

Meeting Notice

A meeting of the Planning Unit for the WRIA 55 and 57 Local Watershed Planning program will be held at:

Time: 10:00 am
Date: February 20, 2002
Place: Conference Room
Spokane County Conservation District
210 N. Havana Spokane, WA

Agenda

- 10:00 am** **Call to Order: Introduction of Committee Members**
Facilitator Lead
- 10:05 am** **Discuss and Approve January Meeting Summary**
Facilitator Lead
- 10:10** **Discuss Draft Data Compilation and Assessment Report Comments**
Facilitator Lead
- 10:50** **Update on Little Spokane River Instream Flow Work**
Stan Miller
- 11:05** **Review Planning Unit Memorandum of Agreement and Discuss Decision Making Process for Plan Recommendations**
Facilitator Lead
- 11:35** **Other items of Public or Committee Concern**
Facilitator Lead
- 11:55** **Wrap Up of Session: Facilitator summarizes information presented**
- 12:00** **Adjourn**

If you have any questions regarding this notice contact Stan Miller at (509) 477-7259 or via e-mail at smiller@spokanecounty.org

**Meeting Summary
Planning Unit**

Little Spokane River – Middle Spokane River Local Watershed Plan
February 20, 2002

Committee members recorded on the sign in sheet were:

Doug Allen	Bill Rickart (for Lloyd Brewer)	Tom Hargreaves
Rick Noll		Donald Comine
Jim Wilson	Harry McLean	Bruce Howard
Walt Edelen	Ty Wick	Dave Jones
Neil White	Julia McHugh	Neil Beaver
Terry Liberty	Susan McGeorge	Reanette Boese
	Ann Murphy	Erin Cunningham

Consultants that attended the meeting were: Sarah Hubbard-Gray of Hubbard Gray Consulting and Bryony Hansen, Chris Pitre, and Donna DeFrancesco of Golder Associates.

Introductions: Sarah Hubbard-Gray called the meeting to order at 10:05 am. Committee members introduced themselves. Sarah provided an overview of the agenda and asked if there were comments on the January 16, 2001 Meeting Summary. There were no comments on the meeting summary.

Discuss Draft Data Compilation and Assessment Report Comments: Due to the large number of comments on the report, the committee discussed various options for reviewing the comments and providing final direction to Golder on addressing the comments. The following process was established:

- Golder will incorporate all of the editorial and typographical correction comments without further review by the Planning Unit members.
- A work group will be formed to review the remaining detailed comments and summarize the themes and issues raised by comments that require input and guidance from the Planning Unit. The work group will present a summary of the issues for the Planning Unit to address at the March 2002 meeting.
- At the March 2002 meeting, the Planning Unit will provide Golder direction on how to address the issues summarized by the work group.

The Planning Unit members that agreed to be in the work group include: Ty Wick, Susan McGeorge, Doug Allen, Lloyd Brewer, Reanette Boese, and Erin Cunningham. Bryony Hansen of Golder Associates will join the work group to assist. The work group will contact other Planning Unit members that provided comments if there are questions relating to their comments. The first work group meeting was set for Tuesday February 26, 2002 at 1:30 pm.

Update on Little Spokane River Instream Flow Work: Chris Pitrie of Golder Associates gave a presentation on instream flow on the Little Spokane River. His presentation covered the following points:

