

FINAL
Meeting Summary
WRIA 54 Lower Spokane River
November 30, 2005

Location: Tum Tum Community Center, Tum Tum, WA.

Planning Unit members and guests recorded on the sign-in sheet were:

Bill Rickard, City of Spokane	Rob Lindsay, Spokane County
Keith Holliday, WA State Dept. Of Ecology	Dick Price, Stevens PUD #1
Bill Gilmour, Spokane County	David Moss, Tetrattech/KCM
Bryony Stasney, Golder Associates Inc.	Jonathon Rudders, GeoEngineers
Commissioner Merrill Ott, Stevens County	Hank Nelson, Avista Corporation
Brian Crossley, Spokane Tribe	Fran Bessermin, Lake Spokane Protection Assoc.
Jim DeGraffenreid, Lincoln County Planning	Bill Herrlinger, Citizen-at-Large
Suzanne Shields, Citizen-at-Large	
Wes McCart, Stevens County Farm Bureau & Stevens County Water Conservancy Board	
David Luders, Fairchild AFB & IVEWA	

Call to Order

Bryony Stasney opened the meeting at approximately 6:30 pm. The meeting started late because the Community Center was not open at 5:30 pm as scheduled. Attendees introduced themselves and the interest / organization they represent. Each attendee also documented their attendance on the sign-in sheet.

The October 26, 2005 WRIA 54 meeting summary was reviewed page by page with one comment from Dick Price to delete the words “the Planning Unit” on page 3, 2nd full paragraph, 2nd line following the word “bound”. With this change, the Planning Unit accepted the October 26, 2005 meeting summary as final.

Public Comment

No public comment was received.

Presentation of local hydrogeology in Garden Springs area – Bill Herrlinger

Mr. Bill Herrlinger passed out a one-page handout with a map of the study area showing seven well locations in the south West Plains area (about 1 to 2 miles south and east of the Spokane Airport) and water level data taken at these wells between May 2003 and October 2005. Bill’s presentation was supported by a satellite image of the study area. The following points summarize Bill’s presentation:

- Bill believes that there is a geologic feature (fracture zone, lava tube, paleochannel or regional lineation) that transmits significant amounts of water from the West Plains area between Marshall and Four Lakes towards Garden Springs from where it extends downhill and discharges into the Spokane River just downstream of Hangman Creek (i.e. in the vicinity of the upstream boundary of WRIA 54).
- Bill believes that his well (noted as the Herrlinger well on the handout) is located within this feature.
- Bill suggested that the source of this water may be Williams Lake / Rock Lake area.
- In 1999, a Spokane County stormwater management study noted a groundwater discharge area south of the Hampton Hotel to the north and south of I-90. Bill feels that this may be the surface expression of this feature (“an underground river”) in the Garden Springs area.
- In addition there are a number of high capacity wells (including the Herrlinger well) that appear to be located along this feature. These wells and water levels are noted on the handout provided to the Planning Unit.

Bill asked the Planning Unit to consider including an assessment of the hydrogeology of this area within the Phase II, Level 1 Technical Assessment. Rob Lindsay said that there are no specifics in the scope of work. However, the Phase II, Level 1 Technical Assessment will review existing hydrogeologic data and will include an assessment of the information available for this location. Bill let the Planning Unit know that he would be available to answer any questions.

Consultant Contract Negotiation Update

Rob Lindsay noted that the Phase II facilitation contract is now in place with Golder and, as a result, Bryony is facilitating this and future Planning Unit meetings per the contract. Contract negotiations are close to being complete with Tetrattech/KCM for the Phase II Technical Assessment work. The scope of work is based on the scope of work in the Phase II grant agreement between Spokane County and Ecology. The final negotiations involve clarifying the data collection that will be completed by the Tetrattech/KCM team versus data collection that will be completed by members of the Planning Unit. Rob said that in many cases it is more efficient for the Planning Unit members to compile certain types of data (e.g. purveyor water use data).

Public Outreach Program Update

Bill Gilmour provided two handouts to the Planning Unit:

- A legal size fact sheet including text and graphics describing the WRIA 54 and important features such as the jurisdictions of the initiating agencies, principal economic activities and land use; and,
- An updated list of the Watershed Presentation Schedule (dated 10/25/05).

Bill Rickard asked Bill to clarify how the principal economic activities are quantified. Bill said he would check the reference for this information.

