



CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP

Zoom Call with Screen Share

Friday, June 25, 2021

9:30am - Noon

Meeting Summary

MEMBERS* and ALTERNATES' PRESENT

Jane Hewitt', *Grays Harbor County*

Sean Swope*, *Lewis County*

Lee Napier', *Lewis County*

Tye Menser*, *Thurston County*

Dave Windom*, *Mason County*

Glen Connelly*, *Chehalis Tribe*

Alissa Shay', *Port of Grays Harbor*

Andy Oien', *City of Centralia*

Terry Harris*, *City of Chehalis*

Dan Wood*, *City of Montesano*

Nick Bird*, *City of Ocean Shores*

Chris Stearns*, *Thurston PUD*

John Bryson*, *Quinault Indian Nation*

Lauren MacFarland', *Quinault Indian Nation*

Terry Willis*, *Grays Harbor Citizen*

Paula Holroyde*, *Citizen, League of Women*

Voters Thurston County

Mike Noone*, *Ecology Water Resources*

Chris Lunde*, *Port Blakely*

Jan Robinson*, *Chehalis River Basin Land Trust*

GUESTS

Amy Booth, *Oregon State University*; Mark Mobbs, *Quinault Indian Nation*, Nat Kale, *Ecology Office of Chehalis Basin*; Alex Gustafson, *Trout Unlimited*; Chanelle Holbrook, *Creekside Conservancy*

STAFF

Cynthia Carlstad, *Facilitator, NHC*, Kirsten Harma, *CBP 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

Welcome, Agenda Review

Chair Harris convened the meeting, welcoming Partnership members and guests.

Approval of May Meeting Summary

Ms. Carlstad described a few edits received from Mr. Glasgow and Mr. Kale. The meeting summary was accepted with no further edits.

Permit-Exempt Well Fees for Implementation Efforts

Ms. Harma opened discussion with the Partnership on permit-exempt well fees and asked Ms. Carlstad to provide an orientation to the topic. Ms. Carlstad described that the Streamflow Restoration law directed counties to collect \$500 for new permit-exempt wells; this was effective beginning 1/19/18. Part of this fee goes to Ecology (\$350) and part stays with the counties (\$150). The Partnership may request that the portion currently going to Ecology be directed back to the basin for use in implementing the Streamflow Restoration Plan. If the Partnership wishes to pursue returning the fee to the basin, the first step is for the Partnership to send a letter to Ecology requesting that the well fee be directed back to the basin.

The question was posed to the Partnership “Does the Partnership support Ms. Harma drafting a letter to Ecology requesting \$350 of each well fee to be provided to the Partnership for implementation efforts?”

Questions/Answers and Comments

1. Mr. Wood asked how much money the Partnership is trying to secure and what it would be used for. Ms. Harma answered that the Partnership has not determined the amount of money it needs to secure. She added that the portion of her position in support of the Partnership has historically been funded annually at approximately \$30,000.
2. Mr. Noone said that currently \$94,000 has been collected by Ecology for the Chehalis basin (WRIAs 22/23). Ms. Carlstad asked Mr. Noone what is happening with the \$94,000 if the Partnership does not request it. Mr. Noone answered that it is just sitting in the account. Mr. Noone expanded that approximately \$14,000 was collected the first year, \$37,000 the second year and \$42,000 has been collected over the past year, with an expected average of \$30,000 per year going forward. Mr. Noone added that no other entity has requested these funds yet, so Ecology does not currently have the administrative systems in place to return the money to the basin. The request seems to be aligned with the law and he foresees that Ecology would work to accommodate it.
3. Ms. Willis stated that she is glad to hear that there is no proposal to raise the well fee. She is also glad to hear that Ecology may be willing to give it back to the watershed. She asked if Ecology may only be willing to give part of the money back and what other limitations may apply. Mr. Noone responded that the limitations are what the law states “to implement watershed planning projects, and collect data and complete studies needed to develop, implement, and evaluate watershed planning projects.”
4. Mr. Wood stated that he is comfortable asking Ecology what the process is for getting the money, but he is not comfortable requesting the money until/unless the Partnership has a detailed estimate of what it needs and what the money would be used for that they have agreed on.
5. Ms. Holroyde stated that she would like to see an estimate of expenditures (e.g. on a quarterly basis).
6. Chair Harris suggested that the letter include a 9-month expenditure estimate. Partners should expect to contribute to the Partnership, especially those most benefiting from the work. Mr. Stearns supports Chair Harris’s comments, and believes this work benefits every participant.
7. Ms. Harma noted that because there is a significant need for implementation funding, it is important to understand what level of funding could be available in order for her to organize the workload and complete a work plan. The function of the Partnership pre-Streamflow Plan implementation was very basic, but now they have a significant implementation workload. She needs to figure out how they are going to get work done, and what resources are available.
8. Mr. Menser would like to see as much detail as possible, but also believes the need and use of the funds is specified enough that he is comfortable with moving forward with the request, especially given the relatively modest level of funding potentially available from the well fees.
9. Chair Harris suggested that each member contribute \$1000 as a stopgap, and then build a plan to ask for continual funding.
10. Ms. Willis stated that Ecology has reached out to the Partnership on several occasions, and there is credibility in that relationship. She supports Mr. Wood’s request for a budget

