

**CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP
STEERING TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY
Lewis County Public Services Building
2025 NE Kresky Avenue
Chehalis, WA 98532
June 7, 2007
9:30 AM**

Meeting Summary

PRESENT

Steve Craig, WA State Department of Ecology
Glen Connelly, Confederated Tribes of the
Chehalis Reservation
Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County
Chad Stussy, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife
Mark Swartout, Thurston County
Randy Lehr, Grays Harbor College (via telephone)
Terry Willis, Citizen, Grays Harbor County
Kernen Lien, Lewis County

Cheri Lindgren, Puget Sound Meeting Services
Bruce Jones, Citizen
Jim Hill, Citizen, Lewis County
Petra Shenk, UCSB

Announcements and Introductions

Chair Mark Swartout called the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) Steering Technical Committee (STC) meeting to order at 9:42 a.m. Everyone present provided self-introductions.

Agenda

Mr. Swartout reviewed the meeting agenda.

Water Resource Survey

Ms. Napier distributed copies of two Chehalis Basin water resources surveys. Mr. Lehr said the goal of the survey is to more effectively manage water resources by understanding how citizens value water throughout the Chehalis Basin. Results from the survey will be synthesized and used to guide decisions and policies for watershed management in the basin.

Mr. Lehr said the shorter survey was developed in consultation with the Water Quality Committee (WQC). The WQC modified the survey to focus on water resources and water quality in particular. The survey was provided to a consultant who presented it to a survey formatting group, creating a longer survey. Mr. Lehr asked for feedback on the surveys.

Mr. Swartout asked whether the survey will be a random sampling. Mr. Lehr replied the intent is distributing the survey to as many people in the basin as possible. Demographic information will be used to better understand response representation.

Discussion ensued about random sampling and self-selecting survey participation. Mr. Lehr said completion of the surveys is on a volunteer basis. It's important to line up the respondent's demographic profile with the overall demographic profile.

Mr. Swartout commented that telephone surveys often result in a higher percentage of response from citizens. He asked about the predictive analysis results. Mr. Lehr replied general profiles will be reviewed to determine if a cross-section of individuals responding is a good representative of residents throughout basin. If so, the data could be used to help inform future decisions.

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Mr. Craig agreed with comments by Mr. Swartout. Much effort has gone into developing the questionnaire; however, a nonrandom sample will lead to major limitations of the conclusions. He suggested reviewing with a statistician the sample size to produce a statistically valid survey.

Discussion followed about whether there was consideration for conducting a telephone survey using random sampling techniques, how a telephone survey is more random than a mail-out survey, pros and cons of each method, and determining the number of responses to achieve a predictable analysis. Mr. Swartout said staff could follow up with individuals who do not return surveys by telephone. A self-addressed stamped envelope could be included with the survey to encourage response. Mr. Lehr emphasized that the survey and methodology were refined by statistically literate staff. The comparisons are based on demographic profiles. Mr. Swartout said the key is to choose the pool that will receive the survey randomly. The information is useful if the statisticians demonstrate the survey has a predictability of plus or minus 'x' amount.

In response to a question from Mr. Jones about whether a proposal was developed outlining the goal to achieve with the survey, Mr. Lehr reviewed four main goals of the survey for water resources and water resources management questions. Mr. Jones expressed interest in reaching both rural and urban citizens. Each area has a different view about water use.

Mr. Hill commented that the STC is focusing on the methodology. The content of the survey is quite comprehensive.

Further discussion followed about how to ensure a random sampling and dependent on the results, sending out additional surveys to a target group and other techniques to achieve the goals.

Mr. Swartout suggested members should review the survey. He suggested soliciting input on the survey from several citizens. Mr. Lehr agreed with the suggestion. Ms. Napier added that members can discuss the survey content at the June 14, 2007 WQC meeting.

Ms. Willis reported the WQC reviewed the survey and suggested some changes, including parameters of the ranking. Additionally, a blank page should be added for the respondent to include additional comments.

Mr. Craig suggested replacing "place" with "please" in the last sentence of the "Comments" section.

