

**CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP**  
**Chehalis Tribe Community Center**  
**Oakville, Washington**  
**May 21, 2010**  
**9:30 a.m.**  
**Meeting Summary**

**MEMBERS, ALTERNATES, & GUESTS**

**PRESENT**

Mark White, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation  
Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County  
Julie Balmelli-Powe, Lewis County Farm Bureau  
Janel Spaulding, Grays Harbor College  
Mark Swartout, Thurston County  
Karen Valenzuela, Thurston County  
Terry Harris, City of Chehalis  
Terry Willis, Grays Harbor County  
Bill Schulte, Lewis County  
Trevor Ridgway, Student  
Koby Galenger, Student  
Devan Parkinson, Student  
Dawn Geddenberg, AmeriCorps  
Melissa Ashlock, Teacher

Lyle Hojem, Citizen, Lewis County  
Christine Hempleman, Department of Ecology (DOE)  
Amy Iverson, WDFW  
Valerie Gow, Puget Sound Meeting Services  
Terry Baltzell, Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force  
Kahle Jennings, City of Centralia  
Miranda Plumb, US Fish and Wildlife Service  
Theresa Marcourt, Grays Harbor Conservation District  
Kathy Jacobson, Chehalis Basin Education Consortium  
Chris Stearns, Thurston Public Utilities District  
Mathew Plato, Student  
Nathan Kloempken, Student  
Makayla Ashlock, Student  
Noelle Tingey, Student,  
Macey Wecker, Student

**SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS:**

**Approval of Meeting Summaries**

Approval was deferred to June meeting

**Organizational Restructuring**

Members agreed to delay sending the letter and incorporate the changes within the draft letter as recommended and invite a representative from WACCO to attend the next meeting to address questions on establishing a foundation.

**WCSSP Board Nominations**

Lewis County will continue to pursue candidates for submittal to Grays Harbor County for appointment to the WCSSP Board.

**WRIA 22-23 Phase 4 Scope of Work**

Members accepted the scope of work with the exception of Mr. Schulte who indicated he opposes the scope but not to the extent of delaying it from moving forward.

**GENERAL PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS**

**Welcome, Introductions and Roundtable Comments**

Terry Harris called the May 21, 2010 meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) to order at 9:40 a.m. Everyone present provided self-introductions. A meeting quorum was not attained.

**Discuss and Adopt Draft Meeting Summaries of March 26, 2010 & April 23, 2010**

Bill Schulte requested the following corrections to the minutes of March 26, 2010:

- On page 6 between paragraphs three and four add the following statement, “Julie Balmelli-Powe left the meeting at 10:30 a.m. A meeting quorum was lost.”

*Miranda Plumb and Terry Baltzell arrived at 9:44 a.m.*

Approval of the March 26, 2010 minutes was deferred to the June meeting.

Mr. Schulte requested the following correction to the minutes of April 23, 2010:

- On page 2, include a new bulleted item at the top of the page stating, “Insert the following on page 6 between paragraphs three and four, “Julie Balmelli-Powe left the meeting at 10:30 a.m. A meeting quorum was lost.”

*Kahle Jennings and Chris Hempleman arrived at 9:47 a.m. A meeting quorum was attained.*

Approval of the April 23, 2010 minutes was deferred to the June meeting.

Members arriving late introduced themselves.

## **SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

### **Status Report and Discussion Regarding Organizational Restructuring**

Janel Spaulding distributed a revised letter advising members/former members of plans to form a non-profit foundation. She asked for feedback on the letter.

Mr. Schulte opposed sending the letter out as well as forming a non-profit foundation. Ms. Spaulding asked about his reasons for opposition. Mr. Schulte said his opposition of forming a foundation is to avoid having a small group making decisions for the Partnership without its approval. Ms. Spaulding acknowledged the concern and indicated that the foundation would be assisting the Partnership in implementing its Watershed Management Plan and that the Partnership would provide guidance and direction to the non-profit foundation. The primary role of the non-profit foundation is to fundraise for the Partnership.

Terry Willis asked whether the legal avenue was determined for establishing the fundraising organization. Ms. Spaulding said she's obtained information for contacting Washington Attorneys Assisting Community Organizations (WAACO), which provides pro bono legal assistance to organizations. Additional information can be obtained from WAACO if the Partnership directs staff to obtain information on the legal structure of the organization.

