

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: May 15, 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** **Discuss and Approve April 17 2002 Meeting Summary**
Facilitator Lead
- 10:10** **Update on final revisions to Draft Data Compilation and Assessment Report**
Reanette Boese
- 10:30** **Update from Little Spokane River Instream Flow Work Group**
Planning Unit Discussion and Decision on the Technical Instream Flow Approach
Planning Unit Discussion and Ranking of Priority for Study Sites
Stan Miller
- 11:00** **Continue Discussion of Decision Making Process for Plan Recommendations**
Facilitator Lead
- 11:45** **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
May 15, 2002

Committee members recorded on the sign in sheet were:

| | | |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Doug Allen | Julia McHugh | Dave Jones |
| Jim Wilson | Ty Wick | Rachael Pascal Osborn |
| Lloyd Brewer | Ken Kuhn | Stan Miller |
| Terry Liberty | Steve Skipworth | Reanette Boese |
| Don Comins | Gus Koedding | Erin Cunningham |

Consultants that attended the meeting were: Sarah Hubbard-Gray of Hubbard Gray Consulting and Bryony Hansen of Golder Associates.

Guests that attended the meeting were: Jane Cunningham, the Lands Council, and Steve Silkworth, Avista..

Introductions: Sarah Hubbard-Gray called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. Committee members introduced themselves. Sarah provided an overview of the agenda and asked if there were comments on the April 17, 2002 Meeting Summary. It was recommended that the last sentence of the last bullet item under Planning Unit Voting Process on page 3 be changed to read: “Typically, discussions and consensus building will occur at one meeting, with a wrap up discussion and decision making occurring at the following meeting.” There were no other comments on the meeting summary.

Update on Final Revisions to Draft Data Compilation and Assessment Report: Reanette Boese explained that she sent out an email to all of the Planning Unit members with the spreadsheet that outlined the Work Group recommendations for addressing the Draft Report comments. No comments or concerns were received from members of the Planning Unit. Reanette went on to explain the process for revising and finalizing the Draft Report, which includes:

- Spokane County staff doing some research to clarify some issues, making revisions to some of the chapters, and cross checking the references in the text with the appendixes,
- Avista to review and correct the revised text that describes their dam operation,
- Golder revising the remaining chapters,
- Golder finalizing the report by June 2002.

Planning Unit members commented that the Work Group process worked well to identify issues and develop revision strategies.

Update on Little Spokane River Instream Flow Work: Stan Miller distributed a memo summarizing the May 6, 2002 Instream Flow Work Group meeting (see enclosed copy) and gave an overview of the May 6 meeting. He reiterated Golder’s recommendation to use the Wetted

Perimeter Methodology because it is well suited to this stream system and can be completed with the funds available from DOE for instream flow studies. Stan explained that, using the Wetted Perimeter method, the Instream Flow grant monies will be adequate to study at least four sites and would also provide information on aquatic biota sufficient for an initial evaluation of the current regulated flows.

Stan explained 1) that the Work Group agreed with this method as a first step in evaluating the instream flow needs of aquatic biota to develop recommendations for additional study and regulated flow changes, 2) the four regulated flow control points along the Little Spokane River with current and historic gauging stations, 3) that the Work Group felt that Elk should be given a high priority as a study site in order to evaluate Pend Oreille County water usage, 4) how the wetted perimeter would be applied and used to describe the relationship between habitat and stream flow, 5) that the wetted perimeter method may not be conclusive enough to recommend new regulated flows, 6) how Golder would evaluate the stream system using the wetted perimeter method, and 7) that an invertebrate study is being conducted by a graduate student insome of the stream reaches.