- The reasons to pursue instream flow work on the Little Spokane River -- because the basin is closed to additional allocations and because the existing instream flow requirements are not based on the needs of aquatic biota.
- An overview of instream flow regulations.
- The Department of Ecology's established step-wise process for conducting the instream flow work – Step A involves development of a detailed scope of work that specifies the reaches to study and the methodologies to be used. Step B involves doing the field work and applying the methodologies. Step C involves Planning Unit review of the data and development of a recommendation.
- A virtual tour of the Little Spokane River basin was presented that included mean annual flow information.
- An overview of instream flow methodologies, including IFIM, Wetted Perimeter, Toe Width, Tennant, and Correlation, was presented. An overview of their relative cost and scientific worth was discussed.
- A preliminary scope of work and budget for instream flow work on the Little Spokane River has been developed and need to be submitted to Ecology prior to final authorization of supplemental funds. Chris distributed the draft scope of work Golder prepared.
- Chris indicated that the draft scope of work had been prepared after consulting with Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife staff (Hal Beecher and John Whalen). These experts felt that the Wetted Perimeter method is compatible with the Little Spokane River's flow regime. Chris explained that this method considers the relationship of flow and the wetted perimeter of the stream. The method assumes a positive relationship between wetted perimeter of the stream and fish habitat. Therefore, the wetted perimeter method considers protection of salmonids (including trout), but is not species specific. This method provides a single instream flow number for rivers with a mean annual flow greater than ~215 cfs, and provides a range for rivers with a mean annual flow less than ~215 cfs.

A variety of questions, concerns, and comments were raised and discussed by members of the Planning Unit, including:

- Concern about not using the species specific IFIM methodology, which is the most rigorous and defensible, was raised. This includes concern that the wetted perimeter method skews the results toward habitat protection, not specific fish species protection. Chris explained that there is not enough budget to use the IFIM method at all the compliance points on the Little Spokane River. In addition, Department of Fish and Wildlife specialists feel that the Little Spokane River has the right morphology for the wetted perimeter method.
- Questions were asked about the proportion of the spawning habitat that is on the main stem versus that on tributaries. Concern was raised that the proposed study reaches are all on the main stem of the river rather than on the tributaries.
- Concern was raised that the Planning Unit has not been consulted and involved with the review of the methodology options and the selection of the instream flow methodology to be used.

- Questions were asked about the process used for arriving at the preliminary scope of work. It was explained that the Instream Flow Work Group met in November and December 2001, and that Stan Miller has provided updates at the previous Planning Unit meetings and has passed out memos regarding the Work Group and agency meetings. However, some Planning Unit members indicated that they do not recall receiving the memos that discussed the process and possibility of not using the IFIM method.
- Pend Oreille County is interested in gathering information that will allow flows to be specific to different segments of the river, and to more reflect conditions in Pend Oreille County. Chris acknowledged that the approach addresses this concern and considers several reaches along the river to develop meaningful recommendations for several reaches.
- One Planning Unit member indicated that setting instream flows is a mix of science and policy, and that the Planning Unit should have the opportunity to gain more information on specific species that can be considered along with the results of a study.

Chris Pitrie continued his presentation and detailed the pros and cons of the wetted perimeter methodology, reviewed the scope of work which focuses on using the wetted perimeter method on the main stem of the river, described the challenges of adding work on the tributaries to the study, and described the products that would be delivered to the Planning Unit for their use in developing instream flow recommendations (e.g., rating curves, data analysis, flow recommendations, comparisons with existing flows, discussion of aquatic biota protection, discussion of additional qualitative considerations such as water quality, maintenance of river regime, and temperature).

Because of the concerns and misunderstandings raised regarding the Little Spokane River Instream Flow work, and the difficulty of fully discussing the topic and background without Stan Miller, it was decided that an Instream Flow Work Group meeting to review the decision making process would be held and be open to all interested Planning Unit members. Stan Miller will coordinate this meeting the week February 25, 2002. In addition, time will be allocated at the March 20, 2002 Planning Unit meeting to review the outcome of the Work Group meeting and provide direction to Spokane County on how to proceed.

Note: The Instream Flow meeting was held on February 28, 2002. Please see the attached memo from Stan Miller regarding the meeting and its outcome.

Due to the extended time that was used to discuss the Little Spokane River Instream Flow work, it was decided that the review of the Planning Unit Memorandum of Agreement and discussion of the decision making process for plan recommendations will be carried over to the March 20, 2002 meeting. Everyone was asked to review the process section (6.0) of the Memorandum of Agreement and the water uses listed in questions 2 and 3 of the November 2001 Public Meeting Questionnaire to prepare for the discussion.

The next meeting was set for 10:00 am on March 20, 2002 at the Spokane County Conservation District.