In reply to a request by Mr. Swartout, Mr. Lehr said the initial strategy is to distribute the survey on a basin-wide level. Funding for the mailing has not been determined. Ms. Napier said the survey also serves as a good outreach tool.

Ms. Willis asked whether other organizations will have access to the data. Mr. Lehr affirmed that is the intent.

Mr. Hill suggested using a one-page summary in a bullet format on the methodology strategy and how the survey data will be used. The summary could be sent to Ms. Napier. Ms. Napier could distribute the summary to STC members.

Mr. Jones echoed similar comments. It's important to pinpoint the intended audience, identify the kind of feedback expected, and how the information will be used prior to sending the survey out. He suggested following up with the Puget Sound Partnership, as the group has conducted several surveys.

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Ms. Willis referred to question #48, financial incentives, and asked if federally funded incentive programs used by large landowners are discussed in the survey. Mr. Lehr replied that the survey consultant recommended asking very specific questions or conveying general ideas and letting the respondents interpret the request. The question can be reworded to also reflect the volunteer aspect.

Mr. Swartout asked if it's possible to identify people living on hobby farms but working in a different industry. Mr. Lehr said the zip code could be used to pinpoint the county of residence. The survey can ask another question about land size and employment.

Mr. Lehr said he will draft a clarifying statement about the statistical distribution and proposed sampling schemes and review with the committee prior to working on any additional content within the survey.

STC members thanked Mr. Lehr for his work.

Scope of Work for Legislative Appropriation

Ms. Napier distributed a *WRIA 22-23 Chehalis Basin Scope of Work* document (handout #3). Mr. Craig referred to Task 2, Continuation of the GIS Clearinghouse. The Department of Ecology (DOE) funded the first year and Grays Harbor College is funding the second year. He asked why a budget of \$60,000 is required for the task. Ms. Napier said the \$60,000 request is for the third year. Mr. Lehr added the college will provide a match for the fourth year.

Discussion followed about task 3, "Continuation and expansion of the coordinated water quality program." The total budget is \$245,000. A scope of work (SOW) titled, *Assessing Long-term Water Quality Trends in the Chehalis Basin*, was developed.

Mr. Lehr reviewed responsibilities proposed for a Water Quality Technician and Water Quality Coordinator and the deliverables tied to the task.

Mr. Swartout asked whether adding a genetic analysis of fecal coliform to the responsibilities is possible. A professor with the University of Washington is putting together an entire database. Mr. Lehr replied that he's familiar with the project and has heard mixed reviews. He's said he's been told it's been historically frowned upon within the Chehalis Basin, but supports a better understanding of the source of fecal coliform. Mr. Swartout explained that the Thurston County Commissioners were interested until they learned that the bacteria sources were from humans. The analysis is not a quantitative survey, but does help to address the bacteria issue. Mr. Lehr said the costs are significant (\$500 - \$1,000 per sample) depending on the scope. Mr. Swartout referred Mr. Lehr to a website address, www.co.thurston.wa.us/shellfish containing the county's report and methodology. Mr. Lehr conveyed that shellfish growers are interested in the technology. He indicated he will follow up with further details.

Mr. Hill said a public health, county, or state agency might want to contribute and participate in an analysis study.

Mr. Lehr reported the college will coordinate data analysis. The Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation will conduct sample collection and analysis activities.

Discussion ensued about \$18,000 to purchase long-term water quality monitoring probes, the possibility of the Chehalis Reservation providing supplementary funding for additional probes, and potential availability of

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grant funds through the college that could be used to purchase another probe. Ms. Napier noted the two probes shown in the proposed budget are specific to the 2007 legislative appropriation.

Mr. Swartout referred to deliverable #4 and asked whether the Environmental Information Management (EIM) database is available to others. Mr. Lehr said the database will be available through DOE’s database and website. A new GIS tool that could be integrated to web access consists of creating a new feature that fits over each of the water quality monitoring sites. The feature can rate long-term water quality based on specific parameters.

