

**Chehalis Basin Partnership
Water Quality Committee
Grays Harbor County Administration Building
Montesano, Washington
October 8, 2009
9:30 a.m.**

Meeting Summary

PRESENT:

Janel Spaulding, Grays Harbor College/Chehalis Basin Partnership
Dave Rountry, Department of Ecology (DOE)
Patrick Wiltzius, City of Chehalis
Dave Jarzynka, Briggs Nursery
Chris Hempleman, DOE
Tom Gibbons, Quinault Indian Nation
William Gow II, Puget Sound Meeting Services

Call to Order, Introductions and Changes to the Agenda

Patrick Wiltzius called the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) Water Quality Committee (WQC) meeting to order at 9:36 a.m. Everyone present provided self-introductions.

Personnel Changes at Grays Harbor College

Janel Spaulding reported on recent personnel changes at Grays Harbor College. Joel Green's contract ended September 15, 2009. Mr. Green is now employed at Northwest Indian College as the Director of the Natural Resource Program in Bellingham. Don Loft's contract with the college ended on September 15, 2009. Narendran Kodandapani, GIS Coordinator, is no longer with the college. His contract ended at the end of August 2009. Grays Harbor College is discontinuing its Natural Resources Program with the exception of the forestry instructor who continues to teach classes.

Mr. Loft is currently not taking classes during the quarter, but is seeking employment. His contract termination was unexpected. The grant from DOE for the Watershed Council Year 2 grant included a task associated with the Water Quality Program. That task included Mr. Loft's time, which resulted in the college ending the contract.

Ms. Spaulding provided a copy of the grant budget and associated tasks. Task 3 involving the Water Quality Monitoring Program included funds for the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation to conduct annual water quality monitoring. It included some of Mr. Loft and Mr. Green's time. Some budget information for the most recent quarters hasn't been received from the college. As of June 30, 2009, approximately \$44,000 was available for Task 3. However, a bill was received from the Tribe for \$75,000 for this year's monitoring work, which resulted in an overrun of the budget. Lee Napier met with DOE representatives concerning the budget overrun. The Partnership may be asked to provide guidance for resolving the issue.

Tom Gibbons arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Wiltzius asked whether the billing from the Tribe was anticipated. Ms. Spaulding said the billing was anticipated. A total of \$245,000 was allocated to the task to cover water quality monitoring by the Tribe and some of the Mr. Green and Mr. Loft's time, which was overspent. At this point, there is no support to the Partnership for the GIS Clearinghouse. Ms. Napier is working with the college to determine whether the college will continue funding for hosting the site of the GIS Clearinghouse server at the Satsop Business Park until another location can be identified. GIS Clearinghouse data are intact; however, Mr. Kodandapani did not upload water quality monitoring data to the GIS Clearinghouse. The information is located on Mr.

Chehalis Basin Water Quality Committee Meeting Summary

October 8, 2009

Page 2 of 8

Kodandapani's computer at the college. Mr. Wiltzius suggested obtaining a copy of the file. Ms. Spaulding advised that she is working on the issue. Prior to Mr. Loft's departure he backed up Mr. Kodandapani's computer as well. Dave Rounry added that the data was uploaded to DOE's Environmental Information Management (EIM) System.

Mr. Wiltzius questioned the role and the responsibility of the committee. He suggested a discussion should occur at the Partnership about the role of the committee. During a recent discussion with Chehalis Councilmember Terry Harris, it was pointed out that it appears the Partnership is beginning to lose effectiveness and control and that some members may begin withdrawing until some of the issues are resolved in terms of funding and focus.

Chris Hempleman acknowledged the challenge with respect to funding sustainability and keeping people engaged until long-term funding and the focus of the Partnership is resolved. Mr. Wiltzius offered a suggestion of merging the Water Quality Committee with the Steering Technical Committee (STC). Any water quality issues that may arise can be discussed by the STC until there is a need for the full committee to meet.

Dave Jarzynka offered that committee meetings could be held less frequently. Ms. Hempleman suggested addressing the issue at the next Partnership meeting. Mr. Wiltzius said the issue was addressed but no direction was provided. Ms. Hempleman reported the STC is in the process of developing information on funding alternatives for review by the Partnership.

