

CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP
Chehalis Tribe “Lucky Eagle” Casino
Rochester, Washington
January 23, 2009
9:30 a.m.

Meeting Summary

MEMBERS, ALTERNATES & GUESTS PRESENT

Bonnie Canaday, Chair, City of Centralia	Terry Harris, City of Centralia
Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County	Patrick Wiltzius, City of Chehalis (Alternate)
Kahle Jennings, City of Centralia (Alternate)	Mark White, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation (Alternate)
Chris Hempleman, Department of Ecology (DOE)	Ann Wick, Department of Agriculture
Chanele Holbrook-Shaw, Citizen, Thurston County	David Rountry, DOE
Bob Burkle, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)	Lonnie Crumley, Streamworks Consulting
Janel Spaulding, Grays Harbor College	John Penberth, Citizen, Pe Ell
Don Loft, The Evergreen State College (TESC)	Valerie Gow, Puget Sound Meeting Services
Terry Willis, Grays Harbor County	Mark Swartout, Thurston County
Dr. Joel Green, Grays Harbor College	Jim Hill, Citizen, Lewis County
Ron Mauel, Lewis County Farm Bureau	Kathy Jacobson, Chehalis Basin Education Consortium
Chuck Caldwell, Port of Grays Harbor	Narendran Kodandapani, Grays Harbor College
Art Lehman, Port of Centralia	Theresa Julius, Grays Harbor Council of Governments
Pete Holm, Chehalis River Council	Amy Iverson, WDFW
Philip Spencer, Student, TESC	
Dave Vasilauskas, City of Chehalis	

GENERAL PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS

Welcome, Introductions and Roundtable Comments

Chair Bonnie Canaday called the January 23, 2009 meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) to order at 9:36 a.m.

Chair Canaday shared highlights of her trip to Washington, D.C. to attend the 2009 Presidential Inauguration of Barack Obama along with two million other people.

Changes to the Agenda

Approval of a letter of support for a grant proposal submitted by Kathy Jacobson was added to the agenda as well as an update on the upcoming Student Congress sponsored by the Chehalis Basin Education Consortium.

Lee Napier requested updated membership information from each member.

Everyone present provided self-introductions.

Discuss and Adopt Draft Meeting Summary for October 24, 2008

The October 24, 2008 minutes were accepted as presented.

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PRESENTATIONS

Watershed Festival Post Event Report

Kahle Jennings reported on the progress to form a Stream Team in Centralia with some resource assistance from the City's stormwater utility. Janel Spaulding is spearheading the effort. Two meetings with volunteers were held. China Creek is the focus for the team's initial efforts. Ms. Spaulding reported she is applying for funding in February through the Department of Ecology's Husseman Account for the Stream Team.

Kathy Jacobson reported on Ms. Spaulding's new role as the festival coordinator. The 2008 festival was very successful. A wrap-up meeting was held in October following the festival for generating some ideas and suggestions for this year's festival. One recommendation pertained to the previous involvement of students in creating a festival logo. Ms. Jacobson asked members to consider the logo developed for the 2008 festival to be the festival's formal logo. Additionally, Morrison Riverfront Park will be used as the site each year for the festival with a suggestion to conduct a smaller event in the upper watershed. Members also discussed the range of exhibits and will work on encouraging additional farm exhibits for the 2009 festival.

Watershed Festival Committee members recommended not scheduling a weeklong schedule of activities because of the effort and amount of time involved based on the low attendance. Members also believe the one exhibit enjoyed by attendees involving the fishing pond will need to be revisited based on some situations associated with the pond.

Ms. Napier commented on the popularity of the water taste test. The City of Centralia contributed much to the festival this year from providing a trolley tour of the City's stormwater project to its participation in the water taste test, which the City won. Ms. Napier said she and Ms. Spaulding presented the trophy to the City of Centralia for winning the water taste test during a recent City Council meeting. She encouraged members to contribute ideas for improving the festival.

Ms. Jacobson reported members also discussed volunteerism and involving more Partnership members in planning and coordinating the meeting. Ms. Napier noted that some people are donating time and there are some monetary contributions. However, there are expenses associated with the festival and funding those costs has been from funds from the Partnership's first legislative appropriation. The City of Aberdeen donated the facility for the last two years. However, the City is requesting future payment for use of the facility. The cost for "Fin" was sponsored from funds from the Lead Entity Program. However, there are other things, such as rental of tables, chairs, and planning fees that require a source of funds. She invited members to become a committee member if they are interested in sponsoring some of the costs associated with organizing and conducting the community festival.

