

**CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP
STEERING TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY
Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
600 Capitol Way
Olympia, WA
December 4, 2008
9:30 AM**

Meeting Summary

MEMBERS PRESENT

Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County
Christine Hempleman, Department of Ecology (DOE)
Bob Burkle, Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)
Mark Swartout, Thurston County
Kahle Jennings, City of Centralia
Lonnie Crumley, Stream Works Consulting
William Gow, Puget Sound Meeting Services
Jerry Louthain, HDR
Nancy Allison, Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership
Janel Spaulding, Chehalis Basin Partnership/Grays Harbor College
Joel Green, Grays Harbor College
Taylor Pittman, US Fish & Wildlife Service

Welcome & Introductions

Chair Mark Swartout called the December 4, 2008 meeting of Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) Steering Technical Committee (STC) to order at 9:35 a.m. Everyone present provided self-introductions.

Chair Swartout reported Brian Peck's open position at the Department of Fish and Wildlife has been posted for applicants. The position is responsible for the Chehalis Fisheries Restoration Program and other salmon recovery projects.

Agenda

A meeting agenda was reviewed.

Update on the Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership

Kahle Jennings reported he requested the update in part because the Port of Centralia received a letter from the Washington Coast Sustainable Partnership (WCSSP) about interest in becoming a member of WCSSP.

Nancy Allison, Executive Director, WCSSP, said the Port of Centralia's partnership within the Chehalis Basin Partnership does not necessarily transfer to membership in the WCSSP because of the focus only on salmon issues, which is a narrower focus than the CBP. The Port of Centralia's participation can be at any level the Port desires from receiving monthly information to participation as a boardmember. It's dependent on the level of interest by the Port of Centralia.

Ms. Allison described the Lead Entity Program comprised of Lead Entity Groups along the Washington coast. Lead Entities engage a wide range of participants as project sponsors, committee members, agencies providing technical and process support, and on-the-ground volunteers. The WCSSP is a regional oversight organization for the Lead Entity Groups.

Bob Burkle reported the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) distributes funds to Lead Entities for their respective regions. WCSSP was established to guide the distribution of SRFB funds to ensure the funds are expended on projects of interest within each of the regions.

Ms. Allison shared that the state encouraged coastal Lead Entities to formally organize the region. The region was geographically established in 1999 when the Lead Entity Groups were established. The coast region never formally organized as other regions within the state had, with the exception of the Northeast Region.

Mr. Jennings agreed it's important for establishing the organization to enable the opportunity to compete for funding. Ms. Allison said her role is to be the voice for the coast in Olympia because there is inequity in how funds are distributed across the state. The coastal region wants to ensure it receives its fair share of those funds. She noted that although the region does not have listed species, it's much less expensive to avoid adding additional species to the threatened list, which is why it's important to receive funding.

Ms. Hempleman mentioned a conversation with a DOE employee involved in the grant program who conveyed that DOE is looking at ways to coordinate funding sources in watershed and salmon programs. The concept of "Salmon Stronghold" was not understood by the employee. Ms. Napier said the concept is a fairly new concept. Ms. Allison said the Quinault Indian Nation has been officially designated as a "Stronghold." It falls under the North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership, chaired by Sarah LaBorde. Ms. LaBorde is a strong advocate for the coast. Ms. Allison said she sits on the Regional Allocation Task Force, which is an ad hoc group comprised of other regional directors and representatives from other organizations. The group reviews allocations for each region and whether the percentage for each region should be adjusted. The group agreed to focus on streamlining the process and seeking sources of other funds. One suggestion included coordinating different funding sources.

Mr. Swartout asked whether critical habitat for bull trout has been determined in the Chehalis River. Mr. Burkle said the location of bull trout has been determined but he is unsure about the identification of designated critical habitat. A recovery plan was completed for bull trout in Puget Sound. Mr. Swartout said the reason for his question relates to NOAA Fisheries releasing a scientific document how development within the floodplain affects salmon habitat and whether it will apply to bull trout. Mr. Burkle said he's unsure if there is that degree of a link for bull trout because the fish essentially use the estuary for feeding. Bull trout feed heavily on juvenile salmon and to the extent floodplain development is detrimental to salmon, that aspect is not favorable. Mr. Swartout said he understood bull trout were discovered in the Satsop. Mr. Burkle said it was determined the fish were not bull trout but were in fact brook trout. The nearest bull trout spawn is in the Quinault River. The fish is relatively abundant in the Quinault River. He cited other areas of the state where bull trout are located.

