

## Meeting Summary Planning Unit

### Little Spokane River – Middle Spokane River Local Watershed Plan January 21, 2004

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

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

**Consultants that attended the meeting were:** Sarah Hubbard-Gray of Hubbard Gray Consulting and Marcia Sands of Golder Associates.

**Guests that attended the meeting were:** Dale Gill

**Introductions :** Sarah Hubbard-Gray called the meeting to order at 9:05 am. Committee members introduced themselves. Sarah asked for comments or corrections to the December 17, 2003 meeting summary. No comments were provided.

**Reports from Work Groups:** Spokane County staff gave brief reports on the work group activities since the last Planning Unit meeting. The Domestic Exempt Wells and Water Rights group met since the December meeting, reviewed the Planning Unit comments, and made revisions to their recommendations. The Conservation, Reclamation and Reuse work group did not meet since December. The Little Spokane River Instream Flow work group did not meet since December. Stan Miller explained that he would like to go over the work group's instream flow recommendations and get this section cleaned up so the work group could move onto Middle Spokane River instream flow items. Stan indicated that the review of the Middle Spokane River may influence the Little Spokane River instream flow recommendations. It was also noted that there are several proposed 2004 legislative bills dealing with instream flow. And Stan Miller reminded the Planning Unit that watershed planning started because of instream flow.

Stan Miller also gave a report on the status of the plan development. He explained that the draft plan needs to be developed by June 30, 2004. He indicated that there is lots of content for the plan, that some of the difficult issues may not have been resolved by that time, but that they can be dealt with through implementation. It was asked when the model simulation results would be available. Stan indicated that they need to get them from Golder and that the results may need to be considered in the plan implementation phase.

**Review of Conservation, Reclamation and Reuse Work Group Suggestions:** Bill Gilmour provided an overview of the handout from the work group's December 4, 2003 meeting. The work group suggestions that had not previously been considered by the Planning Unit were reviewed and the following preliminary decisions were made:

## **New Recommendations (first time considered by Planning Unit):**

~~Municipal water suppliers are encouraged to~~ County and city governments will develop and participate in implement a coordinated regional education and awareness program to promote wise use of the water supply.

- *Change as edited. Planning Unit support, carry forward*

Municipal water suppliers will develop their own water conservation program in accordance with Washington State Department of Health regulations.

- *Planning Unit support, carry forward*

Other water suppliers are encouraged to develop their own water conservation programs.

- *Add this new recommendation*

Include options for xeriscaping in landscape requirements for commercial and industrial developments ~~option for xeriscaping~~.

- *Change as edited. Planning Unit support, carry forward*

Encourage the xeriscaping option for urban open space in planned developments.

- *Planning Unit support, carry forward*

Encourage xeriscaping as a way of reducing irrigation water use; include it as an element of education programs.

- *Add this new recommendation*

Encourage aggressive maintenance programs by all water purveyors for pumping, transporting and storing water.

- *Delete this recommendation – it is covered in HB 1338. Provide background information in the plan that describes what is required in HB 1336.*

Use various effective media forms to educate the public (i.e., flyers, pamphlets, television, workshops, radio).

- *Delete this recommendation*

Encourage development of regional water conservation plans. Urge development of plans for water restrictions to use in critical times.

- *Send back to work group to revise. Develop a recommendation relating to drought management plans.*

Encourage coordination of education programs for effective water conservation.

- *Delete this recommendation*

Cities, counties, and other local agencies incorporate water conservation in their comprehensive plans. ~~Local agencies to review plans to evaluate water conservation elements and incorporate water conservation elements into their local plans.~~

- *Change as edited. Planning Unit support, carry forward*

In so far as possible, encourage reclamation and reuse of wastewater within the watershed it was extracted.

- *Send back to work group to revise. Consider deleting “in so far as possible”, evaluate impacts to water purveyors, consider what simulation may show, and consider developing one recommendation relating to cities and counties including reclamation and reuse in their comp plans and one recommendation relating to “out of basin”.*

Evaluate high-tech irrigation systems/automatic controllers for schools, go lf courses, parks, cemeteries, etc.

