



CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP

Conference call with screen share

May 22, 2020

9:30am - 11:30am

Meeting Summary

MEMBERS* and ALTERNATES' PRESENT

Lee Napier', *Lewis County*

Dave Windom*, *Mason County*

Brad Murphy', *Thurston County*

Colleen Suter', *Chehalis Tribe*

Alissa Shay', *Port of Grays Harbor*

Kris Koski*, *City of Aberdeen*

Kim Ashmore*, *City of Centralia*

Dan Wood*, *City of Montesano*

Brian Shay*, *City of Hoquiam*

Councilman Jaron Heller*, *City of McCleary*

Nick Bird*, *City of Ocean Shores*

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*

Tristan Weiss*, *Fish and Wildlife*

Bob Johnson*, *Natural Resources*

Jason Walter*, *Weyerhaeuser*

Jan Robinson*, *Chehalis River Basin Land Trust*

Caprice Fasano', *Quinault Indian Nation*

Lauren MacFarland', *Quinault Indian Nation*

GUESTS

Tom Culhane, *Ecology*; Ned Pitman, *Co-Salmon Partnership*; Joel Massmann, *contractor to Quinault Indian Nation*; Anthony Waldrop, *Grays Harbor Conservation District*; Jill Van Hulle, *contractor to Grays Harbor County*; Jon Turk, *contractor to Grays Harbor County*

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

Ms. Carlstad and Ms. Harma convened the meeting and took roll.

Ms. Carlstad instructed members of their participation options in WebEx since the last few meetings were through Zoom, and asked participants to mute themselves when not speaking.

2. Approval of April Meeting Summary

Mr. Noone gave input that the meeting summary should tally who voted, abstained, or was absent for the PE well projection and consumptive use estimate vote. The summary was approved as final with that revision.

3. Working Draft Watershed Plan Addendum

Ms. Carlstad introduced the meeting's first topic – a preview of the working draft Plan Addendum and opportunity to provide input prior to reviewing a completed draft in August. Ms. Carlstad reminded the Partnership that this is just an addendum so it will not get into background details, but rather focuses on addressing how the streamflow restoration law will be met. The layout of the addendum is tailored such that Ecology will have an easy review. Ms. Carlstad then gave an overview of the Table of Contents and what information is included in each section.

Following the presentation, Ms. Carlstad asked for thoughts from the group regarding how much detail they want to see in the body depending on the target audience; Should the target audience be technical reviewers or leaning towards the public? This distinction will change the text presented in the body of the addendum. Regardless, the appendices will include details of the analyses performed. Input from the Partnership members is that the text should be geared towards the public. Ms. Harma reminded the group how difficult it was to get people to read the original Watershed Plan so she believes the text should be thin with many figures. Mr. Noone suggested including an executive summary at the beginning since many people will not read the full addendum. Ms. Suter agreed.

Ms. Carlstad then asked Mr. Noone what facilitates their review the best? He responded that Ecology's view of a good plan will not obscure any information, will be to the point, and will clarify where all assumptions come from. The Partnership concurred that brevity is best. Ms. Carlstad wants to put together a work group to review the addendum text and advise the facilitators and will follow up with members via email in the coming weeks.

4. Net Ecological Benefit (NEB) Evaluation

Mr. Noone began with an Ecology presentation addressing the definition of NEB. His presentation also discussed the required plan elements laid out in NEB guidance. He stressed that if the five plan elements listed in the guidance are met, the NEB requirements have likely been met. Ms. Harma questioned whether Mr. Noone was describing things globally or is this a project-specific definition? He responded that NEB refers to the entire suite of actions included in proposed offset projects and actions. Ecology is focused on whether the collective efforts meet NEB. Mr. Culhane also confirmed that NEB will not be looked at on a project-level basis. Ms. Carlstad clarified a previous statement that when developing information for each project, the features of projects that will support NEB will be described. That detail will then assist a plan-level evaluation.

Mr. Massmann questioned what metrics are envisions being used to describe NEB; is it fish related or broader? Mr. Noone responded that the primary focus should be quantitative water benefits and then focus can turn to timing and location of those water benefits. Mr. Culhane added that providing benefit in a lower-need basin via a great project could be justified if that benefit is shown to overcome the obstacles in a higher-need basin. His advice is to look at where the impacts are geographically and how large they are, where the benefits are geographically and how large they are, and then compare them utilizing a ledger-style analysis.

Ms. Carlstad gave a second presentation which addressed the NEB approach for the Chehalis Watershed. To meet the necessary requirements, the group is considering NEB at both a project level and plan addendum level. At the project level, the project features that help meet NEB need to be identified so that at the plan addendum level evaluation of how implementation of the projects and actions will yield adequate offsets. Ms. Carlstad emphasized that complex analysis regarding the non-water portion of NEB is not required so we should keep project analysis for these actions simple. For water offset NEB, quantitative analysis is required by Ecology.