The following comments and issues were discussed:

- Ty Wick asked what the wetted perimeter method would tell us and expressed concern about the adequacy of the method. Stan Miller explained that wetted perimeter method evaluates the relationship between stream flows and habitat. In other words, the method evaluates the relationship between stream flow and the amount of the stream bed that needs to be wet to provide adequate instream habitat. Doug Allen clarified that the difference between the toe width method and the wetted perimeter method is that wetted perimeter adds a safety factor into the evaluation.
- Doug Allen also indicated that the regulatory requirements associated with flow control points need to be considered when picking the study site locations.
- Stan Miller explained that the study would occur over a one-year period and that due to the characteristics of the evaluation, precipitation and flow may not significantly affect the study results.
- Lloyd Brewer asked if biological and fisheries elements would be incorporated into the proposed wetted perimeter study. Stan Miller explained that fish and wildlife would be considered in the study, but would be limited by budgetary constraints.
- Rachael Pascal Osborn expressed concern that using the wetted perimeter method would not provide adequate information for the Planning Unit to recommend modifications to regulated instream flow, that the method doesn't consider the stream health needs, and that a more holistic study methodology is needed. She distributed information on a watershed planning satellite downlink production and gave some examples of different approaches being used in other parts of the state. She expressed the opinion that wetted perimeter methodology is only one piece of a more holistic study that is needed and that she is not comfortable that the wetted perimeter method will provide enough information for the Planning Unit to be able to make any recommendation regarding regulated flows.
- Doug Allen reiterated that the Planning Unit would need to consider the data gathered under the instream flow study and make a recommendation to the state, but clarified that the recommendation can be to leave the current regulated flow unchanged.

- It was acknowledged that other methodologies were focused on in early Planning Unit discussions on this subject. Further, because the wetted perimeter was not part of the initial discussions, it has been problematic for the Planning Unit to understand and accept the proposal that wetted perimeter method is the method best suited to this system for the funding available. Stan reminded the group that there is not enough grant funding available from DOE to utilize a more holistic approach/method.
- The applicability of results of a wetted perimeter method study to future holistic studies was discussed. It was explained that fisheries experts from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Golder Associates consulted and agreed that the wetted perimeter method is well suited for the Little Spokane River system and that it would provide valuable information. However, the results of a wetted perimeter study will not provide data that can be directly used to conduct an IFIM study in the future. However, the results may be able to be used in/applied to more holistic stream studies.
- The Planning Unit was reminded that one full water year of data is needed for a wetted perimeter study, that the current grant monies are available through the end of June 2002 and for use during the next fiscal year; additional monies may not be available in the subsequent fiscal year.
- Gus Koedding asked if grant monies could be used to study fewer sites using a more intense method like IFIM. Concern was raised about limiting the number of sites and therefore limiting the study to a small geographic area.

Following the discussion, several of the Planning Unit members expressed concern about using the wetted perimeter method, but indicated that they would support using it. Planning Unit members were asked to explain and respond to the various opinions. Ty Wick indicated that he could not support spending the money to complete a study using the wetted perimeter method since it would likely not provide enough information for the Planning Unit to use to recommend a new minimum flow requirement. Rachael Pascal Osborn and Gus Koedding agreed with Ty that it would be better to spend public monies on a method that would provide more useful information. Others expressed their opinion that this method is a good stepping stone to gather more information and that it may be adequate to characterize instream flow requirements for this stream system.

The Initiating Agencies previously reached consensus on moving forward with an instream flow study using the wetted perimeter method. In order to move forward and gather the needed data for a full water year and have it coincide with the fiscal year that grant funds are available, Stan Miller needed a decision from the Planning Unit in May 2002. The group was asked if the Little Spokane River instream flow work should move forward. Planning Unit members were not in consensus. Since Stan needed a decision at this meeting, it was decided that Planning Unit members would vote. It was noted that this was the first time a vote of Planning Unit members had been called. The Initiating Agency members did not vote, and 5 of the 9 Planning Unit members present voted against moving forward with instream flow analysis using the wetted perimeter method. This vote resulted in the postponement of the proposed Little Spokane River instream flow work until further clarification to the scope of work and adequate support was generated from the Planning Unit.

Continue Discussion of Decision Making Process for Plan Recommendations: Further discussion on this topic was postponed until the June 2002 Planning Unit meeting.

Other Items of Public or Committee Concern: The following items were shared with the group:

- The Interim Steering Committee for the proposed inter-state aquifer study will be holding an all day educational meeting on June 20, 2002. Representatives Nethercutt and Otter submitted a \$3.5 million bill in the house to fund the study.
- Rachael Pascal Osborn announced a meeting on the Bellingham watershed planning process and a watershed planning satellite downlink program at the Cooperative Extension on May 31, 2002.

The next meeting was set for 10:00 am on June 19, 2002 at the Spokane County Conservation District.