



## **CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP**

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

**November 20, 2015**

**9:30 am – 12:00**

### **Meeting Summary**

#### **MEMBERS\* and ALTERNATES' PRESENT**

Bob Burkle', *WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife*  
Bonnie Canaday\*, *City of Centralia*  
Bud Blake\*, *Thurston County*  
Brian Thompson\*, *Lewis Co. Farm Bureau*  
Chuck Caldwell\*, *Port of Grays Harbor*  
Dustin Bilhimer\*, *Dept. of Ecology*

Frank Gordon\*, *Grays Harbor Commissioner*  
Glen Connelly', *Chehalis Tribe*  
Heather Saunders Benson', *Thurston County*  
Kahle Jennings', *City of Centralia*  
Lee Napier', *Lewis County*  
Lyle Hojem\*, *Lewis County Citizens*  
Patrick Wiltzius', *City of Chehalis*

#### **GUESTS**

Miles Batcheldar, *Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership*  
Elyse Clifford, *Quinault Indian Nation*  
Jan Robinson, *Chehalis River Basin Land Trust*

#### **STAFF**

Kirsten Harma, *Chehalis Basin Partnership*

#### **SUMMARY OF KEY FOLLOW-UP ITEMS**

- The Steering Technical Committee will develop a detailed proposal on what the "education/outreach" project would be for the 2016 work plan.
- The Committee will investigate the NGO possibility for discussion at the January meeting

#### **MEETING**

##### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

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

Chair Canaday determined that a quorum was present. No one objected to the content of the October meeting minutes. Minutes approved.

##### **2. Member Updates**

- Kahle Jennings: The permits and design were recently submitted for review for the China Creek project. The project is slated for construction in 2016.

- Bob Burkle: Chris Conklin, WDFW, has recently been promoted. He is now a Biologist 4, working out of Olympia.
- Glen Connelly: The Chehalis Tribe recently hired a water quality lab technician: John Jorgenson.

### 3. Strategic Planning:

Kirsten's presentation – Kirsten presented the survey results, results from the October 23<sup>rd</sup> strategic planning session, and then presented three options for the future of the CBP.

\*Option 1: Information-Sharing Only

\*Option 2: Information-Sharing and taking on One Project

\*Option 3: “Super Organization” – Taking on multiple projects that implement the Chehalis Basin Watershed Management Plan

Kahle's presentation – Kahle said the goal for end of today's discussion is to choose one of the three options for the future of the group, and then to task the Steering Technical Committee with developing a work plan starting January, 2016. He suggested that the choice be made based on the “overlap” between the Watershed Management Plan, the survey and recent strategic planning session, and the reality of present finances.

### 4. Facilitated discussion: Next steps for CBP

Kahle facilitated the discussion around which options different Partnership members think is best, and why.

- Patrick Wiltzius: Option 2 – Take on a manageable chunk of work that will lead to successes. That will then entice more people to become involved in the work of the Partnership. Find something that will fill a gap. What is no one else doing that this group could do? He doesn't think we have the finances or member support to do #3. If Option 2 doesn't work out, can always drop down to Option 1 in the next year. If it does work out, can expand up to Option 3.
- Frank Gordon: Option 2 – Find a project that the CBP can “sell” to the public as something good that the CBP is doing. Being able to show success from a project will also lead to attracting more funding. The information-sharing function is also valuable because there is good communication between the members. This function provides value to him and helps him be a better Commissioner. He thinks the “project” should be the Watershed Festivals – one in Aberdeen and one in Centralia.
- Bob Burkle: Option 1 - Keep this information-sharing function for CBP. The CBP could also find a way to build a project with the money that is coming to the basin as a result of the flood damage reduction money and associated salmon recovery money. The CBP could also consider increasing participation of the CBP members as citizen members in the Lead Entity's Habitat Work Group would be a good way to do some of this. The community members help the Habitat Work Group decide if different projects will be acceptable to community interests. (He also mentioned that improved research on groundwater could become a greater priority throughout Washington State. More state funds may soon go

towards groundwater research. The CBP is well positioned to be involved in this work in the Chehalis Basin.)

