

**CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP
STEERING TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Building
600 Capitol Way
Olympia, WA
September 6, 2007
9:30 AM**

Meeting Summary

MEMBERS PRESENT

Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County
Glen Connelly, Confederated Tribes of the
Chehalis Reservation
Mark Swartout, Thurston County
Steve Craig, Department of Ecology (DOE)
Debbie Carnevali, Department of Fish and Wildlife
(WDFW)

OTHERS PRESENT

J Roach, Citizen, Thurston County
Cheri Lindgren, Puget Sound Meeting Services
Chanele Holbrook-Shaw, Citizen, Thurston County
Jerry Louthain, HDR
Bruce Jones, Citizen
Gary Turney, US Geological Survey (USGS)
Matt Ely, (USGS)
Terra Hegy, WDFW

Announcements and Introductions

Chair Swartout called the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) Steering Technical Committee (STC) meeting to order at 9:44 a.m. Everyone present provided self-introductions.

Meeting Agenda

Members reviewed the meeting agenda.

Discussion ensued about the status of the Year 2 Contract, specifically Task 7, Interim Milestone 3.1. Ms. Napier reported the STC discussed the issue last month. Mr. Jennings and Mr. Lien volunteered to draft a Scope of Work (SOW). However, Lewis County informed Mr. Lien the county is not interested in refining its water rights map at this time because of staffing limitations. Mr. Louthain said HDR wants to participate. Ms. Napier said she understands the City of Centralia is interested in working with HDR on a pilot water rights project.

The STC directed Grays Harbor County to initiate an interagency agreement.

Ms. Napier suggested Mr. Louthain should follow up with Mr. Jennings.

Members added a discussion on storage projects.

Follow up on Seepage Study from USGS

Mr. Craig provided a general overview and background on a seepage study for the Chehalis Basin. The Partnership asked Department of Ecology (DOE) to take the lead to manage distribution of funds through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with US Geological Survey (USGS) performing the work. USGS is determining the best time to conduct the measurements and is ready to mobilize and move forward.

Chanele Holbrook-Shaw arrived.

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Matt Ely, USGS, presented a display map. The ultimate goal is to look at all aspects of groundwater availability. Ground and surface water interaction is a multi-year effort. A first step is conducting seepage flow measurements using six people spanning three days. Initially, USGS hoped to have measurements by now; however, because of rain, the work was postponed until next week to allow the system to stabilize. USGS scoped 75 potential measurement locations identified on the display map. He explained how measurements are taken. USGS will begin at the Elk Creek gauge and work its way down the system, focusing on major tributaries (Scatter Creek, Black River, Skookumchuck) and the upper basin. Seepage measurement of the main stem below the Satsop River is questionable. Measurements will not provide a definitive look at ground and surface water interaction but will identify areas with significant interaction. There are several water miles between measuring points. There are more than 40 named creeks within the reach. DOE completed some work in the Centralia/Chehalis area. USGS will compare data with DOE's study. USGS or another group could focus efforts in a smaller area of concern.

Mr. Swartout said seepage measurements data will help the Partnership define next steps, develop a more detailed work plan, and inform first model phasing.

Ms. Shaw commented that there are several measurement points identified along the Black River. Mr. Ely explained USGS was asked to give more attention to the Black River and major tributaries. More interaction takes place in the broader plains. Other agencies have monitoring sites and gauges along the river corridor.

Mr. Roach asked whether USGS plans to measure the output of Black Lake to the north. Mr. Ely said USGS could add the point as a potential site. He explained USGS is working with Thurston County, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, and DOE on the seepage project. Different methods USGS plans to use to gain measurements includes an electronic flow tracker well suited for low velocity flows, a boat equipped to conduct velocity profiles, a floating stream probe, and kayaks along stretches of the Black River and main stem. Some interpretation of the data will be necessary. Records will be entered into the USGS database and available to the public. Results will be published in the agency's annual data report (published in April) and will also be available online. USGS can release draft information to the Partnership immediately following the collection activity.

Discussion ensued about incorporating the data and creating a Geographical Information System (GIS) map layer and the ability to make data readily available online at USGS.

In response to questions from Mr. Jones, Mr. Ely reviewed data elements to be collected at each point, primarily discharge. Digital photos will be taken at each station to include point of reference information. USGS will provide the Partnership with a photo bank. If all goes well, USGS could provide the Partnership with an introduction to USGS, its functions, and an initial presentation at the September meeting followed by a more formal presentation on data results at a future meeting. Ms. Napier suggested USGS focus the presentation on the seepage study.