Brian Crossley asked if there was still an opportunity for the initiating agencies to provide information for inclusion on the fact sheet. **Bill answered yes and requested that the Planning Unit members provide additional text and comment on the fact sheet by December 14, 2005.**

Rob Lindsay asked the Planning Unit to note that Bill has a presentation to the West Plains Chamber of Commerce scheduled at 11:45 am at the Airport Ramada on December 15, 2005. Rob encouraged Planning Unit members to attend the presentation to help the business community better appreciate the membership makeup and commitment of the Planning Unit. Rob feels that if the Planning Unit has a good turn out to the meeting, this will lend more credibility to the WRIA 54 planning process and the West Plains Chamber of Commerce is likely to have more interest in becoming involved.

Steering Committee Report

The Steering Committee met on Wednesday November 16, 2005, and was attended by Bob Derkey, Bill Gilmour, Keith Holliday and Cynthia Carlstad (Tetrattech/KCM). All future Steering Committee meetings will be scheduled on the second Wednesday of each month, from 10 am – noon at the Spokane County offices. There will be no December meeting. **The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for January 11, 2006.**

The primary discussion at the November 16 meeting related to the need for the Planning Unit to have approved Operating Procedures (per the grant with Ecology for Phase II). The Operating Procedures need to consider the MOA that has been signed by the Initiating Agencies (i.e., Spokane County, Stevens County, Lincoln County, City of Spokane, Stevens PUD #1, Spokane Tribe of Indians) and to also reflect the way the Planning Unit members would like to operate. The MOA between the Initiating Agencies has two sections that have overlap with the Planning Unit's Operating Procedures: 1) membership; and, 2) decision making. Bill said that Planning Unit members have brought to his attention that there is some language in the MOA that is not necessarily appropriate to just duplicate in the Operating Procedures. The difference between the MOA and the Operating Procedures is that the MOA describes how the Initiating Agencies will work together and the Operating Procedures define how the Planning Unit will work together. To meet the intent of RCW 90.82 (the Watershed

Planning Act), the Steering Committee felt that additional language and specifics for membership and decision making should be developed by Planning Unit members for inclusion into the Operating Procedures. Per section 5.6 of the MOA, the MOA allows for the Planning Unit to adopt rules for operation, decision making and membership to supplement the rules in the MOA.

Bill noted that he has developed language for consideration by the Planning Unit that divides decision making in the draft Operating Procedures into 3 categories:

1. Watershed Plan Approval (per RCW 90.82.130(1)(a));
2. Approval of Watershed Plan content; and,
3. Administrative decisions (e.g., meeting summary approval, membership changes, technical decisions).

Administrative decisions include all decisions that are not approval of Plan content or approval of the final Watershed Management Plan.

Bill passed the discussion over the Bryony to describe the suggested changes to the Operating Procedures. Bill noted that the draft Operating Procedures document will be posted on Spokane County's web site in a couple of days.

Review and Development of WRIA 54 Draft Operating Procedures

Bryony ensured that all Planning Unit members present had copies of the draft Operating Procedures (revised 12/2005) and the MOA. Bryony noted that time for this agenda item was limited and that she would provide a brief overview. Bryony requested that the Planning Unit members review the sections on decision making (section 8b of the Operating Procedures) and membership (section 5 of the Operating Procedures) and **provide comment to Bill Gilmour by January 13, 2006**. This will allow Bill to compile the comments prior to the January 25, 2006 Planning Unit meeting. It is anticipated that the Operating Procedures can be finalized at the February 22, 2006 Planning Unit meeting.

Bryony directed the WPU to Section 8b (page 6) of the draft Operating Procedures and overviewed the suggested changes to allow for 3 types of decisions:

1. Watershed Plan Approval (per RCW 90.82.130(1)(a));
2. Approval of Watershed Plan content; and,
3. Administrative decisions (e.g., meeting summary approval, membership changes, technical decisions).

For #1, Watershed Plan approval, the language suggested for inclusion reflects RCW 90.82.130(1)(a). RCW 90.82.130(1)(a) states,

“.. the planning unit may approve the proposal [i.e. plan] by consensus of all of the members of the planning unit or by consensus among members of the planning unit appointed to represent units of government and a majority vote of the nongovernmental members of the planning unit”.

Bryony noted that the Planning Unit will need to be clear on which Planning Unit members represent units of government and which members are nongovernmental. Bryony also noted that the Initiating Agencies and any government obligated to take on a Plan action would be included within the unit of government category. Bryony also noted that Initiating Agencies are important to initiate the watershed planning process. Once a Planning Unit is formed, the Initiating Agencies become governmental members of the Planning Unit and in the RCW 90.82 are not distinguished from other Planning Unit members that represent units of government.

For #2, approval of Watershed Plan content, the language suggested for inclusion requires consensus of the Planning Unit members at two Planning Unit meetings. Bryony noted that this was a decision making process that worked well during development of the WRIA 55/57 Plan.