- Miles Batcheldar: Mentioned the need for expanded Coordinator time to go towards the Lead Entity work. He also suggested another Option for the group to consider: Option 4 – Dissolve the CBP. He did not provide an opinion about this, but thought that the option should be on the table.
- Heather Saunders Benson: Option 1 - Continue information sharing function. There is value to the county participants to have a single source of information about the Chehalis Basin's watershed issues. Understand that there isn't value or people would be providing resources for it. Assume that if there is value for this function, people will find a way to provide resources. The greater community does find this information-sharing valuable. The meeting about the drought this past summer was an example. Also, there is a need for enhanced engagement with the public. Allow community to talk about their needs for the watershed. Taking time to meet the public "where they're at" to discuss watershed issues could be "the project" -- a revised Option 2.
- Brian Thompson. Option 1 - This function helps the different groups working in the watershed "get on the same page." Helps group get together and learn what others in the basin are doing. The ideal would be for this group to be able to also provide influence to agencies and decision-makers. The individual members on the CBP take what they learn and get it back to other people they know. Other citizens aren't hear because they more or less trust that the representatives will let them know what's going on. There are others in the community that are aware of what we're doing and appreciate it. He suggested an additional function for Partnership meetings: if you have a project you're going to undertake in the basin then come to this group, and take input from this group.
- Dustin Bilhimer. Option 2: Agrees that outreach to landowners would be a good action for the CBP to take. The "project" could be expanding education/outreach to watershed residents.
- Glen Connelly: Option 1: He provided historical context to his recommendation, being that when he got involved, being the "Super Organization" was what was envisioned. The reality has been that since funding ran out, the status quo has been Option 1, information sharing. The group is not structured to take on projects. He sees value in the clearinghouse and information-sharing function and understands that this is the default Option given that there is not funding to do anything more.

Kahle reminded the group of the need to reach consensus by the end of the day. Consensus being that every member is in agreement such that they are not going to block a decision.

Kahle summarized the general direction for the group coming out of this conversation. There is value in information-sharing as described in Option 1. Participants are ambassadors to others in the community, in wherever their spheres of influence are, so by educating themselves, they have the tools to educate the broader community. At the same time, participants saw value in taking on a manageable chunk as in Option 2, the "project" being education and outreach.

### Discussion on what the Education “project” could be:

- Lyle reminded the group of the importance of meeting people where they’re at. Community members are not going to come to meetings. They are busy.
- Heather said that the group needs to clarify what “education/outreach” is. She would like to see a way to improve relationship with local landowners so that in her role with the County she can speak with them about the benefit of having projects on their land.
- Bonnie and Frank support education through the Watershed Festival(s) and Stream Teams.
- Jan Robinson mentioned that funding for education in schools in the Chehalis is being cut. The ESD 113 position is being reduced.
- Frank said that being a CBP member is being an ambassador to one’s own community
- Another mentioned that CBP members should be a force in reaching out to people in the basin and hearing what their concerns are.
- Lyle added that “education” could be telling the public what all the different government organizations do.

### Discussion on Financing:

After the break, several members brought up the question of sustainable financing and asked why the CBP has not formed a non-profit. Glen provided the history, stressing that the 501 c3 option has investigated, and then blocked repeatedly in the past. The members present suggested that the group revisit this issue.

Kirsten reminded the group that setting up a 501c3 is “Option 3” since it will take more time and resources to develop that organizational structure. Jan reminded the group that 501c3 requires more staff time to go look for grants, yet grants don’t provide funding for operations and staffing.

One member stated, “If we don’t have financing we don’t have anything.” Heather suggested using The CBP’s remaining dollars to get structure set up to gain more funding. She said this might be only option if members aren’t willing to support the work through dues. Commissioner Blake supported spending time at future meetings to discuss financing options. Kirsten mentioned that she needs direction from the group on how to prioritize how to use remaining funds: for developing an NGO, or for keeping some of the CBP’s present functions going. Commissioner Gordon supported using existing resources towards development of the NGO.

The group expressed interest in looking for consensus on pursuing formation of a non-profit. Mayor Canaday, as Chair, initiated the consensus process. She asked: “Does anyone object to having the Partnership take the steps necessary to form a non-profit?”

Lee Napier opposed the proposal on behalf of Lewis County.

Bob Burkle suggested reframing this proposal as tasking people to volunteer to look into the option of an NGO, but not necessarily committing to forming one.

Mayor Canaday will ask Commissioner Schulte if his position on the NGO has changed.

The conclusion was that the direction to Steering Committee is to develop details on a hybrid of Option 2, with the manageable project being internal and external communication. Investigating

the NGO as a funding mechanism would be a near-term “sub-project.” In January, a suggested meeting agenda item is exploration of forming an NGO, including looking at the articles and bylaws that it would take to do that.

#### **5. Upcoming climate change summit at Grays Harbor College (Jan 2016)**

Kirsten informed the group that Jarred Figlar-Barnes had requested the support of the Chehalis Basin Partnership as a “sponsor” of a climate change summit to be held at Grays Harbor College. Members asked what sponsorship consisted of. Kirsten replied that Jarred defined this as sending a representative to attend, advertising the event, and/or providing funding to the event. Heather clarified that she sees the word “sponsorship” as implying endorsement of content. Since members did not know the content of the presentations, they agreed they would not endorse/sponsor the event. They agreed that the CBP could disseminate information about the event, as information-sharing is one of the functions of the CBP. Individual members expressed interest in attending the event.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

#### **NEXT MEETING**

\*\*January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016.