

**Meeting Summary**  
**Planning Unit**  
Little Spokane River – Middle Spokane River Local Watershed Plan  
January 15, 2003

**Committee members recorded on the sign in sheet were:**

Doug Allen, <i>Dept. of Ecology</i>	Ty Wick, <i>Spokane Aquifer Joint Board</i>	Gus Koedding, <i>Spokane Homebuilders Assoc.</i>
Lloyd Brewer, <i>City of Spokane</i>		
Jane Cunningham, <i>The Lands Council</i>	Steve Skipworth, <i>Vera Water</i>	Tom Hargreaves, <i>Friends of Little Spokane Valley</i>
Ken Kuhn, <i>Pend Oreille County Planning</i>	Rick Noll, <i>Spokane County Conservation District</i>	Bruce Howard, <i>Avista Utilities</i>
Don Comins, <i>Pend Oreille Conservation District</i>	Dave Jones, <i>Water Quality Advisory Committee</i>	Stan Miller, <i>Spokane County</i>
		Reanette Boese, <i>Spokane County</i>

**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:** Sarah Schrock, Spokane County Conservation District.

**Introductions:** Sarah Hubbard-Gray called the meeting to order at 10:05 am. Committee members introduced themselves. Sarah asked if there were comments on the December 18, 2002 Meeting Summary. Ken Kuhn requested a change to the first paragraph associated with Follow up on Plan Recommendation Decision Making. Discussion followed and it was decided that the last sentence of the first paragraph should be changed to read: “Since the City of Spokane representative, Lloyd Brewer, has indicated that the City of Spokane staff do not support amending the current MOA, and since reaching consensus is the primary goal, the Initiating Agencies decided to move forward with the following process for developing plan recommendations”.

**Little Spokane River Instream Flow Update:** Stan Miller indicated that Hal Beecher had been consulted regarding the Little Spokane River instream flow field data that has been collected and that he continues to support Golder’s original Little Spokane River instream flow approach and associated data collection scheme. Therefore, data will be collected over the original range of flows, including high flows. Reanette Boese provided an update on the field sampling and explained that four stream flow measurements have been captured. Bryony Hansen reviewed the range of flows measured so far.

**Spokane River Instream Flow Discussion:** Stan Miller explained that information regarding Spokane River instream flows will be discussed and that the Planning Unit needs to decide whether to apply for Step A Instream Flow funding. Doug Allen relayed information provided by Hal Beecher. Hal indicated that current Spokane River instream flows do not consider spawning habitat and are not based on enough information. Therefore, Ecology feels that Spokane River instream flows should be studied and evaluated and that new Spokane River instream flows should be set. Doug indicated that if the Planning Unit does not study and recommend new Spokane River instream flows that Ecology will.

Stan Miller explained that Avista, as part of their FERC re licensing, will be hiring a consultant to do similar work on the Spokane River in the near future. Avista's work will evaluate their dam operations affect on fish; it will not recommend instream flows.

Stan reminded the Planning Unit that they had previously indicated support for doing a Spokane River instream flow study and requested Ecology to earmark funds for this work. He explained that the application for funds for Step A of the instream flow study needs to be submitted by January 30, 2003. He explained that Step A involves the development of a scope of work, which would consider the Avista work so that the two studies were complimentary and not duplicative. The study costs were discussed, along with Avista's study elements which will focus on instream flow and fish evaluation (particularly rainbow trout). The need for the Planning Unit to have follow up discussion and finalize the decision at a second meeting was discussed. Various comments and suggestions were provided, including:

- If Planning Unit doesn't apply for funds in January 2003, they will not be able to start work until July 2003 and will lose the ability to coordinate with Avista's work.
- Ecology will consider Planning Unit's instream flow recommendations.
- It was suggested that Stan should submit the application for Step A funds by January 30, 2003, then further discuss the application with the Planning Unit at the February 2003 meeting and make the final decision on whether to move forward with Spokane River instream flow work. If the Planning Unit does not approve the Spokane River instream flow work, then Ecology would be asked to withdraw the application. Doug Allen indicated that the application could be withdrawn in February 2003 if needed.

