

**CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP
STEERING TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
600 Capitol Way
Olympia, WA
March 5, 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

Phil Rupp, Lewis County

Brad Murphy, Department of Ecology (DOE)

Janel Spaulding, Grays Harbor College

Lonnie Crumley, Stream Works Consulting

Jim Hill, Citizen, Lewis County

Cheri Lindgren, Puget Sound Meeting Services

Welcome & Introductions

Glen Connelly called the meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) Steering Technical Committee (STC) to order at 9:40 a.m.

Ms. Napier reviewed the meeting agenda. A discussion on CBP's role with the Washington Coastal Sustainable Salmon Partnership (WCSSP) and efforts in Grays Harbor County to form a Marine Resource Committee (MRC) were added to the agenda.

Work Plan

Ms. Napier distributed supplemental materials. She reviewed a work plan for fiscal year (FY) 2009-2010. The work plan focuses on watershed planning and salmon recovery. She reviewed grants, budget, end dates, and deliverables. For the Phase 4, Year 3 grant, some funds must be expended by the end of June 2009. Ms. Napier provided additional details concerning the Lead Entity Operation Grant tasks, including roles and responsibilities.

Washington Coastal Sustainable Salmon Partnership Discussion

Ms. Napier referred to the *Salmon Recovery – Regional Organization*, which appears on the work plan for several reasons. The Partnership has a role in the WCSSP as it relates to the Lead Entity. The region includes the coast from Cape Flattery to Willapa, five Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIAs), and four lead entities. The four lead entities work with salmon recovery. WCSSP is a recognized regional group and is forming a regional board. The cities of Centralia and Chehalis are identified as potential participants in the Grays Harbor Lead Entity. The regional board will be formed through an interlocal agreement. Each city has been invited to become a partner to the interlocal agreement and serve on the policy board. Letters were sent to cities, counties, the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, and other organizations earlier in the year soliciting participation in some capacity as a board member, providing technical assistance, or receiving information. There was consideration for the Partnership to join, however the Partnership cannot participate in an interlocal agreement. The City of Chehalis is opting not to sign the interlocal agreement at this time. Cities and counties can join the regional board at a future time as well.

The Resource Conservation Office (RCO) provided a grant to help form the regional board. Grays Harbor County is the fiscal agent. Additional Chehalis basin representation is needed as the WCSSP

pursues its work because it's the largest group in the region and most advanced. There is an opportunity for habitat restoration in the City of Centralia.

To date, the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, Thurston County, City of Montesano, Grays Harbor County, Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force, Nature Conservancy, and Cascade Land Trust have signed the interlocal agreement. The cities of Elma and Hoquiam are likely to sign.

Mr. Jennings added that the City of Centralia may sign the interlocal agreement as well.

Ms. Napier said the advantage of a regional approach is providing the CBP with a larger voice. She confirmed the WCSSP is the salmon recovery regional organization. RCO was formerly known as the Office of the Interagency Committee (IAC).

Members discussed the composition and dynamics of the regional organization, participation responsibilities, and potential voting rights. Ms. Napier said the organization's direction and voting mechanism is dependent upon which organizations are participating on the board and at what level. An ad hoc committee was formed. Developing a regional plan is important so organizations understand the commitment.

Members discussed the Chehalis Basin Ecosystem Restoration Program. Ms. Napier said the work by the US Army Corps of Engineer (Corps) is on hold pending a fiscal appropriation. Grays Harbor County is the sponsor. Program components include project management and planning by the Corps, the US Geological Survey (USGS) Groundwater Characterization Study, and/or the Flood Authority. A list of ranked projects was submitted to the Department of Ecology (DOE) last spring. The Groundwater Characterization Study is a priority and may position the CBP to leverage other grant funding.

Mr. Jennings asked if the Corps is interested in contracting with the CBP on the Groundwater Characterization Study. Ms. Napier advised that Laura Orr is the contact and project manager. The Corps and USGS will do the work. The Corps is seeking mitigation projects for the twin cities work.

