



CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP

**Chehalis Tribe Lucky Eagle Casino, Eagles Landing Hotel Conference Room
Rochester, Washington**

March 25, 2016

9:30 am – 12:00

Meeting Summary

MEMBERS* and ALTERNATES' PRESENT

Amy Spoon*, WDFW

Bonny Canaday*, City of Centralia

Brian Thompson*, Lewis Co. Farm Bureau

Chuck Caldwell*, Port of Grays Harbor

Dan Wood', City of Montesano

Dustin Bilhimer*, Dept. of Ecology

Frank Gordon* Grays Harbor County

Glen Connelly', Chehalis Tribe

Kahle Jennings, City of Centralia

Lee Napier', Lewis County

Patrick Wiltzius', City of Chehalis

Terry Harris*, City of Chehalis

GUESTS

Rick Sangder, City of Aberdeen; Kyle Scott, City of Aberdeen; Mike Randkit, City of Aberdeen; Garret Dalan, The Nature Conservancy; Jan Robinson, Chehalis River Basin Land Trust; Fred Chapman, City of Centralia; John Jorgensen, Chehalis Tribe DNR; Stephanie Zurenko, Ecology; Derek Rockett, Ecology; Jessica Schwing, Ecology; Janel Spaulding, Ecology

STAFF

Kirsten Harma, Chehalis Basin Partnership

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Presentation slides from this meeting are available on the Chehalis Basin Partnership website: <http://chehalisbasinpartnership.org/presentations/>
- [Website: Chehalis River real time flow and water quality data, at Centralia](#)
- Chehalis TMDL website – updated!: www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/tmdl/chehalisrvrtmdlsummary.html
- [Stormwater grant application workshop listserve.](#)
- For technical assistance on designing Low Impact Development (LID) tools, and getting ideas for stormwater improvement projects, contact the [Washington Stormwater Center](#).
- Article by Sightline Institute: "[Are raingardens mini toxic clean-up sites?](#)"

MEETING

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Bonnie Canaday welcomed everyone to the meeting. Members and guests provided self-introductions.

Kahle Jennings provided the guests and presenters with an overview of the Chehalis Basin Partnership and its accomplishments. The CBP started because of state agencies asking for the local community to help figure out balance between competing demands for water for people and water for fish. He mentioned that the CBP is low on resources and we have had to do some restructuring. What you will be seeing today is the result of some of that restructuring.

2. Member Updates

Chair Canaday announced that she will soon be getting married and the wedding party will be open to everyone.

Kirsten, as Lead Entity Coordinator, shared the call for Local Review Team members. Reviewers will participate in the Chehalis Basin Lead Entity Habitat Work Group's review of projects for SRFB funding. Any basin resident is eligible to participate. Participants don't need technical background.

3. Funding Opportunity for Education and Outreach

Kirsten shared information about the Call for Proposals from the Rose Foundation for funding in 2016. The call went out to eight groups and the CBP was one of those eight. Several of those groups came up with a shared project idea and plan to collaborate on that project. The shared project is to get interns to help run the Grays Harbor Stream Team. Today (March 25) is the deadline for the "pre-proposal" to the Rose Foundation. Kirsten asked if the CBP would support this proposed application.

Chair Canaday asked the group if anyone had any objections. No one had questions or comments. Hearing none, she pronounced this proposal approved.

Jan Robinson updated the group on a proposal by the Chehalis River Basin Land Trust to the US Fish and Wildlife. They won't know until spring if they received it. The plan directly relates to Watershed Management Plan. They hope to reignite Drops of Water and will ask for Partners' help in providing content. They also have 3 other community outreach projects planned, including a "bioblitz" where families can work with local scientists to identify species, and plan to conduct riparian restoration.

B. Presentations & Discussion

Ecology's 2015 Water Quality Monitoring Results for the Upper Chehalis watershed. *Dustin Bilhimer, SWRO Water Quality Program*

Dustin presented the results of the Department of Ecology's water quality monitoring work in the upper Chehalis. This work is being paid for as part of the Chehalis Strategy (www.chehalisbasinstrategy.org). Water quality monitoring with gauges started last summer (2015). Some collect data on temperature only, others gather data on streamflow and multiple water quality parameters. There is funding available to keep gathering data with the gauges until June 2017.