Mr. Turney reported the agreement runs through the end of September. USGS will need to push that date past October 1, 2007 because of the fiscal year change. Mr. Craig asked Mr. Turney to follow up with DOE about rolling the project funds into Fiscal Year (FY) 2008.

Ms. Napier said a goal is to provide the Legislature with a report about Chehalis Basin activities for the next session.

Mr. Ely outlined factors that could contribute to data uncertainties.

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Mr. Turney said follow up to verify data could be conducted in the future. Analysis of the data collected is part of a larger project.

Mr. Ely said conducting a seepage run is a typical component to help inform a larger groundwater study.

Mr. Craig noted that later this fall the intent is to draft a more detailed SOW.

Mr. Swartout suggested that the handout USGS prepared on the two study phases could be provided to Partnership members. Ms. Napier asked that Mr. Swartout or Mr. Jennings provide an introduction of USGS and the project to the Partnership.

Mr. Craig reminded members that the US Army Corps of Engineers and the Governor discussed spending \$60 million in the watershed on flood control aspects. That piece is connected to the seepage measurement work. He indicated he will follow up with the Corps of Engineers about congressional appropriations. Following up on the multi-storage assessment completed in 2003 is another connection.

Discussion ensued about USGS assisting with developing a more detailed SOW. Mr. Ely conveyed USGS is committed to helping draft a refined SOW for the larger study by the end of 2007. Regarding the \$55,000 line item, STC will continue discussions to the October 4, 2007 meeting. Ms. Napier indicated she will follow up with USGS representatives.

Storage Project Grant

Mr. Craig reported the STC submitted a proposal as a follow up to its storage assessment completed in 2003. The intent is to focus on two or three projects that could be flushed out in greater detail. It is likely DOE will fund the \$250,000 storage project; however, DOE wants a proposal with two or three projects identified with an emphasis that additional money will be spent on a more detailed feasibility analysis. DOE would like the Partnership to evaluate potential projects. The Partnership might want to focus on storage projects within the Skookumchuck and/or Newaukum Rivers.

Mr. Swartout said technical expertise is needed. He asked if the storage project fits within the Corps of Engineers study on flooding.

Mr. Louthain reported HDR is working with Mr. Jennings on additional water supply from the Skookumchuck River. HDR is familiar with the Corp's flood project. There is a problem with securing adequate funding. A local match and local support is required. Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) does not plan to raise the freeway above flooding levels.

Mr. Craig suggested setting up a meeting with DOE and other stakeholders (Corps, USGS, Centralia, Chehalis, watershed policy makers, and WSDOT) to exchange information.

Mr. Jones said it might be beneficial to conduct a workshop followed by forming a subcommittee to discuss potential projects as soon as possible. Ms. Napier offered to contact Mr. Kliem for facilitating a workshop at DOE.

Follow up Discussion Regarding Hiring a Watershed Coordinator

Mr. Swartout shared his vision on how to move forward hiring a Watershed Coordinator as soon as possible. He suggested a two-tiered process appointing two interview panels: one with STC members and a prescribed set of questions resulting in a short list of candidates and forwarding the short list to

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the Partnership for a final interview with a second set of questions. It's important to hire the right person to fill the position.

Conversation followed about the possibility that consulting teams might submit a proposal to fill the job. Mr. Swartout said a consulting team would undertake the same interview process. He said he would like to see citizen participants on both interview panels. A major work task is reenergizing the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC). Ms. Napier said she'd like Water Quality Committee and citizens group members in addition to STC members participating on the initial interview panel.

Ms. Napier reported a more recent discussion with Randy Lehr at Grays Harbor Community College centered on partnerships and the Watershed Coordinator position. There is an opportunity to partner with the college. The college has space available to house a person. The Partnership could pursue the recruiting process but the college might be able to house the new position. Grays Harbor County would cover salary costs. The arrangement could help the college to leverage other resources. She suggested lowering the salary to offset a benefits package.

Mr. Craig commented that there is a benefit associated with a storefront and office. A consultant would be located elsewhere. The Partnership is beginning to build organizational capacity to create a presence.

Conversation followed about where the position will be advertised, interview panels including broad representation and a balance of basin interests, members interested in participating on an STC interview subcommittee (Mr. Craig, Mr. Jennings, Ms. Willis), and a Partnership interview subcommittee (Ms. Canaday, Mark White or Glen Connelly).

Ms. Napier indicated she could advertise the position and report on progress at the next STC meeting.