Kahle Jennings referred to the draft letter and the second paragraph and noted that the only purpose of the foundation is to raise funds; it's not the primary purpose. The purpose of raising funds is to support implementation of the approved Watershed Management Plan. That establishes some strict boundaries on what the non-profit will be doing. However, what is unknown is the latitude of the non-profit's board of directors to change the purpose of the organization.

Mr. Schulte pointed out that the only thing the board would need to do is draft a new set of bylaws and approve them. Once established, the non-profit foundation becomes an independent legal entity.

Ms. Willis said she has information that indicates there are ways to form an organization that would be legally bound to the Partnership. Those issues are questions that haven't been answered. Mr. Harris agreed the board of directors could change the articles of incorporation as well as the bylaws and actually separate from the Partnership. The Partnership needs to determine some way to tie them permanently as a flagship fundraiser for the Partnership.

Mr. Harris asked whether Mr. Schulte contacted Bob Schroeter for a legal review of the documents. Mr. Schulte advised that after his position on the proposal to form a foundation changed he withdrew from facilitating the process.

Mr. Jennings asked Mr. Schulte for clarification on his opposition and whether it's for forming a foundation to raise funds to implement the plan. Mr. Schulte said his opposition is based on the Steering Technical Committee (STC) making decisions without bringing it back to the general membership. He does not want another group operating independently, making decisions, and obligating the Partnership without the Partnership's permission and approval. In 2008, the Partnership achieved consensus for not becoming involved in flood issues. Sometime later, it was determined that the Partnership is working with the Flood Authority on the Project Management Plan for the General Investigation (GI) Study without approval by the Partnership. He's weary of small groups making decisions and then asking the Partnership after the fact to rubber stamp it.

Mr. Jennings expressed appreciation for the clarification but noted that he is still somewhat confused. The GI Study for Ecosystem Restoration has been in existence since 2000. Grays Harbor County was the local lead for the project. That project was directed by the CBP. Mr. Schulte agreed. Mr. Jennings continued that at some point, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers indicated they couldn't modify the Twin Cities Flood Damage Project to include upstream storage unless they sought reauthorization/approval from Congress. The Corps looked at the existing GI Study for Ecosystem Restoration and indicated the scope of work could be expanded to include examining upstream storage. Mr. Jennings said he is not aware the Partnership or the STC sought out involvement in the flooding study. In fact, the CBP tried to be clear that while there is recognition of the flooding issue, the Partnership's primary focus is implementation of the Watershed Management Plan. The Partnership was drawn into the flood issue because of the existing GI Study for Ecosystem Restoration and the Flood Authority's desire to study upstream storage. That's how the CBP became involved in the flooding issue. Mr. Schulte agreed but noted that the Partnership's involvement occurred without the general membership's concurrence to become involved in modifying the plan. That occurred through the STC without presenting the request to the CBP for consensus. The more the Partnership becomes involved in flooding issues, the higher the probability exists for that split to destroy the CBP. He provided several scenarios where audits could be triggered, which could be problematic. The City of Vader was audited and as a consequence of its inadequate financial records, the city is not eligible to receive state or federal grants for the next five years. He alleged that if the Partnership is audited, there could be a problem as there are no budget records for the organization. The organization has only to experience controversy to trigger an audit. In this climate, if the organization attracts attention, someone could allege mismanagement of funds and open the Partnership to an audit with Grays Harbor County ending up with a "black eye." He pointed out that he hasn't seen a budget document in three years and he spoke to Mr. Harris who indicated that it's been years since he's asked for a budget document. The Partnership doesn't have a budget, and that's a problem.

Mr. Jennings said the CBP and the STC were involved with Grays Harbor County as the local sponsor for a General Investigation Study for Ecosystem Restoration. At the time, Lori Morris was the Corps'

representative and she oversaw the process. The project included a single purpose of examining how ecosystem functions could be restored in the Chehalis basin in the context of the Watershed Management Plan for providing water for fish and people. That scope of work was developed with input from the CBP and standing committees then approved by the Corps and Grays Harbor County. Work has been undertaken on the project within the basin. He questioned how the scope of work for the study could be modified to include looking at upstream storage as a flood prevention method by Grays Harbor County and the Corps with input from the Flood Authority but without involving the Partnership that was instrumental in developing the initial scope of work. Grays Harbor County is the fiscal agent for the CBP, but in terms of the GI Study, the county is the local sponsor.

