

FINAL
Meeting Summary
WRIA 54 Lower Spokane River Watershed
January 25, 2006

Location: Airway Heights Community Center, Airway Heights, WA.

Planning Unit members and guests recorded on the sign-in sheet were:

Lloyd Brewer, City of Spokane	Rob Lindsay, Spokane County
Keith Holliday, WA State Dept. of Ecology	Judy Kaufman, Spokane Fly Fishers
Bill Gilmour, Spokane County	Cynthia Carlstad, Tetrattech/KCM
Bryony Stasney, Golder Associates Inc.	John Patrouch, Citizen-at-Large
Doris Dietrich, Landowner	Hank Nelson, Avista Corporation
Brian Crossley, Spokane Tribe	Gary Pederson, City of Airway Heights
Jim DeGraffenreid, Lincoln County Planning	Mark Leenhoots, Fairchild Military Community
Bruce Smith, Landowner	Jerry Warner, Landowner
Vic Castleberry, Palisades	Jay Landreth, Landowner
Colleen Little, Spokane County	Brenda Sims, Spokane County
Craig Volosing, Palisades	
Charlie Peterson, Spokane County Conservation District	
Wes McCart, Stevens County Farm Bureau and Stevens County Water Conservancy Board	

Call to Order

Bryony Stasney opened the meeting at approximately 10:05 am. Attendees introduced themselves and the interest / organization they represent. Bryony requested that each attendee complete the sign-in sheet.

Bryony reviewed the agenda and requested that Brenda's presentation be moved from 11:00 am to 10:15 am to follow the first public comment period. All agreed with the change.

The November 30, 2005 WRIA 54 meeting summary was reviewed with the following requests for changes: 1) Wes McCart noted that he represents the Stevens County Farm Bureau and Stevens County Water Conservancy Board. Bryony noted that the following edits had been requested via email: 1) Avista should not be capitalized; and, 2) details on Fairchild AFB's water supply must be deleted before the final summary is posted on the County's web site.

Public Comment

Rob Lindsay and Bill Gilmour informed the group that there is a public meeting tonight (Wednesday January 25) at 6 pm at the Winsor Elementary School related to the development of 200 new houses in the Airways Heights area. Bill Herrlinger requested that the County inform the group since the homes are expected to be built over the aquifer he talked about at the November 30, 2005 WRIA 54 meeting. Bill believes that this aquifer may be providing groundwater recharge to WRIA 54.

Bryony asked that those who arrived late introduce themselves and complete the sign-in-sheet.

Presentation of the West Plains Stormwater Management Plan - Ms. Brenda Sims, Spokane County Stormwater Utility Manager.

Ms. Brenda Sims, Spokane County Stormwater Utility Manager, provided a PowerPoint presentation to the group entitled, "West Plains Stormwater Management Plan". The presentation will be posted on the Spokane County site (<http://www.spokanecounty.org/wqmp/wria54.htm>) along with the final summary for this meeting. The West Plains Stormwater Management Plan was adopted by the Board of Spokane County Commissioners on January 17, 2006 along with the Stormwater Management Plans for the North Spokane and Glenrose areas, the Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan for the County's service area and the County's 6-year capital improvement plan. The Goal of the West Plains Stormwater Management Plan is to take care of some of existing problems and avoid future problems from new development.

The County considers the West Plains as the area between the City of Spokane boundary to the eastern Airway Heights boundary, including Highway 2 and extending as far south as Melville Road. Both industrial and residential growth is expected on the West Plains in the near future and there is a need for a more regional approach to stormwater management.

Stormwater on the West Plains does not infiltrate well due to the soils and geology and therefore dry wells do not work. The County therefore requires evaporation ponds if a development is unable to infiltrate stormwater. Evaporation ponds are expensive and there are maintenance and aesthetic concerns. However, evaporation ponds do mimic the natural pothole-type drainage that occurs on the West Plains.

The County's consultant has looked at available information including: topography, geology and hydrogeology; groundwater and surface water quality; and, land use trends (see slides on the web site for additional details). The following points list some findings:

- Most of the West Plains has less than 10 feet of soil / overburden above bedrock with a few (potentially four) deep troughs or palaeo-channels that contain sediment where the infiltration is better. These palaeo-channels occur: 1) west of the airport; 2) in the Marshall Creek area, southeast of the airport; and, 3) north of the airport in the vicinity of the polo grounds.
- Many of the ditches in the West Plains area do not work well as conveyance ditches because groundwater levels rise into the ditches in some areas during high rainfall and snowmelt.
- When asked about stormwater issues of concern on the West Plains in the future, cost, water quality impacts and increased flooding were identified by the public.
- The southwestern West Plains area has the greatest potential for problems due to shallow bedrock, gentle topography, few well defined surface channels and extensive planned development.