Discussion followed about the funding amount to continue the program in the future. Mr. Lehr said the budget would be less after purchase of the equipment. Salaries would essentially remain the same.

Mr. Craig reminded the committee that the state has switched grant management from a biennium timeframe to a fiscal year. Funds must be expended because rollover of funds is not likely. He said he will follow up about whether the management change applies to proviso funds.

Mr. Swartout said the question is whether the funds are capital or operation in nature, which dictates when the money must be spent and what can carry over.

Ms. Napier said the SOW spans two years. The proposed budget for assessing long-term water quality trends in the Chehalis Basin includes:

	Salary (2 Years)	Benefits (2 Years)	Equipment	Total
Water Quality Technician	\$150,000			\$150,000
Water Quality Coordinator	61,000	\$16,000	\$18,000	95,000
Total:	\$211,000	\$16,000	\$18,000	\$245,000

Mr. Lehr concluded the teleconference at 10:45 a.m.

Clarification followed about the timeline for DOE, Grays Harbor College, and legislative appropriation funding sources. Mr. Craig said the information is confusing without financial and/or budgeting reporting.

The committee continued review of the SOW and project tasks. Ms. Napier explained the \$560,000 legislative appropriation/line item proviso will be used to fund programs over the next two years. The Partnership has an opportunity to apply for supplemental watershed funding available from DOE.

Mr. Craig reported DOE received funds from the Legislature for plan implementation. He distributed a DOE *Watershed Planning and Implementation Project Request Application 2007-09 Biennium* document and an overview paper detailing funding available (handouts #4 and #5).

Ms. Napier reviewed the tasks outlined in the SOW document and language to justify the line items summarized below. The goal is to submit the SOW to DOE by July 1, 2007.

- **Task 1 - Increase administrative capacity.** In addition to the Phase 4 grant, the proposal is to expand administrative support to the Partnership. If the Partnership needs additional support, another \$75,000 is budgeted as a placeholder for additional capacity. Additional capacity is beyond a half-time project manager (Napier) and support provided by Puget Sound Meeting Services (PSMS). The placeholder could be used to cover Bill Jarocki’s time to attend the Partnership meeting to discuss organizational needs.

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Discussion followed about financial resources available for the Chehalis Basin. Mr. Swartout illustrated the resources available:

- Phase 4 grant, \$125,000
- Proviso (legislative appropriation) \$560,000
- Watershed implementation grant:
 - \$1.2 million is available statewide for administrative support
 - \$45,000 to the Chehalis Basin that is not competitive but requires submitting a proposal, and \$10,000 available on a competitive basis (\$55,000), and part of the \$1.2 million above. The final amount is dependent on the SOW.
- Watershed implementation funding available
 - Operating budget \$3.1 million statewide (legislative proviso of \$960,000 subtracted out)
 - Capital budget for projects \$11.7 million statewide (legislative proviso and planning unit support subtracted out)

Mr. Craig said handout #5 lists the types of projects that are eligible and grant criteria. He noted under DOE project ranking criteria it states the lowest priority is given to projects that have other funding options, including proviso allocations.

Discussion ensued about how much money is needed for administration. It was determined that the Phase 4 grant (\$125,000) pays for PSMS and Ms. Napier's support. An additional \$75,000 can be allocated from the proviso for administrative support. Additionally, there is another \$45,000 available through DOE that could be earmarked for administration.

- **Task 2 – Continuation of the GIS Clearinghouse.** Grays Harbor County contracts with Grays Harbor College staff or with DOE to continue the operation of the GIS Clearinghouse. Deliverables include quarterly progress reports to DOE and the Partnership. Total budget for the task is \$60,000 for fiscal year 2008.
- **Task 3 – Continuation and expansion of the coordinated water quality monitoring program.**
(Discussed earlier in the meeting.)
- **Task 4 - Analyze the connection between river flow and ground water levels.** Need input to formulate the task/outcome and deliverables. One question is whether the committee follows the suggestion from an earlier SOW distributed by Mr. Jennings. A total of \$90,000 is budgeted for the task that is anticipated to span two years. The project must be included in US Geological Survey (USGS) work plan to qualify for a 50/50 match. Another option is to work with Centralia and its consultant.