Mr. Schulte said the Colonel from the Corps recommended modifying the study to include upstream storage and the Flood Authority agreed. However, the Partnership never agreed to modify the study. It was the STC, Flood Authority, and the Corps that modified the study. The Corps has never reviewed those changes with the Partnership. The Corps had a meeting in November or December for participation to modify the Project Management Plan. Glenn Carter attended on behalf of Lewis County. Representatives from the Corps were upset because they didn't want to make modifications to the plan based on input from others. At the next meeting, the Corps did not attend and indicated that they would present a draft when it was completed and no other participation would be accepted. Mr. Schulte said he opposes that process as well as the foundation. If the foundation is connected to the CBP, it must receive consensus from its members. He threatened to use the consensus process to prevent the formation of the foundation until the issues are resolved.

Mr. Harris acknowledged that there is a level of frustration that members are experiencing. However, the intent is for members to discuss the issues associated with establishing a non-profit 501(c) 3 foundation. It appears because there are so many other interlinking problems Mr. Schulte is insinuating that he will not agree to anything until all issues are resolved.

Mr. Schulte said he won't support any efforts until 'we can resolve the problem' because it is a systematic problem that needs to be resolved before the Partnership moves forward.

Mr. Harris acknowledged the comment and said he's not pointing the finger at Grays Harbor County. Grays Harbor County finds itself as a key partner to many different things because of the county's involvement in many different areas at different levels. That is where there is some confusion. The ecosystem restoration project implemented by the Partnership is now under study by other organizations. Everyone understands there is comingling of many tasks by different organizations, but rather than focusing on the Flood Authority's issues with the Corps on flood issues that the Partnership has tried to avoid, he suggested members should focus on its agenda and pursue the business that the Partnership needs to complete.

Mr. Schulte said the Partnership's business is water quality, water quantity, and fish recovery. Anything beyond that - the Partnership will have problems.

Mr. Harris commented that at the last meeting, Mr. Schulte indicated he would contact Mr. Schroeter on potential ways to control a 501(c)3 organization. Mr. Schulte said he contacted Mr. Schroeter. Mr. Schroeter is willing to talk with the Partnership. Mr. Schulte said he is now opposed to the process until the issues are all resolved. However, he spoke with Mr. Schroeter who has agreed to speak to the Partnership. Mr. Harris said he's not supportive of forming a 501(c)3 until all the problems are resolved. It's likely no one disagrees with that because everyone favors making sure that if and when it's created;

the foundation is functioning as the Partnership envisioned. The focus should be on the next steps of whether the Partnership should form a non-profit foundation. Issues associated with the Corps and the Flood Authority are likely outside the control of the Partnership

Ms. Spaulding requested approval to contact WACCO, which will entail a several week wait, so she can review the documents and the legal questions surrounding the formation of a foundation. Mr. Jennings said one of the fundamental questions is whether the Partnership can limit the foundation's authority. Ms. Spaulding said she has compiled a list of questions and asked members to review the questions prior to her meeting with a WACCO attorney.

Karen Valenzuela agreed with Mr. Jennings comment regarding the second paragraph of the letter. The letter should read that the non-profit foundation's only purpose will be to raise funds to support the work of the Partnership. If the letter is changed to reflect that and then the legal review occurs on how to structure both the articles of incorporation and the bylaws of the foundation such that it could not do what Mr. Schulte fears, then it likely will help in initiating the process. Ms. Spaulding agreed the first step is contacting WACCO or someone else who can offer pro bono legal advice.

Mr. Schulte agreed with the suggestion but noted the next sentence creates the problem because it stipulates that the non-profit will function as a separate entity with guidance and direction from the Partnership. It's important to determine whether that's possible because he understands it's not. It's not possible for the Partnership to direct an independent non-profit.

Ms. Valenzuela said the sentence could be strengthened by stating that "Non-profit foundation will function as a separate entity under the direction and guidance from the Partnership based on recommendations in the Watershed Management Plan." That narrows its function.

Mr. Schulte suggested changing it to "separate entity, with the purpose of raising funds to support the Watershed Management Plan and Detailed Implementation Plan." The letter should specify that it will operate to raise funds for those processes.

