

CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP
Chehalis Tribe “Lucky Eagle” Casino
Rochester, Washington
May 29, 2009
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Meeting Summary

MEMBERS, ALTERNATES & GUESTS PRESENT

Bonnie Canaday, Chair, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Centralia
Kahle Jennings, City of Centralia (Alternate)
Bob Burkle, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)
Amy Iverson, WDFW
Don Loft, Grays Harbor College
Phil Rupp, Lewis County
Miranda Plumb, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Ron Mauer, Lewis County Farm Bureau
Julie Powell, Lewis County Farm Bureau
Janel Spaulding, Grays Harbor College
Chanele Holbrook-Shaw, Citizen, Thurston County
Kathy Jacobson, The Chehalis Basin Education Consortium (ESD 113)

Bill Schulte, Lewis County
Jim Hill, Citizen, Lewis County
Lyle Hojem, Citizen, Lewis County
Terry Harris, City of Chehalis
Terry Willis, Grays Harbor County
Chuck Caldwell, Port of Grays Harbor
Patrick Wiltzius, City of Chehalis (Alternate)
John Penberth, Citizen, Pe Ell
Joel Green, Grays Harbor College
Chris Stearns, Thurston County PUD
Bill Overton, Montesano High School
Nikko Sprinkle, Montesano High School Student
Natasha Potts, Montesano High School Student
Cheri Lindgren, Puget Sound Meeting Services

GENERAL PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS

Welcome, Introductions and Roundtable Comments

Chair Bonnie Canaday called the May 29, 2009 meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) to order at 9:36 a.m. Everyone present provided self-introductions.

Discuss and Adopt Draft Meeting Summary for April 24, 2009

Approval of the April 24, 2009 minutes was deferred to the June meeting.

Other Business

Lyle Hojem reported members of the public have been asking various questions about whether the CBP and the Flood Authority are the same organization, whether the Partnership is different from the Flood Authority, whether two groups are necessary, and the role of One Voice. Many CBP members also attend Flood Authority meetings. He suggested developing a letter clarifying the roles of the two organizations.

Terry Harris agreed with the suggestion to draft a letter of explanation. A similar discussion occurred just prior to the creation of the Flood Authority. A letter outlining the roles and responsibilities of the two organizations could be worthwhile and distributed to media, communities, and counties.

Bill Schulte referred to a previous meeting when CBP members agreed to focus on salmon and water quality and not flood mitigation. Several flood authority groups have failed over the years and it would be unfortunate to have CBP blamed if the Flood Authority is unsuccessful. The two organizations should remain separate.

Chair Canaday agreed citizens don't have a clear understanding of the role of the CBP or the Flood Authority.

John Penberth provided a historical overview of the Partnership and House Bill (HB) 2514 aimed at providing sufficient water for people, fish, and wildlife in Washington. The watershed planning unit was established by the Legislature. The CBP was created to act as an insulator between regulatory agencies and citizens. The Partnership and Flood Authority are two distinct organizations. However, some members represent both agencies. He suggested extracting flood activities from the CBP's role, which could provide a clearer distinction between the two organizations. Bob Burkle agreed. House Bill 2514 enables WDFW representatives to attend CBP meetings. WDFW representatives provide technical assistance to the Flood Authority on fish and wildlife habitat. Mr. Burkle reviewed Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 2946 for funding salmon recovery. The Flood Authority doesn't have the same interface and is focused on flooding issues.

Miranda Plumb commented that outcomes from the Flood Authority could impact fish habitat.

Mr. Hojem referred to an article published in *The Chronicle* on May 28, 2009 about a new study that could combine the goals of each organization.

Terry Willis commented that she also attends Flood Authority meetings. She agreed with Mr. Hojem's comments about the confusion between the two organizations, is valid. It makes sense to clarify and determine the role(s) of each entity. There is an element within the Watershed Management Plan (WMP) addressing flooding. The US Geological Survey (USGS) Groundwater Characterization Study will inform the Flood Authority's work. "One Voice" is a citizens group vital to obtaining real information about recent floods. The Legislature passed bills providing the Flood Authority with funding and organizational power. She recommended distinguishing the two groups while recognizing that the two organizations will work together on common programs.