The County completed investigation work on the palaeo-channel located to the north of the airport in the vicinity of the polo grounds including seismic refraction, drilling two wells and groundwater monitoring. In addition, the County has considered geologic mapping (completed by WA Department of Natural Resources).

In concept, the West Plains Stormwater Management Plan recommends:

- Infiltration of stormwater in a palaeo-channel;
- Use of grass-lined ditches and natural drainage ways to convey stormwater; and,
- Replacement of on-site facilities (e.g., evaporation ponds) with a regional conveyance and disposal system.

The County plans to evaluate the feasibility of this concept including: suitable topography for conveyance; potential environmental impacts; and, infiltration rates in the palaeo-channel.

Questions posed after the presentation to Brenda by those present included:

1. Are you concerned about mosquitoes in the settling ponds? Response – Yes, if this is a problem, the County will treat with mosquito bits.
2. Can you describe what you mean by “treatment facility”? Response – The County means the grassy swale concept. For this facility the County is considering a horseshoe-shaped sediment basin which would be cleaned out frequently. This basin would overflow into a shallow grass-lined facility from where the water would infiltrate rapidly. The airport has concerns about large pools of standing water that might attract birds and this will be considered when designing the facility. Also, the County is considering the conveyance of stormwater via grass-lined ditches as a form of treatment and will be estimating how much water is expected to be conveyed to the treatment facility.
3. Would it make more sense to have a series of smaller treatment facilities along the planned conveyance route? Response – This may exacerbate the high groundwater problems in these areas. However, this may in effect occur since some of the ditches may have very low gradients.
4. Is oil and grease an issue. Response – The County does not consider this an issue at this time.
5. Moving all the stormwater to one location will have an impact on the regional hydrology and will affect everyone’s wells to an extent. Are you addressing this? Response – The County wants a consultant to look at this. The County is also addressing this by allowing only the amount of water that went into the ground prior to the development to continue to go into the ground at that location after development. The only additional water that should be conveyed is the run-off from impermeable surfaces and the concept is to allow some seepage of this additional run-off in grass-lined ditches close to the site. The County is only displacing post-development water (i.e. the water that is currently not infiltrating at a pre-development site because it is being held and evaporated from grass surfaces etc. After development, it is this water that will need to be conveyed).
6. Is the County considering how the ground will cleanse the stormwater and potential pollution issues? Response – The County will ask the consultant to assess groundwater contamination and will need to be sure that the stormwater will not impact wells within and downgradient of the palaeo-channel. The County is also concerned about potential contaminants that may occur now and in the future upstream of this area and plans to do baseline monitoring to characterize this now in an attempt to avoid liability issues in the future.
7. How big is the treatment site? Response – The concept is for a 20-acre site near the polo grounds.
8. Did the seismic refraction determine the depth to bedrock in the palaeo-channel? Response – No. The seismic lines show the bedrock surface diving down but not the total depth of the palaeo-channel. The County acknowledges that more work is needed. The depth to water in the new well drilled at the polo grounds is about 155 feet below ground surface.
9. What area does the study include? Response - The area included in the study includes all areas that naturally drain to the palaeo-channel, including the Oswald property.

Brenda let the Planning Unit know that she would be available to answer any further questions by contacting her at the County.

Technical Consultant Contract Update

Rob Lindsay noted that the contract negotiations for the Phase II Technical Assessment work were completed with Tetrattech/KCM and GeoEngineers in late December 2005. Rob introduced Cynthia Carlstad as the team’s project manager.

Grant(s) Status Updates

Rob Lindsay noted that the supplemental WRIA 54 Instream Flow grant has been reviewed by the Steering Committee and is ready for submission to Ecology. All indications are that the grant will be funded in the next month. This grant will dovetail with the WRIA 55/57 Instream Flow grant to study the reach below Monroe Street and the confluence with Hangman Creek. Cynthia Carlstad informed the group that the technical team are hoping to start work in March / April 2006. To do this, the group will need to develop and agree upon a scope of work for the study. Rob Lindsay asked for volunteers to serve on the Instream Flow Committee. The

Instream Flow Committee will work with members of the WRIA 55/57 Planning Unit to develop a scope of work (i.e., identify reaches for study and study methodologies). Rob said that he is anticipating 3 to 5 meetings (including conference call meetings and a field trip) to develop the scope of work. A number of those present volunteered to serve on the Committee. Rob said that he would be contacting these people in the near future.

Rob noted that the WRIA 54 Water Quality supplemental grant application is also being developed but is not a priority at this time.

Proposed Planning Unit Meeting Schedule for 2006

Bill Gilmour passed around hardcopy of the proposed WRIA 54 Planning Unit Meeting schedule for 2006. The WRIA 54 Planning Unit meetings will be held on the fourth Wednesday of each month, alternating between the Airway Heights and Tum Tum Community Centers. Bill Gilmour asked for approval from the Planning Unit to consider moving the Tum Tum meeting location to the new fire station. Bill contacted the fire station and they do plan to have a meeting room ready in the next month or two. The Planning Unit approved Bill looking into the venue change.

