

**CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP
STEERING TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY
Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
600 Capitol Way
Olympia, WA
April 2, 2009
9:30 AM**

Meeting Summary

PRESENT

Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County

Kahle Jennings, City of Centralia

Glen Connelly, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis
Reservation

Mark Swartout, Thurston County

Christine Hempleman, Department of Ecology (DOE)

Janel Spaulding, Grays Harbor College

Lonnie Crumley, StreamWorks Consulting

Cheri Lindgren, Puget Sound Meeting Services

Welcome & Introductions

Chair Mark Swartout called the meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) Steering Technical Committee (STC) to order at 9:30 a.m.

Chair Swartout reviewed the meeting agenda.

Detailed Implementation Plan Work Plan Update

Lee Napier distributed a draft Watershed Education and Outreach (E&O) Plan concept for review. The concept was presented to the Partnership on March 27, 2009. Contractually, the CBP is scheduled to update the Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP). She is working with Ms. Hempleman on the contract amendment.

Kahle Jennings commented on how other initiatives and plans have evolved into education and outreach.

Chair Swartout responded that an element of Ms. Spaulding's responsibilities is education and outreach. He described how public outreach efforts have helped to improve water quality within the Henderson Shellfish District over the last four to five years. Funds from the conservation district's assessments were allocated to the Shellfish Protection Fund, a majority of which was dedicated to public outreach. The best outcome expected for water quality at Henderson Inlet was the status quo. However, water quality has improved. Thurston County is also implementing an operation and maintenance program for septic systems. He reviewed ongoing programs, such as "Doggie Do." A commercial shellfish farm on Henderson Inlet is used as a teaching component. Property owners learn how to harvest oysters. Property owners soon learn that if their neighbors are not managing septic systems, they are unable to harvest their shellfish.

Ms. Napier reported she asked John Kliem and Debbie Holden, Creative Community Solutions (CCS), to draft articles for the *Drops of Water* newsletter. The last article included her picture and she's been approached by many people who have indicated they read the article when they viewed her photo. She suggested featuring more photos in future articles so citizens can make the connection to the Partnership and the Chehalis basin.

Mr. Jennings acknowledged the CBP is making a conscience decision to focus on watershed education and outreach

Lonnie Crumley said he's spoken with representatives from Rainier Timber Company in Aberdeen and encouraged them to attend CBP meetings and become involved.

Discuss Letter for CBP Role on Government Policies

Janel Spaulding distributed a draft letter for review. Elements of the letter include an introduction to the Partnership, a short discussion of the watershed plan, and CBP's mission. The letter asks agencies to consider the Chehalis Basin Watershed Management Plan in the development of local policies and plans. The letter would be mailed to government agencies on an annual basis rather than in response to a specific policy and/or plan proposal.

Discussion ensued on the status of a policy statement the STC reviewed at the February 2009 meeting.

Ms. Napier said the correspondence can be used in a variety of ways to raise awareness. A follow up letter could also be drafted.

Ms. Hempleman left the meeting.

Chair Swartout suggested the letter should be sent to government agency staff responsible for developing policies. He suggested presenting the policy statement and draft letter to the CBP for approval. If the Partnership or STC receives notice from a government agency to review a critical areas ordinance (CAO), the committee could draft a letter and provide comments and/or recommendations based on the watershed plan.

Ms. Napier suggested adding language to the letter requesting government agencies consider the CBP as a party of record when updating land use plans, development regulations, and zoning within the Chehalis basin.

A proposal was offered to send the letter to board of county commissioner chairs, mayors, tribal chairs, and the Port of Centralia in addition to local and state government agency staff responsible for developing policies. Ms. Spaulding was asked to develop a list of recipients for the STC's review in May. The letter could be mailed in May.

Flood Authority Update

Chair Swartout provided an overview of the Flood Authority's (Authority) last meeting. Congressman Brian Baird helped secure \$574,000 for the General Investigation (GI) Study.