Ms. Napier referred to an e-mail from Mr. Jennings concerning the gaining/losing reach study. The first option is contracting with USGS as part of a larger ground/surface water continuity study that has not been funded. A second option is to hire a consultant to complete the gaining/losing reach study with the understanding that the results will be used in a larger ground/surface water study when funding is available to complete the larger study. Mr. Jennings expressed support to hire a consultant. He believes HDR could complete a field work report by the end of 2007 and suggests securing additional funding from DOE's capital budget. Ms. Napier said the last option might not be possible because of proviso language.

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Mr. Swartout said the committee could use some of the proviso funding to complete preliminary work. The Partnership could then justify approaching the Legislature and requesting additional funding for the larger ground/surface water basin study in the next biennium.

Mr. Craig said he understood Centralia is covering the costs of the data gathering activities for the gaining/losing reach study. Ms. Napier said the task and budget is in addition to Centralia's funding. Mr. Craig said at a previous meeting, USGS pointed out that it is necessary to assess all available data, identify gaps, which then translates to a proposal for implementation. Developing a detailed SOW with assistance from USGS seems appropriate.

Ms. Willis commented that obtaining real information is valuable. She said she doesn't totally understand the gaining/losing reach proposal and asked how the information will be used. Mr. Swartout said the information will be used in the model when developed.

Mr. Jones agreed with Mr. Craig's comments that the Partnership should take a holistic approach to the watershed. Data collection occurs at the end. It's important to know how the data will be collected and used and how to present the findings to the public.

Mr. Craig said DOE, Mr. Pitz, and USGS have advised the committee to develop a plan and strategy to gain a comprehensive understanding of the hydrologic dynamic within the watershed.

Mr. Lien echoed similar comments by Mr. Craig and Mr. Jones. He indicated that he prefers moving towards the larger project and offered a third suggestion of the STC supporting work on the larger project while concurrently working on more immediate projects that can be presented to the Legislature next session.

Discussion followed about the time it might take to draft a SOW in time for the next session. Mr. Swartout said the Partnership could contract with HDR to develop a detailed SOW for the task.

Mr. Craig noted the Legislature will be more impressed with a long-range systematic approach compared to an isolated study that is not connected to the larger goal. DOE would support a long-range systematic strategy as well. Mr. Stussy agreed

Mr. Hill and Mr. Connelly expressed support to build on a long-term strategy.

Ms. Willis said the committee could work on the long-term strategy while working on smaller projects concurrently.

There was general consensus to identify a long-term strategy for analysis between ground and surface water.

Mr. Craig suggested soliciting input from DOE, Mr. Pitz, and USGS to gain a clear understanding of the work task and to determine whether the budget is realistic.

- **Task 5 – Acquire data and administration of Ecosystem Diagnostic and Treatment (EDT) model.**
Acquire data to implement the EDT habitat model. The Partnership does not own EDT model data for the Chehalis Basin. Contract with Grays Harbor College to staff and administer the EDT as a tool to enhance the Partnership's capacity to prioritize habitat restoration projects. Deliverables include quarterly reports to DOE and the Partnership. A total of \$90,000 has been allocated for the task.

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Ms. Napier commented that the task benefits the Habitat Work Group. The EDT model was developed for the basin, but there is no one to run the model. Mr. Lehr drafted the task and is interested in acting as an interim administrator until a permanent administrator is appointed. There is a one-time transfer fee of \$40,000. The remainder of the budget would pay for an administrator. If the Partnership pays for the first year, Grays Harbor College will cover second year costs.

Mr. Stussy reported WDFW supports the college administering the EDT model. The state agency is able to easily interact with Grays Harbor College. Mr. Craig noted the data will be stored in the clearinghouse.

Discussion followed about the types of natural resource data feeding the modeling program, predictions about potential impacts and/or benefits to fish based on specific scenarios, the Nisqually model, oversight to ensure the model is used properly, and that other entities can access the data.

