



# **CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP**

**Zoom Call with Screen Share**

**Friday, April 23, 2021**

**9:30am - Noon**

## **Meeting Summary**

### **MEMBERS\* and ALTERNATES' PRESENT**

Jill Warne\*, *Grays Harbor County*  
Sean Swope\*, *Lewis County*  
Lee Napier', *Lewis County*  
Tye Menser\*, *Thurston County*  
Kaitlynn Nelson', *Thurston County*  
Dave Windom\*, *Mason County*  
Alissa Shay', *Port of Grays Harbor*  
Andy Olen', *City of Centralia*  
Terry Harris\*, *City of Chehalis*  
Brian Shay\*, *City of Hoquiam*  
Nick Bird\*, *City of Ocean Shores*  
Chris Stearns\*, *Thurston PUD*

Terry Willis\*, *Grays Harbor County Citizen*  
John Bryson\*, *Quinault Indian Nation*  
Paula Holroyde\*, *Citizen, League of Women Voters Thurston County*  
Mike Noone\*, *Ecology Water Resources*  
Megan Tuttle\*, *Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife*  
Chris Lunde\*, *Port Blakely*  
Brian Thompson\*, *Lewis County Farm Bureau*  
Jason Walter\*, *Weyerhaeuser*  
Jan Robinson\*, *Chehalis River Basin Land Trust*

### **GUESTS**

Charissa Waters, *Elena Fernandez, Thurston County*; Garrett Dalan, *TNC*; Jill Van Hulle, *Jon Turk, Aspect Consulting, contractor to Grays Harbor County*; Joel Massmann, *Keta Waters, contractor to Quinault Indian Nation*, Sarah Moorehead, *Thurston Conservation District*; Jacqui Brown Miller, *Washington Department of Health*; Alex Gustafson, *Trout Unlimited*

### **STAFF**

Cynthia Carlstad, *Facilitator, NHC*; Bridget August, *GeoEngineers*

### **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, Agenda Review**

Ms. Carlstad convened the meeting and briefly reviewed the agenda. There is one decision item on the agenda – to approve the guidelines for support letters from the Partnership.

#### **2. Approval of March Meeting Summary**

The meeting summary was accepted with no edits.

#### **3. March Meeting Debrief**

Ms. Carlstad displayed a handout that Ms. Harma created following the March meeting that explains the Skookumchuck River water and land topics that were discussed at the March meeting (see meeting handout also on Partnership website). It covers the TransAlta water right that the Partnership is seeking partial acquisition of, and other potential uses for that water right. These include creating a water bank for the unused portion. It also shows the Skookumchuck Dam,

which stores water that has been used for the power plant and instream flow. There is some local discussion around removal of the Skookumchuck Dam, however there is no plan to do that at this time. Also, at its March meeting the Partnership heard from WDFW and TransAlta about plans for WDFW's proposal to acquire part of the land that TransAlta will be vacating.

Mr. Stearns commented that TransAlta does not mine coal any more at the site and has been using coal imported from Montana for many years now.

#### **4. Guidelines for Support Letters**

Ms. Carlstad oriented members on the reason for having these guidelines. They are intended to be the structure for how letters can be obtained from the Partnership. Having guidelines helps the Chair and Coordinator be clear about when and how letters of support will be provided. It also helps those asking for letters of support understand the process and timelines that they need to work within.

Ms. Carlstad displayed the revised guidelines and briefly walked through them. The only updates since the March meeting are the date, changing "72-hour review period" to "3 business days", and addition of the sentence about how it would be addressed if concerns are raised.

Mr. Swope asked if the Partnership should consider using a lower-than-full-consensus threshold for approving issuance of a letter of support. Ms. Carlstad responded that using a lower threshold would require a change to the Partnership's operating procedures.

Chair Harris commented that he likes the guidelines and thinks they will be useful to the Partnership.

The Partnership gave a first approval on the guidelines, with the caveat to honor Mr. Bryson's request to have Ms. MacFarland confirm that is acceptable to Quinault Tribal Council prior to the May meeting, and the guideline approval will be confirmed (second approval) at the May Partnership meeting.

#### **5. Watershed Plan Addendum Implementation Projects Update**

Ms. Carlstad opened the topic with a short review of the near-term goals the projects team is working toward. They are seeking to develop approximately three projects for high quality 2021 streamflow restoration program grant funding requests. They have been working on:

- Identifying and confirming projects with committed sponsors; support sponsors in championing the project
- Increasing confidence in technical feasibility and estimated streamflow benefit
- Assessing realistic implementation timeline, constrains and cost estimate

The team has reviewed and explored the whole list of projects and is focused on those with an interested sponsor, reasonable technical and implementation feasibility, ability to refine/improve certainties. The projects team will give a full report-out at the June meeting.

##### Scatter Creek Project Bundle

Ms. Carlstad then began the discussion on specific projects, starting with a potential package of projects in the Scatter Creek watershed. The projects team has focused on this watershed because there are a few committed sponsors for potentially good projects, there is a large need for good water management because the projections for new permit-exempt wells is large, and the shallow groundwater and stream are in close connection.

Ms. August described the work happening at the Sampson Wetland Restoration and the Upper Scatter Creek Managed Aquifer site. GeoEngineers has installed 8 of 9 planned piezometers at the Sampson Wetlands site and is also working on installing a surface water gage. All of these are

equipped with pressure transducers and data loggers so we will have continuous water level data. They will be doing reconnaissance investigations at the Upper Scatter MAR site in the coming weeks and decide whether monitoring would also be an asset there. Having the water level data span the wet and dry season will help project developers understand what projects could be successful at these sites.

