

**Chehalis Basin Partnership Water Quality Committee
Chehalis Tribe Community Center
461 Secena Road
Oakville, WA
February 10, 2011
9:30 a.m.**

Meeting Summary

MEMBERS & OTHERS PRESENT

Patrick Wiltzius, City of Chehalis	Tom Gow, Puget Sound Meeting Services
Janel Spaulding, Chehalis Basin Partnership	Bob Amrine, Lewis County Conservation District
J Roach, Citizen, Thurston County	Chris Hempleman, Department of Ecology
Kathy Jacobson, Chehalis Basin Education Consortium	Ron Schillinger, City of Montesano
Tom Gibbons, Quinault Indian Nation	Harry Pickernell, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation

Call to Order, Introductions and Changes to the Agenda

Patrick Wiltzius called the February 10, 2011, meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) Water Quality Committee (WQC) to order at 9:38 a.m. Everyone present provided self-introductions.

Mr. Wiltzius reviewed the agenda.

Develop/Discuss Water Quality Committee Work Plan 2011

Janel Spaulding reported at the last meeting it was agreed to develop a work plan and establish some goals. The committee expressed interest in focusing on education and outreach, as the committee doesn't have the capacity or the funding to pursue other projects. Ms. Spaulding shared information on how to create a rain garden. Chris Hempleman drafted an article for the *Drops of Water* publication highlighting the report by Scott Collyard on water quality improvements in the basin.

Mr. Wiltzius referred to the previous meeting and the agreement to focus on public outreach by providing different types of brochures to the public through jurisdiction utility billings, articles in the *Drops of Water* publication, and other venues. It may be possible to have jurisdictions contribute some funds to produce bill stuffers. The Lewis County Health Department has instituted a prescription drug drop-off program. He said he emailed the county about the program and informed the Department that there is no publicity about the program. He offered to have the committee involved in publicizing the program.

Ms. Spaulding said Grays Harbor County provides an annual program for people to turn in prescription drugs. Mr. Schillinger said he believes the Legislature is working on a bill for pharmacies to develop a program for the disposal of prescription drugs.

Mr. Schillinger commented that he's following up with the WSU Extension on any existing literature on water quality that could possibly be distributed to the public. Bob Amrine suggested contacting Puget Sound Enhancement Group to obtain additional information on the proper disposal of pharmaceuticals. He offered to follow up with the organization.

Mr. Wiltzius suggested that over the course of the next several meetings, members can continue collecting information and following up on contacts.

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Ms. Spaulding suggested establishing some timelines as the *Drops of Water* is a bi-monthly publication. Mr. Amrine said he could draft an article for the publication as well. Mr. Wiltzius suggested devoting some time each month to designate someone to draft an article.

Ms. Hempleman shared that Chanele Holbrook-Shaw has suggested providing some time at the monthly CBP meeting to organizations to update members on current activities. That same format could be applied to the *Drop of Water* publication. It would involve contacting various organizations to seek possible articles of interest. Mr. Amrine said that because of the lack of funding within his organization, resources are limited. The District's Board of Directors is focusing on utilizing funds to complete projects rather than continue to increase the project list.

Ms. Hempleman asked why the Conservation District is outreaching to the Flood Authority. Mr. Amrine said that in January of last year, the Board conducted a long-range planning exercise. Landowners and constituents were very disappointed with the lack of efforts in controlling flood damage in the Chehalis basin. The Board has listed that as one of the top three priorities to ensure that some action occurs with flood control damage/flood control retention. The main program that is being pursued is the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program, commonly known as the PL-566 Watershed Program, which isn't funded. The National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is beginning to scope the program. Ms. Hempleman said she understood that the program is essentially dead according to information shared during the Flood Authority meeting. Mr. Amrine described efforts in Washington, D.C., to secure funding for Washington's program. In the meantime, the Conservation District is working on farm bill programs and having people work on projects under those programs. However, projects often are not compatible with that funding program.

Mr. Wiltzius said it appears the CBP will devote time at meetings for organizations to share information on success stories. He suggested adding an agenda item for next month to develop a list of individuals to invite to the CBP to share information.

