



CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP

Conference call with screen share

April 24, 2020

9:30am – 11:45am

Meeting Summary

MEMBERS* and ALTERNATES' PRESENT

Jane Hewitt', *Grays Harbor County*
Bobby Jackson*, *Lewis County*
Lee Napier', *Lewis County*
Dave Windom*, *Mason County*
Tye Menser*, *Thurston County*
Brad Murphy', *Thurston County*
Colleen Suter', *Chehalis Tribe*
Phil Papac*, *Port of Grays Harbor*
Alissa Shay', *Port of Grays Harbor*
Kris Koski*, *City of Aberdeen*
Kim Ashmore*, *City of Centralia*
Andy Oien', *City of Centralia*
Rick Eaton', *City of Centralia*
Terry Harris*, *City of Chehalis*
Dan Wood*, *City of Montesano*
Brian Shay*, *City of Hoquiam*
Nick Bird*, *City of Ocean Shores*

Dusty Guenther*, *Boistfort Valley Water*
Chris Stearns*, *Thurston PUD*
Jim Hill*, *Lewis County Citizen*
Paula Holroyde*, *Citizen, League of Women Voters Thurston County*
Mike Noone*, *Ecology Water Resources*
Megan Tuttle*, *Fish and Wildlife*
Jason Walter*, *Weyerhaeuser*
Jan Robinson*, *Chehalis River Basin Land Trust*
Caprice Fasano', *Quinault Indian Nation*
Lauren MacFarland', *Quinault Indian Nation*
Chris Lunde*, *Port Blakely*
John Bryson', *Quinault Indian Nation*

GUESTS

Garrett Dalan, *The Nature Conservancy*; Tom Culhane, *Ecology*; Jill Van Hulle, *Aspect*; Ned Pitman, *Co-Salmon Partnership*; Jon Turk, *Aspect*; Rachel Stendal

STAFF

Kirsten Harma, *Partnership Watershed Coordinator*; Cynthia Carlstad, *Facilitator, NHC*; Rebecca Roberts, *NHC*

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, Introductions

The Chair's audio was not working so Ms. Carlstad and Ms. Harma convened the meeting and participants introduced themselves.

Ms. Carlstad reminded members of their participation options in Zoom and asked participants to mute themselves when not speaking.

2. Approval of March Meeting Summary

Mr. Stearns had one revision to the meeting summary which will be incorporated into the final version. The summary was approved as final with that revision.

3. Permit-Exempt Well Projections and Consumptive Use Estimate “Second Reading” Decision

Ms. Carlstad introduced today’s first topic – second (final) approval of permit-exempt well projections and consumptive use estimate. Ms. Carlstad reviewed the presented methodology and results for the PE well projections and consumptive use estimates from the previous meeting and explained how this approval relates to the planning effort overall. Ms. Carlstad reminded the group that these numbers drive the type and number of projects moving forward. Commissioner Menser asked for clarification for the meaning of these numbers not including a safety factor. Ms. Carlstad clarified that the numbers provided are the calculated numbers and are not increased by a safety factor as a buffer. Mr. Windom added that utilizing a turf irrigation consumption assumption is conservative and would include a safety factor. Mr. Windom asked what the consumptive use estimates would be in gallons per day. Ms. Roberts confirmed it’s approximately 100 gallons per day per residence as an average, WRIA-wide. All members voted in favor of the estimates except for Mr. Koski and Mr. Walter who abstained from the vote. Mr. Stearns questioned if this took rural versus urban consumption into consideration. Ms. Carlstad confirmed that this was based on yard-size analysis for rural homes currently on permit-exempt wells.

4. Offset Project Inventory Review

The Offset Project Work Group has assembled an inventory of 41 potential projects for inclusion in the Plan Addendum. Ms. Harma presented the summary of input from the work group and presented some questions from the planning group to the Partnership. The project categories are water right acquisition, non- acquisition water offset, habitat projects (as presented in the March meeting), and other related projects. Ms. Harma reviewed a sampling of projects which have been presented in the past. The first consideration for projects is how should projects be prioritized geographically? If there is an in-time/in-place requirement for projects with streamflow impacts, then we must implement a project that offsets water in that same location. Mr. Culhane interjected that this watershed does not have in-time/in-place requirements for the watershed plan. Net ecological benefit (NEB) is not the same as in-time/in-place water right requirements and the 90.94 plans don’t have the water right requirements. For these WRIAs, in-time/in-subbasin is an option for setting a goal but is not required.

