

CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP
Thurston County Courthouse, Building 1, Room 152
Olympia, Washington
November 18, 2011
9:30 a.m.
Meeting Summary

MEMBERS, ALTERNATES & GUESTS PRESENT

Bonnie Canaday, City of Centralia	Janel Spaulding, Chehalis Basin Partnership
Chanele Holbrook-Shaw, Thurston County Citizen	Jim Hill, Lewis County Citizen
Chris Hempleman, WA Dept. of Ecology	Julie Balmelli-Powe, Lewis County Farm Bureau
Chris Stearns, Thurston County PUD	Kahle Jennings, City of Centralia
Chuck Turley, WA Dept. of Natural Resources	Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County
Commissioner Bill Schulte, Lewis County	Lyle Hojem, Lewis County Citizen
Commissioner Karen Valenzuela, Thurston County	Mark Swartout, Thurston County
Dave Vasilauskas, City of Chehalis	Patrick Wiltzius, City of Chehalis
Don Loft, The Evergreen State College	Terry Harris, City of Chehalis
Glen Connelly, Chehalis Tribe	

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS:

Approval of Meeting Summary	Meeting summary from October 28th approved.
Thank you letter to Chehalis Tribe for Watershed Festival donation	The group agreed to have Bonnie send a letter to the Chehalis Tribe thanking them for the WS Festival donation.
Thank you letter to Port of Grays Harbor for meeting space donation	The group agreed to have Bonnie send a letter to the Port of Grays Harbor thanking them for the meeting space donation.
2012 meeting calendar	
Thurston PUD Membership	The group agreed to allow Thurston PUD to replace Boistfort Valley Water as a water purveyor on the formal membership of the CBP.
CBP Work Plan 2012	

GENERAL PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS

Discuss October 28, 2011 Meeting Summary:

The October 28th, 2011 CBP meeting summary was approved.

Quorum requirement of 10 met:

City of Centralia, Thurston County Citizen, State agency rep (WA Dept. of Ecology and Dept. of Natural Resources), Lewis County, Thurston County, City of Chehalis, Chehalis Tribe, Lewis County Citizen, Lewis County Farm Bureau, Grays Harbor County, Thurston County PUD.

MEETING AGENDA

1) CBP Organizational Discussion-Fundraising Letter Follow-Up:

The Chehalis Basin Partnership sent out their fundraising request letter to members in August, signed by Chair and Vice Chair.

The Port of Grays Harbor budgeted \$2,000 in their upcoming budget to pay for meeting space back at the Lucky Eagle Casino so starting in January 2012 we will be meeting again at the Lucky Eagle Casino. The \$2,000 will get us through the year if we don't have coffee service. The group agreed to send a thank you letter signed by Bonnie to the Port of Grays Harbor. Janel has reserved the meeting room at the casino for our meetings next year. The only date they didn't have available was April 27th so she suggested the CBP meet a week earlier. Generally the CBP meets the third Friday in May, November and December to accommodate holidays. Janel distributed the 2012 CBP and sub-committee meetings calendar. The calendar is also available on the CBP website. The group would like to have coffee service that members pay for each meeting. Chuck Turley offered to cover it at the January meeting and see how the members contribute at the January meeting for future meetings. Perhaps each member would want to pay for each meeting.

Thurston County Commissioners have tentatively approved \$15,000 for the CBP budget for next year. The group agreed to have Bonnie send a thank you letter to Thurston County as soon as the budget is finalized.

The Chehalis Tribe donated \$5,000 to be used towards Chehalis Watershed Festivals. The check is being deposited in GH County-Watershed Festival account. This funding will likely cover festivals beyond next year, if we get other community organizations to continue to chip in small amounts, like we have in the years past. The group agreed to send a thank you letter to the Tribe for their donation to the Chehalis Watershed Festival.

No other updates from members.

2) Thurston PUD Membership Discussion:

At the last CBP meeting the group agreed to send out a letter to our existing water purveyors asking about their level of interest and their continued involvement in the CBP. Lee Napier attended the GH Water District #2 meeting and they decided they'd rather opt in and start attending meetings. Janel contacted Rich Eitel via phone after the letter was sent out and he expressed that his main focus is on keeping the water system going. He doesn't have time to attend our meetings. He would be okay with Thurston PUD filling their spot on the water purveyor list. He sent an email and Janel distributed a copy of that email for members to review.

The group decided to make Thurston PUD a member of the CBP by replacing Boistfort Valley Water Company as the water purveyor for the upper basin. The CBP membership list and website will be updated to reflect this change.

Boistfort Valley Water would still like to be included on our email and mailing lists for information.

3) CBP Strategic Planning Session for 2012: Work Plan

Janel suggested it's time to start thinking and discussing the CBP work plan for 2012. She emailed out a spreadsheet for members to fill out with information about projects they are doing that might be implementing our DIP and WMP.

Janel gave a powerpoint presentation on the status of the DIP (for a copy of the presentation please email her). She presented all of the DIP strategies and interim milestones (IM's) then listed what has been accomplished in each milestone. There might be projects/work missing so she asked for feedback from members as she went through the presentation. Overall, most of the IM's are in progress, a few are

completed, and a few are not yet started. She asked for member feedback on projects they are doing/have done that might have also implemented our DIP or Watershed Management Plan.

