

**Chehalis Basin Partnership Water Quality Committee**  
**Grays Harbor Forestry Building**  
**Montesano, Washington**  
**May 8, 2008**  
**9:30 a.m.**

**Meeting Summary**

**PRESENT:**

Terry Willis, Citizen, Grays Harbor  
Teri Franklin, Citizen, Grays Harbor  
David Jarzynka, Briggs Nursery  
Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County  
Dave Rountry, Department of Ecology

Randy Lehr, Grays Harbor College  
Brady Engvall, Citizen, Grays Harbor  
Happy Engvall, Citizen, Grays Harbor  
Danielle Gardea, Puget Sound Meeting Services

**Call to Order, Introductions and Changes to the Agenda**

Chair Terry Willis called the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) Water Quality Committee (WQC) meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Lee Napier commented on a meeting she attended on May 7, 2008 regarding the Wildcat Creek aquifer and the need to establish an ambient water quality monitoring site. Randy Lehr reported this area was identified as a future site for the long-term monitoring program.

Ms. Napier reported the capture zone for the city well is located north of the city. There is not a monitoring site established on the southern portion of the creek where the three branches join. Mr. Lehr said the collection site is located at the Elma-McCleary Road crossing. Ms. Napier asked about the contact for information on the site. Mr. Lehr replied he could be contacted.

Teri Franklin said there is a meeting with Jim Arthur of McCleary at Tim Hamilton's home. Ms. Willis asked if any officials were invited. Ms. Franklin replied it's a community meeting scheduled for 6:30 p.m. She provided directions to the meeting site.

**Discussion of Presentation to Chehalis Basin Partnership -**

Ms. Willis reported Dave Rountry, DOE, has collected information for TMDL/DIP (Total Maximum Daily Load Study/Detailed Implementation Plan) efforts for a comparison to the DIP developed five years ago. A meeting was held in September to collaborate with individuals regarding water quality studies. All committee members received an email on the data provided to Mr. Rountry. Ms. Willis reported the September meeting included presentations from the Thurston County Conservation District, Lewis County Conservation District, and Randy Lehr, Grays Harbor College.

Ms. Willis asked whether including the information is the final step for the task. Mr. Rountry replied that the obligations described in the TMDL/DIP are for the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) and DOE to coordinate the review of activities on an annual basis. The purpose is distribution of information informing the community and all entities involved. Compiling the information is the first step.

Ms. Willis asked about the steps needed for following through on the DIP. Mr. Rountry advised that the next step is a briefing of the CBP to include a description of activities and water quality showing patterns or trends. Ms. Willis asked whether one of the recommendations is having measurable results. Mr. Rountry reported in order to pursue to adaptive management and planning, the CBP needs to know current water quality conditions and activities leading to water quality results. The CBP needs to be informed of gaps with

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implementation and water quality improvements. Ms. Willis asked if the gaps have been identified. Mr. Rountry said there have been several gaps identified during implementation activities based on information provided by Mr. Lehr.

Mr. Rountry suggested drafting a letter and presenting it to the CBP for signature to send to entities where there are gaps in implementation. The letter could request an update on activities and what obstacles have been encountered. A second letter needs to be provided for signature and forwarded to Samuel Iwenofu with the Quinault Indian Nation for a request of the tribe's data.

Mr. Rountry said the briefing for the CBP is informational and will provide guidance for the next steps on adaptive management. The only way to work towards adaptive management is through discussion.

Ms. Napier commented that the TMDL DIP is included in the Watershed Plan by reference. There are issues in the Watershed Plan that are connected to the water quality section.

Mr. Engvall asked for examples of improvements. Mr. Rountry replied that water quality improvements related to activities is based on trust. There have been noticeable differences from the data that were used as a baseline in some locations, but there are failures of water quality standards in others.

Mr. Rountry reported he provided additional information and a proposal to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 10. EPA reviewed all the data from the 303(d) listed sites to determine priorities. Some of the sites are now being addressed in a TMDL. There are six to eight different pH impairment 303(d) listings in the upper Chehalis. Most are concentrated in the Black River vicinity. There has been over 4,000 acres of land conserved in the Black River basin through the actions of the Capital Land Trust, Chehalis Land Trust, Lewis Conservation District, Thurston Conservation District, and the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation. Actions for implementing TMDLs are also contributing to managing pH impairment. There have been improvements in dissolved oxygen (DO) in some areas. Mr. Rountry provided an example of Winter Creek, which is encountering bacteria loading. Recent data reveals conditions are improving.

Ms. Willis commented that pH was not a parameter included in the original TMDL Study. Mr. Rountry confirmed that was correct but that the department is now addressing pH.