need estimate. She also commented that there is a housing boom going on and the available funds from the well fees may increase.

11. Mr. Stearns pointed out that the law was crafted to provide steady funding for ten years. It is associated with a bond fund. Mr. Noone corrected that the bond fund for projects was established for 15 years, and there is no sunset for the well fees.
12. Chair Harris commented that Mr. Wood's comments highlight a shortcoming the group has had for a long time – no formal annual accounting – and he supports the request for more formal accounting. The lack of annual accounting has mostly worked ok since many Partnership members are very familiar with how the money is being spent. He supports developing the letter with the financial element included.
13. Ms. Harma requested that the Steering-Technical Committee work with her in developing the budget proposal. Others are welcome too.

The Partnership concluded this topic with agreement that the Steering-Technical Committee, along with anyone interested, work with Ms. Harma to develop a budget proposal and draft letter to Ecology. Both will be provided and discussed at the August Partnership meeting, and before being submitted to Ecology.

Watershed Plan Addendum Implementation Project – Alluvial Water Storage

Mr. Waldrop presented the Satsop/Wynoochee Tributary In-Stream Restoration Strategy and Pilot Project. The major goals and objectives for this project focus on cultivating collaborative relationships with timber landowners to develop a restoration-based strategy for water quality, water quantity, and habitat enhancement in the Satsop/Wynoochee River tributaries. He views this as ideally developing a roadmap for this type of work and relationships. The work is funded by Ecology (water quality grant), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Coast Salmon Partnership.

They have completed analysis, strategy design, and will be doing construction during the summer, and monitoring following that. The project scope include 2nd to 4th order headwater tributaries that intersect with managed timber land ownerships – primarily Weyerhaeuser and Green Diamond. The projects are design to address legacy impacts from splash damming and stream cleaning from historical logging operations. Stream incision (deepening the channel) is caused by these practices. Stream incision reduces storage of water in the shallow groundwater within the floodplain.

The approach they are using to address these legacy impacts is to strategically add wood to degraded stream systems. They developed a number of restoration prescriptions that apply to different situations. Some are machine-built and others are hand-built structures. A third approach is called “valley reset” or “stage zero” which can be applied in some situations, like when a streamside road is being decommissioned.

Mr. Waldrop then demonstrated the GIS WebMap tool designed to identify suitability for different restoration approaches. The tool shows estimates of potential alluvial storage in acre-feet per mile. It also can screen for areas that have known salmonid use and temperature impacts with climate change estimates applied. Much more detailed information can be easily accessed from the tool once you zoom in on a potential site.

He then described the Schafer Creek Pilot Project. The site is on a tributary to Schafer Creek, a tributary to the Satsop River. The site has good riparian attributes, but a simplified channel that will lead to continued degradation. The treatment approach is hand-built wood structures. They will be monitoring for groundwater level changes in the treatment reach and in a control reach. They will also monitor for channel cross section changes that indicate sediment accumulation – a desired response. The estimated increase in streamflow is 0.04 cfs for 60 days after baseflow is sole streamflow source.

A second pilot project is located on Still Creek, a larger creek that will require machine-built structures. They are currently in the planning stage for this project.

