

Meeting Summary Planning Unit

Little Spokane River – Middle Spokane River Local Watershed Plan
November 19, 2003

Committee members recorded on the sign in sheet were:

Doug Allen, <i>Dept. of Ecology</i>	Steve Skipworth, <i>Vera Water</i>	Terry Liberty, <i>Spokane</i>
Harry McLean, Jr., <i>City of</i>	Rick Noll, <i>Spokane County</i>	<i>County Planning</i>
<i>Spokane Water</i>	<i>Conservation District</i>	Stan Miller, <i>Spokane County</i>
Ty Wick, <i>Spokane Aquifer</i>	Walt Edelen, <i>Spokane County</i>	Reanette Boese, <i>Spokane</i>
<i>Joint Board</i>	<i>Conservation District</i>	<i>County</i>
Susan McGeorge, <i>Whitworth</i>	Jane Cunningham, <i>The Lands</i>	Bill Gilmour, <i>Spokane</i>
<i>Water</i>	<i>Council</i>	<i>County</i>
Dave Jones, <i>Water Quality</i>	Tom Hargreaves, <i>Friends of the</i>	
<i>Advisory Committee</i>	<i>Little Spokane Valley</i>	

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

Guests that attended the meeting were: none

Introductions : Sarah Hubbard-Gray called the meeting to order at 10:05 am. Committee members introduced themselves. Sarah asked for comments or corrections to the October 22, 2003 meeting summary. It was noted that 1) Bryony Stasney's name needed to be corrected, and 2) the statement under the Little Spokane River Instream Flow recommendation number 4 should be changed to read "PU decided to put on hold and discuss along with exempt wells". No other comments were provided. Doug Allen announced that the information from the recent Watershed Conference is now available on CD.

Conservation, Reclamation and Reuse – Re-examination of Plan Items that Received Preliminary Approval at the October Meeting: The Planning Unit reviewed the issues and recommendations that received preliminary approval at the October 22nd meeting. All of these elements received final approval, they include:

Issue 1. What steps can be taken to reduce indoor water use?

- Determine indoor conservation issues the public needs to be educated on (i.e. in-door low flow devices such as showerhead, faucets, toilets and appliances and habits).

Issue 2. What steps can be taken to reduce domestic, municipal and public outdoor water use?

- Determine the outdoor conservation issues the public needs to be educated on (i.e., soil development, plant root development, native/drought resistant vegetation, xeriscaping).

Issue 3. What steps should be taken to educate the public on water conservation and use?

- Encourage use of several educational methods to reach all segments of the population, those in schools, government, and businesses.

Issue 4. What economic, political, legal and resource incentives can be implemented to encourage municipalities, utilities and businesses to build and use reclaimed water systems?

- Evaluate the public perception of water reclamation use and determine how to educate the public for acceptance.
- Evaluate the public perception of water reuse and determine how to educate the public for acceptance.

Issue 5. What policies can be developed to provide cost-effective options for reuse in small scale and decentralized settings?

Recommendation not associated with specific issue that received final approval:

- County/Cities/Water Purveyors encourage implementation of water conservation in watering of public properties such as parks, school lawn areas, athletic fields, boulevards, and highway green areas.

Domestic Exempt Wells / Water Rights – Re-examination of Plan Items that Received Preliminary Approval at the October Meeting: The Planning Unit reviewed the issues that received preliminary approval at the October 22nd meeting. All of these issues received final approval, they include:

Issue 2. Should the counties adopt policies to manage the proliferation of domestic exempt wells?

Issue 3. What are the methods for reducing summertime water use from domestic exempt wells during low flow years?

Little Spokane Instream Flow – Re-examination of Plan Items that Received Preliminary Approval at the October Meeting: The Planning Unit reviewed the issues and recommendations that received preliminary approval at the October 22nd meeting. In response to the City of Spokane concern that the current minimum flows on the Little Spokane River are not being met and their interest in continuing to evaluate what minimum flows could be, it was decided that the recommendation to “Recommend no changes in the minimum instream flows in the current rule at this time” would be put on hold until further evaluation is done as part of the developing plan. All of the other elements received final approval, they include:

Issue: Does the information on rainbow trout and mountain whitefish from the Golder study support changing the minimum instream flows on the Little Spokane River?

- Recommend a study on the Little Spokane River tributaries on optimizing habitat for the target species and linking the preferred flows on the tributaries to flows at the control points.
- Monitor the effects of exporting water from the SVRP Aquifer into the Little Spokane Watershed on the flow of the Little Spokane River. (To be clarified how it will be implemented in the implementation section of the plan.)

Review and Confirm when Final Decisions will be made on Revised Work Group Suggestions: The Planning Unit discussed the process for making final decisions and approved that a final decision could be made on items that were originally discussed at the prior meeting and subsequently revised by the work groups based on Planning Unit requests. Therefore, items that were reviewed at the October 22nd meeting and sent back to the work groups for revisions could be reviewed for a second time at the November 19th meeting and approved by the Planning Unit.