Ms. Willis asked what's required from the committee and the CBP to facilitate the next steps. She referred to an email sent to the committee from Mr. Rountry stating:

- The Water Quality Committee should present the results and progress review.
- Discuss and choose an appropriate way to communicate to all partners to inform the partner's work and what others are doing.
- Protect the investments in the development of the plan.
- Encourage participation by all partners.
- WQC should revisit the work plan, TMDL cleanup plan, and the water quality actions of the Watershed Plan collectively.
- Plans should be updated to reflect current needs.
- Plan changes should be made collectively by the CBP.
- CBP should write to the Partners who did not update the CBP.

Ms. Willis questioned how many issues could be addressed or are already in the process. Ms. Napier said the committee will be able to assist with several tasks. Ms. Willis commented that the committee would be able

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to write the letters requesting the information from partners who have not responded. The committee could address changes in those regions experiencing worsening conditions.

Ms. Franklin suggested the committee could identify areas of improvement as well as areas that are deteriorating. Ms. Willis added if problem areas can be identified it might be possible for conservation districts to visit the areas and ascertain the problem. Mr. Rountry agreed with the suggestion. However, it's likely the districts do not have the capacity to offer recommendations on all sites. The project should occur by subbasin. Ms. Willis suggested establishing a formula and identifying possible partners for each area.

Mr. Rountry commented that the process is opportunistic. The committee should approach each region that is receptive to assistance. Much of the information hasn't been distributed and needs to be shared with communities and partners. Ms. Willis asked about the appropriate way to distribute the information. Ms. Franklin suggested placing notices within newspapers.

Mr. Jarzynka recommended beginning with the businesses located along rivers. Most owners want to know and also be prepared for changes. Questions could arise concerning businesses and the river. Ms. Willis indicated that most businesses don't have the information.

Ms. Franklin asked about the possibility of inviting representatives from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to a committee meeting. Logging practices affect water quality, which involves forestry. Ms. Napier commented it may be possible to invite representatives to attend meetings to address specific questions or concerns.

Mr. Rountry suggested it's more important for the CBP to understand current water quality conditions for a proper context for a future discussion on implementation activities occurring and future implementation. He suggested providing Mr. Lehr's water quality monitoring results. There could be a role for the citizen outreach committee in indentifying or defining how the information should be communicated. There is a need for specific recommendations.

Ms. Willis asked about what is realistic in terms of the CBP. Ms. Napier said the CBP needs to determine the role of committees. Ms. Willis agreed the CBP is responsible for directing implementation activities.

Mr. Rountry said the key is to inform the CBP why the work is being done. There is a procedural reason based on a good substantive basis. The CBP and DOE agreed in the TMDL/DIP to coordinate the review process to monitor the meaningfulness of adaptive management processes. There were specific actions submitted by members of the CBP. Ms. Willis pointed out the actions were included in the TDML DIP.

Mr. Engvall commented on the progress he's observed and suggested the committee needs to preserve the foundation for protection of water. DOE has the rule making capacity that the CBP and conservation districts do not have.

Ms. Willis said pH was not originally included within the TMDL study. As the effort proceeds there may be more water quality parameters discovered.

Mr. Lehr advised that he is developing six maps of the basin with colored dots representing the percentage of water quality compliance for each site based on water quality standards.

Ms. Willis asked for feedback on the content of the presentation to the CBP. Mr. Lehr suggested having all information presented with a timeline. There are 4,700 independent locations and samples that have been recorded throughout the Chehalis River basin. Because it's unknown which sites previously monitored

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correspond with the current water quality sites, it will be difficult to query the information from the database. He suggested developing a map that correlates with the areas currently under sampling and comparing the results from the previous 10 years.

Ms. Willis asked whether it's possible to query data from a specific location along the river. Mr. Lehr advised that not all data points are located on the river.

Mr. Engvall suggested the CBP is seeking a professional opinion. Mr. Lehr agreed and indicated that it's possible. However, what is difficult is providing specific information on areas studied 10 years ago. Ms. Willis asked whether it's realistic to go back to the data source to obtain the information. Mr. Lehr said the color-based map should show the collective areas studied and the information for those areas.

Ms. Napier suggested that by presenting a state of river report, people will begin to consider the merits of water quality monitoring and will want the CBP to notify partners involved in implementation activities.

Mr. Rountry noted the time allocated for his and Mr. Lehr's presentation to the CBP is not adequate to appropriately inform the CBP. Ms. Willis expressed concerns about providing too much information and suggested the committee should assist in consolidating the presentation format.

The committee finalized the agenda for the presentation during the CBP meeting on May 26, 2008 including the request for a letter generated by the CBP, Mr. Lehr's presentation, and examples of water quality findings.

Mr. Rountry said 90% of the budget allotted to the CBP for implementation is for water quality implementation projects.

Ms. Willis noted implementation activities have been missing from the committee's agenda. Ms. Napier pointed out that the major focus of all the committees have been on the December 2007 flood.

