

**CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP
STEERING TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Building
600 Capitol Way
Olympia, WA
November 1, 2007
9:30 AM**

Meeting Summary

MEMBERS PRESENT

Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County
Mark Swartout, Thurston County
Debbie Carnevali, WDFW
Kahle Jennings, City of Centralia
Kernen Lien, Lewis County
Glen Connelly, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis
Reservation
Terry Willis, Citizen, Thurston County

OTHERS PRESENT

Chanele Holbrook-Shaw, Citizen, Thurston County
Cheri Lindgren, Puget Sound Meeting Services
Bill Jarocki, Boise State University
Nadine Romero, Thurston County

Welcome & Introductions

Chair Mark Swartout called the November 1, 2007 Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) Steering Technical Committee (STC) meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.

Plan2Fund and Plan2Fund OPT Discussion

Bill Jarocki, Boise State University (BSU), provided members with a demonstration of the BSU Environmental Finance Center (EFC) website at www.efc.boisestate.edu. Three specific tools, Plan2Fund, Plan2Fund OPT (Objective Prioritization Tool), and the Directory of Watershed Resources are useful for creating comprehensive plans and multiple-year budgets, determining priority projects, and locating funding for implementation. The tools can be accessed at no charge by registering at the EFC website. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provided funding for Plan2Fund and Plan2Fund OPT tools that BSU created for the Partnership using Excel. Data is stored on an independent server that is password protected. BSU is modifying the program to a web-based model that includes an improved financial interface for grant writing purposes and enhanced financial reporting.

Mr. Jarocki reported the Plan2Fund OPT tool runs on BSU's website. He described and demonstrated how the tool is designed, the process to input all plan objectives into the model, and creating a first step prioritization decision model. A template is available to enter decision rules. He reviewed a menu showing values used to score decision rules. A sample worksheet, where scoring takes place and the user can modify rule values, was demonstrated. The model automatically sorts the scores, sequences objectives, and builds a comparison report in Excel. The model provides a clear list of priorities and scores for each objective once decision rules and ranking criteria are defined. Reactions to the tool have been very positive.

Discussion ensued about the ability to add other subtasks, not exaggerating planning to the point it slows down implementation, and that tasks and subtasks can change. Mr. Jarocki said prioritization will be based on objectives rather than tasks. Enhancements can be built and added in the future. Each tool includes a discussion board so users can engage with other users. The program tracks who are using the tool, and can solicit feedback from users.

CBP Governance Structure

Chair Swartout reported there were concerns expressed about a nonprofit governance following discussions at a previous CBP meeting. He said he recently spoke with a Nisqually River Foundation representative about errors and omissions insurance. The presentation at CBP was focused on a nonprofit and there were no other governance options presented. Another strategy is to develop a list of available options and evaluate the pros and cons of each to inform a decision by the Partnership.

Mr. Jarocki said there should be a nexus between a fee and service received by the public that is proportional among ratepayers.

Mr. Swartout described public benefits of a flood district. Using Thurston County as an example, a petition to form a district would be forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC). The BoCC would have to take an action to approve the request and seek a ballot measure. Special purpose district as a governance option should be added to the list. Imposing an assessment or rate when forming a special purpose district doesn't require the same type of nexus.

Discussion followed about why benefit districts are created. Mr. Swartout said what's needed is a legal organization that has the authority to contract. He asked if the Legislature could create an organization, such as a council of government. Mr. Jarocki answered yes. Washington State provides a mechanism to set up lake management districts. A watershed management district might be an option. Mr. Swartout said lake management districts within the county are not legal organizations. Thurston County is the legal organization. Mr. Jarocki said the Legislature would have to determine which counties within the Partnership would have to agree to a watershed management district structure.

Members discussed other potential governance structure options:

- Special purpose districts
- Council of government (ex: Whatcom County, Portland) (*Mr. Swartout indicated he would follow up with more information*)
- Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC), separate from council of governments, different authority
- Status quo
- Approaching the Legislature about creating a watershed council
- Nonprofit, foundation
- A question is what kind of organization or management structure provides continuity and ensures that the Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) plan can be executed (day-to-day management)

Ms. Napier said legislation to form watershed districts or councils was discussed approximately three years ago.

Mr. Jarocki searched for Whatcom County Council of Governments on the internet. A financial document was available on the web. He speculated that the organization is receiving planning funds from member dues.

Mr. Swartout noted the fiscal agent for the Partnership is Grays Harbor County. The Partnership doesn't have the authority to enter into contracts.