Ms. Spaulding said there are many articles for publication in the *Drops of Water* but they don't necessarily tie into how it may improve water quality. Another option is asking authors of articles to tie in how the project or program supports or improves water quality. She offered to provide the contributors list for the publication for review at next month's meeting.

Mr. Schillinger suggested spending some time developing a list of contributors for specific editions of the *Drops of Water*. One of the steps is identifying potential contributors. That fits in with the committee's overall goal. Ms. Hempleman advised that she and Ms. Holbrook-Shaw are contacting potential contributors. It only involves several phone calls a month to follow up with individuals.

Discussion followed on the relationship of the committee with the CBP. Ms. Spaulding said the CBP agreed with the suggestion to provide time on the monthly agenda for different agencies to provide updates to the CBP. Lee Napier provided an update on the Lead Entity and the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB). She asked Mr. Amrine if he would be interested in providing an update on District programs at the February CBP meeting on February 25.

Kathy Jacobson added that the Chehalis Basin Education Consortium is scheduled in May to have students present their water quality monitoring results and/or projects.

Mr. Amrine asked whether it's possible for Mr. Wiltzius to demonstrate the benefits of new treatment plants. Mr. Wiltzius said he could prepare a presentation outlining the benefits. Mr. Wiltzius said

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developing a list of possible presenters is similar to the meeting Dave Rountry conducted several years ago when attendees shared information on their respective projects. There were several worthwhile presentations. Members discussed how Mr. Rountry compiled all the presentations and publicized the information on DOE's website on that progress review. There is also a link on CBP's website.

Ms. Spaulding reviewed the list of contributors for *Drops of Water*. Missing from the list are Capitol Land Trust, Grays Harbor Audubon Society, Grays Harbor Conservation District, and Quinault Indian Nation.

Mr. Amrine asked about the status of ongoing funding for the CBP. Ms. Spaulding advised that effective June 30, 2011, funding from DOE expires and unless the Legislature allocates funding, funding will end. DOE included funds in the WaterSmart Washington legislation to add four more years of funding for watershed funding.

J. Roach said he testified as a citizen before the Legislature. He may have to resign from the CBP, as he's involved in some ongoing legislation. Mr. Amrine said if funding is not renewed he would hope that there would be an opportunity for the group to meet as a water quality advocate for the basin. If not, the momentum that has been gained in water quality will be lost. Mr. Amrine said it's similar to what's occurring at the District, as there is a lack of funds to implement plans. There is a \$2 million backlog at the Conservation Commission for cost share in the state. The Commission receives funding from the Legislature.

Discussion followed on funding for the Lewis County Conservation District and the status of the Centennial Water grant. The grant is competitive with many funding requests submitted.

Mr. Wiltzius asked about the possibility of contacting the public information officer for public outreach information through DOE. Ms. Hempleman said the position will be vacant at the end of the month and it's likely the position will not be replaced by March. Ms. Hempleman offered to check with the department.

Mr. Schillinger commented on the importance of the committee regardless of the status of the CBP. Water quality is an important issue. Those individuals that have a strong interest as well as commitment need to continue to work as long as those efforts are productive. It's important to have the tribes and DOE involved. The location of the meeting is also important. Mr. Gibbons asked about ways to attract more attendance to the meetings. Mr. Wiltzius said there was some discussion on ways to attract more attendance when the committee meetings were reestablished. The new location is more conducive to several of the members than Montesano, where previous meetings were held.

Ms. Jacobson said the meetings must have some relevancy as well. She shared that she is neglecting some responsibilities by attending the meeting. It's important to know what will be discussed during the meeting that she can then share the information with teachers and students. She was prompted to attend the meeting because there was supposed to be some discussion on the possibility of having Simpson Elementary School as a model site for a rain garden, which ties into the summer teacher institute later in the summer. Mr. Amrine agreed that as more people attend, there can be more sharing of information and more momentum will build. Mr. Amrine suggested the committee should discuss pursuing a rain garden at the school.

Ms. Jacobson suggested adding Washington State Parks because they closed Millersylvania State Park because of green algae last fall. Another contact to add is the Washington Health Department and Sue

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Davis with Thurston County Environmental Health as well as Lewis County Environmental Health. Debbie Smith with Tumwater is also a possible contributor and Mark Coster with Thurston County. Rob Schanz's wife, Shirley Cook, with Lewis County Solid Waste and Mason Conservation District should be added as well. Mr. Wiltzius offered to contact the State Department of Health as well as DOE to obtain information and possibly have them attend meetings. Ms. Jacobson suggested contacting WSU Cooperative Extension. The Evergreen State College should also be contacted.