Current "real-time" information about water quality and river levels at several gauges can be found on the website: <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/eap/flows/station.asp?sta=23A120>

Ecology also houses a webpage dedicated to the Chehalis River, water quality issues, the history of the "total maximum daily load" (TMDL), and efforts to clean up water in the Chehalis: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/tmdl/chehalisrvrtmdlsummary.html>

Q) We've been monitoring the river for quite some time. Have there been any improvements from when the TMDL was first established?

A) We're still looking to see if facilities are in compliance with their waste load allocations. We're still analyzing the data. Based on the preliminary data from their discharge monitoring reports, point sources are generally looking ok. I (Dustin) will post them to the TMDL webpage and present the results to the CBP when they are available.

Effectiveness Monitoring Strategy for Pollution Control Plans. *Scott Collyard, Natural Resource Scientist, Department of Ecology.*

Scott provided an overview of the Department of Ecology's effectiveness monitoring work around Washington State. These studies occur over a long time period and aim to understand the health of a watershed, and identify existing pollution sources, detect any trends, and find ways to improve stream health. Only about a dozen basins in the State currently have effectiveness monitoring underway. In 2016, Ecology proposes to start effectiveness monitoring in the Newaukum basin. Ecology will rely on other partners' data to get an idea of overall watershed health. They aim to create a clearinghouse of all data for this subbasin, including fish data and information about restoration projects, BMPs, etc. Our success doing this work in the Newaukum will be dependent on the relationships we build.

Q) *Will you try to take a paired watershed approach for effectiveness monitoring?*

A) No, it's too expensive. It's still an accepted practice, but it's just too expensive to do. We do use EPA protocols with the monitoring we do.

Q) *How do you know that any given activity is improving watershed health?*

A) We look at a lot of different metrics. We rely on a "weight of evidence" approach.

Q) *Is water quality in the Chehalis getting better?*

A) It's hard to know if things happening at the larger scale (climate) are affecting what's happening at the local scale. They did document an improvement in fecal coliform concentrations. We've found that it's hard to determine if dissolved oxygen is getting better.

Q) *You mentioned the importance of building relationships. What kinds of outreach have you done?*

A) This is the first presentation I've given.

Q) *Can you incorporate citizen science into your effectiveness monitoring?*

A) Yes. Will be able to offer training to folks to do monitoring.

Ecology's Nonpoint Pollution Reduction Strategy and collaborative approaches with farmers. *Derek Rockett, Senior Nonpoint Inspector*

Derek shared his definition of non-point pollution: any discharge of polluted matter that is not regulated by a permit. The non-point program's biggest concern right now is with negative water quality impacts to shellfish beds.

Derek told the group about Ecology's non-point pollution reduction strategy and collaborative approaches with farmers. He works closely with Conservation Districts to help farmers implement non-regulatory solutions to water pollution problems. He mentioned that 90% of the time he is able to offer technical assistance to farmers and doesn't need to issue enforcement orders. He will be starting to look at ways to address water quality violations specifically in the Newaukum watershed. His approach will be to look for issues that no one else is working on.

If people suspect a water quality violation or other environmental violation, they can place a confidential call: **360-407-6300** or report via <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/reportaproblem.html>

Q) *What work have you done in the Newaukum?*

A) We have just gotten started on this work. There are a couple of properties we've identified that we want to focus on.

Emerging stormwater issues and preparing for dealing with stormwater the future – discussion for municipalities and counties. Rian Sallee, Municipal Stormwater Permit Manager Q/A -

Q) *What is on the horizon for stormwater?*

A) There probably won't be any major changes to the regulations in the next "reissuance." Ecology plans to work more with communities that are on the threshold of falling under stormwater permit requirements, including the City of Chehalis.

Q) *Ecology has lists of practices we (cities and towns with stormwater permits) have to use ("design manual"). But what if we know that they won't work here?*

A) There are two lists of LID (low impact development) practices. If something won't work for you, you could apply "infeasibility criteria". But generally you'll need to implement a LID.

