

**CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP  
STEERING TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY  
Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife  
600 Capitol Way  
Olympia, WA  
August 6, 2009  
9:30 AM**

**Draft Meeting Summary**

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**MEMBERS & GUESTS PRESENT**

Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County  
Bob Burkle, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife  
Janel Spaulding, Grays Harbor College  
Phil Rupp, Lewis County  
Glen Connelly, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis  
Reservation  
Julie Balmelli-Powe, Lewis County Farm Bureau  
William T. Gow II, Puget Sound Meeting Services

**Welcome & Introductions**

Glen Connelly called the August 6, 2009 Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) Steering Technical Committee (STC) meeting to order at 9:38 a.m.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

Mr. Connelly said he's collecting a list of frequently asked questions (FAQ) about the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) to develop a fact sheet that will be distributed during public events as well as posted on the CBP's website. He distributed a table of questions and some answers he's received to date from Partnership members and others. Some of the questions will need to be shortened or consolidated. The US Army Corps of Engineers and the state team are conducting a series of public meetings on the Twin Cities levee project. The meetings will include information specifically about projects so that citizens will have access to the different projects as well as obtaining some answers to their questions. A FAQ document will provide citizens with information about the CBP.

Lee Napier suggested selecting the top questions and developing answers to meet the timeline for the upcoming public meetings beginning in mid-September and follow up with more work on developing a longer list of questions as a work in progress.

Mr. Connelly asked members and guests to provide input on additional questions to add.

Bob Burkle suggested that since Grays Harbor County is involved in the Lead Entity process as well as the Marine Resources Committee, perhaps questions about those organizations should be included. The Partnership acts as a citizens' arm of the lead entity process. However, including information on the lead entity process could lead to more questions.

Julie Balmelli-Powe said some of the questions can be combined into one answer, such as whether the CBP is an arm of DOE. That could be addressed in the question defining the CBP. Several members suggested the question could be addressed in the question describing the CBP.

Ms. Napier reviewed some of the materials the Partnership is providing during the public meetings.

Mr. Connelly responded to some questions about the FAQ and indicated the document should focus strictly on the Partnership as the other organizations will have their respective materials addressing their organizations.

Discussion followed on the two General Investigation (GI) Studies. Ms. Napier pointed out the difference between the two studies, which will not be combined. The Ecosystem Restoration GI Study is a basin-wide study sponsored by Grays Harbor County, which expanded to a multi-purpose GI Study to include flood damage reduction. The Twin Cities GI Study is a separate study. USGS is involved in the basin-wide multipurpose GI Study. That study will have benefits to both the Partnership and the Flood Authority. Members discussed options on rewording the question pertaining to the GI studies.

Members discussed whether it's necessary to distinguish between the Flood Authority, the Partnership, and One Voice. Ms. Napier advised that at the last CBP meeting, the Partnership agreed to remove One Voice from the diagram on the relationship between the Flood Authority and the CBP.

Ms. Napier suggested the question pertaining to the continued existence of the CBP is important to address because of the issues surrounding long-term funding of the organization. Mr. Connelly suggested that if state funding ends, the question is whether the CBP will dissolve.

Members reviewed the table of questions. The question pertaining to more studies was discussed as many people are questioning the number of studies that have been undertaken. Several members agreed that it's difficult to develop a response on why studies and plans are important for projects. Several members agreed many citizens do not understand the underlying reasons for studies and plans. Unfortunately, composing a concise response is difficult as it will likely generate more questions.

Members discussed issues associated with the basin from its geology, sedimentation, river processes, high groundwater issues, flooding, and climate change. Mr. Burkle commented on the difficulty of developing a summary response and referred to a succinct explanation about river dynamics from a geomorphologist who was involved in the levee setback feasibility study for Pierce County.

Jerry Louthain suggested the Corps should provide answers on why more GI studies are needed, why the studies take so long to complete, and why it appears nothing is ever constructed. Generally, the issue is citizen frustration and not seeing any improvements with the money that has been spent.

