

**CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP  
STEERING TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY  
Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife  
600 Capitol Way  
Olympia, WA  
December 3, 2009  
9:30 AM**

**Meeting Summary**

---

**PRESENT**

Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County	Bob Burkle, Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)
Kahle Jennings, City of Centralia	Alicia LeDue, The Evergreen State College
Glen Connelly, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation	William Gow II, Puget Sound Meeting Services
Mark Swartout, Thurston County	Janel Spaulding, Grays Harbor College
Christine Hempleman, Department of Ecology (DOE)	Miranda Plumb, US Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS)
Julie Balmelli-Powe, Lewis County Farm Bureau	

**Welcome & Introductions**

Chair Mark Swartout called the December 3, 2009, meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) Steering Technical Committee (STC) to order at 9:41 a.m. He reviewed the meeting agenda.

Mr. Swartout described for the benefit of new attendees, the purpose of the Chehalis Basin Partnership and its operating subcommittees.

**Discuss Workplan/Budget**

Mr. Swartout reported that there has been a request by several CBP members for more information on the budget and the workplan. At the last Partnership meeting, Lee Napier provided a copy of the budget and workplan for 2010. The Partnership offered suggestions for improving the documents. The intent of the discussion is to consider the feedback and develop a budget and workplan for review and approval by the Partnership. Another consideration is the provision of an annual report outlining accomplishments over the last year.

Ms. Napier provided a copy of the workplan provided at the last Partnership meeting. The workplan includes all grants and applicable tasks with the remaining balance and start and end date. There was some confusion concerning the budget information. Several members commented that the report didn't track budget information with several members requesting a budget document similar to a county budget. The document does reflect how the county reports information on how each grant is spent. Each grant contract also has its own reporting mechanism.

Mr. Swartout said the document appears to reflect a programmatic layout of where the funds will be expended in 2010. The other element is the budget and expenditures, which appears to be the issue of confusion that occurred at the last Partnership meeting. Ms. Napier said the workplan attempted to account for the budget balance of each grant. However, there is no tracking of expenditures or revenue.

Members discussed the timeline of the workplan and whether it's reflective of July 1, 2009 through July 30, 2011. Mr. Swartout said the timeline can be confusing and that the document should include the month and year as there are differences between the calendar year, state fiscal year, and federal fiscal year.

Chris Hempleman referred to Bill Schulte's comments about the information appearing to be a checkbook rather than a budget. Mr. Swartout said that was the issue of confusion as Mr. Schulte was seeking an expense/revenue document. That's why there was some confusion.

Ms. Napier distributed additional documents. One document is a budget report from Grays Harbor County and the other is an activity year-to-day detail budget by grant for each year for both expenditures and revenue (grant funds). Ms. Napier reviewed both documents. She addressed questions concerning some figures with no supporting description. It appears that some of the missing information pertains to transfer of funds.

Ms. Napier shared a copy of another reporting format for consideration of revenues and expenditures.

Bob Burkle commented that the information is public information that could be posted on the website.

Mr. Swartout said the issue is receiving guidance from the Partnership on what type of documentation the Partnership would like to receive. The document of year-to-day information appears to partly satisfy the request without having to do much additional work. He suggested using the document as an example of a reporting form and obtain feedback from the Partnership. Ms. Napier advised that it may not be possible to provide monthly reports because of limitations associated with the program.

Kahle Jennings reviewed how the city presents its budget to the Council. He cited the Street Department as an example and how the report is formatted to reflect total revenue for the department and a list of expenditures by item. It appears Mr. Schulte is looking for a similar one-page summary.

Julie Balmelli-Powe said she believes the Partnership is seeking information showing the budget and the projected budget for each major expenditure to determine if there will be shortages within a specific area to assist the Partnership in determining where cutbacks might be necessary. Ms. Napier said each task has its own budget and that if there are changes within the budget, she contacts DOE for authority to shift funds, which is first authorized by the Partnership.

Members reviewed the grants and major expenditure categories within each of the grants beginning within the WRIA Phase 4 grant. Major categories include salary and benefits, contract support, citizen volunteers/Drops of Water publication, travel and mileage, and meeting room expenses. The remaining grants include expenditures in salaries and benefits and travel. The Lead Entity is Grays Harbor's responsibility with major expenses comprised of salary and benefits, contracted services, travel, and supplies.