Mr. Schillinger suggested adding the City of Hoquiam because the City is one of a few where its water supply is surface water. Mr. Wiltzius said the water supply for Chehalis is surface water as well. Ms. Spaulding noted the City of Hoquiam has been sending a representative to the CBP meetings.

Mr. Schillinger suggested the urban cities as well as the timber industry should be involved and that it's important to solicit participation by Weyerhaeuser, Green Diamond, Port Blakely, Hancock, Sierra Pacific, and Rainier. The Sierra Club should be included as well.

Ms. Jacobson commented on the importance of having signage at sites as well. The City of Olympia is working on a large project at Yauger Park, but there is no signage announcing the project. Those opportunities are missed. It's important that with any projects completed it becomes part of the collective standard and knowledge base. Mr. Amrine said Boistfort Valley Farm was awarded the Wildlife Farmer Year award from the Lewis County Conservation District. The *Chronicle* newspaper was scheduled to publish an article but the farm never installed the sign announcing the award on the property.

Ms. Spaulding commented on the importance of having freeway signs announcing that motorists are entering the Chehalis basin, similar to the signs posted on Interstate 5 for the Nisqually watershed. Friends of Grays Harbor, the Chehalis River Council, and DOE have funded some signs for the basin.

Mr. Wiltzius suggested developing a map of the watershed and callouts of water quality projects completed. Don Loft from The Evergreen State College was able to complete a similar map for water quality testing. The same principle could be completed for all water quality projects.

Mr. Roach said most people do not understand the history of the basin. From the time the Partnership formed, that was one of the major accomplishments. Since then, there have been many other accomplishments and having it displayed visually could be telling. The message that he is conveying to the Legislature is the momentum that exists in the basin and the importance of that continuing. The only way to convey the information is through visual aids.

Mr. Gibbons commented on the need to focus on large ranging items pertaining to water quality, specifically concerning temperature. He stressed the need for outreach, education, and collaboration efforts. He shared information on areas of focus by the Quinault Indian Nation to eradicate knotweed and improve water quality on the reservation and within the Queets watershed. Education on the spread of knotweed by water equipment will be an important long-term need. Another area of concern is the potential invasion of zebra and other invasive mussels. The Nation has expertise in engaging and complementing efforts by others in the watershed. The Nation might also aid in restoration activities as well.

Mr. Amrine reviewed the Conservation Resource Enhancement Program (CREP) to create forested streamside buffers to provide cooler water, more diverse aquatic habitats, and a reduction in sediment. The program is fully funded through June 30, 2011. The District is working on 9 sites encompassing 800 acres. Because of funding uncertainty effective July 1, the District is continuing to work on its CREP

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plan. The Lewis Conservation District Commission understands the District is very active. Other districts that receive funding are not as successful with the program. The District's success is because of lower maintenance costs. When the program was first introduced, funds were provided of \$1,500 to \$3,000 an acre to maintain projects. The District's average maintenance is approximately \$200 to \$300 an acre. Ms. Spaulding asked whether any of the District's projects have been entered in the Habitat Work Schedule. Mr. Amrine said he's unsure if the projects have been submitted. When the District submitted its Centennial grant, the intent was to match the program. The District received 11 letters of support. Additionally, the TMDL includes recommendations. Fifty years is the forecast for improving water temperature. It's important to plant trees as soon as possible to begin impacting temperatures. There are many open spaces remaining to be planted.

Mr. Gibbons commented that it appears not many projects have been implemented to improve temperature. He questioned what projects through the SRFB have been implemented to help improve temperatures and mentioned Mr. Rountry's interest in the committee's work to pursue efforts to improve water quality parameters. Mr. Amrine said he is seeking funding to match a SRFB project through an application this year with the CREP. Letters of intent are due April 1 through the SRFB.

Mr. Gibbons said one avenue he is exploring is the possibility of contributing some Nation funds to the SRFB or partner with someone regarding similar issues.