Ms. Napier said that even with the ecosystem restoration project, it appears some of the work must be redone or done under the terms of the USGS. However, there is a bibliography of all the resources and documents completed within the Chehalis basin. Sometimes there are disconnects in the various processes as to how existing documents are utilized in current projects. Some documents tell the story of where the basin has been as well as documenting future trends. Ms. Balmelli-Powe added that as technology improves, some studies are often not as defined as required for today's environment, which leads to redoing the study leading to new elements that may require additional study.

Ms. Balmelli-Powe suggested including information concerning a diverse ecosystem with critical interactions that need study before any alterations occur. Often people don't understand how one interaction affects other things in the system. Ms. Napier agreed and suggested revising the response as, "diverse ecosystems, need assessments, and understanding of their critical interactions before human influence alters conditions."

Ms. Napier referred to the list of 14 questions, which the committee managed to combine three of the questions into one by either reformatting the question as either an answer or a question. Another of the questions can be addressed by the diagram. The list contains some basic questions that individuals might ask. The question pertaining to, "What resources and information can/does the Chehalis Basin Partnership provide to the citizens/general public" could be revised to state, "How do I find the work of the Chehalis Basin Partnership?" The last two comments on involving the community could be addressed by including information for citizens to check the meeting calendar online and attend meetings. The information could be key to prompting citizens to take the next step instead of providing too much information. Members need to determine what the CBP wants to derive from the FAQ. The answer is likely to inform people as well as attracting people to become involved.

Ms. Spaulding reminded members the CBP's brochure also includes information on ways to become involved.

Ms. Balmelli-Powe suggested the question pertaining to the GI studies should be moved further down the list. The question might be rephrased as, "What is a General Investigation Study?"

Ms. Spaulding referred to the question on the potential long-term impacts of the CBP and Flood Authority projects on the basin and questioned the intent of the question. Members discussed rephrasing the question to state, "What long-term benefits do the CBP and Flood Authority hope to achieve?" Mr. Connelly said one of the goals is ensuring sufficient water for people and wildlife.

Ms. Napier suggested retaining some of the questions that members believe should be eliminated to ensure that others can address those questions. Mr. Louthain suggested providing a separate list of questions to the Corps to ensure the Corps addresses the concerns. He offered to assist Mr. Connelly with preparing the document as he's heard many of the same concerns from citizens.

*Mr. Louthain left the meeting.*

Phil Rupp asked whether the CBP will review and finalize the document. Ms. Napier reviewed the August agenda and indicated the FAQ is scheduled for review. Members discussed feedback received to date on the FAQ document. One comment involved whether the CBP or the Flood Authority supports the dam project. Ms. Napier indicated that at this time there is insufficient information for any of the entities to express support or nonsupport of the project. Ms. Balmelli-Powe suggested the answer should convey that the organizations are waiting for more information. Ms. Napier suggested including a broader statement of support for storage projects based on specific factors, which could be spelled out. Ms. Balmelli-Powe advocated for including the question regardless of addressing the issue with the CBP in terms of whether the CBP supports the dam project when the CBP has never been presented with information as a group. The CBP does support storage and it could be phrased to reflect that position.

Mr. Connelly suggested the Corps should reference levees more in the description of the project although there are other aspects to the project other than the levees. Other components include pumping stations for some areas for instance. The focus is the 11 miles of levee. From the CBP's perspective, water retention is important. Ms. Napier said from the CBP's approach, multi-purpose storage is under consideration. The issue is how to pursue multi-purpose storage whether it's through USGS and the modeling exercise, through habitat, or accomplished through building a dam. The CBP has a variety of options that have been implemented, such as aquifer recharge as well as other options that have not been

invested. Mr. Burkle referred to the ecosystem restoration study that will develop some alternatives for natural storage.

Mr. Connelly said he views the question from a citizen's standpoint in how does the CBP view a dam alternative. The answer may lie in water retention but the question is whether the CBP supports a dam or whether the CBP is considering building a dam. The answer may be water retention structures or some similar language. Ms. Napier suggested phrasing the question as what is the CBP's position on water retention and storage and then include information on one of the CBP's completed assessments. Ms. Balmelli-Powe suggested a short answer on the CBP supporting water retention and storage if it benefits the basin.

