

**WRIA 55/57: Little Spokane River and Middle Spokane River Watersheds
WRIA 56: Hangman/Latah Creek**

***Joint Watershed Implementation Team (WIT)
Meeting***

**Wednesday March 13, 2013
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Spokane Conservation District
210 N. Havana**

Committee members recorded on the sign in sheet were:

Walt Edelen, <i>SCD</i>	Rob Lindsay, <i>Spokane County Utilities</i>
Bill Rickard, <i>City of Spokane</i>	Peter Grunte, <i>Resident, Hangman Creek</i>
Rick Noll, <i>SCD</i>	Amanda Parrish, <i>Lands Council</i>
Howard Rowley, <i>WBLSR (Horseshoe Lake)</i>	Gary Ostheller, <i>Fairfield Grange</i>
Doug Greenlund, <i>City of Spokane</i>	Harvey Morrison, <i>Trout Unlimited</i>
Rusty Post, <i>Department of Ecology</i>	
Susan McGeorge, <i>Whitworth Water District</i>	
Katherine Rowden, <i>National Weather Service</i>	

The meeting was called to order by Walt Edelen and the committee members introduced themselves. The February 2013 meeting minutes were approved with the following changes:

- Add Doug Greenlund to the list that attended the regional MOA meeting (page 4)
- The Spokane Conservation District's address is 210 N. Havana.

Issues/Announcements/Public Comment:

There were no public comments. Walt Edelen announced the RC&D Weed Management Workshop that was scheduled for March 21st. Interested parties should contact Corey Brandt. The Spokane River Forum Conference is scheduled for March 26-27.

Regional MOA Development:

Susan McGeorge opened the subject and discussed the efforts to get comments from the group regarding its draft form. The future direction of the MOA was further discussed. Members of the meeting wanted to know the focus of MOA. It was determined that the focus was the list of implementation projects already written into the Detailed Implementation Plans. The group does not want to lose sight of these and maintained that we need to keep working towards completion of each one as funding makes possible.

Funding was the next issue. Where are we going to get continued funding to keep the watershed efforts moving forward? Administrative costs were deemed minimal and that we should be able to utilize the regional MOA to garner fees from different entities to maintain the administrative costs of facilitation. Grants were discussed as a possible direction for continued funding. A public "water resource fee", similar to the recent fee approved in Island County, was also discussed as a way to implement watershed work

around the county. Rob Lindsay stated that strong community support will be needed to support such a fee. He also stated a significant factor will be whether the issues of water resources are considered “urgent” or not to our leaders. Support from the commissioners will be difficult to obtain if we do not have data suggesting that Spokane has imperative issues revolving around water resources. Rob will be meeting with the Commissioners in the near future to make a presentation on the status of watershed planning and will note the need for ongoing funding.

Ecology is still supporting the Spokane Area due to all the activity and implementation occurring. This interest by our motivated group keeps us in a favorable light for continued funding when available. The group agreed that we are stronger as a whole than as independents working on issues. We need to continue to work on projects and accomplish the important parts of the plan,

A lead agency was discussed. An entity is needed to administer the funds to the group and to facilitate meetings. The County Water Resources Department and the Conservation District were noted as possibilities due to their involvement in each of these shared activities. This has yet to be determined.

Next Steps for MOA:

1. Determine the function or role of the group.
2. What implementation direction are we taking?
3. Educate the public that we need to take responsibility for water issues and management.
4. Continue to support collaboration of efforts
5. What are the boundaries of the agreement (physical)

*Gary Ostheller noted that we need to resolve issues of fire/emergency needs for small communities in Hangman Watershed. This item was deemed important, but tabled until a later meeting/discussion.

Susan McGeorge requested that the group members submitted comments on the draft MOA and that she would distribute the MOA to the group.

Updates

1. Water Availability and Sustainability Project Summary

Rob Lindsay reported on the status of the project and that he would be taking the issue to the Planning Commission and the County Commissioners in April of 2013. If anyone is interested in coming along for support, then he will email the date, time and location of the meeting/presentation.

2. Spokane River Forum Conference – March 26-27th; issues/questions/panel.

Interested parties were directed to the website for more information. Alyson Beal, from WSU, will be presenting a session regarding questions to the audience that are immediately put on screen by the use of a “clicker”. If there are certain question that should be presented, please get the information to Rob Lindsay and he will submit them to Ms. Beal. The conference will address many issues regarding the river, projects, and policy.

3. Pending Ecology Grants

Rusty Post provided information regarding budgets and proposals. He stated that we have a very favorable group in the eyes of Ecology and that funding may be available when it requested. The ideal situation for the group is to be prepared. We need to solidify our project proposals that we submitted and be ready to implement when funding becomes available. Rusty has been able to champion our efforts with ecology staff and was recognized for his efforts.

4. Garden Springs Creek – City of Spokane

This grant is on the Ecology Draft offer list and should be under contract in July or August. The project is a restoration effort and educational effort for the stream that runs through the Finch Arboretum.

OSS Program – SCD

The on-site septic system program is a project proposal by the Spokane CD to offer low interest loans to residents outside the Urban Growth boundaries. The loans will be for repair, replacement, and potential hookups to sewer. This project is currently on the Ecology Draft offer list.

Livestock and Land Program – SCD

This is a Spokane CD project oriented for livestock operation BMPs to improve water quality throughout Spokane. It is on the Ecology Draft offer list.

Knife River Concrete/Asphalt Project in Marshall

There has been a local uprising by local residents in the Marshall Creek area over the introduction of a concrete/asphalt batch plant on the old Key Rock Pit. Knife River purchased the pit and has purchased water rights (through an in basin transfer) and is ready to proceed. The residents believe this will have a significant impact to the environment. Ecology and other agencies do not agree with the public outcry. More info is listed on the SCAPCA website.

USGS Gauging station contracts and Sequestration Issues

The USGS has considered stopping service to a couple real-time stream gauges if federal funding is not forthcoming. No need to further discuss this issue until we know more.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm. The next meeting was set for Wednesday, April 13th, 2013. It will be held at 10 am at the Water Resources Center at N. 1004 Freya

