

**CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP  
STEERING TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY  
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Building  
600 Capitol Way  
Olympia, WA  
January 3, 2008  
9:30 AM**

**Meeting Summary**

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**PRESENT**

Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County

Mark Swartout, Thurston County

Debbie Carnevali, WDFW

Kahle Jennings, City of Centralia

Chris Hempleman, Department of Ecology

Glen Connelly, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis  
Reservation

Chanele Holbrook-Shaw, Citizen, Thurston County

William T. Gow II, Puget Sound Meeting Services

Jim Hill, Citizen, Thurston County

Lisa Dilley, City of Lacey

Terry Willis, Citizen, Thurston County

**Welcome & Introductions**

Chair Mark Swartout called the January 3, 2008 Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) Steering Technical Committee (STC) meeting to order at 9:49 a.m.

**Meeting Agenda**

Members reviewed the meeting agenda. Jim Hill requested adding a debriefing on the December flood to a future meeting agenda of the Chehalis Basin Partnership.

Kahle Jennings reported members of the Critical Incident Stress Management Team from Mason County spoke to employees in Centralia after the flood. He agreed it's good to have opportunities for people to talk about and deal with the aftermath of the flood.

Chair Swartout commented on the benefits of obtaining data on the flood such as the height of the flood and areas impacted. The role of the CBP should also be discussed. After the 1996 flood, the US Army Corps of Engineers assumed responsibility for many of the follow-up activities.

Members exchanged ideas on who should provide a report to the CBP regarding the flood. Some members suggested a format enabling members to share information about their respective agency/jurisdiction.

Mr. Jennings reported the wastewater treatment plant experienced a flood height 18 inches higher than the 1996 flood.

Chair Swartout said when a federal emergency is declared, funds are available from FEMA. However, FEMA funds are not necessarily for the event but are based by each jurisdiction. If for example Thurston County did not experience a specific level of damage, the county receives no federal assistance nor do the citizens residing in the county. Members discussed the need to have a coordinated plan for citizens to file damage claims to enable the county reach a damage threshold high enough to qualify for FEMA aid. Chair Swartout said Thurston County was able to attain the threshold to receive FEMA aid.

Terry Willis noted FEMA doesn't cover everything. For example, agriculture is not covered by FEMA unless the property owner carries flood insurance. FEMA also does not cover feed or livestock, but only assets, such as a house or equipment within a barn, if the subscriber has coverage for contents. Debbie

Carnevali asked whether a farmer could secure a low interest loan. Ms. Willis advised a farmer can obtain a low interest loan only if the farmer is unable to secure a loan elsewhere. Many farmers lost their barns but not their homes. Neither FEMA nor the Red Cross offers any assistance in those instances.

Jim Hill commented that a former student who owns a farm was able to save 12 cows from a herd of 442.

Chair Swartout commented on the need to consider the role of the Partnership and what actions can be undertaken. Thurston County's Community Rating System (CRS) program requires the county to send a flood bulletin to each citizen living in a floodplain. The bulletin advises citizens to obtain flood insurance. Mr. Hill said that's one avenue for public outreach to consider. Chair Swartout suggested the mailings should be completed by all counties. Mr. Hill said one value of the Partnership is that it's a forum that brings everyone together concerning watershed issues.

Members discussed how floods impact transportation and how the two are interconnected.

Chanele Holbrook-Shaw asked if it's possible to provide Randy Lehr at Grays Harbor College with flood documentation to create a new layer of information for the database pertaining to the flood event. If and when the US Army Corps of Engineers decides to take some action, flood documentation will be available to assist the Corps in their work. Chair Swartout said the Chehalis Tribe documented the elevation of the flood at various locations. Glen Connolly confirmed that the tribe is working on a flood hazard mitigation plan for the reservation. The tribe completed a linear mapping of the reservation just prior to the flood. A consultant company is completing some GPS markings and taking height measurements of high flood points to assist the tribe.