Ms. Harma focused the discussion on the habitat angle for where to implement projects. She presented a table that shows coincidence between level of impact to aquatic species and salmon, and basins with large amounts of consumptive use. Both ways of thinking about impact and species sensitivity lead to a focus on the same subbasins. Based on this, how will the group prioritize project locations? The offset project work group proposes focusing on high need areas first and then implement projects in other subbasins as time and funding allows.

Mr. Stearns commented that high consumptive use areas shown on the WebMap have large growth and he believes those need to be on a water system versus permit exempt wells as a way to conserve water. Ms. Carlstad agreed with Mr. Stearns that those are projected high growth areas and reminded the group that bringing homes into established water systems is a type of project that could be pursued.

Mr. Dalan questioned if the water added to the mainstem from an upstream project would be considered as a benefit or is the effect of a project only considered at a subbasin level? Ms. Carlstad assured that downstream benefits would be considered for upstream projects. Ms. Harma added that projects implemented with the mainstem in mind will not benefit upstream tributaries. Commissioner Menser added that the most impacted subbasin from a consumptive use standpoint includes about 70% of his district, so he supports the offset project workgroup’s recommendation to look at the most impacted areas as much as possible with project area distribution. Mr. Noone believes the WebMap showing consumptive use is a very useful tool for

targeting project areas. He supports project efforts in lesser impacted areas if there is a good reason to implement a project in that area.

Ms. Harma posed the second work group question: "Should projects be included which already have funding or are proposing funding from other sources?" It is allowable by Ecology to include these if they are not a legal requirement or part of permit compliance and mitigation. She provided examples of projects which would be included in this list and noted that the project workgroup supports inclusion of these projects. Chair Harris questioned the ability to determine the water portion of NEB for these projects. Ms. Carlstad confirmed that this would be difficult to assess and should not be relied upon for water offset contribution but could aid NEB. Mr. Culhane added that Ecology has not said you cannot use offset for barrier removal projects, just use caution. Most of these do not have a lot of water offset benefit and are hard to quantify, but there is no blanket statement that water offset from habitat projects should not be used. Mr. Bird is curious about counting WSDOT barrier removal projects towards NEB. Mr. Noone responded that if it is required by law, then no. However, if a project were to go above and beyond what is required by law where habitat improvement or groundwater infiltration benefit were included, then yes that is appropriate to include towards the water offset in the plan addendum.

Ms. Harma noted that the pros and cons considered by the offset project workgroup are: this allows us to show the benefits throughout the basin but we don't get anything extra by including these since they are already being implemented (they are not new projects developed specifically for the CBP plan addendum). If any of these projects were included in the plan addendum, the project sponsors would need to be contacted and agree to the inclusion of their project. Mr. Dalan noted a trend towards restoration projects which engage the hyporheic zone. He added that while there are not a lot of projects that engage the hyporheic zone in the past decade, there will likely be many more in the future. He would suggest that this group create opportunity to look for and include these projects when possible. Ms. Suter agreed with this opinion.

Ms. Harma's third question for the Partnership asked which project concepts the group is most interested in learning more about and are there any the group is opposed to. She presented several project types including managed aquifer recharge, irrigation efficiency projects, adding permit-exempt wells to existing water systems, and others. Ms. Suter wanted to know how a groundwater pumping schedule for major water users, one of the mentioned project types, would work. It was detailed in the original Chehalis plan. Ms. Carlstad noted that it's an idea that could only be used for major water users such as a large agricultural operation or a city. These users would pull from a deeper aquifer or a location that is farther away from the vulnerable surface water source. Chair Harris noted that the difficulty for a project such as this is the water user is only pulling water when they must, so scheduling the time they can pump water is often ineffective. Mr. Hill remembers previous talks about this type of pumping management for a fish farm in the Scatter Creek basin. Mr. Stearns believes that operation stopped consuming water 3-5 years ago so that water right would be relinquished at this point. He noted another aquaculture farm just downstream of Black Lake on Dempsey Creek in the Chehalis watershed and Mr. Hill added that the City of Centralia also has groundwater pumping rights. Ms. Carlstad reminded the group that all of these project types are on the inventory as concepts and will continue to be developed and shared with the Partnership as they're available.