Mr. Swartout suggested discussing the Watershed Coordinator process at the next Partnership meeting and flushing out additional details prior to advertising.

Watershed Festival

Ms. Napier reported the festival committee asked the Partnership to consider a message/theme for the festival. The Partnership delegated the task to the STC. Ms. Taylor is attending a Farm City Dinner on September 27, 2007, organizing a live radio broadcast(s), and several entities are preparing proclamations acknowledging the event.

Mr. Swartout asked STC members to attend the Thurston Board of County Commissioners October 1, 2007 meeting at 9:00 a.m. to accept Thurston County's proclamation. Ms. Napier and Ms. Holbrook Shaw volunteered to attend.

Ms. Napier said the Partnership has a booth for the October 13, 2007 Watershed Festival event. Volunteers are needed to help with design and staff the booth. One suggestion is having the Habitat Workgroup create a display on habitat strategy. Mr. Kliem will help with outreach activities. Grays Harbor College is willing to provide a GIS map. Ms. Warner is working on a Partnership brochure. Student logo artwork could be displayed. Mr. Hill is working on a DVD presentation to broadcast in the pavilion area.

Ms. Holbrook Shaw commented that the Partnership can use the festival to help recruit citizen participation. Mr. Swartout suggested individuals attending and wishing to participate in basin activities could sign a visitor's log. Mr. Roach indicated he might be able to help with the Partnership booth.

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Ms. Napier reported press releases have been distributed. A volunteer is picking up flyers and small posters tomorrow. She stated she has asked Ms. Jacobson to create a personal invitation to legislators. Grays Harbor County will pay mailing costs.

Ms. Holbrook Shaw indicated a layout plan will be finalized next week. Teacher packets have been assembled and will be hand delivered.

Discussion ensued about food availability. Ms. Napier stated there are several fast food restaurants within close proximity. Mr. Connelly said the Lucky Eagle Casino has a mobile food facility designed to serve large events. He indicated he will follow up with the casino.

Ms. Napier suggested Ms. Holbrook Shaw talk to Top Foods about catering the event. *Please note that the Quinault Indian Nation will provide a salmon bake between noon and 4pm*

Watershed activities kick off on October 6, 2007.

Members were asked to brainstorm festival messages during the lunch break.

Chair Swartout recessed the meeting from 11:45 a.m. to 12:17 p.m.

Watershed Festival Discussion, Continued

Ideas for Partnership messages for Farm City Dinner attendees, presentations of proclamations, and for Ms. Taylor to share during radio interviews are summarized as follows:

- Activities and water issues are within each resident's backyard. Citizens are welcome to participate in Chehalis Basin discussions. Additionally, target landowners and citizens who do not live close to the river because their actions also impact the watershed.
- Eventually every road leading into the basin should say, "Chehalis Watershed."
- Provide information on habitat projects.
- Highlight Chehalis River Council's riparian plantings at different sites involving school children.
- Promote the Partnership's adoption of the Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP).
- Provide a list of resources/activities and committees that residents and/or citizens can participate in.
- Continue the image that the Partnership is not a regulatory organization but is able to assist agencies to meet regulatory requirements, which helps advance watershed goals.
- Point out that every watershed in the state is not mandated to implement a watershed plan. CBP volunteered to manage the Chehalis Watershed. Progress to move from a decision point to adopting the DIP in the last six years is remarkable. Stakeholders wanted to be part of the decision-making process; i.e., voluntary actions with regulatory support.
- Share Partnership mission, goals, and recommendations including the watershed plan, committees, habitat restoration projects, and collaborating with DOE on water cleanup plans (Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL).
- An overarching message could be, "we all live downstream."
- The Partnership is working collaboratively with tribes in the basin.
- Citizens, government, and businesses are working together to achieve success.

Begin Preparing Legislative Message

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Mr. Swartout distributed a handout, *Assessment of Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Funding Efforts*, prepared by Clifford Traisman. The purpose of the report is to provide an analysis on what went well and what didn't go well during the 2007 legislative session and to provide preliminary recommendations on how to build a stronger lobbying program and campaign for the 2008 legislative session and beyond. He explained he is working with Shared Strategy, a group in the Puget Sound region, which developed the salmon recovery plan. In the last session, Shared Strategy was awarded \$43 million as a separate line item in addition to funding allocated to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB). Shared Strategy hired lobbyist Clifford Traisman. He highlighted key elements that apply to the Partnership. Shared Strategy initially requested \$100 million to implement the recovery plan over the next 10 years.