For #3, administrative decisions, the language suggested for inclusion requires a simple majority vote of a quorum of Planning Unit members in good standing at the time the decision is voted on. The Planning Unit can therefore only engage in administrative decision making when a quorum (i.e. 50% + 1) of the members in good standing are present. Bryony noted that to establish that a quorum is present, it will be important to know at each meeting who the Planning Unit members are. Bryony said that she will be tracking attendance using the sign-in sheet.

Bryony also requested that the Planning Unit review the membership section (section 5 of the Operating Procedures, starting on page 2).

Wes McCart asked how the initial membership would be established. Bill said that the list of potential members (that was submitted to Ecology) will be the starting membership. Bill said that by reviewing the sign-in sheets, we can develop the current membership based on those who have attended three or more meetings, potential members who have attended less frequently and other potential members who have not attended and whose membership the Planning Unit should decide. Bill also noted that there are other entities who have expressed interest and who have said at his outreach Watershed Presentations that they would like to send a representative. Bill also noted that it makes more sense to finalize the Operating Procedures before deciding on the current membership. Wes noted that there will need to be a vote to establish the current membership.

Bryony provided input on how the WRIA 62 Planning Unit membership was set up as an example. This group established membership categories (e.g., agriculture, industry, real estate and development etc.) and allowed one vote per category. This required individuals on the Planning Unit that represented the same category to agree before casting their one vote. Bryony said she felt this was a fair process that avoided a number of members with the same interest biasing the vote. Fran noted that this may not be appropriate for the WRIA 54 Planning Unit because there is such a diverse membership. Merrill Ott noted that it is important for the Operating Procedures to be flexible enough to allow the Planning Unit evolve its own process and work through difficult decisions. Bill confirmed that there is no limit to the number of members.

Bryony again requested that the Planning Unit members review the sections on decision making (section 8b of the Operating Procedures) and membership (section 5 of the Operating Procedures) and **provide comment to Bill Gilmour by January 13, 2006**. This will allow the document to be distributed to the Planning Unit prior to the January 25, 2006 meeting.

Presentation by Mr. David Luders on “Hydrogeology of Fairchild AFB’s Fort Wright Wellfield”. Fairchild Air Force Base (AFB) is located in WRIA 54 as well as WRIs 56 (Hangman) and 34 (Palouse). The climate is relatively dry (15-inches per year) so the base has to do quite a bit of irrigation. The population of Fairchild AFB includes about 3,500 residents plus about 3,500 day workers and contractors.

The Fort Wright Wellfield (comprising 5 wells) is located within the southeast corner of WRIA 54. The wellhead protection plan for the Fort Wright Wellfield was completed by Buchanan and Associates (1997) and indicates that the Fort Wright Wellfield draws water from the Latah Creek Aquifer (sands, gravels and cobbles) that extends along the Hangman Creek valley (i.e. in WRIA 56) and discharges into the western arm of the Spokane Valley – Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer. Seismic profiling was completed to better characterize this relatively unknown aquifer. Ground water flow direction within this aquifer is towards the northwest. The static water table in this aquifer is about 20 to 30 feet below ground surface. The aquifer in the vicinity of the wells recharges the Spokane River (i.e. the river gains water from the aquifer). This information is challenged by some who believe that the Fort Wright Wellfield may draw water from the Spokane Valley – Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer.

The Washington State Department of Health required a Groundwater Under the Influence (GUI) study that indicated that the wells are not under the influence of surface water. As a result the water withdrawn from the Fort Wright Wellfield is not filtered (it is chlorinated).

A test well on the base was completed after 9-11. This well produced about 250 gpm and could possibly be used as an emergency well and for irrigation in the summer, if the base were to further develop the well and obtain water rights.

Well 2, on the SE corner of the Base, competes with the Medical Lake and Airway Heights wells. The Airway Heights well was installed in 1998. Well 2 has declined in production since 1998 from 900 gpm to 725 gpm. Fairchild AFB has the senior water rights (relative to the Medical Lake and Airway Heights wells). Well 2 is used as an emergency well and for irrigation in the summer.

In conclusion, current thinking is that the Fort Wright Wellfield may draw its water from:

1. The Latah Creek Aquifer in WRIA 56; or,
2. The Spokane Valley – Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer in WRIA 57; or,
3. Combination, including discharge from features on the West Plains.

Fairchild AFB is interested in being involved in the WRIA 54 Watershed Planning process to help improve our understanding of the hydrogeology of the West Plains area. There are few deep wells to aid characterization of the hydrogeology.

Public Comment

No public comment was received.

Adjourn

The next Planning Unit was scheduled for January 25, 2006 from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon at the Airway Heights Community Center. The next Steering Committee was scheduled for January 11, 2006 from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon at the Spokane County Public Works Building. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.