Conservation, Reclamation and Reuse – Review Revised Work Group Suggestions on Plan Items Modified Based on Planning Unit Request at the October Meeting: The Planning Unit reviewed the revised issues and recommendations that were initially reviewed at the October 22nd meeting and revised by the work group. All of the following recommendations received final approval:

- Wastewater utilities and/or local authorities should evaluate customer in-door water saving incentives as a means to save on new facility costs. If cost effective, incentives should be included in facility planning and comprehensive planning processes and implemented through local regulations. Incentives include, but are not limited to, low flow devices and appliance exchange/rebates.
- County/Cities consider developing incentives for xeriscaping, and use of native and/or drought resistant vegetation through existing and future planning processes.

The following recommendation was sent back to the work group for revisions:

- Municipal water suppliers shall be in compliance with existing requirements for water conservation and new water conservation requirements set forth in Second Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1338.
 - Send back to work group, need to establish the tie between law, water system plan, and watershed plan. As it is stated it is not really a recommendation, but more of a statement of fact as required under the law.

The following recommendation was tabled for now:

- County/Cities implement development incentives for restrictive covenants involving use of water, i.e. green lawns.
 - Need to evaluate how to implement this recommendation outside of developer restrictive covenants (e.g., community plans, planned unit developments, stormwater requirements, etc.).

Domestic Exempt Wells / Water Rights – Review Revised Work Group Suggestions on Plan Items Modified Based on Planning Unit Request at the October Meeting: The Planning Unit reviewed the revised issues that were initially reviewed at the October 22nd meeting and revised by the work group. All of the following issues received final approval:

Issue 1.a Would more accurate water use quantities and locations for domestic exempt wells make a significant difference in the accuracy of the watershed model?

Issue 1.b Would more accurate water pumping quantities and locations for Group B and small Group A wells make a significant difference in the accuracy of the watershed model?

Issue 1.c. Would a better understanding of water rights in the WRAs help in making water management decisions for WRAs 55 & 57?

Question: Why doesn't the Department of Ecology credit larger water rights quantities for water systems taking over domestic exempt wells?

? Planning Unit supported the work group efforts to develop an issue relating to this question.

Little Spokane Instream Flow – Review Revised Work Group Suggestions on Plan Items Modified Based on Planning Unit Request at the October Meeting: The Planning Unit reviewed the revised

issues that were initially reviewed at the October 22nd meeting and revised by the work group. All of the following issues received final approval:

Issue: How will pumping water from the SVRP Aquifer Basin to provide water service in the Little Spokane Watershed north of the Little Spokane / Deadman Creek affect flows in the Little Spokane River?

Issue: What action should be taken toward domestic exempt wells when flows at the designated control point fall below the minimum instream flow?

Issue: What effect will reactivating the gage at Chattaroy have on water rights interruptions for upper basin water users?

All of the following recommendations received final approval:

- 5.a. Using existing data study the effects of reactivating the gage at Chattaroy for regulation of the upstream water users.
- 5.b. If further evaluation is desired, the Planning Unit should work with Pend Oreille County, the Department of Ecology, Spokane Community College and others to continue flow measurements as needed.
- 5.c. If benefits sufficient to offset costs are available and legal constraints do not exist beneficiaries of the operation of a Chattaroy control point, in cooperation with the Department of Ecology should reactivate and fund the gage at Chattaroy with real time capabilities needed for regulation.

The following recommendation was sent back to the work group for refinement to add clarity and specificity:

- 1.b. Additional studies on instream flow needs for the mainstem and tributaries should be conducted if problems arise with the existing conditions.
- 1.c. Studies should be conducted on the major tributaries to determine the extent of and areas where spawning occurs. When this information becomes available, flow studies on the tributaries should be conducted to determine flow needs for the tributaries.
- 1.d. Expanded study on the mainstem would require reapplication of PHABSIM using site specific preference curves and multiple transect measurements.

Discussion on the Plan Development: During the discussion of the issues and recommendations the following items were discussed:

- Need to establish definitions for terms that are used in the plan and make sure that terms are used consistently (e.g., local authority or local government).
- Need to identify action items and who is responsible for the actions as the implementation section of the plan is developed.
- Need to establish a numbering system for the issues and recommendations that will carry forward and minimize confusion.

Other Announcements: Stan Miller passed out a flyer on the Spokane River Use Attainability Analysis that is currently being done. It was explained that information about the project can also be found on the

project web page at www.spokaneriveruses.net and that informational meetings will be held in early 2004. Progress on Avista's work was discussed and Doug Allen again requested that the Assessment Report be finalized and made available. Bryony Stasney indicated that she would again pass on the request to Golder staff. Bryony indicated that no comments had been submitted on the Little Spokane River Instream Flow report, and she asked if anyone had any comments. No one indicated that they had any comments.

Wrap Up: The next Planning Unit meeting was set for December 17, 2003 at 10:00 am at the Spokane County Conservation District.