Mr. Rounry said he's often thought about the work products produced by the Water Quality Committee and its work plan. If the committee continues, he suggested moving beyond the reactionary mode and considering the initial purpose of the committee. It might be helpful for the committee to step back and review the initial outcomes the committee wanted to accomplish, as well as revisiting the mission statement and drafting a new statement. It might also be timely for a hiatus of the committee. While there is no dedicated funding for Partnership tasks, volunteers and partners are implementing projects funded through other sources. Projects are occurring through numerous grant opportunities outside the Partnership. Although the funding forecast is not optimistic, there is funding available through other sources. The committee has completed its report with a series of recommendations that is ready for review and a focused evaluation on the next steps. Priority action areas should be identified for some additional work through coordination with groups and agencies located within those specific problem areas. The committee could be reenergized by developing a current mission statement and a common understanding of the desired outcome in water quality. The State of the River Report provides a platform for adaptive management, which is a substantial element of the Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) and the TMDL Water Quality Implementation Plan.

Ms. Hempleman asked about the likelihood of a Centennial Clean Water Fund grant that could fund some monitoring and outreach. Mr. Rounry said funding might be available for public outreach through riparian restoration. Monitoring could possibly qualify for funding if there is a plan or a known problem area of focus.

Mr. Wiltzius said he recalled that the formation of the committee occurred as the STC was developing the DIP. There were many water quality, water quantity, habitat, and instream flow issues. There was basically too much work for the STC resulting in the formation of the Water Quality Committee. At that time, the committee's leadership included Kahle Jennings and others. Over the years, the committee focused on the work and projects that developed.

Ms. Spaulding referred to the Watershed Management Plan and references to issue papers. She asked about the author of the papers. Mr. Rounry said he assisted in developing one of the papers.

Chehalis Basin Water Quality Committee Meeting Summary

October 8, 2009

Page 3 of 8

Mr. Jarzynka said at the initial onset of the committee, members were focused on achieving goals and obtaining data for completing projects. However it's been five years and the committee had done a good job of reviewing the reports as well as completing some accomplishments. The question today is determining the focus and defining the next steps. If there are no projects of focus, there really isn't any reason to continue meeting.

Mr. Wiltzius said it appears the link associated with people implementing projects has been impacted as many of them no longer attend committee meetings. It appears they can access the information and reports without attending a meeting. The issue is whether the committee is still necessary.

Ms. Spaulding reported the committee is scheduled to receive a presentation at next month's meeting from Mason Conservation District concerning the mycoremediation project.

Mr. Rounry shared his perspective on the importance of the committee and his vision for water quality in the future. When the committee was formed, there was a vision, which essentially is what the mission statement entails. Mr. Jarzynka agreed and indicated that initially, the intent was gathering data and reviewing data. That first step of the vision has been accomplished.

Mr. Wiltzius reviewed names of individuals who have actively participated on the committee.

Tom Gibbons said watershed plan legislation has been in force for nearly a decade. It's a decentralized model that strives to ensure all agencies are working on similar issues within the basin. Many of the products passed through that planning effort has been completed by the Partnership and others statewide. Other watershed planning groups are facing a similar drop in attendance. Some may be several years ahead or in a similar place, but all the groups are facing the same types of problems. The list of people who previously participated on the committee was primarily because of the amount of funding available from the state. Now, due to the reduction of the state's budget and the recession, funding is limited and has been withdrawn. If the funding isn't available to keep people energized in planning, there may need to be a refocus in where the funds are located and in the tasks originated by the Watershed Management Plan. There are other funding opportunities that should be explored. There may also be a shift in the planning group dependent upon the source of the funds, which may require the committee to take the next step, as the state has not sustained the next generation of the effort. The focus of the committee may involve the need to implement projects, such as securing a Centennial grant to plant trees or add woody debris to rivers to continue the good efforts that occurred during the previous planning phases. Until there is momentum at the legislative level, the committee should consider reviewing what the next generation of effort entails in terms of projects planning efforts have produced.

Ms. Hempleman said the STC is focused on several major issues. It can be frustrating to attend meetings when there appears to be limited activity. However, if the issue was forwarded to the STC, it likely will not be resolved because the STC is focused on other priorities. She commented on the availability of potential grants through federal programs if local conservation districts can become more engaged. It might be possible for local districts to coordinate efforts through the committee to secure a Centennial grant for on-the-ground work with landowners.