Ms. Napier said when the Lead Entities discussed the formation of the region; there was strong participation by WRIA 20. WRIA 20 attempted to form a separate Lead Entity, which the state opposed. There continues to be a strong presence by WRIA 20 entities at the WCSSP meetings. She encouraged members to attend the regional meetings representing the Chehalis basin to ensure strong representation by the basin. Chair Swartout indicated an interest in attending future meetings. Ms. Allison said WCSSP

meets the third Wednesday of each month at rotating locations. Typically, the meetings are from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. She provided a copy of WCSSP's brochure.

Ms. Allison shared that the Chehalis basin is the largest Lead Entity Group in the region. Decisions at WCSSP meetings are based on consensus. She encouraged participation from members representing the Chehalis basin. Mr. Swartout commented on the consensus process and recommended including a super majority process as well especially involving funding decisions when members cannot attain a consensus. Ms. Allison said at this point, only ground rules have been developed for moving forward. The official board has not been seated. Currently, only the interim committee has been established.

Ms. Allison left the meeting.

Legislative Outreach

Review Brochure & Provide Feedback

Ms. Spaulding distributed a current draft of the Partnership brochure. She described recent changes based on feedback from members. Ms. Spaulding asked whether the brochure should focus on the funding request for the biennium or for the next fiscal year.

Chair Swartout said the brochure should include accomplishments from the last biennium with a focus on funding through the Department of Ecology's Watershed Program for the next biennium. Ms. Napier cited the different funding sources for the various projects. Chair Swartout asked whether all projects are included. Ms. Napier said the GIS Clearinghouse project and the Groundwater Characterization Project with USGS are not listed. Chair Swartout recommended condensing descriptions of the accomplishments and including the GIS Clearinghouse and Groundwater Characterization Projects.

Members discussed characterization of the Chehalis River Basin as the second largest in the state and suggested revising it to state that it's one of the largest basins in the state. Mr. Burkle suggesting revising the characterization to state something similar to, "The Chehalis River Basin is the largest basin originating entirely within the state."

Members discussed the photo of the 2008 Chehalis Watershed Festival and suggested enlarging the photo and moving the photo to the back of the brochure.

Members discussed bullets under the section identifying funding requests. Ms. Napier said the Partnership's Phase 4 funds are nearly expended and she wants to work towards extending the funding window from six years to ten years.

Discussion followed on the Partnership's support of DOE's funding appropriation, which includes funding for the Chehalis basin as well as possible lobbying efforts if DOE doesn't receive its biennium funding appropriation.

Chair Swartout recommended revising the first bullet under *Our Requests* to state, "The model is essential to manage water resources in the basin. USGS is providing half of the funding for the project." Additionally, include the full amount for the 2009-2011 biennium.

Chair Swartout suggested revising the lead-in paragraph under *Our Requests* to reflect that the bulleted items are the Partnership's top priorities among all the 52 actions required to implement the Watershed Plan. Ms. Hempleman suggested adding language that the funding is an essential next step that supports other priorities.

Review Funding Request to Department of Ecology

Ms. Napier referred to the first bullet under *Our Requests* within the brochure and distributed a copy of the *Operational Project Grant Request Form* to DOE for the Groundwater Characterization and Numerical Simulation project. Last spring, DOE, during its budget guidance process, requested the submittal of a brief description of actions the Partnership wants to pursue. The Partnership submitted two projects. The Groundwater application is due on December 5, 2008, which is a project partnering with USGS. USGS developed a scope of work, which has been condensed and translated to the grant application. The request is for \$510,000 for the biennium. It's unlikely because of the state's economic problems, that the full amount will be received. However, it's important to pursue the funding request to demonstrate the need. The Flood Authority could also benefit from the project. It's important for everyone to know about the Partnership's next steps. Ms. Napier said she is working with the USGS representative to scale the project back. If others can contribute to the project, the request could be scaled back, through offerings of technical resources and in-kind assistance.

Mr. Swartout said during a Partnership meeting, US Army Corps of Engineers representatives indicated the Corps would be unable to do a good job without having the information from the Groundwater Characterization Project. He asked whether the Corps has approached USGS on any portion of the project. Ms. Napier advised not to her knowledge. Ms. Hempleman said Laura Orr has asked about some connections with the project. Mr. Swartout commented that it's difficult to understand how the Corps can complete modeling without the information.