Members referred to task 5 of the Phase 4 implementation grant between DOE and Grays Harbor County. Task 5 states, "Implement and refine the Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP)/annual work plan." The task includes working with Ag and forestry representatives to implement DIP strategy #4. Funds were allocated to host workshops; however, that has not occurred. Ms. Napier suggested abandoning the idea of hosting Ag and forestry workshops, but acknowledged keeping Ag and forestry on the ground is important. There are limited funds available for the next budget cycle. Funds to be expended by the end of June could be used to update the work plan with activities that can be completed next year. Ag and forestry did not approach the CBP with the workshop request. She said she'll contact DOE and revisit the scope of work (SOW) for the Phase 4 Implementation Grant.

Ms. Napier referred to the Planning Unit Support Grant. The SOW includes tasks assigned to Ms. Spaulding. She suggested the STC revisit the DIP and concentrate on DIP strategy #2 stating, "Recommend adequate funding levels for water resources management," and refine a work plan for the CBP leveraging outreach and education. The Centralia Stream Team and tree planting activities are prompting local discussions on water resource planning.

Mr. Crumley agreed the suggestion is a good idea.

Other members agreed smaller activities are generating discussions by citizens.

Mr. Hill commented that Ag and forestry have advocacy groups. He also agreed with Ms. Napier's suggestion.

Ms. Napier added that there are sufficient funds to support Ms. Spaulding's work through 2010. It's prudent to pursue other options to fund salaries unless the budget situation changes. Hiring Ms. Spaulding to promote the Partnership was a good investment.

Mr. Jennings commented on how individual member groups stepping up and getting involved will ensure success at the local level. The City of Centralia is supporting the stream team through its stormwater program. The fundamental framework is the issue of water for people and water for fish. He agreed with focusing on the education aspect. Ms. Napier said it's important for people to understand how valuable water resource and supply are.

Mr. Murphy commented that the water supply appears to be adequate until 2025. Issues include what steps can be taken to stretch expand the resource timeline and identifying the best projects for focusing resources to meet future water supply demands. Mr. Jennings suggested not overlooking the overriding vision. The Partnership's initial charge is more than just implementing projects.

Mr. Connelly shared that he's heard complaints that the CBP isn't doing anything. Funding for the larger projects is necessary. It's important not to lose sight of the importance the Partnership plays in influencing development and human activities within the basin as well as being a forum for jurisdictions working together.

Members commented on the importance of building community support and encouraging people to participate in completing larger projects.

Mr. Connelly commented that many of the DIP strategies include a public education component.

Mr. Jennings said another advantage is having Ms. Spaulding serve as a conduit on what's occurring in other communities. He supported updating DIP strategy #2, while recognizing the overarching vision.

Ms. Napier reviewed potential changes to DIP strategy #2 for improving the outreach component and hosting workshops. The overarching goal is developing a strategic plan for outreach. The strategic plan could discuss advancing the DIP, Ms. Spaulding's work plan, and contracting direction for the Phase 4 grant. The Phase 4 grant clearly outlines Ms. Spaulding's responsibilities. At the workshops, the Partnership can identify what other organizations are doing in terms of outreach activities in the watershed (create an inventory) and implementing the watershed plan. It's then possible to identify gaps and strategize how to collaborate more effectively. There might be ways Ms. Spaulding could provide assistance and/or engage with stakeholders. Mr. Kliem and Ms. Spaulding could facilitate the first workshop focused on information sharing. A second session could involve stakeholders identifying elements to include in DIP strategy #2. She proposed initiating an information-sharing piece at the STC's April meeting and confirmed that she'll follow up with Mr. Kliem.

Mr. Jennings said the key to public outreach is public involvement.

Ms. Napier reported she is working with Creative Solutions to fine tune the Lead Entity Program for Salmon Recovery on the Partnership's website. Grays Harbor County's website includes a link to "Lead Entity" under the Partnership heading. She suggested forming an ad hoc committee to review the current

website, identify what should be promoted, and create a website highlighting how all the moving parts fit. The website is a valuable outreach tool. Creative Solutions will design the website and train Ms. Spaulding. Ms. Spaulding can assist in updating the site.

Mr. Jennings, Mr. Connelly, Mr. Crumley, and Mr. Rupp volunteered to serve on the ad hoc committee.