Mr. Rounry agreed coordination with local conservation districts (CDs) is important. For example, Briggs Nursery has implemented many measures in the interest of water quality protection. There are likely dozens of businesses and landowners who might benefit from the State of the River Report. It's important to review the report and quantify some efforts, such as assisting CDs in reviewing the report in coordination with the committee for potential opportunities to identify potential funding and projects.

Chehalis Basin Water Quality Committee Meeting Summary

October 8, 2009

Page 4 of 8

Mr. Wiltzius questioned the role of DOE in terms of reviewing data from the report as a peer review and to help determine next steps or rendering recommendations to local conservation districts. Perhaps the next step is having DOE review the report and merging the data with other existing DOE data. Mr. Rountry agreed the suggestion is part of his job responsibility. There is a role for DOE in terms of coordination and outreach. However, the message is more meaningful if it's generated by the committee. The committee has been working on projects that have been important to the committee as well as the watershed. Efforts are typically through a volunteer basis. He said he anticipates assisting with the outreach for sharing the conclusions of the reports as well as utilizing data from the reports. The message and outreach for opportunities for water quality protection and improvement are best delivered by people rather than by the Department of Ecology. Mr. Wiltzius said it's obvious the committee has lost engagement of people who are doing the ground work. He suggested developing a survey asking questions on what the respondent would like to see the committee do to reengage the respondent to participate on the committee and what is preventing the respondent from attending WQC meeting.

Mr. Gibbons said it's likely attendance from local conservation district representatives is not related to their funding sources. Many conservation districts do not have discretionary funds that representatives can draw on to participate on local committees or boards. The funds are specific to projects. Ms. Hempleman suggested that it's important to work with local conservation districts to secure grants involving the committee to ensure their participation. It may be possible to identify several areas within the report where the committee wants to pursue some work and coordinate some of that work through Ms. Spaulding's educational effort to attract attendance at some meetings to focus attention on particular areas of interest.

Mr. Gibbons said the Chehalis basin is one of three substantial basins where the Quinault Indian Nation has treaty interest. There are many activities occurring now and in the future within the basin. He shared that he is evaluating ongoing efforts in the basin as well as funding successful for the Tribe's program. He expressed interest in participating in the review of the report.

Ms. Spaulding noted that there are areas of concern highlighted within the State of River Report. Discussions could begin with local organizations on efforts in those areas of concern.

Mr. Wiltzius suggested the STC should be updated on the concerns of the committee.

Discussion of 2006-2009 State of the River Report

Janel Spaulding reported on the availability of the 2006-2009 State of the River completed by Joel Green. The document is in a PDF format that is too large to send electronically. The report should be available for viewing on the Partnership's website next week.

Ms. Spaulding displayed and reviewed the State of the River Report:

- Executive Summary – two-pages that include the criteria used to evaluate water quality samples, which is based on Washington State standards as well as generalized descriptions of some trends associated with pH, temperature, dissolved oxygen, fecal coliform, and turbidity sampling results. The summary concludes that although there are general trends in water quality throughout the Chehalis basin, specific needs for restoration and preservation of water quality will need to be evaluated on a site specific basis.
- Acknowledgement section – report was funded by DOE grant. Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation collected, monitored, and analyzed samples in the Tribe's laboratory. Don Loft created the water quality parameter maps.
- Table of Contents

Chehalis Basin Water Quality Committee Meeting Summary

October 8, 2009

Page 5 of 8

- List of Figures
- List of Tables
- Introduction
- Map of the basin with county boundaries and Tribes
- Methods
- Water Quality Parameters & Water Quality Standards

Mr. Wiltzius asked whether the report will be submitted to DOE and whether members would like to request a review by DOE. Mr. Rountry said the report is a product of a grant, which will be forwarded to the department, which could be reviewed for potential use and for implementation activities of interest by the department. The review will primarily pertain to whether the report is completed based on the requirements of the grant. Mr. Rountry said he anticipates that after the report is submitted, he'll include it along with other information and submit it to the Environmental Assessment Program for an Effectiveness Monitoring Review for the upper Chehalis basin. The program reviews the data, which is also included in DOE's EIM, as well as the CD on the progress review workshop for activities implemented, and any other information to begin identifying areas of concern. The committee could send a letter to DOE.