Mr. Jennings reported the City of Centralia has an emergency response plan and sets up an emergency operations center that is separate from the Lewis County emergency operations center.

Chair Swartout commented that documentation of the flood would make a good college thesis project.

Members discussed the roles of the Corps and the state. Mr. Jennings said the Corps has indicated it will evaluate the 1996 flood study and reevaluate dike levels. The reason no mitigation occurred in 1996 was because no state or federal funding was provided. Mr. Hill said at the time, Lewis County wouldn't approve the funding submission because the county feared it was signing a blank check. Mr. Jennings said one of the reasons Centralia did not become involved was that the plan did not address any mitigation to solve the city's problems.

Ms. Willis commented about the extreme conditions associated with the flood that involved water, debris and mud that began in the upper valley and carried into the lower valley. She noted that it was reported the water was six inches higher at Porter than the 1996 flood. She said she stayed up through the night expecting the river to crest six inches higher, but it never happened, and in fact, was lower by six inches. The question is why the water acted the way it did. She suggested studying the flood before undertaking any remodeling. Roads are being constructed that act as dikes because there is no where for the water to flow or escape under the road.

Lee Napier introduced Chris Hempleman who is representing the Department of Ecology and who replaces Steve Craig as a member of the Partnership. Ms. Hempleman reported she worked in water quality and with TMDL studies. Other positions within the department include the toxics clean-up on federal facilities and work on water rights in the Yakima adjudication. Her experience includes project management, public involvement, and grants management, as well as some work on water rights.

Mr. Jennings spoke positively about Ms. Hempleman's public outreach experience and her commitment to involve the public.

Members discussed Ms. Napier's participation on the selection panel for Mr. Craig's position. Members discussed the letter from the Partnership to the DOE stressing the importance of appointing a replacement for Mr. Craig.

Mr. Jennings commented on the recent retirement of two DOE watershed leads with a possible third retirement occurring in the near term. Only one position has been filled.

Members discussed the success of the Nisqually watershed in terms of public and community outreach and awareness and exchanged ideas on the need for the Partnership to undertake similar marketing efforts.

Ms. Willis introduced Lisa Dilley, who is attending St. Martin's University, majoring in hydraulic engineering and as a resident of Grays Harbor County, personally interested in the work of the Chehalis Basin Partnership. Ms. Dilley also lives next to the Satsop River and works for the City of Lacey. Ms. Dilley's work with the city involves existing septic systems within the city.

Members discussed septic systems located within the boundary of a city. Mr. Jennings shared that many people install wells and septic systems on the City of Centralia's critical aquifer. Chair Swartout said Thurston County is trying to develop policies to prohibit similar situations.

#### **Hydraulic Continuity Scope of Work**

Chair Swartout reported funding was available to fund part of the losing and gaining reach study by USGS. The issue now is determining how to move forward from this point as well as determining whether grant funds are available or if the work should continue incrementally. The larger picture could include providing USGS with the scope to undertake the entire project and then subcontract some of the work to private contractors, or not at all, or give the entire project to a private firm with USGS oversight. The issue needs to be discussed at the Partnership. Mr. Swartout suggested it should be a USGS project so that they can control the project and be an integral part of the contracting process with private subcontractors to ensure quality of work meets USGS standards.

Mr. Jennings advised that he doesn't object to the suggestion and that his goal is to ensure the project moves forward.

Mr. Swartout said Mr. Craig was very instrumental in contracting with USGS for the losing and gaining reach study. The issue is the future role of DOE to continue that work. Ms. Napier said the funds are from the legislative appropriation. Most of the funds are not contracted through Grays Harbor but through the implementing partner and DOE. Remaining funds for the work includes approximately \$95,000. She suggested working with Matt Ely, USGS, to determine how much work could be funded for \$95,000.

Members discussed the scope of the project. Mr. Jennings said it's possible that USGS can also contribute some funds.