Discussion followed on the question that needs to be addressed as to whether it's possible to create a separate entity while still ensuring it's under the direction and guidance of the Partnership.

Lyle Hojem suggested inviting an attorney to the meeting so that members can ask questions. If a three-week lead time is necessary to speak to an attorney he suggested including time on the agenda for the attorney to address the Partnership's questions.

Mr. Harris commented that it appears the concerns evolve around two issues, 1) control and direction by the Partnership, and 2) whether the foundation can only be used for fundraising. If those two questions are answered, the remaining issues will likely be resolved. However, if it's not possible to maintain control, then it creates another series of questions. He suggested staff should coordinate with the WACCO attorney and invite an attorney to attend the Partnership's next meeting. If it's not possible to have the attorney attend, staff should obtain answers to enable the Partnership to move forward.

*Members agreed to delay sending the letter and incorporate the changes within the draft letter as recommended. No one objected to inviting a WACCO attorney to attend the next meeting to address questions on the perimeters for establishing a foundation.*

**Follow Up Discussion on Names to the Lead Entity as Representatives to the Board of WCSSP**

Lee Napier reported at the last meeting, the Partnership discussed submission of names for consideration of appointment to the Board of Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership (WCSSP). Members agreed to submit names by email no later than May 7. If more than six names were submitted, the Partnership agreed to discuss a process for determining selection of names to forward to Grays Harbor County for appointment. Nominations to date include Terry Baltzell, Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force; Lee Napier; and Andy Olson, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation. Additionally, to ensure the Lead Entity was represented at the May meeting, Mark Swartout's name was submitted and he was subsequently appointed by Grays Harbor County Board of Commissioners to serve on the WCSSP Board.

The WCSSP Board held its first meeting on Wednesday, May 19. The next step is to fill the positions with the names received to date. The lead entity can appoint up to six individuals to serve on the Board.

In response to questions from Mr. Schulte, Mark White reported Andy Olson lives in Grays Harbor County.

Mr. Schulte said he discussed the positions with the Lewis County Board of Commissioners and there was a recommendation for submitting nominations. Three of the preferred nominees were not interested in serving on the board. Consequently, Lewis County is still seeking a nominee. Ms. Napier noted that the Chehalis Tribe as well as the CBFTF serves the entire Chehalis basin area.

Mr. Schulte indicated Lewis County will continue to seek a representative to serve on the board.

**Phase 4 Year 5 Contract Amendment**

Ms. Napier reported the basic operation of the Partnership and implementation of the Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) and the Watershed Management Plan falls under the contract, which was received from the Department of Ecology for \$62,500. Last year it was reduced by half with one more year of the contract remaining. After next year it appears the funds and the contract will end.

In January, the Partnership was informed that it was likely the Governor was cutting watershed planning funds. Several members contacted legislators and expressed concerns and subsequently, funds for watershed planning were reinstated by the Legislature for Year 5 in the case of the Partnership. Discussions then followed by the Partnership for establishing a non-profit for funding sustainability. Since January, she and Mark Swartout have been involved in providing input to representatives across the state on the future sustainability of state-wide watershed planning.

Ms. Napier referred to a copy of the proposed contract with DOE. Task 1 is for administration involving the preparation of quarterly and financial reports. Task 2 was completed in November 2005. Task 3 includes preparation of the DIP that was completed in October 2006. Task 4 involves project coordination for the Partnership and its standing committees. The budget for this item is \$25,000 and covers the period from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011, and includes time for Ms. Napier and Puget Sound Meeting Services. Task 5 is implementing and refining the DIP/annual work plan. Since the last update of the DIP was completed last year, there is no plan to update the DIP this year. Task 6 is sponsoring the cost of publishing one edition of the *Drops of Water* newsletter estimated to cost \$5,000. Preparation of articles for the *Drops of Water* was deleted from the deliverables for this task as Ms. Spaulding's time is covered under another grant contract. Task 7 was completed in June 30, 2008.

Ms. Napier reported Task 8 is an element of the DIP for working through a committee to continue to implement the tasks associated with DIP Interim Milestone 1.2: Measuring to manage water quantity. This work includes continuing to work with USGS to further the scope of work associated with the Watershed Characterization and Water Resource Management Tool. Ms. Napier said unless directed otherwise, the work is coordinated through the STC.