Letter of Support for Grant Application to NOAA's Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Program

Ms. Jacobson briefed members on a grant opportunity she pursued through Pioneers in Conservation along with Boistfort Valley Farm and Growing Places Farm & Energy Park (GPFEP). She said she was informally notified that the grant was awarded to enable the Consortium to work with Boistfort Valley Farm on some restoration work. Some of the funding will also provide an opportunity for students to learn about local farming.

Ms. Napier reviewed a letter to NOAA's Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Program from the Chehalis Basin Partnership supporting the Chehalis Basin Education Consortium grant application.

The proposal will involve Grays Harbor, Lewis, and south Thurston County elementary, middle, and high school students in watershed and ocean environmental education. The proposal is to fund a summer watershed ocean leadership program to be held at Grays Harbor College. The program will involve local teens in the removal of invasive vegetative species at Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge.

Ms. Jacobson shared additional information on the program and involvement of teachers and schools.

The CBP approved Chair Canaday signing the letter of support.

8th Annual Chehalis Basin Student Congress

Ms. Jacobson reported on the 8th Annual Chehalis Basin Student Congress scheduled at Grays Harbor College on Friday, March 27, 2009. Students from throughout the watershed attend Grays Harbor College and participate in the congress. Last year, over 150 students participated. Volunteers are needed as state-of-the-river facilitators to help students analyze their water quality data and to make recommendations on what they can do to improve water quality. Hands-on workshops are held in the afternoon. Volunteers are needed as workshop presenters.

The key opening activity will feature Sarvey Wildlife Care Center of Arlington, WA. The center rehabilitates injured and orphaned wildlife in the Pacific Northwest. The center will be featuring birds of prey.

Presentation on Chehalis Basin GIS Clearinghouse

Narendran Kodandapani provided a computer presentation on the status of the GIS Clearinghouse application. He displayed the webpage and described the 30 different map layers. As work progresses, new features are added to the site. Some additional data layers were recently received. One layer was received from the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation on data from the water quality monitoring stations through the basin's Water Quality Monitoring Program. Additionally, data was received on water rights for the Skookumchuck area.

Mr. Kodandapani described some of the map layers:

- Non-culvert Barriers
- Natural Fish Barriers
- Fishways
- Fish Barriers
- Dams
- Corrected Barriers
- Roads – major
- Salmonid Distribution
- Fish Distribution

Mr. Kodandapani reported that most of the source data was obtained from the Department of Ecology. Any information that needs to be updated will need to be provided.

Terry Willis inquired about whether data is included on a study by conservation districts on non-passage culverts in Grays Harbor, Lewis, and Mason Counties. Mr. Kodandapani said he would need to review the information to determine if it's been included.

Mr. Kodandapani said there has been some interest for ascertaining the effects of land cover change on water quality. The college acquired two sets of land cover data from 2001 and 2007 from the Landsat Data Program. It's been difficult to obtain data because of cloud cover during the year over the basin. The data provides the ability to delineate different parts of the land cover. The exercise will correlate data with land use characteristics creating a basin-wide land use map as of 2007. During spring and summer 2009, work will continue on the map to improve the accuracy of land cover uses.

As part of future activities, the college will continue to add new data layers on the website. Work will continue on refining the land use and land cover map.

Mr. Kodandapani addressed questions on the land use and land cover map.

Dave Rountry asked whether a data layer is available on aquatic habitat. Mr. Kodandapani affirmed the intent of adding the data layer. Mr. Rountry asked about the water quality data in terms of current data and plans for updating the data. Mr. Kodandapani reported data are based on water quality parameters established by the Water Quality Monitoring Program. Don Loft is currently working on analyzing water quality data from the basin.

Mr. Kodandapani recognized several individuals involved in the program.

Outreach and Education

Collect Completed Watershed Pledges

Ms. Spaulding reported during the October meeting the Watershed Pledge was distributed to members. She requested submission of completed pledges. Persons submitting completed pledges will receive a sun catcher.

The Chehalis Tribe sponsored a second printing of the pledge. Ms. Spaulding noted she is tracking the receipt of each watershed pledge. She encouraged everyone to submit their pledge.

Review 2009 Outreach Brochure

Ms. Spaulding distributed a draft brochure describing the Partnership. The brochure is an informative piece about the Partnership that will be provided to legislators during visits for seeking funds in support of DOE's funding request. The brochure includes information on the Partnership, accomplishments, and requests for the 2009-11 biennium. The Steering Technical Committee (STC) reviewed the brochure several times. Members were asked to review the brochure and provide any suggestions to improve the brochure.