Comment Letter – Template Discussion

Ms. Spaulding reported the STC requested the creation of a template for the CBP's role in responding to government policies and ordinances. At the last meeting, members suggested including a link to the website and the policy statement proposed by Mr. Swartout stating, "One of the primary responsibilities of the CBP is to oversee the implementation of the Chehalis Watershed Plan. There are times when local and state governments develop and adopt local policies and programs impacting actions identified in the Chehalis Watershed Plan. It is the policy of the Partnership to provide constructive comments within the context of the plan to local and state governments on policies when there is an opportunity to do so." The intent is to mail a generic letter to local and state governments addressing the Chehalis Basin Watershed Plan. The template serves as an outreach tool to remind entities of the CBP and its role and conveying the importance for jurisdictions to consider the watershed plan when incorporating elements of the plan in policies and ordinances.

Mr. Murphy said other similar letters include a listing of participating agencies and/or signatories. He offered to provide samples to Ms. Spaulding.

Ms. Spaulding indicated she'll provide the STC with a draft letter at a future meeting.

Members discussed specific components of the watershed plan and DIP that should be referenced in a generic letter. One idea is developing several questions focused on what the Partnership would like the local and/or state government to consider such as, "how is the critical areas ordinance (CAO) helping to achieve the balance between the needs of people and environmental protection?" Additionally, include some general habitat and water quality goals.

Members discussed developing standard operating procedures (SOP) on how to share information. Mr. Jennings suggested mailing out an annual reminder. A letter could also be mailed when members learn of large projects, such as the Birchfield development. Ms. Napier added that another goal is integrating land use and watershed planning.

CBP Agenda – March 27, 2009

- Present a revised logo (Ms. Spaulding is unable to attend the March meeting)
- Ms. Napier will provide an overview of the Lead Entity Program
- Solicit feedback from members on the website project
- Review the work plan and implementing partnership
- Ongoing Chehalis River Basin Flood Control Authority (Authority) briefing on activities

STC Agenda – April 2, 2009

- Begin updating the DIP (alternate location for a workshop to be determined) or begin discussions on updating the Partnership's website
- Discussion on the letter for CBP's role regarding government policies and ordinances
- Ongoing Flood Authority briefing on activities

Flood Authority Update

Ms. Napier reported Commissioner Averill, Flood Authority Chair, attended the February Partnership meeting. She shared her perspective on how the Authority and the CBP can work together. There was discussion about the Partnership serving as a public forum and how that could be designed. There still appears to be some disconnect.

Mr. Crumley suggested pursuing that course carefully because although the CBP represents the public, it still is an official body. Mr. Rupp agreed and added that the Authority has the responsibility to serve as the public forum. Information sharing is different.

Mr. Jennings indicated he would like to be informed of Flood Authority activities to determine how its work integrates with the Partnership's interests. He said he'd also like to be informed on the status of the Corps' project.

Mr. Hill expressed interest in a dialogue between the Authority and the CBP with the public having an opportunity for questions.

Members discussed phase 2 of a Lewis County PUD project. Information a project sponsor wants to share with the CBP should be in the context of how the work advances the DIP and watershed plan.

Ms. Napier reported the Authority is developing a basin-wide plan and project list. She outlined the process and timeline for identifying and prioritizing projects for the list and projects agencies have proposed to date. The Authority will take an action in March.

Discussion ensued about warning systems, such as telephonic, electronic, and gauges. Flood stages have not been established and it will take a suite of projects to address flood reduction.

Mr. Jennings offered that the Partnership's role is ensuring issues identified by the STC are included and addressed in the phase 2 study.

Marine Resource Committee

Ms. Napier reported Grays Harbor County is establishing a MRC. She shared information on other counties considering the formation of a MRC. MRCs complete the ecosystem for the Chehalis Basin. Grays Harbor County is in the exploratory phase. A report on the formation of a MRC will be forwarded to Grays Harbor County Commissioners within the next several weeks.

Members discussed MRC potential stakeholders and representatives and available funding.

Adjournment

With there being no further business, Mr. Connelly adjourned the meeting at 11:54 a.m.