Task 9 involves working through the STC or another standing committee to continue to implement the tasks associated with DIP Interim Milestone 2.1; Develop a finance strategy work plan. This task focuses on developing a clear plan for obtaining resources through capacity building and partnerships. The estimated cost of Task 9 is \$10,500. Ms. Napier said unless directed otherwise, the work is coordinated through the STC.

Ms. Napier reported if approved, the contract would be executed with Grays Harbor County and expires on June 30, 2011. The County would receive and administer \$62,500 to cover the service provided to the Partnership for the period July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011.

Mr. Schulte said he opposes the expenditure of the grant funds until a detailed budget is prepared. However, he does not object moving forward with the proposed contract.

Mr. Jennings addressed Mr. Schulte's concerns about the budget. The contract represents a piece of the detailed budget. Mr. Jennings offered to work with Mr. Schulte offline on the budget.

Ms. Napier recounted how she provided several detailed financial reporting, which included grant contracts, expenditure reporting, and county budgets. It appears the information is not satisfying the request. Mr. Schulte advised that the State Auditor could provide guidance on what's required. Ms. Napier said the county follows state guidelines and that information can be provided.

Mr. Harris suggested that with the ongoing questions concerning the budget, the organization should consider employing a fiscal agent who can construct the Partnership's financial history in the form of a budget document. The Partnership needs to have a discussion about employing a fiscal agent to develop budget documents for the Partnership.

Mr. White asked whether Grays Harbor County is audited by the state. Ms. Willis confirmed the county is audited on a regular basis and passes its audits. She went on to say that Grays Harbor County is owed an apology based on the earlier conversation which insulted the county in terms of its practices as the fiscal agent for the Partnership. The insults and the accusations should cease as well as the comments that Grays Harbor County as a fiscal agent has somehow failed. That is not the case. Lewis County originally was the fiscal agent for the CBP but gave that up with Grays Harbor County stepping in to assume that responsibility.

Mr. Harris apologized if his comments were taken as an insult as they are not meant to convey that intent. The Partnership needs a fiscal agent to take the pressure off Ms. Napier. All organizations have a fiscal agent. Ms. Valenzuela pointed out that the Partnership has a fiscal agent. Ms. Willis reiterated that Mr. Harris' comment represents an insult to Grays Harbor County as the county is the fiscal agent for the Partnership.

Ms. Valenzuela suggested part of the discussion would have been more productive if Mr. Schulte had framed some of his concerns as questions. Many of the concerns have been framed as declarative statement of facts. Mr. Schulte conceded that he has concerns and has requested a budget on how the Partnership allocates its funds. In seven years, he's never received the information and will not apologize for making his concerns public. It's not an insult for stating facts when he's asked for information and hasn't received it.

Ms. Valenzuela disagreed that his comments are statements of fact as he doesn't have enough information to assert those concerns as actual facts. Mr. Schulte said he doesn't have any information. Mr. Harris said that statement is untrue. Mr. Jennings commented on his previous experience in managing contracts with the state. It's very easy to become confused about budgets, because the Partnership's budget is a task budget. Typically, a city/county budget is much different and is comprised of expenditures and revenues. Again he offered to meet with Mr. Schulte to help resolve the concerns.

Ms. Napier responded to the accusations about not providing the information. She noted that Mr. Schulte said last month that he would request the information through the county's public information officer, which did not occur. Believing that a miscommunication might have occurred, Ms. Napier contacted the county's budget director and asked for a copy of the Partnership's budget for the last seven years, which she emailed to Mr. Schulte. Mr. Schulte said he didn't want Grays Harbor County's budget; he wanted the Partnership's budget. Ms. Napier said the Partnership's budget is included within the county's budget. Mr. Schulte acknowledged that he received the information, but it wasn't the information he requested.

Members commented on and exchanged different opinions about Mr. Schulte's continued insistence that he has concerns about the Partnership's budget records. Ms. Willis said the county has never failed an audit and based on her knowledge the county has never received any findings. She indicated she is not aware that the Partnership's contracts have been specifically examined. However, the contracts are administered the same way as the county administers all contracts. All receipts are reviewed and approved before each invoice is paid.