Mr. Stussy stated the EDT divided the basin into thousands of different reaches. Mr. Swartout said lead agencies have used the information to help justify projects. Mr. Stussy added that the model should be used cautiously as a tool.

Mr. Jones asked whether the college could provide the STC with a presentation about the EDT model once the data have been transferred. Ms. Napier noted at a minimum, quarterly reports will be provided to DOE and the Partnership.

Discussion followed about providing legislators with a brief quarterly activities report.

The committee discussed DOE's project ranking criteria (handout #5). Specifically, lowest priority is given to projects that have other funding options (Centennial, Salmon Recovery Funding Board [SRFB], and proviso) and grant monies available on a statewide basis for watershed implementation and capital projects.

Ms. Willis noted the criteria are only one of five within the lowest priority section.

Mr. Stussy commented that each watershed receives SRFB funding. Many areas have been awarded proviso dollars. He asked whether the restriction is based on the funding amounts or the fact that other organizations have proviso funds. Mr. Swartout suggested there are also other sources of funding other than Centennial, SRFB, and proviso funds. Nisqually is pursuing Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) funds for estuary projects in the Puget Sound area, which might not have anything to do with watershed implementation.

Discussion ensued about whether projects that don't fit within the proviso allocation could rank higher, if the Partnership has a project that could compete on a statewide level, and whether to ask DOE to change its ranking criteria. Mr. Swartout said the criteria could hurt the Partnership in the future. Mr. Craig reported there were only two watersheds in the state that received proviso funds for implementation - Nisqually and the Chehalis. DOE was not pleased with the proviso allocations. DOE was under the assumption that the Legislature appropriates money to DOE and DOE distributes the funds. The proviso money was subtracted from DOE's funding request.

Mr. Jones suggested contacting DOE and clarifying the intent of the bullet point. Ms. Napier confirmed she will follow up.

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Members discussed completing a grant application for instream flow rule development and implementation, and/or a storage project, reclaimed water treatment standards, and how reclaimed water can be used. Mr. Craig said there is a study for storage options within the watershed. A next step could be to select two or three options for further review.

Mr. Swartout reviewed eligibility criteria for storage projects outlined on page 3 of the application packet.

Ms. Napier explained that the storage report is divided into recommendations. She suggested focusing on the aquifer storage and recovery, agricultural drainage removal, and wetland restoration recommendations.

Mr. Craig suggested hiring a consultant to evaluate the recommendations, develop a short list of projects, and draft a SOW.

In response to comments from members, Mr. Craig reported instream flows are already affected early in the season. The STC might want to discuss the implications.

Ms. Napier said the Partnership could complete grant applications related to interruptible water rights, storage and administration projects.

Mr. Swartout recessed the meeting from 12:08 p.m. to 1:23 p.m.

Mr. Stussy left during the break.

Logo Contest

Ms. Napier reported a decision on the logo contest is required by June 11, 2007. Mr. Hill advised that he and Mr. Connelly reviewed the artwork and narrowed the selections.

Members discussed selecting a contest winner, having the Partnership retain all artwork, the opportunity to choose a logo for the CBP, and using the winning art for the festival banner. Members reviewed the art and selected three finalists for the logo contest.

Mr. Swartout commented on how the logo will be used and said he likes the concept of students submitting art with elected officials making a final selection. He suggested approaching graphic art students in the future to submit artwork for consideration in time for the Partnership to make a final selection. Each year, the winner's work could be used for the festival.

Mr. Hill said he supports conducting an annual contest for a festival logo and prefers having a consistent logo for Partnership communication purposes.

Mr. Jones left the meeting at 1:29 p.m.

Ms. Napier suggested that Ms. Jacobsen could select the logo from those recommended by the committee.

Mr. Swartout referred to interruptible water rights and said he's been unable to obtain a clear answer about whether any of the interruptible water rights reside in Thurston County. If people are impacted, he needs to brief the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC).