Ms. Spaulding said the Department of Natural Resources is interested in plantings along the Chehalis River shoreline. The Habitat Work Group is inputting projects in the Habitat Work Schedule, which is an online database of projects. The database is currently being updated. It is possible to input project ideas in the schedule. She offered to send out more information on the Habitat Work Schedule to the committee.

Mr. Amrine referred to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers mitigation projects for the dike and levee systems that include tree plantings. However, the Corps never contacted landowners for permission to enter private properties. There are landowners who will not permit access. It takes time to work with property owners to access their properties and to trust the process. There are people who will not sign a contract with the federal government. The CREP requires a contact.

Mr. Schillinger commented that the biggest changes contributing to improving water temperature and increasing protection was the state establishing larger timber buffers.

Mr. Amrine said monitoring efforts could benefit the District by knowing temperatures at the south fork and further downstream. He could then approach residents downstream about what they can do to help water quality. Since the District is non-regulatory, the District encourages and educates landowners on ways to protect and restore water quality.

Ms. Jacobson said a pancake breakfast is scheduled at a grange. She suggested having a presence at events to convey those messages. Mr. Amrine shared that landowner to landowner education is the most effective tool and many landowners are defensive and view outside assistance as land taking.

Ms. Jacobson shared information on the 10th Annual Chehalis Basin Education Consortium Student Congress. The event will be attended by many students across the region. She suggested members of the committee should attend the congress as one of the key elements of the congress is the state-of-the-river session where students share water quality testing results. Research professionals help the students fill in some of the background knowledge and give credence to the students' work. The students also develop

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action plans. It provides a bigger picture of the basin on what is occurring and what individuals can do to protect water quality. She invited members to attend. The event is held on March 18 at Grays Harbor College. Harvest Moon, who is of Quinault Indian Nation ancestry, is attending to demonstrate basket-making. Last year, the Chehalis Tribe hosted a salmon bake. Mr. Pickernell said he would contact Mark White to inquire about hosting a similar event this year.

Ms. Jacobson provided additional details on the Congress, which begins with students sharing water quality data and making recommendations. Volunteers help facilitate the discussion and help students understand the meaning of the results. That is followed by assisting students to develop their top recommendations. A list of the recommendations is shared with the entire group. All the information is then developed into a watershed proclamation of 10 to 12 items that guides next year's work. The workshops are approximately 50 minutes enabling students to gain more experience and knowledge in different topic areas. Mr. Roach previously participated and taught students how to read GIS maps.

Ms. Spaulding suggested for the next meeting, members should be prepared to provide some educational and outreach literature. Another effort is developing a list of people to invite to share updates at CBP meetings.

Mr. Roach asked about the future of the CBP if funding is not provided. Ms. Spaulding said the CBP is working with a pro bono attorney to establish a watershed management partnership. However, whether it can be implemented by June 30 is still uncertain. Mr. Roach shared that unless there are some major changes in watershed legislation, it will not pass.

Members discussed continuing the committee regardless of the outcome of funding legislation. Mr. Roach suggested there are ways to support the legislation by demonstrating to the Legislature what's been accomplished in the basin. He advocated for developing a list of accomplishments to share with legislators and shared information on the legislative process and what's involved in lobbying activities. Ms. Spaulding reported the Partnership has prepared a legislative brochure as well as documenting activities completed to date, which is also posted on the Partnership's website. Mr. Wiltzius advised members to check the website for the information.

Rain Gardens

Mr. Wiltzius reported on recent news coverage in the Seattle area on some failures of several rain gardens that were experiencing drainage problems. Apparently, the gardens were not properly installed. Ms. Jacobson suggested checking with the Tanglewilde neighborhood in Thurston County on the effectiveness of rain gardens installed a year ago. She mentioned that while in Bellevue, a business had installed a large barrel for roof run-off. Ms. Spaulding reported DOE has good information on installing roof run-off systems. At this time, there are no state regulations on rain barrels.

Ms. Jacobson said the agency is implementing a new program on Ecological Restoration of Schoolyards, where schools can select different types of gardens to create. Rochester has selected a garden based on a historic prairie lands theme. Later in the summer, a three-day teacher institute is planned to share information on rain gardens and other types of gardens. Teachers at Simpson Elementary School would like the school to become a demonstration site as very little remained in the new construction budget for landscaping.