Members discussed formatting the document and revising column titles to better reflect beginning, current, and ending balance, and an estimation of expenditures. Ms. Hempleman said the budget document could also benefit the discussion on sustainable funding for the Partnership over the long-term. The beginning grant balance should be relabeled to reflect "Grant Award." Expenditures could be listed quarterly with a remaining balance. It was noted that each grant has a different start and finish date. Instead of including separate columns for the start and finish date, that information could be combined into one column, leaving another column free for other information.

Ms. Napier noted that several of the tasks will be completed or changed.

Miranda Plumb recommended reformatting the document to a landscape format to accommodate additional information.

Ms. Napier said she'll revise the workplan based on the suggestions as well as providing an expenditure summary. Mr. Swartout questioned whether the time is available to itemize expenditure categories and provide a separate worksheet. Ms. Napier said the county's reporting system only provides a year-to-date activity list that is coded numerically with no way to break out each expenditure category except through a manual time-consuming process.

Members reviewed the year-to-date budget activity and discussed how items could be broken out by different codes. A report could be generated by vendor as each vendor has a specific vendor number assigned. Members discussed providing the information through a PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Napier said she often receives requests from Partnership members for copies of all presentations.

Janel Spaulding distributed and reviewed several materials regarding the report card in an outline format. The first handout summarized watershed planning grants from DOE funded by the Legislature under the Watershed Planning RCW. Information includes each grant, budget award, timeline, projects completed or products developed. Mr. Swartout suggested revising headings for each phase to accurately reflect the legislation, such as organize, assessment, planning, and implementation. Ms. Spaulding said additionally, there are different amendments to some of the grant contracts, which can be confusing. Each amendment also has different timelines. She suggested that it may be more beneficial to group all phases together to reflect what's been received and what's been accomplished. Members suggested eliminating information pertaining to the years of each phase or contract.

The second handout is an overview of CBP grants and projects with columns identifying the project or grant name, date, funding, implements DIP and/or WMP, and partners. Ms. Balmelli-Powe asked whether it's possible to designate the ending date of each grant to ensure that any grant with remaining funds could be expended before the end of the grant. Ms. Napier noted that most of the grants with ending fund balances cannot be carried forward if not expended by the finish date. Some grants with a remaining balance can be carried forward. Mr. Jennings suggested rather than citing a particular DIP task number, a brief summary of the accomplishment might be more informative with the task number in parenthesis.

Mr. Swartout noted the funding column within the overview of CBP grants and projects matches with the budget materials. He suggested presenting the material to the Partnership prior to adding any more details. Ms. Plumb suggested dating the document. Members agreed the table format is concise and provides sufficient information at a glance without providing too much detail. Ms. Hempleman said after the Partnership's approval of the document, the information should be posted on the website.

Mr. Swartout said one missing component of the report card is the amount of work that needs to be completed. As the Partnership begins the discussion on sustainable funding and whether the Partnership should continue, the work completed to date is only a fraction of the work that needs to be implemented in the Watershed Management Plan. The report should include some categories on how much more work needs to be done. It could be included by category. Several members suggested including information about the Partnership or describing the Partnership as part of the implementation of the Phase 1 grant. Another recommendation included adding information at the bottom of the document. Ms. Napier suggested deleting the "Partners" column and including information from contributors within the description of accomplishments.

Suggestions on reformatting the document included:

- Delete the last two lines and add one line with the description of “Lead Agency Watershed Planning” and another line stating, “Lead Entity/SRFB,” followed by another line reflecting the total amount of grants.
- Package the two documents, but maintain different documents using the existing formats.
- Include a cover letter highlighting the beginning of the watershed planning process with an overview of several goals, reason for the report, activities underway that are implementing the goals of the Watershed Management Plan, and remaining goals to complete.

#### **Discuss Thurston Regional Planning Council’s (TRPC) Proposal to Include a Water Initiative**

Ms. Napier reported that prior to the last Partnership meeting, Mark White contacted her regarding concerns with TRPC’s water initiative and whether the work should be undertaken by the Partnership or should at the minimum involve coordination with the Partnership. She addressed the issue during the Partnership meeting, which was referred to the STC for review. Ms. Napier advised that she contacted TRPC’s Executive Director to obtain more information on the Council’s work initiative. The Chehalis Tribe is a member of TRPC. The tribe was concerned about the proposed work program. The Council met and discussed the tribe’s concerns. At this point, the work program has been revised to reflect an educational component on water, which was a prior work program of focus of the Council that didn’t get accomplished. The work program is now focused as an educational outreach to policymakers on water issues. Since Thurston County has two watersheds, there may be an opportunity where both planning units may be able to work at the county level on water issues serving as a model for other counties.