Ms. Napier added that Grays Harbor Community College (GHCC) has sponsored proposals on behalf of the Partnership.

Mr. Jarocki said CBP could continue a structure that uses interlocal agreements that individual jurisdictions are responsible for.

STC members discussed what the Partnership would like to be able to do:

- Continuity for implementation, long-term (50 years from now)
- Independent and separate from member interests
- Ability to acquire and manage funding (including the ability to contract)
- Legislative advocacy and education
- Establish and maintain stable funding sources
- Ability to accept private funds
- Administrative functions/executive director, fiscal responsibility
- “Conductor”

Mr. Jarocki explained nonprofits are required to file reports with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and are able to lobby. IRS determines the type of an organization when it applies for nonprofit status. The next step is creating a list of organizational structures that enables the Partnership to do the things identified previously. The exercise will show how efficient the current structure is compared to other governance options.

Mr. Swartout said if the Partnership chooses a nonprofit option, the current organization could run parallel with a nonprofit.

Mr. Jarocki said a goal is to create an organization that can receive as many different funding sources as possible. Another idea is identifying a legal status that supplements the existing political operation. Retaining the status quo could be a viable option recognizing another layer is needed to advance the next step. He suggested creating a matrix showing what the Partnership wants to do across the top with organization structure types along the side and noting distinguishing characteristics for evaluation purposes. He stated he was disappointed he was unable to find watershed organizational structures when he researched the subject in preparation for a prior CBP meeting. Most watershed management governance is comprised of stakeholder groups conducting activities in an informal manner, such as, coordination and information sharing compared to watershed plan implementation. He said he did not contact each watershed organization separately and ask how they are structured.

Mr. Swartout said there are probably watershed activities conducted under a law that doesn't call it watershed planning, such as a flood control district.

Mr. Jarocki suggested the Partnership could create a foundation solely for the purpose of accepting private donations while retaining the current structure.

Mr. Jennings said eventually the CBP might need to look at an organization with an executive director whose job is to shepherd the Partnership and advance implementation of the DIP. Currently, the roles are shared among the jurisdictions.

Mr. Swartout asked Ms. Napier her thoughts regarding the governance discussion. Ms. Napier replied that members are asking the right questions. She said she's not sure retaining the status quo option is adequate. A concern with creating another layer is the ability for partners to implement the DIP. The Partnership currently has an array of activities to manage and implement. One entity or lead cannot do it all. It's important to get others involved and bring those stakeholders to the table. Perhaps an emphasis should be placed on outreach to educate other stakeholders about what they could bring to the Partnership to advance the DIP.

Ms. Willis said Partnership members are responsible to execute the DIP and not the CBP.

Mr. Jarocki asked why the CBP exists if it's not responsible for implementation. Ms. Napier said the Partnership provides a forum to share information. She said because Grays Harbor County is the fiscal agent, she feels responsible to seek out and apply for grants, which has become an overwhelming task.

Mr. Swartout said Thurston County will not pursue a water quality grant for the entire Chehalis watershed. Ms. Napier replied that's where an umbrella organization to coordinate efforts comes in.

Mr. Swartout said Grays Harbor County could enter into contracts with consultants to complete most implementation tasks.

Mr. Jennings suggested that the concept of ownership is lost with hiring consultants to advance the DIP. He said he's not sure contractors would have a vested interest in the watershed.

Mr. Jarocki asked if the Partnership would divest itself of results gathered by consultants. Implementation should be a function of the CBP.

Ms. Willis commented that identifying and maintaining sustainable funding is key to implementing the plan.

Mr. Swartout said it's important to convey that an option is not to do away with the Partnership. The struggle is moving planning to implementation.

Ms. Carnevali asked if the Partnership could now shift from planning and into implementation.

Mr. Jarocki distributed copies of a handout titled, "Tools for Implementation."

Ms. Napier said an exercise to prioritize objectives for implementation is needed. Mr. Jarocki said a key is to structure the organization that provides for an implementation mechanism.

Discussion ensued about the role of the STC, engaging Partnership members in issue discussions, base funding considerations, and implementation reporting. Mr. Swartout emphasized implementing tasks is being done; however, it's on a smaller, slower track. There is some impatience to build an organization that can advance implementation quicker.

Mr. Carnevali said Nisqually uses a map to identify priorities and to track progress.