Mr. Massmann stated that he is unfamiliar with the term "non-water offset" and asked for clarification of what that means. Ms. Carlstad reviewed the types of projects and examples of each. Mr. Massmann continued by asking how her description meets with Mr. Noone's definition. Mr. Noone stated that for watersheds faced with meeting water offsets through habitat projects, the

addendum must provide justification for how NEB is met and more complex analysis to quantify that the offset will be met. For a basin, like the Chehalis Watershed, that has ample water offset projects that are easy to quantify, such as water acquisitions, complex analysis is unnecessary. Ms. Carlstad added that there's disagreement regarding how to calculate offset benefit from habitat projects so there should be careful consideration to what habitat projects provide reliable water benefit and what ones can realistically be quantified. Examples that she believes there is strong enough supporting evidence to count for water offset benefit are beaver dam analogs and alluvial water storage. Mr. Stearns pointed out that habitat concerns, such as beaver dams, are vital to juvenile fish that maintain the stream, and stressed that habitat is just as crucial as adding water.

Ms. Carlstad described what project features contribute to NEB. Since there are several habitat protection/restoration projects in the current project database, she pointed out that the law is focused on salmon with regards to protecting and restoring habitat, not other endangered aquatic species. Finally, Ms. Carlstad provided an overview of the many resources available to the Partnership which are basin-specific for the Chehalis Watershed and encouraged the members to utilize these instead of reinventing the wheel when developing project descriptions and the addendum. Mr. Stearns added additional conservation groups to the list including the Marine Resource Committee, and the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission of which the Quinault Indian Nation is an active member and the Chehalis Tribe is also involved.

5. "Roadshow" Presentation

Following last month's presentation of the draft roadshow presentation, edits were made based on member feedback. The revised version and fact sheet were presented to the Partnership. Mr. Stearns noted the exempt well maximum use change from 5,000 to 3,000 gpd and whether that was a realization by Ecology that water was being over withdrawn. He wondered if the Chehalis basin was part of Ecology's attempt to reduce the amount of water available to exempt wells in overused basins. Mr. Noone does not believe that's the case for the Chehalis Basin. Ms. Carlstad confirmed that the maximum legal usage in the watershed is 3,000 gpd per well connection.

Ms. Harma continued by showing additional slides that could be included depending on the group such as cities, real estate, or conservation. Ms. Carlstad set a deadline for final comments on the presentation and fact sheet for next Friday (5/29). Ms. Harma asked the group if there were any known dates for presenting the roadshow slides and concluded that follow up would happen via email.

Mr. Stearns mentioned his concern for over withdrawal in Scatter Creek and is making a point to discuss it with county commissioners because it will greatly affect the water resources of the entire county. Ms. Harma recommended he tailor the presentation to zoom in on Scatter Creek and provide more detail. Ms. Carlstad suggested he also work to develop additional projects that could be added to the inventory in that area which could take future permit exempt wells and add them to the water system.

6. Plan Addendum Progress Reports

Ms. Carlstad provided updates from the Thursday, 5/21 session with the offset project work group who reviewed the entire inventory and identified leads to develop summary sheets for all the projects in the inventory. Most should be in draft form within the next month.

The workplan schedule was reviewed to lay out the next few month's goals. The draft addendum will be provided in August and at that time members will need to start obtaining approval from their individual entities. The November meeting will most likely be rescheduled due to holiday conflicts and the meeting of Washington State Association of Counties (WASAC). Ms. Napier confirmed that there likely will be a conflict again with WASAC and the meeting will need to be rescheduled. The goal is to submit the addendum to Ecology in November and for Ecology to

adopt the Plan Addendum by February 1, 2021. Ms. Carlstad asked for comments or concerns from members regarding the timeline. Mr. Stearns believed it is doable with a good group of people collaborating on the work.

7. For the Good of the Order / Public Comment

Ms. Harma opened public comment and partner updates.

Mr. Noone shared that a Zoom presentation will be put on by Evergreen College on Thursday, 5/28 at 5pm titled "The Effect of Groundwater Pumping on Baseflow in the Deschutes River of Washington State." For those interested, the link was available through Ms. Harma.

Mr. Stearns pointed out that the Nisqually plan in Eastern Thurston County has submitted projects and grant applications and requested full endorsement from his board which was given. He wants to remind the Partnership that once the plan is in place, projects should be executed quickly because it helps to get to funding first. Ms. Harma added that once the Chehalis plan addendum is in place, the Partnership needs to be advocates for the plan and getting projects funded.

Ms. Van Hulle noted the interconnection between what should be served by public water and the barriers to being served by public water and how that in turn affects permit exempt well projections.

Ms. Carlstad saw the list of streamflow restoration grant applicants, two submitted from the Chehalis Watershed: the Trans Alta Water Acquisition feasibility study submitted by Quinault and City of Centralia China Creek Phase II. Mr. Noone added that the current grant round received 50% more applications than in the pilot round and if all were to get funded, it is about \$10 million more than the pilot round. The projects are diverse and are being reviewed now with results of the review coming in September.

AJOURNMENT

With there being no further business, Ms. Harma adjourned the meeting at 11:10.

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: June 26, 2020