

Meeting Summary Planning Unit

Little Spokane River – Middle Spokane River Local Watershed Plan August 11, 2005

Committee members recorded on the sign in sheet were:

Harry McLean, <i>City of Spokane</i>	Steve Skipworth, <i>Vera Water & Power</i>	Walt Edelen, <i>Spokane County Conservation District</i>
Ty Wick, <i>Spokane Aquifer Joint Board</i>	Dick Price, <i>Stevens County PUD</i>	Reanette Boese, Rob Lindsay & Robbin Paeper, <i>Spokane County</i>
Susan McGeorge, <i>Whitworth Water</i>	Keith Holliday, <i>State Caucus, Department of Ecology</i>	
	Dave Jones, <i>Water Quality</i>	

Consultants that attended the meeting were: none

Guests that attended the meeting were: none.

Introductions: Rob called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. Committee members introduced themselves. The meeting summary for July 11th was reviewed and approved.

SEPA Review of the Watershed Plan: The SEPA was sent out to the Spokane County distribution list. The SEPA announcement was published in the Spokesman Review, the Newport Miner, and the Steven's County paper of record: The Chewelah Independent. A comment period is not required because there was a determination of significance and the Programmatic EIS previously prepared by WDOE (July 2003) and adopted by the Planning Unit has already been through the SEPA process. Any comments received will be passed along to the County Commissioners for the public hearings.

Schedule for Adoption Process: The Spokane County Public Hearing is scheduled for August 16 at 3 p.m. at the Spokane County Public Works Building. The Stevens County hearing will be Thursday August 18 at 6 p.m. at the Fire District #1 office in Clayton. The Pend Oreille County hearing will be Monday August 29 at 3:30 p.m. A joint session of the Commissioners of all three counties will be held after the public hearings. Members of the Planning Unit expressed a preference for a face-to-face meeting of the Commissioners. It was also suggested that work on scheduling the meeting should begin as soon as possible because budget season is coming up and the county commissioners will have even less time for meetings.

Discussion of Phase IV strategies: The group discussed the possibility of using a facilitator and / or technical writer for making the detailed implementation plan. Spokane County representatives feel they will need to be advocates and will not feel comfortable as facilitators. A facilitator may need to understand Watershed Planning in order to be useful. A facilitator will also need to be very organized. Dick Price suggested Linda Kiefer as a facilitator. She does have the abilities to be the facilitator but there was concern that she would need to be the Stevens County representative and would have the same problem as Spokane County representatives. We should not wait to see if we need a facilitator because it takes so long to go the consultant selection process.

No one is sure how much work will be needed to make a detailed implementation plan. It may be somewhat like making a budget by adding columns to the implementation matrix for funding, sources and milestones; or it may be more complex. Spokane County does not feel they have enough staff time available to write the detailed implementation plan and feel it is important to hire a technical writing / planning contractor.

Plan of actions for the next meeting: Spokane County will sort the recommendations by priorities and groups that want to be involved. Spokane County will also draft an RFQ for a technical writing firm with the potential for a facilitator. Spokane County will look through the Phase IV law to define what needs to be done. At this time we believe we will need an MOU, a schedule with milestones and timelines, and an accounting of Group A water systems' inchoate water rights. Whitworth Water and Spokane County will work on the inchoate water rights requirement of Phase IV. This will involve sending Public Records requests to the Department of Health and the Department of Ecology. The smaller cities of the watersheds need to be invited to participate again letting them know that there may be money available for them to implement parts of the plan.

Other topics: Susan McGeorge reported that Whitworth Water is getting calls from homeowners who have no water from wells in the Little Spokane Watershed.

The Avista relicensing applications have been submitted to FERC. The Post Falls Dam was separated from the other four (4) dams on the Spokane River (Upper Falls, Monroe Street, Nine Mile, Long Lake), at the discretion of Avista.

A draft watershed management plan for the Spokane River watershed in Idaho is being considered. Rob Lindsay (Spokane County) and Julia McHugh (SAJB) attended the public meeting in Hayden, Idaho on July 28. Rob reported that the draft plan encourages regional cooperation with Washington State.

Wrap Up: The meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m. The next meeting was scheduled for September 14, 2005, from 10 a.m. to noon, at the Spokane County Conservation District upstairs conference room.