Thurston Conservation District is applying for a Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) grant to continue project development at the Sampson site. The site has great opportunity but needs to have the right project sited on it. For streamflow, the goal is to optimize storing water in the upper watershed to support streamflow for the whole watershed.

Mr. Turk then described the proposed watershed approach to identify which locations in the watershed will most benefit from restoration. They have been working on the framework for this study, starting with desktop analysis. They are collaborating with Thurston County on the existing modeling and data. In part, this GIS data will help home in on good monitoring sites where access is possible.

He then described the near-term data collection that can occur this year. Monitoring may include flow, temperature, and potentially isotope. Aspect will document the field methods and monitoring program to be implemented by others over the summer. There is potentially a student intern from Evergreen College that may help with this. There is also a citizen science element with volunteer landowner along the stream.

Ms. Holbrook commented that Thurston Conservation District did a full stream walk with some inventory elements approximately twenty years ago. The CD may still have records on this, including landowner contacts. Ms. Moorehead will try to locate this information. Ms. Holbrook also volunteered that any land owned by Creekside Conservancy can be used for creek access.

Mr. Turk described that Evergreen College is starting a new program teaching students how to use drones for aerial surveys and then doing GIS analysis with imagery and may be interested in using Scatter Creek as an example for students to use.

Mr. Stearns commented that Lake MacIntosh, just outside the eastern headwater of the watershed used to spill over into Scatter Creek.

Mr. Bryson said that there was quite a bit of inventory work done in Scatter Creek by WDFW. Justine James Jr. would be a good resource and John will inquire about it.

Ms. Carlstad asked if the Partnership is interested in the projects team continuing to develop a potential project bundle in Scatter Creek that could include the Sampson Wetland Restoration, Upper Scatter Creek MAR, Discharge Zone Delineation, Cooke Aquaculture Water Right, additional water rights investigations, water conservation measures, and Weins Farm Restoration.

- Ms. Willis cautioned the group that agriculture needs water for irrigation and buying irrigation water rights can be detrimental to the future of agriculture in the basin. Ms. Carlstad commented that the Partnership is not pursuing any agricultural water rights to be in alignment with the Partnership's core values.
- Ms. Van Hulle said a few words about the proposed water bank being set up with TransAlta's water right. They are looking for end users and organizations interested in managing making the water available to those end users.
- Ms. Willis said she appreciated that the group is keeping agriculture in mind and seeking to help agriculture. She also commented that the summers keep getting drier and this year is already extremely dry and water levels are low in the Satsop River where she lives.
- Mr. Stearns commented in support for bundling the projects saying that it signals that we are willing to work together in unison. Having this work coordinated can only be

beneficial. He also reminded the group that the Thurston County League of Women Voters Water Water Wise Speaker Series had a workshop focused on this same topic and is a good resource to consult. The video is available to view through their website. He further commented that agriculture has been changing for a while with more row crops that require irrigation.

#### Beaver Dam Analog (BDA) Implementation Phase 2

The Phase 1 project is ongoing with funding from the Aquatic Species Restoration Plan (ASRP), and the project sponsors (Wild Fish Conservancy/WDFW) are planning for Phase 2. They have developed a GIS-based map to help identify areas that may be suitable. They also have 4-5 pilot sites where they are implementing BDAs. They are looking for support from the Partnership for a Phase 2 project and will present their ideas at the May meeting.

#### China Creek Restoration Phase 2

Mr. Oien reported that the project will be constructed this summer.

#### Hoquiam Dam Removal and Water Supply Relocation

Mr. Shay reported that the City of Hoquiam would like to relocate their surface water supply that is currently provided by a surface water diversion on the West Fork Hoquiam Dam to well(s). This would benefit the City with better security for their water supply and also benefit aquatic species with removal of the diversion dam. Ms. Van Hulle is helping the City develop a work plan that could be used to obtain funding for next steps.

### **6. For the Good of the Order / Public Comment**

Chair Harris opened public comment and partner updates. He began by acknowledging Mr. Hill for his service to the Partnership. Mr. Hill has decided to resign from his role as the citizen representative from Lewis County. Ms. Napier followed with more kind words acknowledging Mr. Hill's contributions to the Partnership. Mr. Stearns commented in the chat that Mr. Hill defined personability.

Mr. Noone updated the group on a few other restoration planning efforts. The Ecology-chaired WRIAs have all had their plan approval votes – WRIAs 9, 10, and 12 were locally approved and WRIA 7, 8, 13, and 14 were not approved.

Mr. Thompson announced that the Lewis County Noxious Weed Board has a new director – Charles Edmundson as Bill Walmsley recently retired.

Chair Harris announced that the next Partnership meeting will be on Thursday, May 27 at 9:30am instead of the usual Friday date to avoid the Memorial Day weekend.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

### **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
4. October 29, 2020 – First approval of Watershed Plan Addendum by full consensus. Abstaining members: Boistfort Water District, City of Montesano; Absent members: City of Napavine, Town of Pe Ell, Terry Willis (Grays Harbor Citizen Representative),
5. November 17, 2020 – Final approval of Watershed Plan Addendum by full consensus. Abstaining members: Boistfort Water District, City of Montesano; Absent members: City of Napavine, Town of Pe Ell, Terry Willis (Grays Harbor Citizen Representative)
6. February 26, 2021 – Approval to develop guidelines for how project proponents may obtain letters of support from the Partnership.
7. April 23, 2021 – First approval on Guidelines for Support Letters from the Partnership.

**NEXT MEETING:** May 27, 2021