Ms. Holbrook-Shaw commented that the USGS proposal is for approximately a four-year period. She pointed out the possibility of undertaking work in one or two-year increments. Ms. Napier advised that the scope of work may be limited because of the availability of funding.

Chair Swartout suggested contacting Mr. Ely to determine the cost of the four-year effort and then meet with legislators in the next biennium to seek a match of the USGS funds to complete the study. Ms. Willis suggested dividing the study in segments to show what can be accomplished for a specific amount of funds to ensure the study could end at a point that could be picked up later if funding is not available to complete the entire study.

Ms. Holbrook-Shaw said her concern with the proposal is that Mr. Ely conveyed that the study was something that USGS normally undertakes. Mr. Ely appeared to be vague in his presentation in terms of what USGS provides. Chair Swartout said at this point in the process, it's a big picture discussion that could easily get bogged down if too much detail is covered.

Ms. Napier reviewed DOE's role in the project. DOE handles the contract with USGS. The funds are managed by Dave Burdick at DOE. In June or July, after approval to proceed with the losing and gaining reach study, it was decided to pursue the project and because of the timing and the need to expedite a contract with USGS, Mr. Craig assisted with securing the contract to enable the work to occur during the low flow period.

Discussion followed about the timing and sources of funding. Ms. Hempleman asked whether the Partnership maintains a list of prioritized projects in the event funding becomes available. Chair Swartout described the Partnership's process when it sought funding from the Legislature. A tri-fold pamphlet was created of projects the Partnership deemed important and the costs. Ms. Napier and several members met with legislators and provided the information. Ms. Napier advised that the Partnership has also strategized to be general in terms of funding to take advantage of funding opportunities.

Chair Swartout distributed hard copies of a presentation prepared by Thurston County Hydrogeologist Nadine Romero. The information includes data going back to 1930 for the average low flow of either the month of August or September. Mr. Swartout described the map showing the gaining and losing reach within the Chehalis River, Black River, and tributaries per cubic foot per second. The data reveals low flows are increasing. He said he asked Ms. Romero if the result reflects the fact that the river bed could be rising because of sedimentation deposits. Ms. Romero advised that USGS should be recalibrating its gauges to compensate for sediment. It's a good question to ask USGS. The USGS monitoring well that has been in place for a long time also reflects an increase in the water level at Scatter Creek. Ms. Romero has advised that sedimentation of the river should not influence the groundwater monitoring well. For whatever reason, instream flows are increasing as well as the groundwater level. Some members remarked that the results appear to be counterintuitive.

Mr. Jennings suggested having Ms. Romero plot rainfall.

Ms. Holbrook-Shaw identified the location of the monitoring well.

Chair Swartout suggested performing a cluster analysis.

Mr. Jennings said he's reconsidered his suggestion concerning rainfall and suggested not looking at rainfall because the system is fed by groundwater. Instead, he suggested defining a period after it is assumed that the aquifer has been recharged starting in February to determine the rainfall between February and September. It is likely average rainfall between the months of August and September would be meaningful. It must be connected with the recharge of the aquifer.

Chair Swartout said the gauge is the Grand Mound gauge, which is off the Chehalis River. Mr. Jennings said the Chehalis River depends on the aquifer for flows in September and October. If a good rainfall occurs in spring through June, there may be higher flows.

Ms. Holbrook-Shaw said the analysis indicates the largest gaining reach within the Chehalis basin occurs after the mouth of Scatter Creek.

Ms. Willis said she would like to obtain data on the impact of the December flood on the entire river system and what affects it will have on summer instream flows in 2008. The data could show that the water is seeping into streams during the summer months. She remarked that not all of the water flowed out to the ocean. Mr. Hill said one problem and the effects of the flooding will reveal higher flows with much scour resulting in a wider river in many areas causing a decrease in river flow.