Mr. Wiltzius said he wants to ensure that DOE is reviewing EIM and data from the report and drawing some conclusions to avoid having the report shelved. DOE should be using the data to determine the location of potential TMDLs or other actions. Mr. Rountry said he will submit a request to include the report in the effectiveness monitoring review. Ms. Hempleman said another option is requesting a .01 FTE for the scoping process as technical support to assist in some groundwater analysis. It's likely availability of the individual wouldn't occur until next July.

Mr. Wiltzius asked about the possibility of inviting someone from the program to discuss how the data will be utilized by the department. It's important for the data to be utilized otherwise the entire effort is a waste of time. He said he would like some kind of assurance that the data will be used by DOE, and believes the department's role is to determine where TMDLs should occur. DOE has other monitoring efforts that can be combined with the results from the water quality monitoring data.

Ms. Hempleman expressed a different point of view pertaining to data collected and not utilized by the department as being a waste of time. DOE manages the state at a high level. There are many opportunities for the committee. The best may not involve a TMDL or listed on the 303(d) list because of the ability of the committee to determine where problems are developing to focus efforts and manage the problem before the state becomes involved.

Mr. Jarzynka agreed as one of the reasons for his participation on the committee is because it's important to look forward and recognize issues that relate to his business and the river. If it takes action to protect his business and the families that are employed then it helps to sustain the business in the long term. It's important to know what actions are necessary to protect the business through sustainability practices to ensure a successful business.

Mr. Gibbons said he believes there are a number of outcomes from the report. One positive outcome is a variety of projects to address some problem areas. Another potential outcome is identifying the location of the monitoring stations to continue efforts. He asked if information is available within the report identifying the location of monitoring stations for future continuation of the program if funding becomes available. Ms. Spaulding advised that maps are located within the report of the sites. The Chehalis Tribe has the latitude and longitude coordinates.

Chehalis Basin Water Quality Committee Meeting Summary

October 8, 2009

Page 6 of 8

Mr. Wiltzius suggested obtaining a copy of the information and including it within the report.

Discussion followed on downloading the report at www.chehalisbasinpartnership.org and how to access information from the GIS Clearinghouse at www.gis.ghc.edu, which includes an interactive access feature.

Mr. Wiltzius said perhaps the focus should be more on water quality outreach. However, the question is how to fund that effort. Letters could be sent, but more extensive outreach will require a source of funding. Mr. Wiltzius added that the report might be helpful to the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the habitat program. He asked how the report will be distributed to different agencies. Ms. Spaulding offered that an email could be sent to organizations and agencies notifying them of the report's availability on the Partnership's website. Mr. Wiltzius recommended including additional information on data included in the report and some water quality concerns for fish rearing and habitat.

Mr. Wiltzius said another tool that the committee discussed but is not available is the integration of land use records within the report. Ms. Spaulding advised that Mr. Loft worked on some land use maps for some of the subbasins. As Mr. Green mentioned during his presentation, there were some problems with some of the data. Information was included in the report outlining how the problem was resolved.

Ms. Spaulding reviewed some of the data and maps in the report for some of the water quality parameters. Mr. Loft was able to complete a land use map for the Black River. Mr. Wiltzius offered that the committee might consider a recommendation for completing land use for the entire basin and flow direction for each subbasin.

Mr. Wiltzius suggested members should review the report and be prepared to discuss issues with the report, recommendations for further investigation, and develop a list identifying people for outreach. It could be included as an agenda topic for the next meeting. Additionally, invite a representative from the Environmental Assessment Program at DOE to discuss the value of the report to the department. Additionally, provide the report to the Tribes with a request to provide input on potential people and groups for outreaching.

It was noted that Mr. Green offered several recommendations within the report that align with the committee's discussion.

Members discussed some of the problems associated with data quality. Mr. Green was asked how the issue was addressed. He sent a substantial email to Mr. Wiltzius outlining how the data was edited. Mr. Wiltzius said he shared his concerns with Mr. Rountry. Mr. Green did address the issue within the report. However, it does call into the question future water quality efforts and utilizing the same lab to collect data if results are questionable. Mr. Rountry said he was reassured after reading Mr. Green's explanation and why some pH data wasn't utilized. He reviewed the narrative within the report documenting problems of some of the test samples.