Mr. Schillinger described the new school and the lack of landscaping. The Chehalis basin and the river flow are a theme throughout the school. The school wanted a natural landscape. However, the community as a whole does not like the landscaping and are seeking some improvements. The school,

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because of the public response, is trying to create some landscaping that incorporates grass as well. At the last Council meeting, some timber revenues were allocated to partner with the school for landscaping improvements.

Ms. Spaulding shared a copy of an instruction booklet on developing a rain garden.

Mr. Wiltzius distributed information he obtained from the Water Environment Federation, a national organization focused on water quality. The federation provides a variety of billing stuffers, such as drug free drains at approximately 10 cents a brochure. He shared other information he obtained on water conservation from the Department of Health.

Mr. Schillinger said the information provides multiple benefits because when people pour inappropriate products down the drain, it can have serious consequences to both septic systems and wastewater treatment processes. Mr. Wiltzius said there is much information available. The issue is collecting the materials and determining ways of sharing it with the public.

Article for Drops of Water about Improved Water Quality in the Chehalis Basin

Ms. Hempleman distributed a draft of the article and asked for feedback. Steering Technical Committee (STC) members are emailing any suggested changes to her directly.

Mr. Wiltzius suggested including the Yelm Treatment Plant in the third bullet as another plant that has been recently upgraded.

Members discussed the third bulleted item and suggested some revisions to eliminate some of the negativity. The discussion focused on loss of dairy farms in the basin. In 1995, according to Mr. Amrine, there were 44 dairies in the county; today that number is approximately 34 with approximately 17 converting to organic farms that have become very successful. Ms. Hempleman recommended revising the sentence. The first sentence in the third bullet was deleted and the next sentence was revised to state, "The reductions likely came from a combination of early efforts involving (1) updates to wastewater treatment facilities in Chehalis (2007), Centralia (2004), and Yelm (year), (2) changes to management, location, and the economics of dairy production, and (3) individual landowner BMPs (best management practices), such as improved fencing and streamside plantings."

Mr. Wiltzius suggested adding additional information under the fourth bullet on additional tree plantings are occurring to make a difference in the future.

Ms. Hempleman offered to send the final draft to members for final review.

Ms. Jacobson said she met with an individual who has a fishing shack on the river. She mentioned the possibility of having one of the individuals write an article in the *Drops of Water*. Mr. Amrine said one individual attended a committee meeting after the flood in 2008 and complained about turbidity in the river. It would be nice to have him attend a meeting and speak to the abundance of steelhead today. Ms. Jacobson said his perspective was great because of the amount of time he spends on the river. Ms. Spaulding said his name is Louis Farran that he was born and raised on the Chehalis River and has fished the river his entire life. He said he has three fishing shacks on the river that are fished plunked. For the last eight years, he's fished the river off the computer for the highs and the lows. Ever since the slides, he hasn't fished. He described how when it rains and the river is muddy, it's not possible to fish because fish don't travel through the muddy water. He learned over the eight years of computer fishing that after the second day drop, fishing was the most successful because water clarity would improve enabling fish

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to travel up the river. Ms. Spaulding said she believes Teri Franklin invited him to attend the meeting and may be able to contact him.

Next Meeting Agenda

- Ms. Spaulding reported she will compile a list of potential contributors for presentations.
- Discuss the next edition of the *Drops of Water*.
- Members should continue compiling informational brochures and other information resources.
- Mr. Amrine suggested identifying the Water Quality Committee in the article so the reader has contact information. A suggestion was offered to include the Partnership's name or link in the article.
- Continue to identify roadside signage.

The next meeting is March 10, 2011 at the same location.

Members discussed inviting Dave Rounry to attend future meetings. Ms. Hempleman suggested combined meetings with the STC, Habitat Work Group and the WQC to discuss technical issues several times a year.

Mr. Roach reiterated the importance of lobbying the Legislature to ensure watershed funding continues.

Mr. Gibbons provided additional information on the problems associated with infestation of knotweed.

Adjournment

With there being no further business, Mr. Wiltzius adjourned the meeting at 12:02 p.m.

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