Chair Swartout reviewed the proposed scope of work that involves contacting Matt Ely and advising him of the funding level of \$95,000 for preparation of the next steps and incremental costs of the project based on three phases of work. The results will be shared with the STC prior to presentation to the Partnership.

Ms. Napier reported Joel Massman was scheduled to provide a presentation to the Partnership meeting in December. Mr. Massman is a University of Washington professor hired by the Quinault Indian Nation to complete a project. Mr. Massman was ill and unable to attend the meeting. He has committed to attending the Partnership's January meeting. The project involves some hydrogeology analysis somewhere in the Chehalis Basin.

#### **Review Outcome of Water Storage Workshop**

Ms. Napier reported the purpose of the workshop was to select several projects for moving forward with the grant contract with DOE. She said she has communicated with Mr. Burdick that there are two projects and that a scope of work needs to be prepared. The two projects include an aquifer storage and recovery project and a wetland restoration project. DOE has advised they can provide some resources. She commented on the possibility of having Ms. Romero assist in developing the scope of work that will be released for a bid. Chair Swartout suggested contacting Ms. Romero electronically.

Chair Swartout inquired about the differences between a hydrologist, hydrogeologist, and a hydraulic engineer. Ms. Dillely said hydraulic engineers generally design pipelines and levee structures. Hydrologists typically work on surface water issues, such as the movement of rivers, stream and runoff, etc. Hydrogeologists are hydrologists with geology background who understand the movement of groundwater.

Ms. Napier reported on the next steps to develop a scope of work for an aquifer storage and recovery project and a wetland restoration project. Review the feasibility aspects for each project and develop a potential project. She said the projects will not be fully designed but will be projects to be moved forward to a feasibility study.

Chair Swartout said he was somewhat disappointed that low impact development wasn't selected. However, low impact development is an effort that each county should consider as a separate project. Ms. Napier said the workshop discussion involved sharing and eliminating project ideas.

Members discussed whether the selection of the two projects might change because of the recent flood. Ms. Dillely said aquifer recharge and reservoir storage are not mutually exclusive. In the Deschutes basin, reservoir storage on a small scale in multiple locations would serve as aquifer recharge because many times infiltration ponds built for stormwater runoff are actually recharging. There are a number of ways to do

aquifer recharge. Mr. Swartout inquired about the methods for recharging. Ms. Dilley said there are a number of ways to recharge. In some cases, treated water is injected and other ways it's through infiltration or infiltration wells that catch runoff from hills.

Ms. Willis commented about storing water within the river system in deeper ponds that could be another project form and it would be convenient with other smaller projects. Such a project could also be a part of restoration. Ms. Dilley said during her Google search, another aquifer recharge project involved using aquifer recharge to indirectly rehydrate the Everglades. That type of a project goes hand in hand with restoration of wetlands that have been drained. She said Ms. Romero would need to assist in identifying potential sites.

Chair Swartout asked if the outcome will result in a specific site or will it involve potential sites where different types of aquifer recovery could be undertaken. Ms. Napier said during the workshop there were many projects listed. However, it didn't include some of the projects that she's aware of. Perhaps it could be a combination of projects that could be more beneficial because it would help to leverage more funding.

Ms. Holbrook-Shaw referred to the Sampson project that she wants to be a water storage component because it's located in the headwaters of Scatter Creek. The area is a wetland and is located in the headwaters. Ms. Napier said the focus during the workshop centered on the Centralia and Chehalis area for a project.

Mr. Jennings said there are some people who are blaming salmon recovery projects such as riparian protection projects, for the flood. Keeping trees along the stream banks means trees that eventually fall in to the river, which traveled downstream and blocked and destroyed bridges. The issue is significant and the committee should consider that there are some people who would view the project as a threat.