5. "Roadshow" Presentation

The Partnership requested that an informational presentation be created which members could use to brief their elected leaders and stakeholder groups about the Streamflow Plan work. Ms. Carlstad presented the draft slideshow and asked the group for their initial reactions. The presentation touched on watershed planning background, the history of the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP), high-level technical information about wells and consumptive use, the

planning process and status, offset project opportunities, and placeholders for audience-specific information. The presentation will include a script to help the presenter.

Many people liked it. Mr. Hill believes there should be a summary of what will be discussed and what was discussed at the beginning and end of the PowerPoint, respectively. He is also concerned about time constraints and the length of the presentation. He suggested having a second version that is a FAQ sheet as a shortened version.

Commissioner Menser questioned if the newly approved permit-exempt well estimates will be included. Ms. Carlstad confirmed they will be added.

Mr. Bird conveyed his biggest concern is getting elected officials on board. He thinks consensus-based decision making should be addressed more because an agency that does not agree could lead to Ecology rule making for the entire region. Should he customize this for his audiences or amend the presentation as a whole? Chair Harris added that giving a presentation during the COVID-19 pandemic is difficult to do effectively. He's worried about a presentation time constraint given difficulty to administer the information to a remote audience. Ms. Carlstad agreed that is a very important point and will be addressed as the pandemic continues. Chair Harris added that he likes that the presentation provides CBP history since many groups don't know the group exists.

Mr. Bird is curious if there's talk on a state-level conversation about extending deadlines for plan addendums because of COVID impacts? Mr. Noone confirmed that until legislature changes the deadline, Ecology is moving forward with no change to the schedule.

Ms. Harma questioned the entire group to see what the appropriate presentation length would be. Many members believe a 20-minute presentation is ideal. Mr. Noone mentioned that he has noticed better attendance and focus during the pandemic because people are stuck at home and more interested in "filling the hours." Councilmember Wood noted that the current Montesano meeting structure does not allow for presentations.

Mr. Stearns stressed the importance for people to know a goal is not just producing water for fish but also retaining more water in the watershed for everybody's use.

Following member comments, Ms. Carlstad set a May 1st deadline for providing additional feedback to refine the presentation. She agreed that a fact sheet could be useful in conjunction with a streamlined version of the PowerPoint, an idea which Chair Harris and Mr. Hill supported.

6. Plan Addendum Progress Reports

Ms. Carlstad stressed the need for additional offset project ideas. Members need to continue to focus on this and if they have ideas, there are resources to help flesh those out. She mentioned that the streamflow restoration grant proposal deadline was extended to April 30th. Additionally, the Quinault Indian Nation submitted a grant application for a feasibility study for the TransAlta water right acquisition project on behalf of the Partnership. If funded and feasibility study results are favorable, that project could be a major part of meeting plan requirements.

Regarding plan approval, Ms. Napier distributed a sample resolution from Lewis County from the Nisqually plan that can be used as a model for other governments needing to approve the Chehalis Plan Addendum. Ms. Carlstad asked for questions about this sample resolution but there were none. She then thanked the group for approval of the permit-exempt well and consumptive use estimates during this meeting. That is helpful for staying on schedule.

7. For the Good of the Order / Public Comment

Chair Harris opened public comment and partner updates, but nothing further was shared.

AJOURNMENT

With there being no further business, Chair Terry Harris adjourned the meeting at 11:15.

RECORD OF DECISIONS:

1. June 28, 2019 – Members voted by full consensus to review the Charter Addendum as edited at this meeting within their organizations and be prepared for a second reading and approval at the July 26, 2019 meeting.
2. July 26, 2019 – Members voted by full consensus to approve the Charter Addendum to the 2004 Operating Procedures. The Quinault Indian Nation voted “Formal Disagreement, but Willing to Go with Majority” and will provide a written statement to include with the final charter.
3. April 24, 2020 – Members voted by full consensus to approve the permit-exempt well projection of 4555 new permit-exempt well connections by 2040 with an estimated consumptive use of 504.8 acre-feet per year. Absent members: City of McCleary, City of Napavine, Town of Pe Ell, Terry Willis (Grays Harbor citizen member), WDNR, Brian Thompson (Lewis County Farm Bureau); Abstaining members: Weyerhaeuser, City of Aberdeen

NEXT MEETING: May 22, 2020