Mr. Rupp arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Schulte reiterated that the CBP previously decided not to get involved in Flood Authority business. He acknowledged that there is some overlap. The Steering Technical Committee (STC) decided to become involved in flood mitigation after the Partnership agreed to focus on salmon and water quality. He suggested convening an ad hoc committee of the CBP to serve as a liaison to the Flood Authority. He said he asked Ms. Napier to schedule the General Investigation (GI) Study and the contract for services with Earth Economics on the agenda for discussion. The CBP did not approve either study.

The Partnership agreed to amend the agenda and discuss the status of the contract for services with Earth Economics and the GI Study.

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PRESENTATIONS

Status of Contract for Services with Earth Economics and Status of GI Study

Ms. Willis reviewed a report provided by Lee Napier:

- A list of the Flood Authority's "ripe and ready" projects was distributed at the Partnership's April 24, 2009 meeting.
- The Flood Authority is moving forward with developing a basin-wide comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan as directed by the Legislature. Part of that process involves identifying stakeholders and ways to work together, identifying projects of interest for funding, and how the

Partnership can become involved and provide support and resources to enhance the work of the Flood Authority, as well as the CBP.

- The Partnership and Grays Harbor County are working on a GI Study through the US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) for ecosystem restoration. The project was initiated during development of the watershed plan in 2000. Efforts include working with the Corps to evaluate the basin on an ecosystem level. Based on direction from the Flood Authority Chair, Flood Authority members would like to include flood control as a component in the existing GI project sponsored by Grays Harbor County. Commissioner Averill convened a meeting on April 1, 2009 to discuss the GI study and what it entails.
- Congress appropriated \$574,000 for the GI Study. Grays Harbor County with support from the Flood Authority recommends using the funds to support the Partnership's highest priority project, the USGS Groundwater Characterization project. The project was proposed for funding by the Partnership through the Department of Ecology's (DOE) budget but was not successful because of limited funding. The project could advance the joint funding effort between the Corps, USGS, DOE, and the Partnership. The USGS Decision Support Tool (DST) project also has the ability to examine flood issues and projects. GI studies require project management plans. The GI will need revisions to update the work to reflect current conditions including adding flood damage reduction.
- Lewis County, representing the Flood Authority, would like to develop an interlocal agreement describing the relationship between the GI Study, the Flood Authority, and the Partnership. That could occur during the revision of the project management plans (PMP). The current GI PMP describes the work proposed by the Partnership and USGS. It could proceed independently of the PMP.
- During the April meeting, the CBP was asked to provide feedback and concurrence on moving forward and developing an interlocal agreement with the Flood Authority with each county executing the agreement on behalf of each county's member seated on the Partnership. There were no objections to the request to move forward.
- Another "ripe and ready" project requested by the CBP and slated for funding by the Flood Authority is the analysis evaluation of flood protection and other ecosystem services in the Chehalis watershed. The project involves an evaluation tool to determine the value of the ecosystem and how it benefits the watershed. Mr. Batker provided the Partnership with a presentation at its October meeting. At that time, the CBP was interested in acquiring the tool. The analysis and evaluation of the flood protection tool will assist with implementing the WMP and assist the Flood Authority in evaluating the benefits of a project. The project, Project #6 within the list of "ripe and ready" projects, was advanced for funding with \$75,000 from the Flood Authority on behalf of the Partnership. Grays Harbor and Lewis Counties developed a draft scope of work (SOW) and interlocal agreement. The Flood Authority received a presentation by Mr. Batker on May 21, 2009. The Flood Authority suggested a contract for services between Lewis County and Earth Economics. The Flood Authority intends to revisit the issue at its June 18, 2009 meeting.

Mr. Schulte suggested the Partnership should not become involved in either of the projects until the Corps and Earth Economics brief members on how the proposals affect the CBP.

Ms. Holbrook-Shaw emphasized that the STC goes above and beyond to avoid jeopardizing the intent of any actions pertaining to the Partnership. If there's a question regarding an issue, STC members table the issue and refers the matter to the Partnership for additional discussion/resolution.

Mr. Schulte asked for an explanation of what the GI study entails. Mr. Jennings replied that the GI Study relates to the levee and ecosystem restoration project and is unsure whether it involves the Flood

Authority's flood storage project. *Note –Mr Jennings is referring to the GI for the Twin Cities Project which is different than the Chehalis GI.* The Partnership previously funded the first phase of the USGS Groundwater Characterization project. Mr. Schulte acknowledged the briefing on the USGS Groundwater Characterization project. He questioned how the CBP became involved in "Analysis and Valuation of Flood Protection and other Ecosystem Services in the Chehalis Watershed" project.

