

Water Quality Committee Meeting
November 14, 2002
Grays Harbor County Forestry Building

Dave Rountry, Ann Wick, Jim Fleming, Chanele Holbrook, Earl Emerson, Larry Bledsoe, John Sims, Doug Fricke, Chad Stussy, Kahle Jennings, Terry Willis, Ron Wisner, Patrick Wiltzius, Brady Engvall, and Lee Napier were present

Terry Willis, chair, welcomed the group and opened the meeting. Several people commented that they did not receive an electronic copy of the meeting materials. Napier would send out a test message and request people reply to verify delivery of the message.

Copies of the Water Quality Committee description were distributed. The group reviewed the revised document and added few additions.

- Insert "at the direction of the CBP to form" was added to the history and overview section, first sentence. This clarified who request the committee and when.
- Under the roles section Department of Agriculture would draft a bullet that addresses working with Department of Agriculture and pesticide use.

The group felt the committee description was adequate and ready for inclusion in the Operating Procedures Manual.

Review Proposed Committee Description and Workplan

The group discussed its workplan. Some concern was expressed regarding "relieving" the STC of some of its work. The committee members anticipate that the working on proposed changes to the water quality standards and TMDL will consume most of their time. If that consumes the majority of their time, then the committee will be unable to adequately complete the assignments from the STC. The group was comfortable with acting as a sounding board and reviewing work products from the STC, but was not comfortable with devoting time to developing products for the STC. Later in the agenda, the group would evaluate a proposal from the consultant and the STC.

Water Quality Standards

Fleming reported on a hearing that he attend at the Department of Ecology that was jointly sponsored by the agency and EPA. The topic was proposed changes to the temperature standards. This was the second round of hearings for this topic. EPA intends to adopt standards because NMFS is putting pressure on the

agency to finish the review and adopt new standards. The following highlights Fleming's presentation:

- 16° standard is proposed for the Chehalis River. The current standard is 18°, which is also consistent with the temperature TMDL. This question was raised during the Ecology presentation. The Ecology staff will respond to the group.
- The new standards appeared to allow a loop hole for Ecology to recognize existing standards/ natural background conditions.
- The new standards, Section 6, allows for mitigation to meet the standards, such as providing cold water refugia sites. This addresses areas where the standards are unobtainable due to nature background conditions.

EPA is taking public comment until the 26th of November. The group asked County staff to draft a letter for consideration by the CBP. The group would ask the CBP to send the letter and copies would be sent electronically for other entities to use as background for their own letters.

Regarding the state proposed water quality standards, the group shared the following comments:

- The group will develop a letter commenting on the proposed changes after the hearing and during the comment period.
- The group is still waiting for follow up to questions asked during the October 10 meeting.
- Tribes can develop their own water quality standards, which was done by the Chehalis Tribe. The Chehalis standards resemble state standards.
- The question was asked how natural sources or conditions are addressed in the proposed standards.
- If the natural conditions prohibit an area from meeting the criteria what will be the effect? Currently a segment of the Chehalis River does not meet the DO standards, due to natural conditions. What will be the effect?
- Shellfish standards apply nationwide. One issue for them is the inability to use DNA sampling to identify fecal coliform sources, which could significantly change the number of closures. Weyerhaeuser has actively pursued a DNA study that will help this issue by distinguishing the source through DNA.
 - Group would like to a presentation from Randy Cox regarding Weyerhaeuser's model.

Briggs Nursery

Last meeting a request was made to examine water quality issues surrounding the Briggs Nursery. Some the concerns include sit preparation (grading) associated with the relocation and water rights. The land use was reviewed and permitted by the County and the operation is regulated by the Department of Agriculture.

Coordinated Water Quality Monitoring Proposal

The group reviewed the proposed scope of work and requested some changes. The changes would direct the consultant and STC to prepare documents and requests for further review by the group. The group would provide a technical perspective. Considering expected workload, the group felt their involvement might be limited to cursory review.

Next Steps

The next meeting agenda would include a TMDL 102 presentation, Preview of the draft DIP, update regarding the coordinated water quality monitoring program, and update regarding the Briggs Nursery interaction.

The meeting adjourned by 12:00 pm.