Ms. Napier reviewed the Partnership's top priority funding needs among all 52 activities to implement the Watershed Plan during the 2009-11 biennium:

- \$522,000 to begin work on a ground water flow model to manage more effectively water resources basin-wide. The total project cost is \$1,210,000. Through a cooperative agreement USGS will contribute matching funds.
- Sponsor legislation to extend Phase 4 watershed plan implementation funds from 3 years to 9 years. These funds help ensure the watershed plan is implemented to its fullest potential, as envisioned by the Governor and the Legislature.

- Continued coordination and technical support from the Department of Ecology, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and other government agencies.

Ms. Napier described cuts in personnel at DOE and WDFW that are impacting technical assistance and support to the Partnership. Chris Hempleman commented on cuts facing DOE. Programs funded from the state general fund are impacted the most, which includes the entire watershed program for the state. At this time, the proposal is for a \$5 million cut in a \$12 million program that funds all watershed activities as well as planning units and implementation grants.

Several members commented positively on the brochure.

Ms. Napier reported outreach will continue to legislators. She encouraged members to continue outreach efforts to legislators as well as accompanying her and others during visits to legislators.

Review Draft Letterhead

Ms. Spaulding distributed a draft of the Partnership's letterhead, which has been reviewed by the STC. During its review, STC members discussed options for including or not including a list of all members within the Partnership. STC members recommended including the classifications of members rather than individually listing each member. She noted she is working with a student with graphic design experience at Olympic College to redesign the Partnership's logo, which currently is a map of WRIA 22 and 23.

Chanele Holbrook-Shaw asked whether the STC discussed including non-profit organizations. Ms. Napier said the STC discussed stakeholder interest groups, which could include non-profit organizations. The category of memberships was recommended to avoid excluding any groups.

Bob Burkle suggested including more stakeholder groups as there appears to be adequate room to include more information.

Members discussed whether to include environmental organizations, land trusts, conservation districts, agriculture, forestry, and fisheries. Lonnie Crumley suggested including a category of "Non-Profit Environmental Organizations." Several other members suggested including "Environmental Organizations." John Penberth recommended against including any membership categories to eliminate the possibility of accidentally excluding a group. Chair Canaday supported the suggestion as well as including a mission statement of the Partnership. Ms. Willis questioned the intent the letterhead is meant to convey. Jim Hill supported excluding the sidebar list of membership categories and including the addition of the Partnership's website and reducing the size of the logo to afford more space.

Terry Harris pointed out that when the Partnership was originally established, it was referred to as the "Chehalis River Basin Partnership." Members commented on their recollection of the initial name and checking the interlocal agreement to ascertain the correct title for the organization.

Mr. Burkle suggested adding, "Working together to responsibly manage our water resources in the Chehalis Basin" under the title line or at the bottom of the page. Chair Canaday offered to review and refine the letterhead.

Members agreed to review changes to the letterhead at its next meeting.

Ms. Spaulding distributed a calendar of Partnership meetings. Members agreed to change the May meeting to May 29, 2009 because of the Memorial Day holiday.

Ms. Spaulding reported on several successful tree planting events recently completed in the basin.

Ms. Napier commented on the volunteer opportunities for various planting events and how the events provide a good educational opportunity to learn about the local area and how restoration activities improve water quality. She encouraged members to participate.

Ms. Hempleman shared information on a water banking bill (HB 1494) public hearing on Tuesday, January 24, 2009. She encouraged members to review the bill and send comments to legislators. The bill is sponsored by DOE.

Mr. Swartout commented on his attendance to the recent water banking workshop conducted by DOE. Information shared during the meeting revealed the diversity of options for pursuing water banking. However, the bill appears to reduce that ability. Ms. Hempleman advised Mr. Swartout to contact Peggy Clifford at DOE with his concerns.

Mr. Loft said he also attended the workshop and left with some concerns as it appears it could morph into something where water is sold to the highest bidder. Several members agreed that the situation is currently happening. Ms. Willis questioned whether the bill is the result of nonconformity occurring across the state. Mr. Swartout said the purpose of the bill is to afford the opportunity statewide. Mr. Harris said the workshop left many attendees with unanswered questions about the water banking situation. Mr. Swartout said currently, water banking is authorized in the Yakima basin. The bill would allow water banking to occur throughout the state. However, it cannot occur without concurrence of the affected basin. He said he spoke with a contact about possibility exploring whether the basin wants to consider water banking by having the consultant attend and provide information during a Partnership meeting.