Ms. Hempleman said it's unclear about the role of the Flood Authority and whether the Authority is considering a list of projects that can be completed immediately or if there is a long-term management plan. Mr. Swartout said the Authority is moving forward with a comprehensive flood hazard management plan. Ms. Hempleman asked whether that plan will have short-term components. It appears the long-term components will mitigate throughout the watershed. Mr. Swartout advised that Authority members did not discuss that level of detail during the last meeting.

Ms. Napier suggested addressing the project proposal at the next Flood Authority meeting and the benefits it can provide to the Authority with the caveat that it's likely the chance of the project receiving full funding is slim. Ms. Hempleman offered to address the project at the next DOE state team meeting as it addresses flood management in the basin. Short-term measures are important as well, but to address the long-term flooding issue, the focus needs to be wide and diverse. Ms. Napier said another message could be conveyed to DOE if the Authority agreed to sponsor the project to show how the Partnership is working with the Flood Authority.

Ms. Hempleman commented on a recent submittal of a gauge grant to DOE from Lewis County under watershed planning not realizing the county should have coordinated with the Partnership. Ms. Napier said she spoke with Shirley Cook at Lewis County about the request, as there was a misunderstanding by the county that DOE funds river gauges. The issue emphasizes the disconnect between the Partnership and the Authority.

Ms. Napier referred to the second bullet for sponsoring legislation to extend Phase 4 watershed plan implementation funds from three years to nine years. Last spring, she said she met with DOE's Bill Zachmann and discussed the Partnership's funding level decreasing to \$70,000 each year from \$125,000, which is insufficient for the Partnership. The conversation focused on increasing the amount and extending the time period. At that time, Mr. Zachmann was willing to extend the time period but didn't want to consider increasing the funding level. Currently, DOE's message is not to pursue the legislation because of the state's current economic problems. She said she emphasized the current investment to date and that if implementation activities are not funded for the future, the question is what was the point of the last eight to nine years. Mr. Zachmann said it would be a situation where if the Partnership wants to pursue seeking a sponsor for the legislation, DOE could support the action. However, DOE will not pursue the legislation. She presented the proposed legislation, which provides for a six-year extension that may be available for up to \$50,000 each year.

Taylor Pittman arrived at the meeting.

Additionally, if there are multiple planning areas, additional funds will be available. This is the legislation that the Partnership would work on sponsoring while also requesting an increase in the funding level.

Members discussed ways to obtain a sponsor for the legislation.

Members discussed completing the statement within the third bullet under *Our Requests*. Ms. Hempleman suggested the bullet should state, "Continued coordination and technical support from the Department of Ecology and other state agencies." Members discussed specifically identifying the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Members agreed with the revision stating, "Continued coordination and technical support from the Department of Ecology, Department of Fish and Wildlife, and other state agencies."

Chair Swartout suggested revising the last sentence in the second bullet to state, "These funds help ensure the Watershed Plan is implemented to its fullest potential as envisioned by the Governor and the Legislature."

Mr. Jennings suggested adding participation in the Chehalis Flood Authority within the section under *Accomplishments*.

Chair Swartout said he will address the legislation during a meeting with Tom Clingman at DOE.

Work Plan Update

Watershed Festival – Ideas for 2007 & Bike Tour

Ms. Spaulding said she is working with the City of Aberdeen and Historical Seaport on scheduling the Watershed Festival for 2009. Two possible dates include September 19 or October 3, 2009. The pavilion and "Fin" have been reserved for both days. The Historical Seaport is approving its schedule within the next several weeks.

Ms. Pittman mentioned coordinating the Farm Tour for the Watershed Festival planning effort. Ms. Spaulding said it may be to the point where both events are becoming so large that more coordination is needed. Ms. Pittman said the Farm Tour debriefing cited the difficulty of having both events on the same day, which was not advantageous because of the overlap of people and events. However, it would be beneficial to establish a date, such as scheduling the Farm Tour as the kick-off event for the awareness week. The tour needs to be scheduled near the end of the harvest. The tour promotes the relationship between water quality, agriculture, and the Partnership. Additionally, the tour continues to be an avenue for public outreach on the Partnership. She asked to include the group in the planning discussion so that the group understands the date constraints associated with scheduling Fin and the pavilion for the Watershed Festival.