Ms. Willis pointed out that the Flood Authority received the same presentation as the CBP. There's a question on how the project fits with the Flood Authority and Corps projects.

Mr. Penberth offered that elected officials should stop trying to wear numerous hats and focus only on one group. At one time, all member mayors and elected officials attended Partnership meetings. Elected officials are not making the decisions. One Voice is a self-appointed lobbying group and should not be considered within the discussion. Elected officials could appoint another representative to serve on the Flood Authority. Some members of the Flood Authority are not familiar with the role of the CBP. Salmon recovery provides a great separation between the two organizations.

Mr. Hojem referred to the various opinions and preferences expressed by CBP members and the need to resolve the issue.

Chair Canady agreed that there appears to be some confusion between the Partnership and Flood Authority warranting clarification. Some members do represent both agencies; however, there are times when elected officials are required to represent their respective entities at numerous meetings.

Mr. Harris referred to the importance of members wearing two hats and continuing to do so while focusing on one agenda rather than their own.

Mr. Schulte recommended receiving a briefing on the contract for services with Earth Economics and the status of the GI Study at the June meeting. Mr. Hill pointed out that Earth Economics briefed the Partnership several months ago. Mr. Schulte replied that Earth Economics is revising the initial SOW.

Ms. Willis said the consultant could provide additional information on how the SOW adheres with the Flood Authority's work and CBP's goals.

Outreach Letter – Review Content and Distribution List

Janel Spaulding reviewed information on the intent of the outreach letter.

Ms. Willis asked whether the mission statement within the first paragraph is from the WMP. Ms. Spaulding affirmed that it's the same mission statement.

Mr. Harris said he particularly likes the first paragraph.

Mr. Schulte asked whether the letter will include any references to the Flood Authority. Ms. Spaulding advised that at this point there is no intent to reference the Flood Authority.

Ms. Spaulding reviewed the distribution list for the letter.

Mr. Schulte asked for a copy to be mailed to the Flood Authority and suggested adding a sentence stating, "While we're a valuable resource to you, we do not intend to be the Flood Authority." He indicated he won't support distributing the letter without that additional statement.

Mr. Stearns requested the addition of Thurston County PUD to the distribution list.

Several members expressed uneasiness with Mr. Schulte's recommended addition to the letter.

Mr. Burkle suggested drafting a separate letter for the Flood Authority.

Mr. Schulte commented that a separate letter for the Flood Authority should be mailed at the same time as the outreach letter. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw contended that a separate letter for the Flood Authority should not delay the mailing of the outreach letter. Both letters can be mailed to the Flood Authority.

Mr. Harris acknowledged Mr. Schulte's comments.

Ms. Spaulding described the intent of the outreach letter to inform agencies about the WMP recommendations when developing local policies and plans, such as land use, shoreline master programs (SMPs), critical area ordinances, and other relevant actions and projects throughout the Chehalis basin.

Mr. Harris and Mr. Mauel agreed a separate letter and mailing explaining the difference between the CBP and the Flood Authority would be appropriate.

Mr. Schulte reported that all communications from the CBP clarify the distinction between the two agencies, which should also be included in the outreach letter.

Mr. Penberth proposed having the Partnership and the Flood Authority work directly with the media on ways to communicate how the two organizations are different.

Mr. Burkle commented that the cities of Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater are updating their respective SMPs. Mailing of the outreach letter is timely.

Mr. Schulte suggested revising the first sentence of the second paragraph to read in part, "The Chehalis Basin Watershed Management Plan contains recommendations for how state, tribal, local governments, and the Flood Authority manage water resources ..."

Mr. Jennings offered a compromise of inserting language following the second sentence within the first paragraph to read, "We are separate from the Chehalis Basin Flood Authority."

Members discussed the recommendations. Mr. Jennings expressed concerns on how the Flood Authority may react to Mr. Schulte's proposed amendment to the outreach letter. The CBP preceded the Flood Authority. The Flood Authority did not exist when the WMP was approved.

Mr. Schulte suggested revising the first sentence of the second paragraph to read in part, "The Chehalis Basin Watershed Management Plan contains recommendations for how state, tribal, local governments, and flood authorities manage water resources ..."