- *Send back to work group to reconsider and revise. It seems like a good idea, but need to consider changing “high tech” to “high efficiency”, consider “requiring”, evaluate if should relate to new or retrofit, consider how it would be implemented (e.g., through landscape plans), consider if it would it apply only when needed/dry, and consider types of grass that require less water.*

**Review of Little Spokane River Instream Flow Work Group Suggestions:** Stan Miller provided an overview of the handout from the work groups December 4, 2003 meeting. The work group suggestions that had not previously been considered by the Planning Unit were reviewed and the following preliminary decisions were made:

**New Issue (first time considered by Planning Unit):**

III.B.04. What actions are needed to maintain or improve recreational opportunities on the Little Spokane River?

- *Planning Unit support, carry forward*

**New Recommendations (first time considered by Planning Unit):**

Stan and Reanette explained that the III.B.04 recommendations were developed based on comments received from recreational users surveyed in 2003. It was noted that many private property owners complain about recreational use of parks and access areas.

III.B.04 a. Promote management practices that maintain current minimum flows in the Lower Little Spokane River (Little Spokane River Natural Area) to support current and future recreational activities.

- *Send back to the work group. Consider what management practices (e.g., keeping basin closed, cutting off junior water rights), should reference applicable management practices, should include discussion of management practices in plan as background, use model to identify if there are management practices that affect flow and address in implementation, define 2003 minimum flows, consider cost of implementing this recommendation versus cost to the public, and consider priorities relating to minimum flows (e.g., human, fish, recreation) and the law.*

III.B.04 b. Promote management practices that maintain or increase 2003 minimum flows in the Pine River Park and Elk Park reaches to support existing and future recreational activities.

- *Planning Unit support, carry forward*

III.B.04 c. Investigate/determine if future parks or access points are needed sites along the Little Spokane River for potential use as future parks or access point for recreational use of the Little Spokane River.

- *Change as edited. Planning Unit support, carry forward*

III.B.04 d. Seek a formal opinion from the State Attorney General's Office regarding the "non-navigability status" of the Little Spokane River.

- *Delete this recommendation. Doug Allen clarified that this was a State Supreme Court decision, so would need to go back before the Supreme Court for review. Include discussion of the "non-navigability status" of the Little Spokane River in the background section of the plan.*

**Revised Recommendations (previous version considered by Planning Unit, this new version proposed by the City of Spokane):**

III.A.01.a. The current minimum instream flow setting for the Little Spokane River involves a number of minimum flow triggers varying with time of year and location. Planning Unit representatives agree that the current minimum instream flow triggers at, and below, Dartford are higher than necessary to protect fish in that particular portion of the Little Spokane River as a result of Spokane Aquifer input. The Dartford flow settings are appropriate for upstream protection and upstream regulation. The current Dartford and Confluence minimum flow settings are not appropriate for Spokane Aquifer use regulation. Given the current regulatory use of these settings and the need for additional study, the planning unit recommends no change in the minimum instream flows in the current rule at this time.

- *Send back to work group. Consider that it is not clear if downstream beneficial uses are being met by the regulation and current flows (needs more study); consider proposed city language; and not recommend a change now, but include an explanation that further study is needed.*

**General Comments to Consider During Plan Development:**

- Use consistent terminology relating to local governments in plan.
- May develop recommendation to extend or continue the Planning Unit into implementation phase, which could change the "obligated entity".

**Multi-Use Storage:** There was not enough time to get into this agenda item. But, Stan Miller passed out a handout on multi-use storage and explained that they will have another work group meeting before the February Planning Unit meeting. He explained that they need to submit a funding application for the study by the end of April, but would like to get it submitted by the end of February 2004. The work group will develop the scope of work for the application for the Planning Unit's review at the February 2004 Planning Unit meeting.

**Other Announcements:** Stan Miller indicated that the WRIA 54 Initiating Agency meetings are continuing. He also announced that the Phase II, Level I Assessment and the Little Spokane River Instream Flow for Aquatic Biota report have been finalized and that CDs are being developed and that they will be posted on the web page.

**Wrap Up:** The next Planning Unit meeting was set for February 18, 2004 at 9:00 am at the Spokane County Conservation District. Note that this is again one hour earlier than normal.