Ms. Napier questioned how the document should refer to the Chehalis River basin and whether there is a message of consistency in how to refer to the basin. Ms. Balmelli-Powe suggested using the reference of "watershed" because it encompasses the broader system and not just the river. Members agreed with the suggestion.

Mr. Connelly offered to update and reformat the FAQ document. He said he'll also forward some of the questions and comments addressed during the discussion with the Corps and the Flood Authority.

Mr. Connelly said the Corps and the state team will conduct the three open houses to reacquaint the public with the levee project. The open houses will be held in Lewis, Thurston, and Grays Harbor County on September 16 at Swede Hall in Rochester, on September 23 at Montesano City Hall, and September 30 at Centralia Middle School. Tables will be available with posters and information to answer questions about the Twin Cities project as well as the second GI Study. The Flood Authority and the CBP have been invited to sponsor tables as well. FEMA will also be represented at the meetings. The meetings will provide an opportunity for the public to receive information on the Twin Cities project as well as information about flooding and other water issues within the basin.

Mr. Connelly invited members to contact him by e-mail if they have more questions or potential answers for the FAQ document.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities of the CBP and the Flood Authority –Twin Cities Outreach Event**

Ms. Napier referred to the diagram on the roles of the CBP and the Flood Authority. The diagram was reviewed and approved by both entities. One small change involved the section pertaining to areas of cooperation to include some language on flooding.

Ms. Balmelli-Powe suggested changing the circle graphic to reflect drops of water. Colors suggested included blue, yellow, and green.

Members discussed display materials for the open houses to include a basin map and other display boards. Ms. Napier said she'll bring the materials to the September meeting to share with the committee.

Members discussed the state agencies involved in coordinating the open houses. Mr. Connelly shared information about several meetings he's attended in preparation for the open houses and how the rooms will be set up. Ms. Napier said another display option is the project map of projects on the ground as well as the studies.

**Review the CBP Discussion about the DIP – Develop a Report Card & Change the Budget/Work Plan Format**

Ms. Napier distributed additional information to aid members in the discussion. During the discussion on updating the Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP), several questions were asked to include some measures of performance and information on budget accountability. Another CBP member questioned the lack of a budget for the DIP. Another member inquired about the process used to measure success. There are a variety of ways to measure success. Another question concerned accountability. Most projects receive grant funding and the contract language includes accountability and performance measures. The Partnership expressed a desire to receive an outcome document as a way to capture the issues.

Ms. Napier said the discussion was somewhat frustrating as a work plan was produced calling out the grant, tasks, budget, start, finish, and project deliverables. The information was provided several times both to the STC and the CBP. She said she was surprised when the comment was made about never viewing a budget. She considered the comment and believes the issue lies in the format that most members are familiar with. It's likely when the information was distributed, some members didn't realize it was the budget.

Another suggestion was offered of developing a report card. It appears the CBP is interested in receiving more information about the outcomes. The STC was assigned the task of developing a report card with a draft to be presented to the CBP at its August meeting.

Ms. Napier referred to the work plan developed by Ms. Spaulding. She referred to Mark Swartout's work plan for the Nisqually watershed as another example. She asked members to provide feedback on creating a document that satisfies the requirement for a report card as requested by the Partnership. Ms. Napier reviewed the Nisqually watershed work plan and outlined the elements of the document. She reviewed the grants of the Partnership.

Mr. Burkle said the budget provided by Mr. Swartout is only for the planning unit. In addition, there is the Nisqually River Council, which has a budget. The Nisqually Tribe is the lead entity, which also has a budget. What the Partnership work plan attempts to capture is the same three programs plus several more. He suggested the work plan by Ms. Spaulding adequately addresses the information. Ms. Spaulding acknowledged that one piece of information lacking in the document is the remaining dollars for each grant.