Ms. Napier reported some members of the Authority expressed concerns about the GI Ecosystem Study, specifically that some objectives of the Authority are not included and that the study is still within Grays Harbor County. The USGS groundwater characterization project was submitted to the Authority for funding of \$150,000. Funds from the ecosystem study could also help fund the groundwater characterization work. Farmers have expressed concerns about aquifer interaction and interruptible water rights. The STC should be mindful that farmers don't want to know more about the aquifer.

There was also discussion about the relationship between the CBP and the Authority and how to work together in the future. There is a rumor that Grays Harbor County is not interested in continuing to

sponsor the Ecosystem Study, which is inaccurate. Grays Harbor County has not been active because of other work priorities and has always had an interest in the Ecosystem Study. There have been discussions about including flood damage as a component of the GI Study. Flood damage was not included because the project is basically stalled. Ms. Napier reported Grays Harbor County Commissioners directed her to write a letter to the Corps Colonel indicating the county is still interested in sponsoring the Ecosystem Study and wants to step up and sponsor the flood damage reduction project.

Members discussed mitigation required with the twin city project and the purpose of the Authority meeting to clarify the status of the ecosystem restoration project.

Ms. Napier commented that an interlocal agreement between the Authority and Partnership outlining a scope of work (SOW) for the GI study is required. She reviewed the deliverables identified at the last Flood Authority meeting. There is a project management plan and SOW related to ecosystem restoration, which needs to be updated. Grays Harbor County will work with the Corps to revise the SOW to include a flood damage reduction component, as well as updating the cost share agreement. An interlocal agreement between the CBP and Authority will be developed. Priorities for the \$574,000 appropriated for this federal fiscal year should be established. Time is of the essence. Ms. Napier reported that she and Bob Johnson will work together to draft an interlocal agreement for review by the Authority and the CBP.

Discussion followed on the importance of the groundwater characterization model as it relates to future water rights.

Grays Harbor County 2020 Project

Ms. Spaulding proposed scheduling a presentation on the Grays Harbor County 2020 project at the Partnership's next meeting. The goal is making Grays Harbor County a better place to live, work, and play. Strategies concern five common themes of making strategic social investments, preserving the unparalleled environmental assets, fostering a diverse and progressive economy, pursuing state of the art infrastructure and governance, and enhancing and promoting signature spaces and places. The 2020 group is looking for people and groups to implement the strategies.

Ms. Spaulding distributed copies of the unparalleled environmental assets component. She reviewed some of the strategies outlined within the following seven overarching themes:

- Identify and enhance unique natural assets county-wide
- Brand and connect environmental assets as a system
- Expand access to and promote local visitation of natural areas
- Coordinate and expand environmental E&O efforts
- Expand options for county-wide recycling and increase participation in existing and new programs
- Promote and incentivize sustainable actions in our built environment
- Launch a campaign to clean up and maintain our natural areas

It will be interesting to learn more about what the 2020 group is doing.

Chair Swartout suggested the 2020 presenter provide an overview of the project, themes, funding, history on how the group was formed, and focus the discussion on the unparalleled environmental assets section.

Ms. Napier commented that there might be an opportunity to share what the Partnership is doing to help advance the unparalleled environmental strategies following the presentation.

Ms. Spaulding indicated there is an opportunity for the CBP and Grays Harbor County 2020 members to work together and pursue common goals. Additional information can be found on the website at www.graysharbor2020.com.

CBP Agenda for April

- Schedule a presentation on the Grays Harbor County 2020 project for 11:00 a.m., and allow time for questions and answers
- Update on the GI study, SOW, and interlocal agreement
- State of the River report for fiscal year 2008 presented by Dr. Joel Green
- Present and discuss letter outlining the Partnership's role regarding governmental policies

Agenda topics for the May meeting include a presentation highlighting the Centralia Stream Team's first cleanup activity and a presentation by the Student Congress.

STC Agenda for May

- Review a draft distribution list for the letter outlining the Partnership's role on governmental policies
- Discuss the budget and next year's Phase 4 Grant
- Update on the SOW (CBP and Authority)
- Update on services from the college

Adjournment

With there being no further business, Chair Swartout adjourned the meeting at 11:47 am.