***CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP***

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

**Rochester, Washington**

**February 24, 2017**

**9:30 am – 12:00**

**Meeting Summary**

**MEMBERS\* and ALTERNATES’ PRESENT**

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| --- | --- |
| Brian Thompson\*, *Lewis County Farm Bureau*Bonnie Canaday\*, *City of* *Centralia*Chuck Caldwell\*, *Port of Grays Harbor*Chuck Turley\*, *Department of Natural Resources*Chris Stearns\*, *Thurston PUD*Glen Connelly’, *Chehalis Tribe*Jan Robsinson\*, *Chehalis River Basin Land Trust*  | Jim Hill\*, Lewis County CitizenJulie Balmelli-Powe, *Citizen*Kahle Jennings’, *City of Centralia* Lee Napier’, Lewis CountyPatrick Wiltzius’, *City of Chehalis*Terry Harris\**, City of Chehalis* |

 **GUESTS**

Bennett Harbaugh, *Center for Natural Lands Management*; Kylea Johnson, *Chehalis River Basin Land Trust*; Alice Martin, *Chehalis River Basin Land Trust,* Lee Coumbs, *Mayor’s Husband*; Jonathan Bradshaw, *Citizen;* Jason Gillie, *Chehalis Tribe;* Hope Rieden*, Chehalis Tribe;* Chrissy Bailey, *Department of Ecology;* Bob Amrine, *Lewis County Conservation District;* Mark Mobbs, *Quinault Indian Nation;* Garrett Dalan*, The Nature Conservancy;* J. Vander Stoep, *Governor’s Work Group.*

**STAFF**

 Kirsten Harma, *Watershed Coordinator*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

* Meeting summaries are available on the Chehalis Basin Partnership website: [www.chehalisbasinpartnership.org](http://www.chehalisbasinpartnership.org)
* PowerPoint presentations from this meeting are available on the Chehalis Basin Partnership website: [www.chehalisbasinpartnership.org/presentations](http://www.chehalisbasinpartnership.org/presentations)

**MEETING**

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Terry Harris welcomed everyone to the meeting. Members and guests provided self-introductions. Lee Napier introduced Lewis County’s newly appointed citizen representative, Jim Hill. Jim has participated in the Partnership before and brings a wealth of knowledge.

**2. Approval of October Minutes**

A quorum was present. There were no comments on the minutes.

**3. Member Updates**

* The City of Centralia finally has its Army Corps of Engineers permit to start work on its China Creek project. Mayor Canaday thanks Senator Maria Cantwell for helping to make this possible.

**B. Presentations & Discussions**

**Governor’s Work Group and Office of the Chehalis –** presentation by J. Vander Stoep

The Governor’s Work Group was convened by Governor Christine Gregoir to get people to work together on flood and fish issues in the Chehalis. Original work group members were the Chehalis Tribe Chair, Karen Valenzuela, Jay Gordon, Vickie Raines, J Vander Stoep, and Keith Philips, and the group was facilitated by the Ruckelshaus Center. Since then, Steve Malloch has been added to talk with the environmental groups, such as Washington Environmental Council, the Nature Conservancy, and American Rivers. Also added was Junior Goodall from the Quinault Indian Nation.

Over this last year, the work involved putting together a draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. Department of Ecology was appointed as Lead Agency for that effort. It is expected to be completed by the end of June, 2017. The PEIS is being developed independent of a Governor’s Work Group recommendation, but the Work Group will be informed by the PEIS.

The next phase will be fleshing out the details of the currently legislatively created Office of the Chehalis Basin. The Office was established in statute by the legislature, with the intent of being modeled on the Office of the Columbia. In that group, competing groups with the same interest, water in the rivers in the summer, were brought together with the charge to work together to “aggressively enhance flows.” In the Chehalis, the charge will be to get people to work together to “aggressively pursue flood reduction and aquatic species enhancement.” Ecology plans to have a director appointed to the Office by June. That person will report directly to the agency director.

The Office of the Chehalis Board will be a 7 member board. There will be 2 governor appointees and 3 Flood Authority appointees, as well as representatives from the Quinault Indian Nation and the Chehalis Tribe, which those groups will appoint themselves. The applications to fill one of the Flood Authority seats is due March 17. The Governor has published notice on his two seats. Once the Board is formed in May, it will work to hire the Director (Ecology staff).

Discussion

*Q) Why does the Flood Authority get 3 reps and the Governor only 2?*

A) This is what is written in the bill passed by legislation

*Q) Will the group be consensus-based?*

A) The law doesn’t specifically speak to that.

*Q) Is there a bill in session right now to fund this?*
A) The only bill right now is a technical correction regarding the Tribe appointees. Funding is covered in the Governor’s budget. Mr Vander Stoep doesn’t know what the legislative budget will be.

*Q) How will the Governor decide on his two appointees?*

A) Mr. Vander Stoep doesn’t know. The Governor’s Boards and Commissions webpage has qualification information.