Mr. Wiltzius suggested after the review and discussion of the report, the committee should send a letter thanking Mr. Green and Mr. Loft for their efforts.

Ms. Spaulding advised that she'll send an email when the report is posted on the website followed by a more specific email to the Tribes and state agencies.

Mr. Wiltzius suggested delaying delivery of the report to the Partnership until the committee completes its review.

Mr. Gibbons and Mr. Wiltzius discussed the Quinalt Indian Nation's participation in the process. Mr. Wiltzius said the tribe has vested interest and treaty rights and ultimately the tribe should be engaged at

Chehalis Basin Water Quality Committee Meeting Summary

October 8, 2009

Page 7 of 8

committee level discussions. The Tribe's input on the report is desired early in the process. Mr. Gibbons said the information in the report is a step in a good direction regardless of the agendas and outcome between the Partnership and the Tribe. The report provides useful information to start working on issues affecting water quality of fisheries.

Mr. Wiltzius suggested after the committee's review, a formal presentation to the Partnership could occur along with the committee's recommendation on next steps if funding can be provided.

Mr. Rountry commented that while all good scientists want tremendous rigor in the outcome of their study and report, and while standards and protocols are always improving, it's beyond the capacity of the committee given the capabilities of the project and the scale. The report may not represent a scientific report but it does include information summarizing three years of data. It's a huge body of data with some reasonable conclusions about the conditions because of the number of data points analyzed. The report provides tremendous value in that respect.

Ms. Spaulding said Mr. Green included a letter stating that the report doesn't include any long-term monitoring probe data. Mr. Wiltzius said the long-term probes provide another opportunity for the committee to pursue in terms of analysis. Ms. Spaulding noted the Chehalis Tribe committed to continue monitoring activities until the end of December 2009. She suggested following up with Mark White.

Mr. Rountry suggested the committee should evaluate the future use and operation of the monitoring stations. Members discussed ownership of the equipment. Mr. Wiltzius reported the City of Chehalis purchased several of the monitoring stations as well. Members suggested sending an email to the Chehalis Tribe confirming its commitment to continue monitoring efforts until the end of the year or longer, if possible, as well as requesting a copy of the data. Another recommendation from the committee's review of the report could involve the future of the long-term probes.

Other Business

Ms. Spaulding reported the Centralia Stream Team is scheduled to have a second cleanup of China Creek on Saturday, October 10, 2009, at the parking lot across from Centralia College Boulevard. Hot dogs will be served along with refreshments. She invited members to participate. The last event drew 67 volunteers. A significant amount of weeds, blackberries, and debris was removed.

An informational meeting is scheduled on October 21, 2009 for formation of a Grays Harbor Stream Team. The meeting will be held at Grays Harbor College. Several high school students from Aberdeen and a science teacher have expressed interest in forming a local team.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the committee is scheduled on November 12, 2009. Members discussed potential agenda topics and agreed to a tentative agenda including:

- Invite stakeholders, tribes, DOE, WDFW, and conservation districts to review the report and solicit recommendations on the report and offer additional information on data needs. Develop some potential projects from the report.
- Presentation from Mason Conservation District

Mr. Gibbons suggested the committee should provide specific information on the input it's seeking with respect to the State of the River Report. Mr. Wiltzius suggested the email should state that the Partnership/Water Quality Committee produced a report on the State of the River for the Chehalis River and seeks input on the usefulness of the report and additional data needs. Ms. Hempleman added that the email

Chehalis Basin Water Quality Committee Meeting Summary

October 8, 2009

Page 8 of 8

should also ask individuals to share issues or concerns with the report, what recommendations should be discussed for next steps, and who should receive the report. Mr. Rountry said it also should be clear that the committee is not in the position to revise the report and is not seeking editorial or technical comments. Mr. Gibbons said another question could ask the respondent to provide any input on the future direction of the committee based on the report results.

Mr. Rountry recommended inviting representatives from the DOE Environmental Assessment Program to a another future meeting to discuss the review and what's anticipated from the review.

Adjournment

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:33 a.m.

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