hare, Cynthia Carlstad, Jim Fleming, Terry Willis, Ron Wisner, Terra Hegy, Lee Daneker, Lori Morris, Kahle Jennings

Watershed Planning Legislation

Grays Harbor County Commissioner Bob Beerbower and Thurston County Citizen J. Roach testified before the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee in favor of a change to the Watershed Planning Act that would allow counties with very small territories in a planning area to opt out of the plan approval process. For the Chehalis Basin this would mean that Cowlitz, Jefferson, Pacific and Wahkiakum Counties could opt out. This would simplify plan approval because only the two counties that have been actively involved (Grays Harbor, Thurston) and the other two counties that have participated (Lewis, Mason) would need to hold public hearings and then meet jointly to approve the plan.

Outreach to Planning Unit Members

Lee Napier (Grays Harbor County) and Bob Wheeler (Triangle Associates) met with the new Mason County Commissioner Jayni Kamin and Bob Fink to discuss that county's involvement with watershed planning in the Chehalis Basin. The meeting was informational. They suggested that we meet with them again when the issues have been fully developed and alternatives evaluated for comment.

Bob Wheeler suggested expanding outreach on the issues and alternatives to include all initiating governments.

Student Monitoring

The presentation by Rochester students on the water quality monitoring was very well received and we should look for a way to incorporate it into the watershed plan. Chris Page will contact the school to get a copy of the reports they made to the Partnership on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

Grants

The committee is evaluating the possibility of submitting a proposal to EPA for its Regional Geographic Initiative (RGI) funds. The applications are due March 18<sup>th</sup> but the funding won't be available before September because they are tied to next year's federal budget. One project currently being considered for submittal would be a study of the stream 'bugs' as an indicator of ecological condition in the tributaries in the lower Chehalis. This would complement a previous study done in the tributaries of the upper basin. (Ecological Condition of the Upper Chehalis Basin Streams, June 2001, EPA publication 910-R-01-005.)

Issues and Alternative Actions

The committee spent the majority of the meeting reviewing and revising proposed alternative actions to address specific issues. These alternatives are being developed for consideration by

the Partnership. Committee members are actively developing issue papers using the format shared with the Partnership that will become the basis for the recommendations section of the watershed plan.

#### Decision Making Approaches

The committee reviewed an approach to decision making used by the National Park Service called “Choosing by Advantages” for possible use in our planning effort.

#### Multi-purpose Storage

Three handouts on the multi-purpose storage project were distributed. Comments on the criteria used to identify potential sites will be discussed at the February 20<sup>th</sup> STC meeting.