Mr. Harris said that during the first hour of the workshop he questioned whether the basin should establish a water bank. It could be a profitable venture but could also result in a highest bidder scenario, which is unsettling. Mr. Swartout said another type of water bank that was discussed that might be of interest to the basin is the formation of an organization for farmers not using entire water rights who could transfer some rights to protect their rights while others could use the rights under specific conditions. That scenario could be applied in the basin to provide farmers with the flexibility in terms of water usage during crop rotations where unless they use it they lose it. Mr. Swartout suggested members should read the bill as it is clear what conditions would apply to a water bank.

Mr. Penberth said he was a charter member of the Partnership during the formation of the Partnership, which was created under House Bill 2514 to protect water quantity, quality, and fish habitat. The goal then was not to participate in all legislation. He suggested that if the Partnership is going to begin taking sides it will lead to potential conflicts. Tribes in the State of Washington are the senior water rights holders. He said he foresees a conflict with water rights and tribes in the future. Any spare water will be claimed by the tribes. He suggested avoiding that part of the conflict by not choosing sides. He suggested obtaining a copy of the Washington State Water Rights law to clarify how the Partnership wants to proceed in the future. The controversy will continue to grow. He asked whether any of the basin entities have done anything in response to the letter from the Quinault Indian Tribe several years ago about stopping the withdrawal of water from the Chehalis River. The letter offered several ideas.

Chair Canaday commented that the issue is not about “taking sides” but is of informational purposes for all basin entities.

January 8, 2009 Flood Event Discussion – Group Sharing of Information Related to Response, Damages, and Outcomes

Chair Canaday introduced the topic and requested members share their respective experiences.

Mr. Swartout reported Thurston County held several meetings – one in Bucoda and one in Rochester on issues surrounding flooding, availability of national flood insurance, improvements made in emergency response since the 2007 flood, and other topics to include current activities of the Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority. Mr. Swartout said he had an opportunity to take an aerial flight over the affected areas on Friday, January 9, 2009. It was quite easy to see the defined floodplain from the air.

Mark White reported he also took an aerial flight of the area and took many photographs. The biggest change that jurisdictions can make is in land use. He said he’ll share the pictures at the Partnership’s next meeting. Flooding on the reservation was approximately eight inches less than the 2007 flood. Anderson Road was flooded. However, the casino did not experience any flooding.

Mr. Hill said I-5 is always a consideration during a flood. Dillenbaugh Creek created the greatest impact causing the closure of I-5. It is incumbent on jurisdictions to consider land use in the vicinity of the Chehalis Port.

Ms. Willis said Grays Harbor County was better prepared for emergency response. The county was affected by both the Chehalis River as well as the Olympic Mountains. The county was closed only for emergency and essential services because many of the county’s back roads were covered with water cutting off access. The only difference occurring with this year’s flood was some strange flooding occurrences affecting areas not previously flooded. The county is undertaking clean up and accounting for damages. She noted she received phone calls about littering caused by the flood. One particular concern is hay wrapped in plastic that floated throughout the county causing a litter problem. Outreach is possible to farmers to ensure hay is secured during flood events. High tides in Grays Harbor also created some impacts as well as snowmelt. The Satsop was affected by snowmelt.

Mr. Burkle commented on impacts to spawning grounds. The timing of the flood for fish survival was better than the 2007 flood. Most fish had spawned and most eggs were beyond the early stage. Preliminarily, the department doesn’t anticipate many problems with fish as a result of the flood.

Ms. Holbrook-Shaw said the Satsop Springs Hatchery was within six inches of having the river destroy the entire hatchery. Some volunteer firefighters sandbagged the hatchery. Mr. Burkle noted several hatcheries throughout the state were destroyed by the flood.

Mr. Harris said the event was an excellent test for emergency operations centers. All emergency services were in place and ready to respond. The National Weather Service provided timely weather reports. Dillenbaugh Creek is located outside the area the US Army Corps of Engineers is considering for dikes and levees. He suggested authorities need to consider all contributing sources that might close the freeway.