Mr. Penberth said a wealth of resource information is available to agencies and the public on Grays Harbor County's website.

Further discussion ensued on including "flood authorities" in the outreach letter as presented by Mr. Schulte. Member opinions varied. Some members commented that the outreach letter doesn't address other groups such as the Fisheries Task Force that could use the CBP and WMP as a resource. However, it was questioned whether "local governments" is inclusive of task forces and other groups. Ms. Spaulding pointed out that the outreach letter is targeted to counties, cities, ports, and water districts. The STC plans to draft a separate letter directed to task forces, river councils, and other environmental organizations in the basin. She suggested not losing focus of the purpose for the outreach letter.

Chair Canady queried members on whether there's consensus to move forward with the draft as presented by Ms. Spaulding.

Mr. Schulte offered that including "flood authorities" helps delineate a distinction between the Partnership and the Flood Authority. He stressed that he won't support distributing the letter as presented. As the Partnership operates under a consensus mode, the letter can't be mailed without consensus of the entire membership.

Mr. Harris said he prefers not creating a situation where one member can block action supported by other members. Adding, "flood authorities" is not the intent or purpose for developing an outreach letter. A separate letter can be drafted explaining the distinction between the Flood Authority and the CBP. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw agreed.

Ms. Willis said although she doesn't agree with the recommendation to add, "flood authorities," she will not oppose the amendment.

The CBP agreed to add "flood authorities" as proposed by Mr. Schulte. Chair Canady will sign the outreach letter for mailing.

Bishop Trail Clean Up and Centralia/China Creek Stream Team

Ms. Spaulding reported on coordination activities on May 16, 2009 for cleanup of the Bishop Trail in Aberdeen. Approximately 40 people helped clear 1.5 miles of trail along Grays Harbor. The trail could eventually connect to the Westport Winery.

Ms. Spaulding reported on the cleanup activities along China Creek on Saturday, May 2, 2009. Sixty-seven volunteers removed three tons of garbage and three trailer loads of blackberry vines from the channel. *The Chronicle* featured several articles about the effort. Light refreshments, tools, and T-shirts were funded by a grant from DOE. The grant will also help fund future cleanup events, outreach materials, and signage. Future events include:

- A fall cleanup on China Creek is scheduled for September.
- Volunteers are also interested in cleaning up Scammon Creek in June.
- A stream walk survey of China Creek is planned for July.
- Blackberry vine removal along China Creek will occur in August.
- Riparian planting along China Creek is scheduled for October.

Mr. Jennings reported the City of Centralia's stormwater utility is funding some of the cleanup activities on China Creek.

Ms. Spaulding presented several photos of the China Creek activities on May 2.

Mr. Jennings indicated that a long-term project is restoring and opening the channel and planting larger trees.

Ms. Spaulding reported on discussions for initiating a stream team in McCleary.

On behalf of Centralia's Utility Department, Mr. Jennings presented Ms. Spaulding with a certificate of appreciation.

Mr. Green provided an update on Grays Harbor College programs. The Natural Resource Program, Aquaculture and Watershed Assessment, and the GIS Program are being suspended because of budget cuts. The programs have been under-enrolled for the last several years. Grays Harbor College is committed to fulfilling the obligations of the DOE grant, which includes the State of the River Report. He distributed a draft article for the *Drops of Water* newsletter titled, "Grays Harbor College, Chehalis Tribe, and Department of Ecology Team Up to Monitor Water Quality in the Chehalis River Basin."

Discussion followed on the future of the GIS Program.

Presentations – Students from the Chehalis Basin Education Consortium Water Quality Monitoring

Ms. Spaulding introduced Brian Overton, Science Teacher, Montesano High School. Mr. Overton introduced students Nikko Sprinkle and Natasha Potts. Montesano High School students collect data on the Wynoochee River twice a year. Other schools collect data from other locations within the watershed. Students prefer chemical testing because they can visually see changes occur.

A PowerPoint presentation showcasing monitoring activities within the Chehalis watershed was presented. A photograph of Montesano High School and Elma Elementary School students was shared with members.

In February 2009, students learned how to plant Oak, Willow, and Cottonwood trees and how to protect trees from strong winds and flooding water. The trees also provide homes to wildlife.