Mr. Swartout responded to questions about TRPC and its members. TRPC is responsible for regional transportation as well as advance planning for many of the jurisdictions and administering the Shoreline Master Program. The core responsibility of the organization is regional transportation.

#### **Discuss Outreach Approach for the 2010 Legislative Session**

Mr. Swartout reviewed historical approaches. Typically, the Partnership has visited with legislators to request specific funding for projects implementing the Watershed Management Plan. The Partnership has generally been successful in obtaining funding. A tri-fold brochure was developed about the Partnership, funding request, and projects to be completed with the funds. Former Grays Harbour County Commissioner Bob Beerbower, former Thurston County Commissioner Bob Macleod, Mark Swartout, and Lee Napier met with all senators and representatives from the basin in one meeting and then individually through the years. At the last meeting, Representative Gary Alexander pointed out that the Partnership cannot continue approaching the Legislature for funding and that it must focus on ways to obtain a consistent source of funding. Currently, the Partnership’s source of funding will be exhausted by June 30, 2009. The issue is how to obtain a consistent source of funding after that date and whether the Partnership should approach legislators during 2010, and if so, what should the request entail.

Mr. Jennings disagreed with Representative Alexander’s viewpoint because watershed planning was intended to take an effort that was previously pursued by the state and redirecting that effort to local entities. The Partnership is competing for funding. At this point, there appears to be no funding issues for the Puget Sound Partnership. However, that agency is the main competition for the Chehalis basin. Losing visibility will dramatically reduce the chance for competing. Each time the Legislature funds a grant program; there is a set-aside for Puget Sound Partnership. If the Chehalis Basin Partnership becomes invisible, there will be no legislative support. It’s important that the basin continue to promote the Partnership. The Partnership has existed for 10 years and can show many accomplishments. It’s important to continue lobbying for funding.

Mr. Swartout noted that the Nisqually River Council was able to obtain funding of \$100,000 annually from DOE to provide basic administrative support to the group. Mr. Jennings said that may be the way the Legislature directs the funds for channeling. It's important to maintain visibility; otherwise the Legislature will forget the Partnership.

Ms. Hempleman said the budget year is one unlike any other and that those kinds of discussions are likely moot next year. The current revenue projection includes a \$2.7 billion shortfall. The state is looking at cutting whole programs that are likely more important than watershed planning, such as basic health. All programs are on the table. One of the possibilities is that the entire watershed program will be eliminated. At this point, there have been decisions. The Governor's budget is anticipated to be released early next week, which generally provides some insight on where the cuts might occur. The most powerful argument is that planning units should be working together because of the huge investment of public money that has been invested in watershed planning to empower locals. It has been successful in most places and less successful in others. The Chehalis basin is at the high end of the scale.

Mr. Swartout reported that during a meeting of the watersheds with Bill Zachmann with DOE, there was discussion for the watersheds to work together and approach the Legislature to maintain watershed planning funding at a specific level. It could entail all the watersheds approaching the Legislature with a common message. There was some discussion on DOE assisting in developing a one-page document for presentation to legislators to ensure a common message. Ms. Hempleman said she'll follow up with the department as she believes the department is leaving the approach to each watershed. She offered to contact Mr. Zachmann about DOE's potential assistance to watersheds.

#### **CBP December 18, 2009 Agenda**

- Election of Officers
- Fiscal Report and Introduce Outcome Report Card
- Henderson Pilot Watershed Project

#### **STC January 7, 2010 Agenda**

- Legislative Session discussion
- Watershed Activity in upper basin during summer
- Budget Reporting/Workplan
- Project Management Plan (PMP) discussion

Ms. Napier reported the Partnership agreed not to participate in a joint letter from the Corps of Engineers and the Flood Authority to citizens who commented at the four public workshops. The basic letter thanked citizens for taking the time to share their concerns and that their respective contact information will be used to advise them of future events. The Flood Authority appreciated the feedback from the Partnership. A new letter was drafted and is under review. The letter is addressed to the citizen and speaks directly to the citizen's concerns. The letter will include a spreadsheet on all public comments. Members agreed the revised letter is a much better response to citizens who offered comments.

#### **Adjournment**

With there being no further business, Chair Swartout adjourned the meeting at 11:22 a.m.