Ron Maule cited the 2007 flood in comparison to the 2009 flood. This year, the loss of animals was minimal because of emergency services. Many people heeded the warnings and evacuated herds. Some animals in Onalaska from hobby farms were lost because the animals were not moved. During the 2007

flood, the area was declared a disaster area resulting in funds of \$1.5 million from the state for agriculture lands and removal of woody debris by the Department of Natural Resources. At the time of the 2009 flood, the area had recovered by approximately 90%. The area also received \$1.7 million from the federal government. When FEMA arrived, approximately \$28,000 was provided for residential homes. However, no such assistance was provided to farms. Animal loss was reimbursed at \$.26 on the dollar. For the 2009 flood, no reimbursements are included in the budget. Mr. Maule reported on two dairies that have closed because of the floods and economic downturn. A third dairy may close as well. The two floods cost the dairy industry three to four million dollars a year in economics. Currently, Lewis County has 20 dairies. The long-term problem associated with the floods is the debt load carried by agriculture. Many farmers will cease business next year because of their debt load and inability to rebound.

Mr. Jennings reported the City of Centralia escaped major flooding during the event. Predictions were for record flooding on the Skookumchuck River, which did not occur. A majority of the damage was to private residences in the north area of the City. Approximately 400 homes were affected. China Creek flooded during the evening of Wednesday, January 7, 2009. Approximately 55,000 sandbags were filled. The Skookumchuck levee didn't overtop sparing the north area of the City. Some of the damage was repeat damage occurring in 2007 along the Chehalis River and access roads. Access to the hospital remained opened and most streets remained open. There are discussions about the project at Opus Northwest involving the excavation material from adjacent port property bordering the Chehalis River and filling the Opus site to create a pad for future construction. The emergency operations center in Centralia was much more prepared with the areas of the city marked as different subareas for handling issues.

Mr. Swartout said the 2009 flood provided more warning than the 2007 flood. The Flood Authority is working with the National Weather Service to see if there can be any improvements in predictions by adding other measuring devices in the basin. The Skookumchuck dam had 20 feet of capacity prior to the flood. The National Weather Service doesn't have a gauge on the Skookumchuck. The water level in the reservoir is a huge factor in terms of predictability in what occurs in the Skookumchuck River. The dam was not designed for flood control and has no way to release water. One of the elements of the Corps project is modifying the dam to utilize the dam more for flood control purposes.

Ms. Holbrook-Shaw noted that Bucoda experienced severe flooding.

Mr. Penberth reported the Town of Pe Ell lost its water system in the flood. It took six days to restore water service.

Mr. Burkle reported on his visit to the Preacher's Slough project, which was funded by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) and the impact of the flood on the area. The project is for fish enhancement but it might be one of the better flood control projects.

Mr. Rountry said most of the SRFB projects were spared after the 2007 storm. He inquired about the status of newer projects during the last year. Mr. Crumley advised that one project in the Snohomish area experienced some problems during the 2009 event. Ms. Willis said the conservation districts are checking on projects to ensure plantings were not washed away or fences destroyed.

Mr. Loft suggested the examination of land use is one way to control damage. He commented on whether there has been any consideration in terms of impervious surface and controlling runoff by installing rain gardens and bioswales to help control a storm surge. Mr. Harris said those measures are required within the airport property so that when development occurs there is a place for water storage.

Chair Canady commented that previously, discussions on flooding occurred every 10 years. However, recent occurrences have occurred each year. The Corps is looking at a different plan under the instruction of the Governor.

Ms. Willis cited coal pollution in China for creating heavy rains on the West Coast. Chemicals contained in coal dust are the same chemicals found in rain clouds. Mr. Burkle commented on the presence of mercury pollution in the air.

Mr. Loft advocated for considering roof gardens, rain gardens, and bioswales as a way to control flooding rather than relying only on levees. Mr. Harris agreed the effort needs to be addressed as a basin-wide measure because of downstream impacts as well as impacts to areas outside the protected zone.

NEXT MEETING

Ms. Napier responded to an information request from Mr. Green on an update on activities by the Flood Authority. The February meeting agenda will include an update on Flood Authority activities. Mr. Swartout said the Flood Authority is moving forward on a comprehensive flood hazard management plan for the entire basin to include a list of all possible projects that could be pursued.

Ms. Napier encouraged everyone to attend Flood Authority workshops to solicit input from the community scheduled for February 11 in Lewis County at the Veterans Museum and February 12 at Montesano City Hall beginning at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Penberth commented on the limited opportunity to provide public comments during Flood Authority meetings, which will ultimately lead to the Authority's failure.

The next CBP meeting is scheduled for February 27, 2009.

ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business, Chair Canaday adjourned the meeting at 11:52 a.m.