Next steps include finishing the pilot project, monitoring it as funding allows, constructing the Still Creek project in 2023, and monitoring its performance, and also hoping to form a collaborative with the large forest landowners so that more of this work can be done in a streamlined fashion. Relationships with the forest landowners has been a big success story and Mr. Waldrop said he has learned a lot about working with Weyerhaeuser and Green Diamond, including what each company needs in its decision-making.

Questions and Answers

1. Mr. Stearns asked if they are monitoring bankfull width. Mr. Waldrop responded yes.
2. Ms. Carlstad asked about future plans and whether Mr. Waldrop expects to ask the Partnership for a letter of support. He is not sure yet and is intrigued by a strategic subbasin approach. He will update the Partnership as their next steps progress.

Other Implementation Projects Updates

Mr. Turk described that Aspect has prepared technical memorandums for the following projects:

- Keyes Road floodplain reconnection – a methodology for quantifying groundwater benefit
- Hoquiam Dam removal – This project exchanges surface water rights for groundwater rights, and removes the dam. The memo describes next steps and level of effort, and a menu of different funding avenues.
- Grays Harbor Forest and Flows – This project looks at managing forest for flow benefits. The scope of work describes tasks and budget for using the Velma model for estimating benefits and management scenarios.
- Scatter Creek flow restoration, including thermal profiling. Ms. MacFarland asked if budgets will be included, and Mr. Turk answered yes.

Ms. Harma displayed and described photos showing the China Creek Phase 2 project, currently under construction.

Ms. MacFarland updated that Quinault is close to finalizing a grant agreement for the feasibility study on the TransAlta water right acquisition project. The first task will be the extent and validity evaluation.

Partnership Planning for the Future

Ms. Carlstad introduced that this agenda item is about hearing from the Partnership on what they want to see on future agendas and for Partnership activities. Participants used a virtual whiteboard to provide their ideas. The following input was provided.

What topics would you like to have on future Partnership agendas?

1. Chehalis basin drought impacts
2. Project updates – successes and lessons learned
3. Updates from other processes, like ASRP, Coast Salmon Partnership, and Lead Entity
4. Goal of creating “Big Picture” view of what’s happening in the watershed
5. Tracking to see progress on streamflow implementation
6. I was really impressed with the Partnership meeting where the TransAlta Dam and the broader topics were discussed. It was very productive and helpful, in making sure that everyone had the best information
7. Field tips, acknowledging that they can be hard to set up

8. Annual updates of forecast vs. actual permit exempt wells (several people requested this), and consider adapting Streamflow goals to align with actual data
9. Science presentations to update our knowledge
10. Most of the watershed consists of forest lands and agricultural lands. The CBP has historically worked to maintain those industries in the watershed. Could we have a broad update on the state of Ag and Forestry in the basin?
11. Long term water supply and forecast in the Chehalis (similar to updates that the Columbia basin gets). Invite Jeff Marti to discuss water supply forecasting because he's entertaining and informative
12. Education and outreach – do the Watershed Festival again (despite funding issues)
13. Information on financing options for projects
14. I like to hear both the success and “lessons learned” where our approach needs modification. Also like to hear of problems that are encountered in implementing projects – these are essential pieces of information for others that may be developing similar projects.

What types of field trips interest you for the Partnership?

1. Could do another field trip to Nisqually – especially if we are looking to use Velma model
2. Visiting project sites with various restoration techniques and projects at different stages
3. Projects that have been implemented in the basin
4. Checking back in on projects implemented years ago, to see progress and how things have evolved in the intervening time. Very useful for the lessons learned aspect.

Ms. Harma collected names of those interested in helping to plan field trips.

The group briefly discussed when they would begin meeting in person again, but no decisions were made.

For the Good of the Order / Public Comment

Chair Harris opened public comment and partner updates.

- Mr. Noone said there is no new information about timing for the next streamflow restoration grant opening.
- Participants shared about their plans to survive the heat wave.
- Ms. Harma thanked everyone for the get-well card.

ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business, Chair 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.
8. May 27, 2021 – Final approval of Guidelines for Support Letters from the Partnership.

NEXT MEETING: August 27, 2021