Mr. Jennings said part of the issue involves the formality of the organization as a stand-alone agency. The Partnership's budget is controlled through a contract between DOE and Grays Harbor County. The only formality of the agency is through an interlocal agreement signed by all members. He again offered to work with Mr. Schulte to address the concerns.

Mark White said it appears the issue concerns the format of the documents. He cautioned against making allegations that the county is not properly performing the work. Mr. Harris agreed and suggested the Partnership should consider hiring a fiscal agent to produce the documents in the format that members want. Ms. Willis asked for a description of the documentation that's desired.

Ms. Napier asked for consensus for acceptance of the WRIA 22-23 Phase 4 Scope of Work. Members accepted the scope of work with the exception of Mr. Schulte who indicated he opposes the scope but not to the extent of delaying it from moving forward.

*Mr. Jennings left the meeting.*

Ms. Napier reported the status of the Project Management Plan (PMP) and the GI Study hasn't changed since the last update. A joint meeting is scheduled on Tuesday, May 25, between the Flood Authority and the CBP to meet with the US Army Corps of Engineers on the PMP and the request to include a second "without project conditions" report within the PMP that will become a task during the feasibility phase. Lewis County is requesting the addition of a second "without project conditions" report that does not include the Twin Cities levees. Initially the Corps indicated the request was not possible and that its direction is to pursue a "without project conditions" that includes the levees. That leaves the option of pursuing two "without project conditions" reports. The Corps was asked to consider the request. The meeting will provide an opportunity for members to participate in an informational discussion presented by the Corps and to ask questions. Based on the input, the Flood Authority and the Partnership could expect to be asked to provide direction to Grays Harbor County on what should be included in the PMP. The PMP was on track for acceptance, but in April concerns were expressed about the reports by Lewis County, which halted progress on approving the PMP. The meeting will be held at the Veterans Museum at 9:00 a.m. In June, the CBP will include a discussion of the issue on its meeting agenda.

Ms. Willis said the joint meeting will provide an opportunity for the Corps to address questions by members of the Flood Authority and the CBP.

Mr. Hojem asked why another meeting is necessary when several members of the Flood Authority are also members of the CBP. Ms. Willis said the meeting was scheduled by the Corps and that it provides an opportunity for members of each entity to attend and receive information or ask questions. Mr. Hojem said the goal of the CBP is not primarily flooding. Ms. Willis acknowledged that the issue is part of another agenda.

Mr. Schulte emphasized his opposition of including flood risk management within the ecosystem restoration study.

Mr. Hojem expressed satisfaction with the explanation.

Chris Hempleman said ecosystem restoration involves water quality, water quantity, and fish habitat and many of the measures that accomplish those goals would also help to contain floodwaters. She said she hopes there is a way past the problems because the funding of the GI Study is an opportunity for the CBP to accomplish its plan objectives. Ms. Willis agreed as many of the floodplain projects involve rebuilding the flood areas, which also serve as mitigation or storage for flooding. She said there isn't a definite line between the two activities as there is some overlap of both activities.

*Mark Swartout and Karen Valenzuela left the meeting. A meeting quorum was no longer attained.*

#### **Presentations by the Students of Wishkah Valley and Simpson Elementary Schools**

Ms. Napier introduced Kathy Jacobson, Chehalis Basin Education Consortium (CBEC). Ms. Jacobson described the calendar of activities that includes water quality monitoring, riparian restoration, and a workshop on "Washington's River of Words," field studies, and the student congress. Funding for the CBEC this year is from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Educational Service District (ESD)13, The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (Pioneers in Conservation), WDFW, The Nature Conservancy, the Nisqually River Foundation, and Thurston County through its stormwater utility.

Core to the program is water quality monitoring. Each year, CBEC provides water quality monitoring training to teachers as well as to students and parent volunteers. This year, Maggie Bell-McKinnon with

the Department of Ecology, is participating in the program. Approximately 1,500 students from Onalaska and Hoquiam participated in monitoring water quality at over 24 sites. Grays Harbor College, DOE, Chehalis River Council, Heernett Foundation, and other organizations have been instrumental in assisting. Additionally, in partnership with Grays Harbor County, an AmeriCorps volunteer assisted with the program.

Classroom activities include an overview of the Chehalis Basin, introduction to water quality monitoring, introduction to native plants and planting tips, and activities involving project WET and Healthy Waters Healthy People. New this year is how to calculate food miles for a typical meal.