Members discussed conflicts with the two proposed event dates. The proposed dates are the two best dates to capture the desired attendance. Fin in the classroom is featured the week before at elementary schools.

Ms. Napier said during the last several years, the Partnership has sponsored the cost of the festival, which requires some additional sponsors to help absorb rising costs. Members commented on the possibility of either having the tour precede the festival or having the tour at the conclusion of the awareness week.

Ms. Pittman reported on the idea of scheduling an event in the upper Chehalis basin along the lines of a festival involving citizens and increasing awareness. She referred to the Mallonee farm, which hosts Lupine Day and recommended consideration of a bike tour in the upper basin during the spring as an annual event or fundraiser to draw attention to the basin and attract people to a fun and educational event.

Ms. Pittman reported she and Ms. Hempleman met with an individual who has initiated "Bike the Deschutes" event in July. The event requires much effort and coordination. However, if the bike tour was a fundraiser it might be able to pay for the costs of the event.

The Mallonees have an ESA listed plant on their property and due to organic practices, have been able to sustain the plant and remove the property from the critical habitat list. Many of the other neighbors have not been as successful. The Mallonees offered to hold a community day in June during the time the Lupine is blooming. The family has hosted two events held at the Baw Faw Grange during the second Saturday in June. The event includes a free catered lunch by the Baw Faw Grange and free Organic Valley Family of Farms cheese and cream. The event could attract people living outside the watershed to enjoy a rural and rich area. A bike tour could involve touring of farms and restoration areas. She noted the discussions have been preliminary and haven't involved any organized group or Lewis County.

Ms. Pittman said if the event is held, a brochure would be needed for bicyclists. Ms. Hempleman said the issue is whether there is a connection to the Watershed Plan and whether the Partnership is the logical partner. Members discussed possible options such as accommodating non-bicyclists, landowner cooperation and participation, length of the bike tour, sites to visit, and scheduling bus tours for non-bicyclists.

Mr. Jennings suggested beginning small and contacting local bike groups. Ms. Pittman indicated she is planning to talk to the Capital City Bike Club. Members shared ideas for initiating a bike tour with acknowledgement that a 2009 event is too late to include in the work plan. Ms. Hempleman suggested contacting other potential partners, such as the Native Plant Society and local bike clubs to seek a person to lead the effort.

Ms. Spaulding provided a list of potential subcommittees to organize to assist in planning next year's Watershed Festival.

Members discussed the water taste test contest and award and how pleased the City of Centralia was in receiving the award. Ms. Napier suggested soliciting volunteers to obtain water samples from each city for next year's taste test as well as establishing some parameters for judging. Mr. Jennings suggested having the water collected within 24 hours of the event, and other parameters to ensure a fair test between the samples.

Ms. Spaulding said she would like to present the list at the Partnership meeting to seek volunteers.

Ms. Hempleman suggested an option of a dunk tank, such as agency personnel or county commissioners. A dunk tank could also be used as a fundraiser.

Members agreed to have Ms. Spaulding present the list of subcommittees to the Partnership to solicit volunteers. Members were encouraged to volunteer on a subcommittee.

Outreach Survey

Ms. Spaulding referred to a citizen survey developed by Randy Lehr prior to his departure to measure citizens' understanding of water resources management within the Chehalis basin. The survey is 11 pages comprised of 60 questions. The Water Quality Committee reviewed the survey and indicated the survey was too lengthy and that most people wouldn't take the time to complete the survey. At the Water Banking Workshop at DOE, Ms. Hempleman shared information on an idea to conduct an outreach-focused survey, which might be another option instead of distributing the Partnership's survey. The estimated cost of mailing and printing the survey is approximately \$10,000 to \$15,000.

Ms. Spaulding noted that some of the questions appear to be duplications only stated differently. Because of the length of the survey, Ms. Spaulding suggested shortening the survey as well as including information about the Partnership and how people can become involved.

Mr. Swartout said when Mr. Lehr presented the survey his concern was whether the survey would be predictive or whether the survey was to obtain basic information about people living within the watershed. If the goal is for the latter, it shouldn't be considered a survey. To successfully accomplish a predictive survey, at least 400 randomly selected people need to participate. Ms. Spaulding said Mr. Lehr had indicated approximately 1,000 surveys would need to be returned to obtain a margin of error of 3%, which is why the cost would be so high.