*Q) How much influence does the Governor’s Work Group have on the Board appointees?*

A) Won’t likely make a recommendation. Haven’t talked about that.

*Q) What are the time requirements of someone who might sit on the Office of the Chehalis Board?*

A) At the beginning there will be more time needed. We don’t know how much time it will take.

*Q) What are the responsibilities of the Office of the Chehalis?*
A) They will advance what comes out of the PEIS – the work plan for the next biennium. They will developed the budget for subsequent biennium.
*Q) Is this going to be a policy-making Board?*
A) It will follow what’s in the law. It will execute existing policy.
*Q) Will they develop an internal strategy on how to implement the Chehalis Strategy?*
A) Yes. But within guidelines.

*Q) Will there also be 5 non-voting members from various government agencies?*

A) Yes.

**Engagement - Office** **of the Chehalis Basin** – presentation by Kahle Jennings

Mr. Jennings did a “dry run” of the presentation he plans to give to the Governor’s Work Group on March 10th.

Discussion and feedback on presentation:

-J Vander Stoep thought it provided good information and that it will be well received by the Governor’s Work Group.

-Mr. Hill mentioned that it was not a very dry run and appreciated his efforts.

-Julie Balmelli-Powe noted that the Flood Authority hasn’t paid attention to the lack of water issue. She thought the CBP should stress the need to look at times of lesser flows.

-Jan Robinson suggested listing all the communities and agencies who supported the plan (list of signatories)

Next, the group discussed whether or not the CBP should request a Governor-appointed seat. Kahle Jennings mentioned he is seriously considering applying for one of the Governor-appointed seats (2-year position). He is retiring on September 1, 2017. However, he believes he still has a lot to contribute. He has worked in the basin since 1995 on issues like writing and implementing the dissolved oxygen improvement plan. He lives in the basin and has been impacted by flooding. CBP members agreed to support a letter of recommendation for Kahle’s application. Given the tight timeline, with the application due before the next CBP meeting, the Chair and Vice Chair will approve the letter, then circulate to members. Member organizations will be invited to write letters of support if they wish to.

**Presentation: Satsop Project. By Doris Small, WDFW.**

This project is a partnership of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Grays Harbor Conservation District. It is a multi-phase project. The objectives of this project are to reduce agricultural soil loss and erosion, while reducing flooding, improving floodplain connectivity and restoring river habitat. The project has been ongoing since 2002. There are two new phases to the project: one related to a high flow channel that they plan to reconnect to a forested area, and one opening up large gravel pits on the WDFW land. The project will include designing the filling of the ponds and reconnection to the river to occur slowly so that amphibian response can be studied, doing a dike removal, removing land in a riparian “notch” to let the river move, and doing work to restore a riparian area.

*Q) What is the downstream impact of the riparian notch? What’s on the far side of the downstream outlet?*

A) The river will go back where it’s already been- a forested riparian area. There is property on the downstream side. Our hydrologic modeling shows that the change won’t do damage.

*Q) Will the hydrological modifications upstream cause greater movement of the river downstream and affect your project?*

A) This possibility has been examined in early phases of project development. The possible impacts of upstream revetments are included in the current modeling.

*Q) Is this area impacted by tidal influence?*

A) The tidal influence is in the Chehalis and might cause the Satsop to back up from its mouth.

*Q) What’s your sense on the application process through the Corps?*

A) We’ll have to get a permit if we intervene in the riparian area, since the work is not natural and we’ll be on the hook for wetland mitigation.

*Q) Are they looking for a larger wetland to be created to mitigate for that riparian notch? What are some of the issues they’re having with it?*

A) I don’t know the mitigation ratios, but we are having to go through the Department of Ecology’s credit-debit and we are getting tagged for direct and indirect impacts. It’s not just where we cut the notch (direct) but where we expect the river to go (indirect).

*Q) Can you market the fill coming out of the pond site? Can you stockpile it and later put it up for sale?*

A) We’re open to looking at that, but being the state we have a lot of policies to follow.

*Q) Do you have concerns about the river getting into the pools?*

A) Our modeling suggests that it’s not going there any time soon. We understand that things can change, so we can’t discount the possibility of that happening.

*Q) Is this project an example of doing one project that includes flood damage reduction and habitat restoration?*

A) Our objectives were to reduce loss of agricultural soils, to try to reduce flooding, and restore habitat. The weakest part of the project is flood reduction. We haven’t found the right tool to do that appreciably, but talking to the stakeholders in the area, that seemed to be their least concern.

**Other Business:**

Ms. Harma let the group know that the Chehalis Lead Entity is looking for citizen reviewers for habitat projects in the upcoming Salmon Recovery Funding Board cycle. Please contact her if you would like to be a reviewer: kharma@chehalistribe.org.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With there being no further business, Chair Terry Harris adjourned the meeting at 12:00.

**NEXT MEETING**March 28, 2017 -- Pending meeting content – please submit your ideas on presentation topics.