Another central activity is riparian restoration. In partnership with The Nature Conservancy, Wishkah High School students conducted water quality testing, removed invasive weeds, and planted 150 native plants along the school's creek. Additionally, 300 students from Chehalis Middle School and Tenino Elementary School planted over 3,000 willow trees to help with the historic restoration of salt march habitat along the Nisqually River at the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge.

More than 225 CBEC students and youth from Growing Places Farm and Energy Park planted over 1,200 plants along the Chehalis River at Boistfort Valley Farm. Approximately 600 native trees and shrubs were planted along the Chehalis River Discovery Trail, 300 plantings along Coffee Creek at Growing Places Farm and Energy Park, and 250 trees and shrubs were planted along the Chehalis River at Let Us Farm.

On March 19, the 9<sup>th</sup> annual Student Congress was held at Grays Harbor College attended by more than 225 student delegates from Adna, Cosmopolis, Hoquiam, Montesano, Elm, Rochester, Centralia, Chehalis, Tenino, Tumwater, and Onalaska. Resource professionals from the cities of Centralia and Elma, the Chehalis Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, DOE, WDFW, and others facilitated the "State of the River" sessions as well as the hands-on workshops.

Field studies involved over 350 students from 13 classes at Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge. Major activities included nature mapping, native plant identification, discovering the importance of wetlands, and nature sketching. One hundred 6<sup>th</sup> grade students will participate in field studies at the Chehalis River Discovery Trail in June. More than 200 students from eight classes enjoyed tours of the Boistfort Valley Farm on May 12. Students were able to check on native plants they helped plant and provided feedback on their visit to the farm.

Ms. Jacobson reported that each year the CBEC is Washington's coordinator for the International River of Words (ROW) contest. Each year, students are asked to submit art and poetry inspired by nature for the international ROW contest. All entries are sent to California and Washington State entries that are not finalists are returned to ESD 13 for judging for the Washington River of Words contest. The annual awards ceremony was held on May 1 at DOE. Approximately 160 students, teachers, and family members participated in the celebration hosted by Ecology's art committee.

New this year is a partnership with South Sound Green to conduct a summer teacher training institute. Teachers interested in incorporating watershed education into their curriculum are welcome to attend the training at no cost. Another opportunity offered by US Fish and Wildlife Service is training on ecological restoration of school grounds that Ms. Jacobson is attending.

A new curriculum on "Project Wild" is new and is designed for preschoolers. CBEC is teaming with WDFW to develop a nature explore area. A workshop will be held for early childhood educators on how to incorporate nature activities into preschool curriculum.

Ms. Jacobson introduced Melissa Ashlock. Ms. Ashlock introduced 4<sup>th</sup> graders who shared their respective experience in activities involving plantings and removal of invasive weeds. Student presenters included Mathew Plato, Nathan Kloempken, Trevor Ridgway, Koby Galenger, Makayla Ashlock, Noelle Tingery, Macey Wecker, and Devan Parkinson.

Ms. Jacobson introduced Dawn Ginther, an AmeriCorps volunteer working with the CBEC. She shared results of a student survey of 550 students regarding conservation efforts, nature, and recycling activities. The results are encouraging. There is an increase in the time students spend on nature and conservation activities. The survey reveals that the program is providing opportunities to students.

Chris Stearns suggested future surveys should solicit information from students on future ways for students to become involved. Ms. Jacobson said students provide feedback during the Student Congress on ways they would like to be involved in watershed activities. During the farm tours, students are asked about ways they would like to be involved and engaged in watershed and restoration activities.

Terry Baltzell conveyed to the students the importance of having the opportunity to publicly speak before a group. He shared that he was never afforded the opportunity to speak when he was in school. He complimented the students on their presentation.

Members discussed issues associated with invasive weeds and potential noxious affects associated with knotweed and canary grass.

Dawn said her contract with AmeriCorps ends on July 31. She is working on developing a map of local organic farms within the Chehalis basin. The maps will be printed and provided to teachers and others who may benefit from having the information.

Mr. Harris thanked the students and Ms. Jacobson for providing the presentation.

#### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on June 25 at the Chehalis Basin Lucky Eagle Casino.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

With there being no further business, Terry Harris adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m.