Chair Swartout advised members to consider that floodplain management is based on historical record of flows. When an extraordinary event occurs, it doesn't matter how well the system is managed, a disaster will occur. It's important to consider that as well. It's possible to learn from the flood, but it's not possible to fix everything to prevent a reoccurrence. Chair Swartout pointed out that as the Partnership makes decisions; it doesn't get caught up in the blame game. Mr. Hill said it's important to focus on the mission of the Partnership. Chair Swartout said the real issues to solve include warning people sufficiently in advance, moving livestock from floodplains, and providing as much advance notice to citizens as possible.

Ms. Hempleman suggested advertising the Partnership's flood debriefing discussion to solicit citizen attendance. Mr. Hill commented on the DOE meetings concerning low flow withdrawals from the river and suggested similar efforts could be planned in partnership with DOE.

Members shared information on post-flood meetings hosted by various entities in several locations to provide citizens with information and assistance. Ms. Willis suggested community meetings should follow a triage format so that citizens are directed to the appropriate sources of assistance. Chair Swartout shared that the Thurston County Department of Health initially prepared a six-page informational flyer on how to recover a well after a flood. After further review, the flyer was reduced to a one-page flyer.

Ms. Napier reported the funding proposal to DOE was for \$250,000. Tasks included identifying candidate and top priority water storage projects for design and implementation planning. DOE suggested removal of the tasks. There was a plan to meet with a group of stakeholders, but the identity of the stakeholders outside of the STC is unknown. She asked if that is something that she should focus and bring to the STC or work the issue outside of the STC meetings. Ms. Napier described the benefits of working the issue through the STC because of the benefits of exchanging information and because many people attend regularly scheduled

meetings. She asked members to consider dedicating time outside of the meeting to work on the project. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw affirmed that it is possible and cited the workshop as an example. Chair Swartout suggested advertising the meeting date to ascertain the attendance.

Members discussed the agenda for future STC meetings. It was agreed that a major portion of the meeting will be devoted to the USGS study. Ms. Napier suggested dividing the agenda to address the USGS study and the water storage project. She agreed to begin working on scope of work.

Chair Swartout said he liked the idea of working on smaller individual sites rather than one large site. Additionally, Napavine was included on the list, and it would be nice if a project could benefit a city that is experiencing water shortage.

### **Governance Structure**

Ms. Napier reported Bill Jarocki attended the November meeting and discussed organizational design ideas. He offered to develop a presentation to the Partnership, which was provided to the Partnership's November meeting. STC members developed a list of what was desired of an organization and why, which was presented to the Partnership. Subsequently, there were discussions centering on the lack of a specific model that could serve the Partnership. Mr. Jarocki offered to assist the STC in refining a governance model with the STC at its February meeting. *Note: Mr. Jarocki is not able to attend the February STC meeting.* She suggested a two-hour time slot should be sufficient.

Chair Swartout said he will provide some information on a regional planning group in Skagit County. The group resembles a regional planning council but contracts work with various government entities. The group is a nonprofit organization.

Ms. Napier agreed to distribute a list of desired functions of the organization. Ms. Napier reviewed some of the feedback offered by Partnership members. Ann Wick recommended revising one of the bulleted items pertaining to "provide a level of independence from the influence of any specific interest group or any single member of the group." Ms. Wick suggested revising the bullet to read, "Respect the interests of specific groups." She suggested it's important not to ignore small interest groups' valid concerns. Terry Harris added that it's important to not let any one cause, organization, or individual dominate the process. The two points of respecting and providing a level of independence from the influence of any specific group or single member are necessary but should be independent of each other.

Ms. Napier said she reviewed the suggestions as a context for a particular reason because at the meeting John Penberth highlighted the bullet and said to Guy McMinds, "See, they are looking to take away consensus." She said she wants to ensure that everyone remembers the conversation that in thinking about an organization there is goal to provide a level of independence from the influence of any specific interest group or any single member of the group. The desire for a level of independence is not to eliminate consensus but to balance all the interest groups. Another comment was offered to "maintain the cultural and social integrity of the Partnership." That is more of a philosophy of how the group interacts.