Mr. Jarocki asked if the CBP would accept the idea that the STC operates as a board of directors with executive and fiscal officers to ensure implementation, with the Partnership providing oversight. Mr.

Swartout reminded members that the STC frames policy choice discussions for CBP and is only an advisory body to the Partnership. He said if he was a watershed coordinator, he would use the STC as it currently exists with the CBP providing policy expertise.

Ms. Carnevali commented that the information in the handout would be valuable to the Partnership.

Most members agreed a strategy is for the STC to present a governance structure list of options to the Partnership for review and comment.

Mr. Jarocki suggested members further evaluate the “what do you want to do” points, flush out administrative and policy oversight responsibilities of each governance structure as it relates to implementation, plug in the organization types and characteristics, begin to distinguish differences between the options, and identify gaps.

Discussion followed about a format to present the information to the CPB in November, and who could help populate the matrix. Mr. Jarocki said he could build a spreadsheet, drop in organization characteristics, and present a methodology to the Partnership. If the CBP decides that the concept is reasonable, the Partnership could remand the matter to the STC for further refinement. The STC could follow up with a recommendation for the Partnership’s December meeting. The next step is to come up with a decision model for the type of governance selected. Another option is the CBP could hire a consultant to flush out the options and build a spreadsheet if STC members do not have the time.

Mr. Swartout said hiring a consultant is a realistic approach. He agreed with presenting a matrix to the Partnership, discussing the STC’s process to review organizational governance, and soliciting feedback from the CBP. A consultant could lead the Partnership through a decision-making process and drill further into each organizational type.

Mr. Jennings suggested the ultimate goal is implementing the DIP. In terms of a presentation to the CBP, he suggested initiating a discussion about governance structure options deliberated by the STC and seeking Partnership feedback. The STC could then create a list of organizations that could advance identified goals. The matrix could be a final slide of a presentation. He volunteered to put together a concise PowerPoint slide show for the CBP. Mr. Jarocki offered to assist Mr. Jennings.

Members thanked Mr. Jarocki for his assistance.

Discussion ensued about staffing changes at Department of Ecology (DOE) caused by employees recently retiring.

Mr. Jarocki said funds are available in his 2007 budget to work with the STC. If the CBP asks the STC to continue flushing out governance structure options, he indicated he could help. It might not be necessary to hire a consultant.

Discussion followed on marketing strategies and opportunities. Mr. Jarocki suggested the STC invite Tim Jones from the Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds Division at EPA Headquarters to a future meeting. Mr. Jones heads up EPA’s sustainable finance team who reviews implementation issues related to watersheds.

Chair Swartout recessed meeting from 11:59 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Mr. Lien left the meeting during the break.

Hydrology 101

Nadine Romero, Thurston County Hydrologist, provided the STC with a basic “Hydrology 101” presentation. Copies of an information packet were distributed. She reported 45% of Thurston County drains into the Chehalis Basin.

A map illustrating the physiography (physical geography) of the upper and lower Chehalis Basin was displayed. Ms. Romero reviewed physical characteristics. She located Grays Harbor, which contains a large continental shelf and continental slope. She pointed out a subduction zone that lies beneath the entire basin. It’s important to know the basin’s geology to determine how water flows through and out of the basin, and how aquifers are connected to the Chehalis River itself. Key geology elements consist of basalt and coal beds sandwiched between volcanic sediments and sands. The geology is not typical to glaciated areas found within Puget Sound. Real time stream gauges were incorporated on the map to better understand river hydrology flows at key points.

US Geological Survey (USGS) stream gauge facts (river miles, area in square miles, elevation, monthly average flow, peak storm flow) at Ground Mound, Porter, and Satsop were reviewed. Peak storm flows (February 1996) were significant and vary between stream gauges (74,800 CFS [Cubic Feet per Second] to 80,700 CFS). Flows during August 2003 (158 CFS to 559 CFS) were at their lowest.

Ms. Romero provided a LiDar map. Gauging stations were noted with blue pins while green pins represent a geologic cross-section from Tenino to Crawford Mountain (west to east). She shared a sample of a piece of typical volcanic rock that forms much of the basin geology, even at the surface.

Discussion followed about the Tenino sandstone slab. Ms. Romero explained Tenino sandstone is fine and soft, which represents a sea and beach environment (40 million years old).

Ms. Romero reviewed provisional results of USGS’s recent seepage study. Results do not include CFS information but do consist of gain and loss data. She used two drawings to illustrate what gaining (water coming in from groundwater) and losing (river loses water to the groundwater table) reaches look like. She noted USGS measured actual rivers and tributaries coming into the main branch of the Chehalis River.