Ms. Hempleman said members of the Water Quality Committee questioned the goal of the survey and whether the goal is outreach or a survey that provides answers. If outreach is the goal, the vehicle should be very different.

Mr. Swartout said Budd Inlet is working with its consultant who provided a cost estimate of \$35,000 to conduct a predictive survey of randomly selected individuals participating in a telephone survey. He suggested including a list of questions on one or two pages and incorporating it within the *Drops of Water* newsletter. Ms. Spaulding offered that the survey could also be included in local utility billings.

Members discussed situations where people might complete more than one survey and the difficulty associated with people returning surveys.

Ms. Spaulding addressed questions on the status of the Watershed Pledge.

Mr. Swartout offered a suggestion of reducing the number of questions to accommodate the size of a large postcard with questions on one side and the address on the other side.

Ms. Spaulding said Mr. Lehr's goal for the survey was to try to identify where people fall within their behavior and the likelihood of changing their behavior. Mr. Swartout agreed the survey is a good survey. He suggested seeking grant funding to ensure the survey is pursued appropriately.

Ms. Napier reported Mr. Wiltzius suggested including providing the ability of completing the Watershed Pledge on the website. Members agreed the suggestion would be beneficial in prompting more people to submit a pledge. Ms. Napier suggested contacting Grays Harbor County for additional information on how to include the pledge on the website.

Letterhead

Ms. Spaulding presented a copy of the current draft of CBP's letterhead. Members provided feedback on how the listing of Partnership members should be reflected. Chair Swartout recommended eliminating "County" within the list of County and list the counties similar to how cities are listed. Members discussed the Department of Ecology's signatory as a member representing all state agencies. Members recommended substituting Department of Ecology with "Washington State Agencies" to reflect that intent. Members discussed options on how to list state agency partners as well as fisheries and ports. Mr. Green advocated for listing all the organizations. The goal is not to offend members who may not regularly attend Partnership meetings but to simplify the design of the letterhead. One option discussed was not including the list of members and listing only the categories of membership, such as cities, counties, etc. Members agreed to include similar language included on the brochures stating, "Working together to responsibly manage our water resources in the Chehalis Basin." Members initially agreed to include that statement and a list of "Citizens, Stakeholders, Tribes, Cities, Counties, Water Districts, State Agencies, Federal Agencies" in the left column. Members discussed options and voiced different opinions in terms of too much detail, ensuring any list includes all parties, including only the parties of the agreement, and the connotation of including "special interests" and what it could invoke.

Members agreed to list the following categories of Cities, Counties, Tribes, Water Suppliers, State Agencies, Federal Agencies, Citizens, and Stakeholders in the left hand column.

Members discussed the logo representing the outline of the Chehalis basin. Ms. Hempleman said most people would not know what the outline represents. Chair Swartout suggested improving the contrast of the map showing the outline of the watershed incorporating the two WRIAs. Members offered suggestions ranging from the map including only the main tributaries. Members discussed having Kathy Jacobson pursue a logo contest through the schools. The contest could be published in the *Drops of Water newsletter*. Centralia College was suggested as an option for designing a logo through graphic classes.

Chair Swartout recommended eliminating "Partnership" under the map.

CBP Agenda

The December 19, 2008 meeting of the CBP includes:

- Debriefing of the Watershed Festival – Kathy Jacobson
- Review Brochure and Letterhead Design
- Invite Lewis County Commissioner Averill to provide an update on the Flood Authority.
- Members acknowledged the meeting is the last meeting for Commissioners Bob Beerbower, Richard Graham, and Bob Macleod.

STC Agenda for January Meeting

Members discussed the agenda for the January meeting. Possible agenda items include:

- Discussion CBP's role regarding comments on governmental policies.
- Discussion on using the DIP to draft a 2009 Monthly Work Program for the CBP.
- Discuss whether water banking is an appropriate tool to retain agriculture and forestry practices.

Chair Swartout commented on the water banking issue and some of the tools the basin could consider.

Members discussed options for soliciting AG representation on the Water Quality Committee. Ms. Napier suggested jointly meeting with the Water Quality Committee on January 8, 2009 because of holiday.

Ms. Spaulding reported on assistance by Kim Ashmoor to organize an introductory stream team meeting in Chehalis on December 16, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. at the Utilities Building, 1100 North Tower.

Adjournment

With there being no further business, Chair Swartout adjourned the meeting at 12:20 p.m.