All of the Planning Unit members present agreed with the recommendation to submit the Step A instream flow application by January 30<sup>th</sup> and make a final decision at the February 2003 meeting. Stan Miller indicated that he would mail the application to Planning Unit members prior to the February 2003 meeting.

**Model "What If" Scenario Examples and Discussion:** Stan Miller explained that the best way to use the available model runs for obtaining information is to formulate questions in a way that facilitates getting the desired information. Each of these questions should be posed in a memo that provides background. Stan handed out a memo that provides an example of the format and asked the Planning Unit members to start thinking about questions for the model runs.

**Continued Discussion on Non-aquatic Biota Instream Flow Elements for Little Spokane River:** Sarah Hubbard-Gray asked the Planning Unit member to work in small groups to review and confirm the objectives and criteria recommendations/suggestions that were provided at the December 2002 meeting. The four groups came up with the following recommendations which will be presented and discussed at the February 2003 meeting:

**Overall**

**Objectives:**

- Assure that recommended instream flows for the Little Spokane River protect all designated beneficial uses.

**Aquatic Biota**

**Objectives:**

- Assure that instream flow recommendations resulting from this plan meet the needs of selected fish species (rainbow trout and mountain whitefish) and other representative aquatic biota.

**Criteria:**

- Are the flows adequate for salmonid spawning and rearing in the mainstream and major tributaries?
- Do the high flow levels provide adequate flow to cleanse deposited silt, without increasing erosion or excessive silt deposits?
- Do the flows support diverse aquatic biota production (e.g., macroinvertebrates, frogs, salamanders)?
- Is the existing instream flow rule sufficiently protective of fish habitat?
- Are changes to the existing instream flow needed to protect selected fish species?

**Water Quality****Objectives:**

- Identify non-point sources that adversely effect water quality. Establish water quality parameter and flow relationships.
- Assure that flow is adequate for dilution of current point and non-point sources.
- Identify minimum channel maintenance flows.

**Criteria:**

- Are the flows adequate to support meeting the state surface water quality standards and beneficial uses? (including temperature and swimming)
- If public access on Little Spokane River is allowable above Dartford, is the flow/water quality relationship adequate for contact and/or non-contact uses throughout all of the public use river reaches?
- Will the flows protect streambanks and maintain integrity of streambank protection measures implemented?
- Will intensity of use at a given flow result in water quality degradation that will impair beneficial uses?

**Recreation & Aesthetics****Objectives:**

- Inventory natural areas, boating, fishing, and public access, and determine current level of recommended use and the flow needed for recreational use.
- Determine the potential recreational uses and the flow needed for each recreational use.
- Determine the legal status of public access and use, and the amount of actual public use.
- Determine the possibility of changing the legal status of public access and use.

**Criteria:**

- Are the flows sufficient to assure that the water quality and quantity is suitable for swimming (e.g., Pine River Park)?
- Are the flows adequate to support canoeing, kayaking, tubing/floating, and fishing uses year-round in the lower reaches of the LSR (e.g., downstream of Dartford)?
- Are the flows sufficient to support aesthetic, educational, and cultural values of the LSR natural area?
- Are the flows adequate to achieve a healthy / normal channel formation and associated riparian vegetation?

**Power Production****Objectives:**

- Ensure that low-head hydro power development opportunities are not diminished.

**Criteria:**

- Would the proposed flow negatively impact the potential for low-head hydro power development?

**Other items of Public or Committee Concern:** Planning Unit members provided the following reminders/information:

- A Watershed Planning workshop, sponsored by Preston, Gates and Ellis, will be held on January 22, 2003.
- Ecology is proposing changes to the Watershed Planning and Surface Water Quality Standards. A series of public hearings will be held in Spokane on January 27<sup>th</sup> at Spokane Falls Community College at 6:00 pm.
- Spokane County Conservation District and Pend Oreille County Conservation District are developing a water quality management plan for the Little Spokane River. Anyone interested in working with a group that is being set up for this project should email Stan Miller and let him know.

The next meeting was set for Wednesday February 19, 2003 at 10:00 am at the Spokane County Conservation District. The meeting adjourned at 12:05 pm.