Ms. Carnevali asked what causes the river to lose flow. Ms. Romero said the bottom of the river leaks, which is referred to as “river leakage.”

Mr. Jennings said it would be interesting to plot elevation data at measurement points.

Mr. Swartout asked how thick the potential aquifer is within the basin. Ms. Romero referred members to the last page of the handout containing a geologic cross section of Scatter Creek. Some of the wells are shallow that result in unknown factors in river basin areas. Basalt is only five feet below the other side of the Black River. A goal is to map the basalt particularly when conducting contaminant studies. Geophysics could define valleys and determine how thick the unconsolidated deposits are. The Chehalis River is fed by the groundwater system itself and is why seepage studies are important. She noted there are 600 well logs throughout the Scatter Creek Basin. She indicated that she would like a model to identify how the gradient affects contributions to the Chehalis River. She distributed and reviewed

preliminary analytical model results. The USGS seepage study produced interesting information. She said she looks forward to seeing actual CFS data and not just gains and losses.

Discussion followed regarding characteristics unique to Scatter Creek.

Members thanked Ms. Romero for the presentation. Members provided feedback on a potential presentation to the Partnership on November 16, 2007:

- Members preferred the display and handout format compared to a PowerPoint slide show presentation
- Show Willapa Bay on the upper and lower Chehalis Basin display board
- Allow more time during the presentation to explain hydrology concepts
- It's hard to visualize groundwater flow paths shown on the gaining reach drawing; it might be better to explain that arc flow paths consist of springs that pop up in the river bed from higher ground
- Provide the Partnership with a range on how long it takes flows from mountain tops to the river to affect flow patterns
- Omit Table B from the presentation

Ms. Napier reported she received a telephone call from Karen Olsten, Quinault Indian Nation (QIN), in response to a request for information on reports Samuel Iwenofu referred to at the last STC meeting. Ms. Olsten conveyed that Joel Masman was hired by QIN to complete data collection work. Data gathering was conducted last spring. Results are under review by QIN policymakers. QIN would like to provide the STC with a presentation. She said she asked Ms. Olsten if Mr. Masman could attend the STC's December (coincides with USGS attendance) or January meeting. Permission has been provided for Mr. Masman and Mr. Ely to share data set information.

Ms. Carnevali left the meeting.

Legislative Outreach

Mr. Swartout commented that the Thurston County BoCC expressed a preference for receiving copies of a brochure on the Partnership rather than scheduling time for a presentation.

Ms. Napier said opportunities with the Coastal Caucus include a roundtable discussion to raise awareness on issues. She indicated it would be preferable to have the same opportunity with Thurston County. Mr. Swartout advised that he will speak to Commissioner Macleod about members talking directly to the BoCC. It might be beneficial to also have an updated brochure to leave with commissioners.

Discussion followed on outreach messages consisting of an update on the GIS Clearinghouse, other partnerships with Grays Harbor Community College, hydrologic continuity and Scope of Work (SOW), identifying Partnership members, quantifying entity contributions (volunteer hours, in-kind services) to the Partnership, and scheduling follow up appointments with key representatives and senators. Ms Napier said she would make herself available to attend legislative send off meetings.

Mr. Swartout suggested asking Bonnie Canaday about designating a Partnership outreach person.

Mr. Connelly said the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation could engage with its lobbyist on local watershed issues.

Ms. Willis said she plans to attend the Coastal Caucus meeting for legislators on November 2, 2007. She said she could convey a message on behalf of the committee. She noted both conservation districts lobby the Legislature for money. It would be easy to tie the Partnership into water quality messages. Ms. Napier suggested Ms. Willis could thank legislators for the 2007 appropriation and report how it was used. Examples include continued funding for the GIS Clearinghouse; coordinated water quality monitoring program with stakeholders; work is underway to better understand the interaction of surface water and groundwater; and conclude that the CBP plans to meet with legislators in the future.

November CBP November

- Officer nominations
- Governance structure presentation
- Hydrology 101 presentation (1.5 hours)

Agenda topics for the STC's December meeting include discussions with USGS on the larger SOW, a presentation by QIN (tentative), and feedback from the Partnership regarding governance.

Adjournment

With no further business, Chair Swartout adjourned the meeting at 2:22 p.m.

Prepared by Cheri Lindgren, Recording Secretary
Puget Sound Meeting Services