Mr. Rountry said he would like members to discuss their role, DOE's role, and the relationship to the CBP. Ms. Willis sought input on the agenda item for a future meeting. Ms. Franklin noted DOE representatives are the technical experts and that it's unlikely the committee can achieve its goals without the support of DOE.

Mr. Jarzynka commented that efforts are moving slowly. There are not many action steps underway other than data collection. He asked about the use for the data. One recommendation should be for the CBP to take action. The committee should brainstorm those issues. Ms. Willis asked about next steps. Mr. Jarzynka suggested members should identify interested parties along the river and who will want and use the data. The committee should identify people who would be interested in the data and let them know of the actions the committee will take. Mr. Lehr said that there is a philosophical question as to who is in charge of producing data and its distribution. Ms. Willis said after DOE releases the grant, the funds should be allocated to the entity doing the work and producing the report.

Mr. Jarzynka said all the committees are running parallel in their efforts and have the same concerns. Mr. Engvall added that the committee and the DOE are carrying out a mandate.

Members discussed the division of funding and the requirements for good faith implementation and budgeting. Ms. Willis said the committee has completed many good projects. Dividing data collection regionally will help in the effort.

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### **Review of Gray's Harbor County Critical Areas Ordinance.**

Ms. Willis reported Grays Harbor County published a Critical Areas Ordinance, which needs to be adopted in 2008. There is a 90-day period ending on June 30, 2008 for public comment. The committee is reviewing the ordinance because of water quality implications throughout the document. Grays Harbor County is not subject to all the Growth Management Act (GMA) requirements.

Ms. Franklin said one of the issues she encountered is that the county does not use best management practices. RCW 36.70A.172 requires best management practices under critical areas designation and protection. In designating and protecting critical areas under the chapter, counties and cities shall include best available science (BAS) in developing development regulations to protect the functions and values of critical areas. In addition, counties and cities shall give special consideration to conservation or protection measures necessary to preserve or enhance fisheries. She expressed concerns regarding the ordinance not using BAS. The buffer requirements on page 15 states the document will be used for critical area protection of geologically hazardous areas. The ordinance is using the Department of Agricultural Soil Conservation Service Survey and the Ecology Storm Water Management Manual. Forestry Practice Application Reviews System (FPARS) have resource maps showing where there are unstable slopes and soils.

Ms. Willis said current building code buffers are used throughout the document.

Ms. Franklin cited the differences between DOE and county requirements for Category 1 wetland buffers.

Mr. Engvall noted the proposed ordinance lacks a definition for "farm." He questioned the possibility of a shellfish farm becoming exempt and whether that's good policy. He stressed the importance of including definitions within the ordinance.

Ms. Franklin expressed concerns about the committee's efforts over the last years wasted if the ordinance is adopted as currently proposed.

Ms. Willis said the ordinance doesn't reflect any difference between agricultural and residential properties. The buffers are identical for both uses. The ordinance speaks of floodplains without specifics.

Ms. Napier reviewed the comment period deadline. After conclusion of the public comment period, the proposed ordinance will go before the county's planning commission for its review and recommendation to Grays Harbor County Commissioners. Ms. Willis commented on her attendance to many planning commission meetings and noted she's never seen the commission revisit an issue. Ms. Napier advised that the committee's input will be provided to the planning commission, which will render a recommendation to the County Board of Commissioners.

Ms. Willis asked about available funding for the planning committee if it decided to pursue public outreach efforts. Ms. Napier responded that she was not familiar with their budget.

Mr. Lehr asked if Ms. Franklin has spoken to Dean Schwickerath on the ordinance. Ms. Franklin replied she has not spoken to him specifically but she has spoken to many others. Mr. Lehr said Mr. Schwickerath is a good person to speak to because of his involvement in the Grays Harbor Audubon Society.

Ms. Franklin said it's unrealistic to believe development will not affect the values and functions of wetlands. She commented on the wells and the wetlands that are drying up near Powers Creek.

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Mr. Engvall said he viewed the agricultural lands set aside as a sort of salvation as the county will take the land and turn it into housing projects. Agricultural and forestry lands need to be protected. Ms. Franklin said those are areas that can be restored instead of developing.

Mr. Lehr asked about the Skagit County Critical Areas Ordinance. Ms. Willis said the county is still working on the ordinance. She cited some examples within the ordinance and suggested inviting Olympia-area agriculture lobbyists to a community meeting.

Members discussed possible sponsors and meeting space for a community meeting to obtain public comments for the planning commission. The committee discussed procedures for a public hearing and the process the docket will undertake.

### **Next Meeting Topics, Closing Comments, and Suggestions**

The next meeting will include review of the Critical Areas Ordinance and follow up on the Chehalis Basin CBP meeting.

### **Adjournment**

With there being no further business, Ms. Willis adjourned the meeting at 12:10 p.m.

Prepared by: Danielle Gardea, Recording Secretary  
Puget Sound Meeting Services