Kahle Jennings described the Centralia Stream Team as a project the City has taken on that is implementing the DIP. The City is covering the cost of supplies/materials and staff support to the Stream Team and this is helping implement DIP Strategy #2. The City has spent and/or received grants in the amount of \$24,000 for Centralia Stream Team; 1,462 volunteer hours tallied, and the stormwater staff person spent 162.5 hours unpaid working on the stream team projects.

Chanele Holbrook-Shaw mentioned enhancement, education/outreach, and acquisition projects that Heernett Environmental Foundation has undertaken.

The CBP has partnered more closely with the Chehalis River Council to help prepare their bi-monthly electronic newsletter "Drops of Water".

The Chehalis Basin Lead Entity and the Habitat Work Group have been developing a conceptual project list of habitat restoration projects to be included in the Habitat Work Schedule. They have also been the lead on facilitating numerous Salmon Recovery Funding Board projects and other restoration work basin-wide.

The voluntary stewardship program was discussed and how that might have a link in watershed planning. Lewis County has opted into, but no other county has yet to. Grays Harbor County is in the process of determining whether to opt into it. Some tasks in the DIP could be accomplished by partnering with the counties and their voluntary stewardship programs like inventory and assessment of farmlands and ag lands. Outreach work could also be done about the value of keeping ag on the landscape. Other projects were brought up but the link to how they implement the DIP was not really clear. The group decided those projects should not be included on a list since the CBP was not the primary sponsor/advocate of those projects.

Next, Janel asked the group for ideas on future projects for the 2012 work plan. She presented some potential projects and goals for the CBP in 2012:

- Funding request to legislature which would entail outreach/meeting with legislators
- Membership/funding contributions to the CBP; other sources of funding
- Find funding sources to continue the work of the groundwater/surface water study in the Chehalis with the USGS
- Continued work on tools to help municipalities meet water quantity needs such as an aquifer storage and recovery project
- Find funding and coordinate the 7th Annual Chehalis Watershed Festival
- Continued work with Stream Teams

Julie Balmelli-Powe described some troubles that Ag landowners are facing when there is no one in the family left to farm, and the land isn't worth what it should be, or when a flood happens and some of the organic farmers lose their organic license. Mark suggested there might some opportunity for farmers in the future to help alleviate some issues. Perhaps one day there will be flood easements that would pay farmers to let their land flood.

Bill Schulte, Julie, Kahle and other members discussed junior water rights holder issues and interruptible water rights, impacting the Centralia and Chehalis area. One of biggest food processors in the area, National Frozen Foods, won't write contracts with farmers who have a junior water right for fear they won't be able to produce the crop during a time of water shortage or through the whole harvest season.

Members of the CBP suggested developing a mechanism for sharing water that would benefit all parties involved, Ag, people, fish, economy, etc. An idea is that there might some policy level change that could be made with Ecology to help interruptible water rights by supplementing farmers with groundwater. The USGS groundwater/surface water model is critical to helping figure this out. A water bank would also be another mechanism for helping junior water rights holders. Unused senior water rights could be “banked/stored” and used by the Ag users who need it during dry months or other water shortage times. The group also suggested the need to promote sustainable agriculture in the basin. These both align with DIP Strategy #4.

At the end of the discussion the group had identified 4 top priority projects to work on in 2012:

- DIP 4: Keeping agriculture on the landscape.
 - Develop mechanism for sharing water that benefits all.
 - Promote sustainable agriculture.
- DIP 2: Continue education/outreach; continue to form partnerships to fund CBP daily operations and projects.
- DIP 1: Find funding to continue the work of the groundwater/surface water model with the USGS.
- DIP 3: Find funding to continue the feasibility work of an aquifer storage and recovery project.

The CBP and its sub-committees will continue to work through these at upcoming meetings and see what progress can be made in 2012.

4) Monthly Organizational Presentation: Chehalis Basin Early Warning System

It was suggested at the last meeting to give a presentation on the Chehalis Basin Early Warning System. The warning system is a publicly accessible, internet-based site that has information on rain, stream, reservoir, wind, temp and other data displayed in real-time. This information will be useful in helping residents plan and prepare for flooding and other weather related events. Julie Balmelli-Powe showed the group how to access the website and walked them through several of the features on the website. Not all of the features were working properly so to get a better idea members should spend some time on their own to check out the website and see what it can offer. Janel distributed a handout of information about the early warning system and how to access it. It can be accessed at contrail.onerain.com. The username is public and the password is public.

5) Agenda Items for December 16, 2011 Meeting and Future Meetings:

The CBP will not meet in December. The next CBP meeting will be on January 27th at the Lucky Eagle Casino near Rochester.

Agenda items for January:

- Fundraising discussion continued
- Legislative outreach ideas and brochure
- Continue discussion of CBP 2012 Work Plan priorities
- Monthly Organizational Presentation: Chehalis Basin Land Trust

Possible Upcoming Presentations:

- Presentation from Cliff Mass, UW Metr about effects of La Nina/El Nino
- Presentation on the new coastal Doppler Radar
- Presentation from WDFW about status of fishery in Chehalis Basin (Curt Holt)

ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business, Chair Bonnie Canaday adjourned the meeting at 12:05pm.