



CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP

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

June 24, 2016

9:30 am – 11:30

Meeting Summary

MEMBERS* and ALTERNATES' PRESENT

Amy Spoon*, WDFW

Brian Thompson*, *Lewis Co. Farm Bureau*

Chuck Caldwell*, *Port of Grays Harbor*

Chris Stearns*, *Thurston PUD*

Chuck Turley*, *WA DNR*

Dustin Bilhimer*, *Dept. of Ecology*

Frank Gordon* *Grays Harbor County*

Glen Connelly', *Chehalis Tribe*

Kahle Jennings, *City of Centralia*

Lee Napier', *Lewis County*

Terry Harris*, *City of Chehalis*

GUESTS

Kris Koski, *City of Aberdeen*; Rick Sangder, *City of Aberdeen*; Mark Mobbs, *Quinalt Indian Nation*;
Jonathan Bradshaw, *Citizen of Centralia*; Marc Ratcliff, *WA DNR*; Chrissy Bailey, *Dept. of Ecology*;
Jan Robinson, *Chehalis River Basin Land Trust*; Caprise Fasano, *Quinalt Indian Nation*;

STAFF

Kirsten Harma, *Chehalis Basin Partnership*

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Meeting summary is available on the Chehalis Basin Partnership website: www.chehalisbasinpartnership.org
- PowerPoint presentations from this meeting are available on the Chehalis Basin Partnership website: www.chehalisbasinpartnership.org/presentations

MEETING

1. Welcome and Introductions

Glen Connelly welcomed everyone to the meeting. Members and guests provided self-introductions.

2. Approval of Minutes

No one had any comments on the minutes.

3. Citizen Appointments

Kirsten reminded the group of the passing of citizen member Lyle Hojem and noted that in the CBP bylaws it falls to the Commissioners to appoint new citizen members. The only Commissioner present was Frank Gordon, and he agreed to appoint a citizen.

4. Member Updates

Mayor Bonnie Canaday will be getting married in August.

Jan Robinson from the Chehalis River Basin Land Trust told the group that their organization has a new website and is planning a fundraising gala dinner in August. Those interested can learn more on the website: <http://www.chehalislandtrust.org/>

Kirsten told the group that the CBP's grant application to fund a part time Coordinator for the Grays Harbor Stream Team through the Rose Foundation was successful. This grant will support various organizations operating in the Grays Harbor area. CBP members are encouraged to think of stream restoration and protection projects a volunteer group could help out with in their constituencies.

Kirsten noted that she would be representing the CBP at two upcoming outreach events: Centralia's Summerfest, July 4th, and the Fat Tire ride on the Willapa Trail, June 26. She solicited volunteers for both events.

B. Theme: Forest Practices and the Chehalis Basin

Organization of the Forest Practices Program – Chuck Turley, Department of Natural Resources.

Mr. Turley prefaced that the public has little understanding of what the DNR does. This presentation is to provide an overview of the history of Forest Practices rules and the DNR.

Timeline:

- * 1957 – DNR was formed by the legislature who combined multiple smaller agencies working on forestry and fire suppression. Environmental protection wasn't a part of the agency's work at that time.
- * 1970s – Washington State passed SEPA, Federal Clean Water Act passed, Department of Ecology was created, Federal Endangered Species Act passed. Era characterized by court litigations, with tribes and environmental interests on one side and industry on the other, with state agencies in the middle.
- * 1980s – Billy Frank Jr. (Nisqually) and Stu Bledstow (head of WFPA) helped move forest practice issues away from litigation and conflict through initiation of the "Timber, Fish and Wildlife" (TFW) agreement. This agreement is a commitment by interested parties to work toward consensus, and has largely been a success.
- * Fish and Wildlife agreement was put into effect as a result of endangered fish listings. This led to more stream buffers and protections of unstable slopes. Includes RMAP. This agreement has led to successes, as roads that have been brought up to standards are faring better than those that weren't.
- * 1997 – Forest Practices Habitat Conservation Plan (FPHCP) came as a result of endangered species listings. It's a State Forest Practice program approved by the Federal government (may be only one in country) and is the most stringent in the nation.

Something that makes the DNR unique is that it is only state agency run by an elected official.

Forest Practices rule changes occurring since 2007 flooding event – Marc Ratcliff,
Department of Natural Resources

Forest Practices (FP) rules establish standards for forest activities. Rules were designed to protect public resources and lessen threats to public safety. There are different classes of rules depending on probable environmental impact and the type of activity.

DNR has jurisdiction over stream crossings only on forest lands. FP aquatic rules are connected with the Clean Water Act and are done in concurrence with Ecology. FP rules are there to achieve compliance. Under the FPHCP, when landowners follow FP rules they are covered for ESA compliance.

Rules for aquatic resources:

Rules for harvest size and timing are evaluated to make sure they're not going to negatively impact aquatic resources, with special scrutiny given to proposed harvests on unstable slopes. Road Maintenance and Abandonment Plans (RMAP) apply to all large forest landowners. Having and implementing a plan brings their roads up to FP standards. In the Chehalis Basin, >500 fish barriers on lands with a RMAP have been removed or will be corrected by October 2016.

Watershed Analysis (WSA) Rule (1992) addressed cumulative effects in watersheds. Creating a Watershed Analysis Plan was optional. There were 4 of these in the Chehalis. In 2011, a panel reviewed this rule to see if it was doing what it proposed to do. As a result, the 4 approved WSA were rescinded and activities in those watersheds now follow regular Forest Practices rules.

