



CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP
Chehalis Tribe Lucky Eagle Casino, Chehalis Meeting Rooms
Rochester, Washington
October 22, 2017
9:30 am – 12:00

Meeting Summary

MEMBERS* and ALTERNATES' PRESENT

Bobby Jackson*, Lewis County

Chuck Caldwell*, Port of Grays Harbor

Chris Stearns*, Thurston PUD

Kris Koski*, City of Aberdeen

Jane Hewitt', Grays Harbor County

Jim Hill*, Lewis County Citizen

Kahle Jennings', City of Centralia

Terry Harris*, City of Chehalis

GUESTS

Chrissy Bailey, Ecology; Garrett Dalan, Nature Conservancy; Cynthia Carlstad, Carlstad Consulting;
Mark Mobbs, Quinault Indian Nation; Miranda Plumb, USFWS

STAFF

Kirsten Harma, Watershed Coordinator

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Meeting summaries are 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

Chair Terry Harris welcomed everyone to the meeting. Members and guests provided self-introductions.

2. Review of July, August & September Meeting Minutes

A quorum was not present and thus a vote on the minutes could not take place.

3. Member Updates

- Grays Harbor County is working on its Shoreline Master Plan
- Coast Works is running a small business competition to encourage economic development. The competition is aimed at start-ups that are natural resource based. The scope of the competition is Westport to Sequim. Contact Garrett for more information.
- Aberdeen has received FEMA pre-approval on their North-Shore levee. Aberdeen is keeping design going but is waiting on the capital budget to further fund this project.

- The Thurston Conservation District will be hosting a community conversation on water rights law on October 30th at the Yelm Community Center from 5:30-8. Thurston PUD is moving to a new building.
- Lewis County has formed a Flood Zone Control District. They are beginning the permit process. The preferred alternative they will advance is a hybrid of flood control only with the option to retain water in a pool above the dam at a later time. The design will include “fish mitigation”
- Centralia is waiting to further its China Creek project until the funds borrowed to further the Chehalis Strategy are returned.
- Chehalis has finalized its Zero Rise Policy. Businesses that want to build in the floodplain need to provide funding to flood reduction and habitat projects elsewhere. The plan is not to be a mitigation bank but to have funds go to specific projects. The plan is still under development.

4. Nominations and voting for Vice Chair & Chair

A quorum was not present, so the opening of nominations could not be made.

5. Reallocation of Watershed Coordinator Time

A quorum was not present, so a vote could not take place.

B. Presentations & Discussions

Update on Office of the Chehalis/ Chehalis Strategy – Chrissy Bailey, Ecology

Ecology is still waiting on a Capital Budget to fund the Office of the Chehalis. The development of the Aquatic Species Restoration Plan is underway, with Phase I expected to be out at the end of November 2017. The Army Corps can’t make a NEPA determination until January, at which time they will determine if there needs to be an EIS. The Flood Control Zone District will “sponsor” a project to review for the SEPA/NEPA process. The Chehalis Basin Board needs to be onboard with whatever the proposed dam option will be. WDFW and the Tribes will make a recommendation on the ASRP before January. At the next Chehalis Basin Board meeting the Community Development Directors from basin counties and cities will talk about land use. They will discuss how land use in the basin has changed over time.

Q) Where would funding for a dam come from?

A) Currently, the ask would be from the State Legislature. There won’t be an ask for Federal funding.

Draft presentation to Chehalis Basin Board – Kahle Jennings, City of Centralia

Mr. Jennings discussed his proposed presentation on the Chehalis Basin Partnership, which he will deliver to the Chehalis Basin Board. He will describe the broad focus of the CBP and the pieces of the Watershed Plan that are relevant to the Chehalis Basin Board. The USGS study is still relevant and critical to addressing habitat issues. A lot has been invested in that work, so he will recommend that the CBB build on that work. Mr. Jennings will highlight key pieces of the Watershed Plan and advocate that the CBB take up key pieces. He won’t oversell what the CBP itself can deliver, but will offer this group as a source of expertise and sounding board for policy decisions.

Members agreed that the CBB should take advantage of the work that state funding has already invested in and implement some of the CBP's project ideas. Mr. Hill suggested that we develop a plan to transfer the body of information generated by the CBP to the CBB and Office of the Chehalis. There is still a lot of "institutional knowledge" within members, but many have left, so they will have to access this soon – maybe through interviews. Someone mentioned that a groundwater storage project was designed for the lower Newaukum. The sit would store water to pump and withdraw later. This is an example of the type of information that should be transferred to the CBB. The need to integrate water quality and water quantity when planning for habitat restoration. Water rights remain an issue in the basin and shouldn't remain unaddressed.

Restorative Flood Protection Alternative -- Cynthia Carlstad, Carlstad Consulting

Ms. Carlstad is on the consultant team developing the Restorative Flood Protection Alternative (RFPA). This is the "less structural" option to flood damage reduction. The premise for developing this option is that the Chehalis River channel is too incised so it conveys more flood water more quickly than it did historically. The goal of the RFPA is a reduction in peak flows. This will happen if the "roughness" of the floodplain is increased. In the near term this will involve constructing lots of engineered wood structures in the floodplain. Eventually the floodplain will reform into a more natural structure with side-channels and less channel incision. To meet the goals of this plan, a change in land use is inevitable. The biggest cost for this alternative would be moving roads and structures out of the treatment areas. Currently, the consulting group is doing a feasibility study in the Newaukum. The Newaukum was chosen in part because there is already significant erosion leading to loss of land, so the proposed treatment might not lead to greater land loss. Types of assistance to landowners being evaluated include buy-out, relocation and flood easements, water rights transfers and irrigation transitions..

Presentation slides are available on our website:

<http://chehalisbasinpartnership.org/presentations/> (see Land Use presentations)

ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business, Chair Terry Harris adjourned the meeting.

NEXT MEETING: TBD