Review of WRIA 54 Draft Operating Procedures

Bryony asked those present to make sure that they had a copy of the DRAFT Operating Procedures (Revised 1/25/2006) that include hand written comments. These DRAFT Operating Procedures (Revised 1/25/2006) include changes approved by the WRIA 54 Steering Committee at their January 11, 2006 meeting. The hand written comments provide an overview of the changes. The January 11, 2006 Steering Committee meeting was attended by Jim DeGraffenreid, Bill Gilmour, Keith Holliday, Brian Crossley and Lloyd Brewer. In addition, Dick Price provided comment via email.

In comparison to the DRAFT Operating Procedures presented at the November 2005 Planning Unit meeting, this revised document includes the following changes:

- The definition of consensus is “unanimous agreement” (page 1).
- Membership additions and removals (Section 5, (a) and (b), pages 2 and 3) are the same process for all Planning Unit members.
- Under voting procedures (Section 8, (a) (1), page 5), invited federal agencies and municipal water suppliers are included and can receive one vote.
- Under voting procedures (Section 8, (a) (3), page 5), if one person represents more than one organization, they may vote more than once, with each vote representing their different affiliations.
- Under decision making (Section 8, (b)(2), page 6), the decision making process to approve and amend the Operating Procedures will involve a two-meeting approval process with Planning Unit members working towards consensus decisions.

Bryony noted that the Steering Committee is hoping for approval of the DRAFT Operating Procedures at this and the next Planning Unit meeting. If, after discussion today, approval is not received, **the County will accept comment until February 6, 2006.** The DRAFT Operating Procedures will be revised, discussed at the February 8, 2006 Steering Committee meeting and presented at the February 22, 2006 Planning Unit meeting for the first approval and again at the March 22, 2006 Planning Unit meeting for final approval.

Bryony opened the floor to comments. The following were received and discussed:

- Keith Holliday requested that the definition of Implementing Government (page 1) be edited so that the definition includes the Washington State Department of Ecology. Following discussion the group agreed with the definition, “any state, federal, tribal or local government entity or others having legislative or regulatory authority”.
- Wes McCart asked that the use of “Best Available Science” (page 1 and Section 9(b), page 8) versus “Credible Data” be researched, discussed at the Steering Committee and again discussed at the next WRIA 54 Planning Unit meeting. Concern was expressed by some that a requirement to use Best Available Science may cause a problem when decisions have to be made with incomplete information

(as is sometimes the case in watershed planning). Keith Holliday noted that the Watershed Planning Act requires the use of best available science and that it is a good reminder to have this on the front page of the Operating Procedures.

- Wes McCart asked that specific language be added to Membership (Section 5 (a), page 2) to describe how the initial Planning Unit membership will be established. Those present agreed.
- Wes McCart requested that the following language be removed in Membership, Section 5 (a), page 2 – “With respect to non-governmental participants, after a person ~~eligible to participate in the Planning Unit~~ has attended three ...”. Those present agreed.
- Wes McCart and Jay Landreth requested no proxy votes (Section 8 (a) (2), page 5). Keith Holliday and Brian Crossely requested that proxy votes be kept so that Planning Unit members have a choice when voting. Following discussion, Wes and Jay said that they could agree with proxy votes if the following language was added to Section 8 (a) (2), page 5, 2nd sentence – “A Planning Unit member may designate another Planning Unit member, **or an alternate**, as their proxy vote. Others present agreed.
- Doris noted that a quorum of Planning Unit members is required for administrative decision making (Section 8 (b) (1), page 6). Following discussion, those present agreed to make no changes at this time but to reconsider the need for a quorum if this proves to be problematic for administrative decision making in the future.

At 11:50 am, Bryony asked the group if they would prefer to continue or to table the discussion until next meeting. The majority of those present agreed to continue the discussion after the public comment period.

Public Comment

No public comment was received.

Review of WRIA 54 Draft Operating Procedures (continued)

Discussion continued on how the initial Planning Unit membership will be established. Bryony said that the membership will be established by using the list of potential Planning Unit members developed during the Phase I process (and posted on the County’s web site at <http://www.spokanecounty.org/wqmp/wria54.htm>). Bryony will go through the sign-in-sheets for previous Planning Unit meetings. Those that have attended three consecutive monthly Planning Unit meetings will be listed as the initial Planning Unit membership. Bryony asked those present to be prepared to vote in these Planning Unit members at the February 22, 2006 Planning Unit meeting. Bryony reminded those present that **the County will accept additional comment on the DRAFT Operating Procedures until February 6, 2006.**

Adjourn

The next Planning Unit was scheduled for February 22, 2006, 6:00 – 8:00 pm at the Tum Tum Community Center. The next Steering Committee was scheduled for February 8, 2006, 10 am – noon at the Spokane County offices. The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 pm.