Mr. Jennings referred to the consensus issue. Many years ago he provided a presentation on consensus when the group was having some problems. He said he used the terms that if following a true consensus model, one individual or someone representing a group, could potentially hold the entire group hostage. He said he received a strong reaction from members. Mr. Jennings said Mr. Penberth's focus on consensus probably comes from his desire to block consensus.

Mr. Hill said it's important to ensure respect between the members but there needs to be a mechanism to move forward.

Members discussed the consensus model and various levels of consensus.

Ms. Napier said there was a suggestion that Ms. Wick's comments might be better covered in an issues statement of what the organization does.

Ms. Napier said Mr. Jarocki will provide the structure for the STC to have the discussion. Ms. Willis suggested the discussion should also include what needs to be changed about current practices when changing to a different governance structure.

Ms. Napier reported the Partnership's presentation included a matrix of functions and different types of organizations. STC members agreed they need to revisit the list of organization functions and different organizations. Ms. Napier said since Mr. J is not familiar with Washington State organizations, the burden of developing a list of organizations will be on the STC. Chair Swartout offered to conduct some research. He cited some previous work on developing lake management districts and flood districts. He asked members to also undertake some research as well as offer input on what the organization should do.

Members exchanged ideas to discuss:

- Pros and cons
- Duties or transference of duties
- Approaching the Legislature for legislating a new governance structure
- Next steps
- Longevity of the organization

Mr. Jennings reported the cities of Centralia, Chehalis, Secretary of the Washington State Department of Transportation, and Steve Phillips are meeting in the next week to discuss how the local jurisdictions can work with WSDOT and the state to address I-5 and local flooding issues.

Mr. Hill suggested the flood was a watershed issue and not so much a transportation issue, although the closure of I-5 did attract the state's attention. Chair Swartout said transportation may be the issue that sparks the attention but that it may not be the issue of focus. Mr. Jennings said the concern by local jurisdictions is that the focus will be to raise I-5 to preserve the transportation corridor while local needs are ignored.

Members discussed various ways to engage the Governor and state officials.

Chair Swartout assigned members a homework assignment to study different types of organizations.

Chair Swartout said although a legislative breakfast didn't occur this year, Ms. Napier and he will try and develop a legislative packet to provide to legislators during visits. Glen Connolly said the tribe's lobbyist expressed positive feedback to become involved in legislative meetings. Ms. Willis suggested including agriculture interests because of recent losses from the flood. Chair Swartout said during previous visits, members stressed how inclusive the Partnership is of all interests. It may not be necessary to have all interests attend the meetings. Ms. Willis said she offered the suggestion because the Farm Bureau has been in close contact with the Governor concerning agricultural impacts of the flood.

## **February CBP**

- USGS Proposal Follow-up
- Role of Partnership with respect to flooding
- Joel Massman Quinault Indian Tribe Water Testing Presentation

Mr. Jennings said the Partnership's plan includes a recommendation to preserve/encourage agriculture and forestry. It has been discussed that within floodplains, agriculture is a land use that is compatible and yet it appears there is a bias against helping agriculture recover from the flood. He suggested there might be some long term actions to consider. Ms. Willis said there are some issues coming before the Legislature that the Partnership may want to support because it supports the plan. Several things occurring during the flood revealed that agriculture is generally self-reliant and farmers began flood clean-up as soon as the water began to recede. The biggest problem in the agriculture community is providing assistance to those that need it the most because many will not accept the help. There is some legislation pertaining to flooding and erosion that helps people who have property that is impacted by erosion. Other legislation pertains to expediting and/or reducing or eliminating permit fees to help people recover from the flood.

Mr. Hill suggested including a legislative update on the STC's February agenda.

Chair Swartout suggested inviting a representative from the US Army Corps of Engineers to the CBP meeting.

Members shared information their respective experiences in the flood.

#### **Adjournment**

With there being no further business, Chair Swartout adjourned the meeting at 12:30 p.m.