Ms. Balmelli-Powe said the form is somewhat confusing as the budget information is not clear in terms of whether it's the budget amount for the year or the total grant award. Members suggested adding a row to reflect the total grant amount at the beginning of the specific tasks assigned to each grant. For example, for the WRIA Phase 4, Year 2 grant, a row would be added reflecting the grant amount of \$62,500 followed by how the grant amount is allocated. Ms. Napier suggested including information reflecting the last year of the grant as well to inform readers that there is two years of the grant.

Ms. Napier asked whether the columns for each of the quarters are helpful for readers. Fiscal years should also be defined (July 1 through June 30). Ms. Balmelli-Powe asked about the option of including more itemized budget details. Ms. Napier explained how she reports budget information to DOE for the DOE grant, which is broken down by tasks and then by budget categories involving salaries, benefits, travel, contracted services, goods and services, and volunteers. Ms. Balmelli-Powe acknowledged that although she didn't attend the last CBP meeting, she believes CBP members want itemized information as a way to make decisions concerning how funds can be saved or moved. An itemized budget provides

members with a better way to analyze how funds are expended and how those funds could be redirected. Mr. Connelly said there are positives and negatives associated with providing budget details. Ms. Balmelli-Powe said she's familiar with budgets where there is more detail to determine where the majority of the funds are going or where more is spent in areas that should be reduced.

Ms. Napier suggested providing a document quarterly on the status of the work plan/tasks and how money was expended for each budget category under each particular task. Ms. Napier said she will continue working on the documents. She reviewed the budget for the Watershed Council Year 1 and Year 2 appropriations (Legislative Appropriation 1 & 2), and Planning Unit Support and the specific tasks associated with each budget. Members suggested adding another column reflecting the current balance of each grant fund. It was noted that some of the grants are yearly while some are awarded over a period of years. The column should somehow reflect the length of the grant or the appropriation. Ms. Napier reviewed the grant for Lead Entity Operation, which is used for some of her time and consultant Lonnie Crumley for technical support and John Kleim to assist in the strategy update. The fund also supports development of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) project list. The budget is not broken down by tasks.

Members discussed the difference in how the information is displayed for the Lead Entity Operation grant. Mr. Rupp previously recommended moving the deliverables prior to the start and finish date to clarify the start and finish date is for the deliverables rather than identifying the funding timeline.

Members discussed the best way to present the information to the membership and the current status in ongoing funding, which in today's economy is tentative. The issue is determining the cost for operating the Partnership. It could involve jurisdictions contributing to the Partnership as one option. Additionally, Ms. Napier indicated that her time is funded through grants and if the funding disappears, her support to the Partnership could also end as well.

#### **Frame the Question for the CBP Regarding the Sustainability Paper**

Ms. Napier said she provided copies of the document on sustainable funding for Nisqually watershed planning to the Partnership at its July meeting. The paper was authored by Mark Swartout, who is Ms. Napier's counterpart in the Nisqually watershed. Mr. Swartout has a long history in watershed planning and understands issues pertinent to watershed funding. The CBP and the Nisqually Watershed were the first two planning units to adopt watershed plans in the state and were the first to complete DIPs.

Ms. Napier reviewed elements of the white paper and asked members to review the document for continued discussion at the September meeting to help frame the discussion on funding sustainability. The CBP also requested the STC consider a recommendation on the formation of a nonprofit.

#### **CBP Agenda for August 28, 2009**

- Presentation of the SRFB Project List
- Review of FAQ
- Update on the Watershed Festival
- State of the River Report
- Drops of Water CBP Edition – ideas for articles. Ms. Napier commented on citizens who are pursuing restoration projects, who could be recognized in the next edition of the *Drops of Water*.

#### **STC September 3, 2009 Agenda**

- Review of FAQ – Finalization

- Display materials for public meetings
- Review Report Card format
- Review of Sustainability Recommendation
- Update on Watershed Festival

**Adjournment**

With there being no further business, Mr. Connelly adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Prepared by Valerie Gow, Recording Secretary/President  
Puget Sound Meeting Services