Rules for riparian zones – require buffers to maintain stream functions.

Through legislation passed in 2012, DNR has been overseeing hydraulic projects on forest lands involving fish bearing waters through Forest Practices Hydraulic Project (FPHP) rules. HPAs are different - these are managed by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife for non-forest lands (Counties and cities, etc.). WDFW still co-reviews certain FPHP applications.

2015: New rule regarding unstable slopes, which ensured that DNR can ask for additional geologic information in order to appropriately classify a forest practices application.

Q) How do we find out where there are forest land owners submitting application to undertake a forestry project?

A) There's an online notification system Forest Practices Application Review System (FPARS) where you can get notifications automatically whenever an application is submitted or whenever information gets added. Folks can sign up to get a notification for a particular watershed, section, township, etc.

Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFFPP)

Designed to remove and replace fish blocking culverts for small landowners (harvest < 2MM bf or less per year). This is a free program. Once landowners sign up by filling out a form, that project gets put on a list and then prioritized by the amount of habitat opened. As funding becomes available, barriers get fixed. Very little involvement is needed from the landowner. Jointly run with WDFW. The program also funds road abandonment and reroutes. 86 culverts have been corrected in the Chehalis Basin since 2003, opening up 160 miles of stream.

Current and Planned Research, Marc Ratcliff, Department of Natural Resources

Hans Berge was unable to attend and present this material. Marc Ratcliff presented the information in his place.

Adaptive Management Program (Forest Practices)

According to the Forest and Fish agreement, aquatic resource rules can only change one of three ways: through 1) litigation, 2) legislation, or 3) through this Adaptive Management program. This program applies science-based recommendations to protect aquatic resources. The evaluation of rule change is through scientific research done by Cooperative Monitoring, Evaluation, and Research Committee (CMER) (multiple agencies sit on this group, including reps from local government, tribes, and environmental groups). CMER's task is to make unbiased recommendations to policy.

Timber Fish and Wildlife Policy current work: There is an "interim" water type rule right now. This has been in place for last 10 years. Finalizing this rule has taken time since the group wanted the water type maps to be 95% accurate, and this is a consensus process. They're working on recommendations for a permanent rule right now. Once the Forest Practices Board initiates rule making, it will be another year before the rules come into place.

For updating regulations, new science is evaluated by the TFW Policy Committee, then recommendations are presented to the Forest Practices Board. They're looking at Best Available Science to evaluate the off-channel habitat definition, BMPs for stream surveys, physical parameters for fish use and re-running the existing hydrologic model (will rerun that with higher resolution LiDAR).

Q) If another group provides new science, will that help update the water type for a stream?

A) Once this information is received, the board may direct the TFW Policy Committee to start its own study on that topic and they may request CMER to provide a literature review

Identifying the point between seasonal and non-seasonal streams (Ns vs. Np) is difficult to do during winter months. Since there is disagreement about what parameters to use to determine this location, the TFW Policy Committee is working on a wet-season default method for establishing this during the winter.

Q) Do water type rules apply to all streams, or just those on forest lands?

A) DNR maintains the hydro-layer for the state, but FP water typing rules only apply to State and private forest lands.

CMER's current projects: Unstable slopes criteria – a technical panel is looking to answer the question, are the current rules good enough to identify potentially unstable areas with a high probability? They are looking at the slopes where failures occur most often. What is the threshold? Is the cutoff of 65% for "rule-identified landforms" adequate?

Type Np buffer effectiveness studies. Several studies are testing the effectiveness of the FP rules on the water quality downstream. They're doing experimental buffer treatments to see what streams look like with buffers of various widths.

Evaluation of Forest Practices that is currently taking place as part of the Chehalis Strategy

-Chrissy Bailey, Ecology

85% of the Chehalis Basin is forested. One thing Ecology was requested to do for the PEIS was to look at Forest Practices. Is there an impact on flow? (summer low flow and flood flows). Are there impacts from landslides on aquatic resources? The PEIS is not one of the 3 means of actually changing these rules, though. A UW professor is doing an independent literature review on hydrology. A geologist is looking at the landslide topic. Both of these reviews are nearly done. Those will be an attachment in the PEIS.

Q) Will public comment be allowed on the literature review aspect of the PEIS?

A) No, the comment period for that has passed. The comments on the draft PEIS will be incorporated into the final PEIS.

General Q/A of all Presenters

Q) How long does a Forest Practice rule change take?

A) Once a rule change proposal is initiated it normally takes a minimum of a year to complete, often longer. In part this is due to the process requirements that must be followed per the Administrative Procedures Act. It should be remembered that rules concerning aquatic resources can only be initiated from one of three sources: Litigation, Legislation, or from the Adaptive Management Program.

Q) Are there any DNR rules on fire protection through thinning?

A) The DNR Commissioner asked for funding from the legislature but they only got a portion of the requested funding. This wouldn't be enough to treat all of the state.

Other Business:

Recommendations for future presentations:

State geologist at DNR;

CMER group;

LiDAR map of the Chehalis floodplain and what it shows us;

values of public lands;

Farm Forestry Association – challenges and opportunities to forestry; Dick Miller (?) Someone from Lewis County chapter? Brian Loucks?

ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business, Glen Connelly adjourned the meeting.

NEXT MEETING

July 22nd 2016.