Mr. Swartout reviewed 12 relevant key factors heading into the 2007 session. He noted there was no single member identified as a champion for salmon funding in either the House or Senate. Preliminary findings (based on over a dozen interviews with key stakeholders) and themes that emerged include:

- There is no organized lobby for salmon.
- The funding request was very ambitious, could have been better organized. Was too late in the process.
- Connection to the Puget Sound Partnership was essential and could have been strengthened.
- It's important to link better and earlier with agency budget requests.
- Nonetheless, obtaining over \$40 million for salmon in the budget is widely regarded as a great success.

Numerous quotes and statements shared during interviews were outlined. Notable comments include the following:

- No one championed the salmon funding requests in the Legislature.
- Watershed-based lobbying is a big problem statewide. Watershed planning implementation suffers from the same problem. Thirty plans will be finalized, yet there is no organization to advocate for them. For instance, no "Association of Watershed Planners" exists.
- Local governments and other local organizations did not visibly lobby requests.

Ms. Napier suggested strengthening outreach, education and legislative language for the next session.

Mr. Swartout added that nurturing a champion is another idea. The STC will have more time to discuss the legislative process after a Watershed Coordinator is hired.

Shared Strategy prospects for the 2008 legislative session were reviewed. Recommendations for a future coordinated state funding strategy for 2008 and beyond were presented. Mr. Swartout pointed out that legislators should hear from their constituents and local leaders on key points before and during session to support funding or policy proposals.

Mr. Connelly said including Mr. Swartout's last point in the Partnership's festival message is a good idea.

Mr. Swartout said it might be prudent for Mr. Traisman to come and talk to the Partnership.

Mr. Roach said the Partnership should thank the Legislature for the last funding allocation, request funding in the next session, and highlight accomplishments.

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Mr. Swartout suggested initiating discussions on the US Army Corps of Engineers and USGS support as part of the upcoming 2009 - 2011 biennium.

Mr. Roach added he'd like to see a map listing number of river miles opened, culvert replacements, and similar improvements. A map also provides a perspective on the size of the Chehalis Basin. Data on the number of river miles and square miles in the watershed could help provide additional context.

Ms. Napier and Mr. Swartout agreed that highlighting partnerships and coordinating joint messages is a good idea.

Additional legislative and other feedback offered by members is summarized as follows:

- Invite legislators to the Watershed Festival.
- Nurture a watershed planning champion.
- Coordinate a legislative breakfast (Coastal Caucus, Lewis County).
- It would be nice to assemble key legislators (Swecker, DeBolt, Alexander) and provide a presentation highlighting in physical work completed. *Ms. Napier indicated she will follow up with Lewis County Commissioners.*
- Grays Harbor County hosts a lunch sponsored by the chamber.
- Thurston County also holds a legislative send-off breakfast with commissioners.
- Pursue discussions on the Chehalis Basin with all local chambers. At the least, members should attend legislative functions.
- Basin representatives should wear attractive nametags. Festival volunteers and participants should also have nametags. *Mr. Swartout said he will follow up regarding Thurston County pins.*
- As a separate venue, host an annual "state of the watershed" dinner and serve local food products. Also, members could attend stakeholder (Farm Bureau) events.
- An STC member should attend the Farm City Dinner.
- Establish a partnership with DOE when talking to the Legislature. *Mr. Craig offered to follow up.*

Develop/Confirm CBP Agenda, and Set Agenda for October STC Meeting

Members discussed the agenda for the Partnership's September meeting:

- USGS presentation (60 minutes)
- Watershed work plan priorities
- Watershed Coordinator process
- Watershed Festival

Ms. Holbrook Shaw asked Ms. Napier to include a message on the Partnership's September meeting agenda calling for volunteers for the festival. Ms. Napier asked Ms. Holbrook Shaw to provide her with a list of needs.

Members discussed the logistics associated with the festival (setting up Friday night, hiring security, garbage disposal), inviting Bill Jarocki back to the STC in November, and having time available to discuss legislative and storage project issues in October.

Mr. Swartout said the intent is assembling a group to meet at DOE with John Kliem facilitating a discussion on sequencing eight potential storage projects to a short list of three.

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Mr. Roach referred to the legislative message, and that it's important to compliment government agencies and the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation for their participation and support.

Mr. Craig asked to schedule time (90 minutes) at the STC's next meeting to talk about USGS developing a more detailed SOW.

Adjournment

With there being no further business, Chair Swartout adjourned the meeting at 1:34 p.m.

Prepared by Cheri Lindgren, Recording Secretary
Puget Sound Meeting Services