Q) *In Chehalis we are looking at putting in bioswales around parking areas in advance of the requirements from Ecology. But we're worried that those systems might concentrate pollutants, creating a concentration point of pollution. When this becomes toxic, who is expected to clean up? Who is responsible for pollution in the soil and who will pay to clean it up?*

A) These types of features are intended to treat pollution. They are used as a "sink" and at least keep pollution out of the water where it is harder to remove. This may concentrate pollution, but at least we know where it is. In systems with filters, they can be replaced regularly. The Washington Stormwater Center is a great resource (<http://www.wastormwatercenter.org/>). They likely can share information about the chemistry of how pollutants are transformed in LID systems.

Q) *Comment: It's useful for you (Ecology) to hear the anxieties we have about implementing LID.*

A) Contact me (Rian) when you have concerns.

Comment: Getting an answer to our questions is better than being left in limbo.

Q) *Will the new permit manual address regional facilities that treat stormwater? Can we collect stormwater at a regional facility and then transport it somewhere that has more suitable soils for infiltration to be treated?*

A) Dan Garypy at Ecology's headquarters is an appropriate contact. You can find him on Ecology's website.

Ecology's Stormwater Grants Program. Jessica Schwing and Janel Spaulding, Stormwater Grant Coordinators

Ms. Schwing described the different water quality financial assistance options available for "stormwater projects". She defined stormwater projects as any that prevent pollutants from urban areas from reaching waterways, and those that control flows to protect streams. They don't have to be just in "permitted communities" (which in our watershed are Centralia and Aberdeen). She also described the process for getting a grant, and then managing that grant.

Stormwater treatment grants do not have a dedicated funding source. Every year the guidelines change with whatever strings come with the legislation. The best way to stay informed about the guidelines is to sign up for the Stormwater ListServe (contact Jessica: jessica.schwing@ecy.wa.gov).

In general, cities and counties can be the lead agency on a grant application. Conservation Districts cannot, but can partner with a city or county. The only type of funding NGOs can use is 319 grants. Tribes can apply for state revolving loans, but those don't necessarily go to stormwater projects.

The Southwest region is not getting as much of this stormwater grant money as other parts of the state. This is a missed opportunity. Ms. Schwing invited participants to contact her about collaborative ideas to putting applications together. "Talk to us to build big beautiful projects so you can get the funding when it does come."

Ms. Schwing encouraged participants to sign up for a grant workshop (<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/funding/funding.html>), and to get in touch with her directly to talk about any project ideas: jessica.schwing@ecy.wa.gov / (360) 407-6216.

Q) Why isn't "conveyance" eligible for a water quality grant? Water would never pick up some pollutants if streams and ditches didn't flood.

A) There are water quality benefits from improved water conveyance. However, these types of projects don't generally rank out well in competitive grant programs. In your application, link your project with the bigger picture problem. Talk about the problem from a watershed scale.

Q) Is match required for these grants?

A) Yes, but it varies with the grant. We can accept loans as a match for a grant. In "hardship" communities, the amount of loan that can be used as match is generally greater. There are several "hardship" communities in the Chehalis Basin. These are listed in the grant manual.

Q) Capacity is a bigger barrier to submitting grant applications than money. It can cost up to \$14,000 to hire a consultant to write a grant. That's a lot of money for an unknown outcome.

A) The Washington Stormwater Center is a great resource (<http://www.wastormwatercenter.org/>). They still offer services that are free to communities. They can provide examples of lessons learned by other communities that have applied Low Impact Development techniques.

Q) Do applications get extra points for being collaborations among a couple of different organizations?

A) GROSS grants have to be collaborative, and have to list planning documents for area and how project fits in with planning document.

Comment: Kahle Jennings noted that he is currently sitting on the Water Quality Funding Advisory Council for representing small communities in southwest Washington. It's a good way to have input into that process. There will be a vacant seat when he retires. He said this is a good opportunity.

ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business, Chair Bonnie Canaday adjourned the meeting.

NEXT MEETING

April 22th 2016.