



Chehalis Basin Partnership

Interim By-Laws

I. PURPOSE

The legislature having recognized the need for local communities to address water resource management issues has created the Watershed Management Act Chapter 247, Laws of 1998, Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 2514. The Act establishes a voluntary planning process to assess and to manage the water resources of the Chehalis River basin and to develop strategies within the basin addressing water quantity, water quality, fish habitat and in-stream flows.

The Chehalis Basin Partnership (the Partnership) has been created per the intergovernmental agreement dated August 31, 1998 (attached), designating Lewis County as lead agency, as outlined in ESHB 2514. The agreement designates a planning unit to pursue strategies within the Chehalis River basin which include the key elements of flood reduction, fisheries, recreation, water quality and water quantity and examine their relationship to economic health and sustainability.

The legislature having also recognized the need to address salmon habitat restoration projects has created the Salmon Recovery Planning Act Chapter 246, Laws of 1998, Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 2496. The Act establishes a structure that allows for the coordinated delivery of local, state and federal assistance to communities for habitat projects that will assist in the recovery and enhancement of salmon stocks.

The Partnership has been designated the 'lead entity' in the salmon recovery planning process; the cities, counties and tribes within the Chehalis River basin have adopted individual resolutions or provided support letters ratifying this designation.

The Partnership adopts these interim bylaws to implement the intent of both legislative acts this 26th day of February, 1999.

II. PARTNERSHIP COMPOSITION AND QUORUM

The Partnership shall be composed of the Planning Unit members as defined in section 4.0 of the intergovernmental agreement, dated August 31, 1998. A quorum for the transaction of business exists when any number of planning unit members are in attendance at any regularly scheduled meeting. No action may be taken regarding Partnership business as defined in section IV, at any regularly scheduled meeting, unless a simple majority of the total number of planning unit members are present. Members present at a meeting at which a quorum is not present may 1) elect to proceed with the business of the meeting subject to ratification of all action taken

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whenever a quorum is next present at a meeting, and 2) may elect to adjourn to a definite time and place announced in open meeting at which a quorum is not present at the time of adjournment.

III. PARTNERSHIP OFFICERS

The Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Partnership shall be selected by the Planning Unit members. Both positions are one-year terms. The Vice-Chair shall preside as chair pro-tem in absence of the Chair of the Partnership. If the Chair and Vice-Chair is unable to attend a meeting of the Partnership, the Chair shall designate another Planning Unit member to serve as acting chair.

IV. PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS

The Partnership, represented by the Planning Unit members, shall use its authority to execute certain contracts and agreements, approve certain expenditures and reimbursements, or conduct any other administrative Partnership function, including such official Partnership business as is reasonably related to or contemplated within such authorization. All Partnership administrative functions shall be delegated to Lewis County, as outlined in section 6.0 of the intergovernmental agreement, dated August 31, 1998.

V. CONDUCT AND FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

Actions of the Partnership shall be conducted according to a consensus decision-making process. Please see appendix A and B explaining the decision-making process.

The Partnership shall meet at least monthly, preferably on the fourth Friday, unless said date is a holiday. Special meetings may be called by the Chair or if a simple majority of the total number of planning unit members are present. Committees and subcommittees will meet as required to conduct business.

The Chair and Partnership staff shall be responsible for preparation of the agenda for meetings. Any member may submit agenda items through the Chair, or his/her designated staff. Items for Partnership consideration shall be scheduled for discussion at least one meeting prior to any scheduled action thereon; EXCEPT, upon agreement of the Planning Unit members an item first presented for discussion may be acted upon at the same meeting, subject to further review and reconsideration by members at the following meeting. The agenda shall be sent to Planning Unit members and other appropriate individuals at least one week prior to a scheduled meeting. For special meetings, an agenda shall be sent to members of the Partnership and individuals required to be notified of the special meeting at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to such meeting.

VI. ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES

Members shall make a concerted effort to attend all Partnership meetings. When a member is unable to attend a Partnership meeting, he/she should make an effort to advise the Chair or other Partnership members of any issues which are of concern or of special interest to such member,

and in case of elected official-members should make an effort to have a designee attend the Partnership meeting.