A major topic of discussion was erosion. Hay was used to cover erosion. Students discovered how a flood changes the way an area looks. Parts of the Chehalis basin floods each winter. The Chehalis Basin Land Trust was awarded a grant from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation to help restore the wetland and river channel to the Black River. Restoring the wetland is important because wildlife rely on the Chehalis basin for food and shelter. The project was initiated in early December 2008. Approximately 135 students from Centralia, Montesano, and Onalaska High Schools, as well as Rochester Middle School, planted 1,200 wetland trees and shrubs.

In February 2009, students from Elma Elementary and Montesano High School returned to the basin to place cloth around the plants. Student teams worked together to determine how many of the plants sprouted. More than half of the trees and shrubs planted had started to bloom.

Ms. Potts commented about students learning about teamwork, restoring life, and that the project provided a one-of-a-kind experience. Everyone had a great time.

Kathy Jacobson, Chehalis Basin Education Consortium (ESD 113), said funding was provided by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation enabling the organization to plant at Littlerock, Elk River, Wild Time Farm in Oakville, Department of Natural Resources (DNR) land adjacent to Grays Harbor College (Alder Creek), and the Skookumchuck River at Riverside Park. Students also planted 450 trees on a cold day in February along the Chehalis River Discovery Trail. The core program involves teachers in water quality monitoring. Two new teachers from Onalaska, one teacher from Wishkah, three teachers from Cosmopolis, and five new teachers from Tenino have joined this year. Ms. Jacobson noted that more than 225 students attended the Student Congress this year.

Copies of the “Words and Images from the Watershed: Washington’s River of Works – 2009 Art and Poetry Contest Winners” were distributed. Funding for the project was provided in part through a grant from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Approximately 900 students competed in the contest. The main goal of the program is to get young people outside.

The Consortium was awarded a grant from the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission as part of its “No Child Left Inside” program. The Consortium is sponsoring a free series of “River of Works in the Park” events for youth groups, families, park campers, and the public. Three upcoming events include:

- June 13: Rachel Carson Family Day at Ocean City State Park, Ocean Shores, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- June 20: John Muir Family Day at Rainbow Falls State Park, Adna, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- June 27: Ansel Adams Family Day at Millersylvania State Park, Tenino, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Don Loft offered his support to any agency willing to house Grays Harbor College’s GIS program. His position is funded through December 2010.

Mr. Green advised that his position is funded through June 30, 2009 and he’s offered his service to Grays Harbor College to complete obligations of the DOE grant including the State of the River Report.

Mr. Jennings asked Mr. Green and/or Mr. Loft to forward GIS Clearinghouse storage space needs to Ms. Napier.

Mr. Loft advised that he’ll follow up with The Evergreen State College (TESC) about hosting Grays Harbor College’s GIS Clearinghouse servers and data.

Mr. Stearns suggested an option of discussing hosting options with Thurston County.

Mr. Hill said he believes there’s an interlocal agreement between Grays Harbor County and the college for the GIS Clearinghouse.

Mr. Green referred to conducting a literature review and synthesizing the information into the State of the River Report. DOE agreed with combining fiscal years 2008 and 2009 into a single report that will be produced later in the summer. The tool could be provided to stakeholders in the Chehalis basin and could be useful in prioritizing restoration projects. He welcomed comments and or advice from members on

what should be included in the report. An overarching objective is to report on current conditions in the watershed.

Agenda Items for June 26, 2009 Meeting

- Briefing on contract for services with Earth Economics
- Briefing on GI Project Management Plan with the Corps
- An update on Winter Creek in Westport and identifying point sources of fecal coliform
- Potential review of supplemental letter(s) outlining the distinction between the CBP and the Flood Authority
- A presentation on the education and outreach workshops held in May

Chair Canady reported she's unable to attend the June 26, 2009 meeting because of a scheduling conflict.

In response to a question from Mr. Schulte, he was advised that the next STC meeting is on June 4, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. at WDFW in Olympia.

Mr. Burkle reported that the watershed steward position vacated by Chad Stussy will be returned to WDFW. However, 76 other staff members will lose their jobs.

Members discussed the status of hiring a new director for WDFW and 2009 legislation affecting that organization.

Ms. Spaulding thanked Mr. Burkle and presented him with a recognition award for returning a Chehalis Watershed Pledge.

ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business, Chair Canady adjourned the meeting at 11:48 a.m.