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Prepare for CBP Meeting

Mr. Swartout reported Mr. Jarocki, Boise State University, is attending the Partnership's June meeting to discuss organizational structure. Ms. Napier reported after researching the issue, Mr. Jarocki learned other groups are functioning as watershed councils. However, there are no standard organizational structures for watershed groups.

Mr. Swartout referred to a Nebraska watershed district that functions as a separate government entity. One idea is to consider a regional approach on water resource management (similar to flood or drainage districts). The issue is whether the Partnership wants to create a legal organization that be a party to contracts.

Ms. Napier offered that the first consideration is determining the Partnership's organizational needs. Only one topic is reserved for the CBP June meeting agenda to brief the Partnership on the regional SRFB process. She suggested discussing the need for future workshops at the July meeting.

Discussion followed about identified needs resulting from instream flow rules and Commissioner Macleod's comment at a previous CBP meeting that the Partnership consider pursuing marketing strategies similar to those developed by the Nisqually Basin organization. Ms. Napier said marketing and outreach are two separate charges. Mr. Craig suggested the Nisqually River Council could brief the Partnership on its organizational structure.

Members discussed the possibility of requesting information from the Attorney General's Office (AGO) on whether the Legislature can create a legal entity for watershed planning. A watershed district is different and operates under statutory language authorizing interlocal agreements. Members discussed the advantages of nonprofit status, the differences between non-legal and legal entities, and lead agency status. Mr. Swartout asked Mr. Craig to research the issue for discussion during the Partnership meeting.

The STC discussed and created a list of organizational needs summarized as follows: project coordination and management, grant applications, watershed planning/implementation, salmon recovery coordination, water quality coordination and monitoring, EDT coordination, outreach coordination, CAC coordination and support, CBP staff support, marketing coordination, GIS Clearinghouse coordination, fiscal responsibility and coordination, and support staff.

Ms. Napier referred to the Watershed Plan Supplement and suggested as the goal in June to reexamine the current organizational structure for watershed plan implementation.

Ms. Willis suggested the Partnership should also reexamine the CAC structure.

Members commented about Grays Harbor County's future role. Ms. Napier explained if Grays Harbor continues to fill a role, the preference is to find other people to contract with.

Ms. Willis said the committee determined there is a need to support outreach. The STC has also discussed finding someone that could handle the financial reporting component.

Discussion ensued about whether Grays Harbor County would be interested in hiring another person to work with Ms. Napier on basin activities and that management of staff and the work would reside with the Partnership. It was acknowledged that Grays Harbor College has nonprofit status and could work with the Partnership when applying for grant funding. Ms. Napier said it is easier to contract the work compared to developing a job description, justifying a new position with the union, and advertising the position.

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Mr. Craig explained that the executive director of the nonprofit also serves as the senior staff to the Nisqually River Council. Responsibilities include taking the meeting notes, drafting the minutes, and setting the meeting agendas for the council and the CAC. The executive director also writes the grants. The Nisqually Tribe donates the space and overhead for the position and is able to leverage its resources more effectively. Members discussed having additional support in the legal and accounting areas for the CBP.

Mr. Craig offered the suggestion that Mr. Jarocki also provide some guidance about a format for budget tracking purposes. Members exchanged thoughts about fiscal reporting, hiring another person or a consultant to relieve Ms. Napier from the accounting and financial reporting aspects, and a reporting format identifying the budget to include quarterly balances, timelines, and major milestones.

Mr. Swartout said Ms. Napier will contact Mr. Jarocki and brief him regarding the STC discussion in preparation for the CBP's June meeting.

Discussion ensued about a non-storage project and an initial assessment prepared by Tetra Tech. The nonstorage proposal and assessment could be used as a potential interruptible water rights project. Mr. Craig said he will follow up with Mr. Loranger at DOE to determine if it makes sense to turn in a grant application for an interruptible water right project.

Members agreed to tentatively reschedule its July 5, 2007 meeting to Friday, June 29, 2007. Staff will follow up with a meeting location.

Adjournment

With no further business, Chair Swartout adjourned the meeting at 2:56 p.m.