VII. ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The Partnership shall appoint a technical advisory committee. One or more additional advisory committees or subcommittees may be appointed in order to provide focus on specific issues related to the Partnership's responsibilities.

The four (4) county commissions represented on the Partnership shall each designate four (4) local citizens to a citizen advisory committee. Recommendations from such committees and subcommittees shall be forwarded to the full Partnership.

Such additional committees and subcommittees will be chaired by at least one Partnership member, but may draw upon membership outside the Partnership as needed or appropriate to the committee or subcommittee function. Committee or subcommittee membership may be established by the Partnership or, at the discretion of the Partnership, by open public enrollment. Members of the Partnership may attend any committee or subcommittee meeting.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Business of the Partnership will be conducted in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act and Public Disclosure Act, Chapters 42.20 and 42.17 RCW. In providing public information, the following will apply:

1. All official public statements on behalf of the Partnership will be made by the Chair or his/her designee;
2. Only documents approved by the full Partnership will be represented as Partnership-official;
3. In public discussions, individual Partnership members will provide a disclaimer that their statements as personal opinions and are not necessarily those of the Partnership;
4. Following each Partnership meeting, a summary of the meeting topics and discussions will be prepared as official minutes (and preferably mailed to Partnership members in advance of the next meeting), and subject to approval at the next meeting. After approval, unless otherwise exempt in part or in whole from disclosure, such minutes shall be made available to the public;
5. The Partnership shall at its earliest opportunity adopt Public Disclosure Act rules governing public access and disclosure policies for the public. Partnership staff shall be responsible for document management and indexing of the records of the Partnership.

IX. PAYMENT OF CLAIMS

All claims against the Partnership by persons furnishing materials, rendering services or performing labor, or for any other contractual or noncontractual purpose shall be approved by the Partnership prior to payment by the Partnership's fiscal agent (Lewis County).

Appendix A

Decision Making by Consensus

1. Discuss the issue to surface all points of view. Invite everyone to speak.
2. When there seems to have been enough talking about the issue, publicly vote to "take the temperature" of the group - those in favor, those opposed. Have the group decide when there has been enough talking about the topic and they're ready to try to make a decision.
3. Those voting in the minority get the floor. They are invited to say whatever they want to try to convince others of the rightness of their view by: adding to the body of information already presented; clarifying their position; pointing out flaws, error, deficiencies...in the other's point of view.
4. Continue to ask those in the minority: "Do you think you have now been heard by others in the group? Is there more you want to say? Are you ready to have the entire group vote again?"
5. Vote again. Those voting in the minority again get the floor.
6. Invite them again to say whatever they want to try to convince the others of the rightness of their view. This process will continue until those in the minority are able to say: "We are clear about what the majority would like to do. While we personally would not make that choice, we do think the others understand our alternative. We've had sufficient opportunity to sway others to our point of view, and we do think we have been heard."
7. AT THIS POINT, THERE ARE THREE VARIATIONS TO CONCLUDE THE PROCESS; pick one:
 - "Since we have not been able to convince others to change their minds, we are ready to go along with what the majority wants."
 - "The proposed alternative is not our preference, but it has been amended such that we will not oppose it."
 - "We do not favor the proposed alternative, but will go along with the majority, and we wish to include a dissenting opinion for the record."

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Appendix B

SEEKING CONSENSUS

The top six types of agreement reflect consensus. Solutions that result in types of agreement closer to the top are preferred.

Endorsement: "I like it."
Endorsement with a Minor Point of Clarification: "Basically I like it."
Agreement with Reservations: "I can live with it."
Abstain: "I have not opinion that prevents this from going forward."
Stand Aside: "I really don't like this, but don't want to prevent the group from agreeing."
Formal Disagreement, but Willing to Go with Majority: "I want my disagreement noted in writing but I'll support the decision."

These two types of responses by one or more interest groups indicate a lack of consensus.

Formal Disagreement, with Request to Be Absolved of Responsibility for Implementation: "I don't want to stop anyone else, but I don't want to be involved in implementing it."
Block: "I don't support this proposal and will work to see that it won't be implemented."