

FINAL
Meeting Summary
WRIA 54 - Lower Spokane River Watershed
March 22, 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.	Charlie Peterson, Spokane County Conservation District
Hank Nelson, Avista Corporation	Charisse Willis, Stevens PUD
Brian Crossley, Spokane Tribe	Jim DeGraffenreid, Lincoln County Planning
Bruce Smith, Landowner	Jerry Warner, Palisades Neighborhood
Robbie Castleberry, Landowner	Fran Bessermin, Lake Spokane Protection Assoc.
Bea Lackaff, Citizen	Mark Curtis, Stevens County Conservation District
Merrill Ott, Stevens County	Bob Derkey, WA State Dept. of Natural Resources
Jay Landreth, Landowner	Craig Schwyn, Spokane County Water Conservancy Board
David Luders, Fairchild Airforce Base and Indian Village Estates Water Assoc.	
Jeanne Barnes, Spokane Association of Realtors and Lake Spokane Park Homeowners Association	
John Patrouch, Northwest Whitewater Assoc. / Spokane Canoe and Kayak Club	

Call to Order

Bryony Stasney opened the meeting at approximately 10:00 am. Attendees introduced themselves and the interest / organization they represent. Bryony requested that each attendee complete the sign-in sheet.

The February 22, 2006 WRIA 54 meeting summary was reviewed with the following requests for changes: 1) Fran Bessermin noted on the first page that Bill and Gail's last name should be Madison and not Martisen; 2) Keith Holliday noted that on the 4th page, 2nd paragraph of the Instream Flow overview, 8th sentence "additional" should be replaced with "addition". Bryony noted that she would also add Rob Lindsay's fax number on page 4. With these changes, the February 22, 2006 WRIA 54 meeting summary was approved as final and will be posted on the County's web site at <http://www.spokanecounty.org/wqmp/wria54.htm>.

Public Comment

Rob Lindsay said that Bill Herrlinger had called the County to express concern about the development planned south of I-90 and just west of Spotted Road. Bill's concerns are also noted in the summary of the February 2006 WRIA 54 Planning Unit meeting. The development is planned within the Urban Growth Area (UGA) as defined by the Spokane County Comprehensive Plan and is also going to be providing public water supply. The development is just south of the WRIA 54 watershed boundary. Bill is concerned that this development may potentially impact the quality of the shallow aquifer in the area primarily due to stormwater discharges. Merrill Ott asked Rob to confirm that the development would be required to manage stormwater discharges. Rob said that since the development is within the UGA the development will need to meet Spokane County stormwater management requirements. Merrill asked where the stormwater would ultimately drain. Rob said to ground, primarily via swales and/or evaporative ponds. Rob reminded the group of the presentation given by Brenda Sims of Spokane County on stormwater management on the West Plains. This presentation and a summary are available on the County's web site for the January 2006 WRIA 54 meeting. Bryony asked those interested in knowing more about the development to call Bill Herrlinger at (509) 535-7733.

Instream Flow Technical Team Update – Ms. Cynthia Carlstad of TetraTech/KCM

Cynthia informed the group that the Instream Flow Technical Team (IFTT) met on March 8. At this meeting, three main items were addressed:

- Study purpose;
- Report on individual interviews with stakeholders. These interviews were completed to get a sense of issues regarding the instream flow study and potential recommendations; and,
- Study scope of work.

The consultant team has developed a draft scope of work that is nearly ready to circulate to the instream flow technical team. The work scoped is expected to provide detailed information for the Spokane River mainstem as well as valuable information for the tributaries.

The IFTT recommended using some grant funding to do detailed IFIM work on the free-flowing reach of the mainstem of the Spokane River within the lower portion of WRIA 57 and the upstream portion of WRIA 54, to the Ninemile dam backwater. This reach has been identified as having critical fish issues as well as interesting areas of groundwater discharge into the river which may be the reason why the fish are utilizing this reach.

Mark Wachtel of Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) gave a summary of the concerns and interests for some of the WRIA 54 tributaries including tributary flows and where the fish are. Tributaries discussed included Deep Creek, Coulee Creek, Spring Creek, Mill Creek, Chamokane Creek and Little Chamokane Creek. The IFTT decided to use the toe-width method to assess Deep Creek, Mill Creek and Spring Creek as part of this study. This work will be done by the consultant team in partnership with Spokane Tribe, WDFW and Ecology (represented by Guy Gregory). Brian Crossley said that he thought that Mill Creek had been dropped from the list of tributaries to be studied and that Little Chamokane had been added. Communication after the Planning Unit meeting with Rob Lindsay, Brian Crossley and Cynthia Carlstad confirmed that the draft instream flow scope of work identifies the tributaries to be evaluated by the toe width method as: Deep Creek, Coulee Creek, Little Chamokane Creek and the lower portions of Spring Creek. Data for Little Chamokane Creek and Spring Creek will be collected by WDFW and Spokane Tribe staff. In addition, the Spokane Tribe will provide some additional funding for the IFTT to assess the field data for Little Chamokane Creek and Spring Creek.

Cynthia noted that Pete Rittmueller (member of the consultant team) is working in the field today making preliminary selections for the Spokane River IFIM transects. Next Wednesday March 29, Hal Beecher (WDFW), John Couvert (Ecology), Brian Crossley (Spokane Tribe) and Mark Wachtel (WDFW) will be working with the IFTT to confirm the transect sites. Cynthia noted that members of the Planning Unit had expressed interest in being involved. However, since most of the work will be done in a boat (access along this mainstem reach is limited), it will be difficult to involve Planning Unit members in the field work. Cynthia invited those interested to meet with the field crew at 4 pm at the TetraTech/KCM office in Spokane on Wednesday March 29. The office is located at 1235 North Post Street, Suite 101 (Tel: 509-744-9271).

Cynthia noted that when the field crew takes high flow measurements (flow and surface water elevation) on the Spokane River in July, a field trip will be scheduled so those interested can gather on the river bank and watch the information being collected. Cynthia asked the group to let her know if this would meet people's needs to be involved in the instream flow work.

Bea Lackaff noted that July seemed late for a high flow measurement. John Patrouch asked what flow would be considered the high flow target. Cynthia said that she could not answer the question for sure but recollected that 17,000 cfs may be the target high flow. John added that the Spokane River typically drops to about 3,000 – 2,500 cfs around July 4. High flow is typically in March – April. Cynthia said that she would pass this information on to Pete. Cynthia said that the plan is to take three sets of measurements (flow and surface water elevation) at high, medium and low flow, with the high flow measurement taken first to minimize the potential for any shifting of the stream channel during the measurement period.

Bill Gilmour asked Cynthia to describe how the transect sites will be selected for the mainstem Spokane River. Cynthia said that the objective is to have sufficient number of transects to represent each of the habitat types at least once and preferably twice. The preliminary transect sites selected by Pete today to meet this objective will then be confirmed by the agency and consultant crew on March 29.

Lloyd Brewer asked if the rationale for selection of transects would be documented. Cynthia said that the team would be taking photographs but was not planning to document the rationale for transect selection and that she could ask Pete Rittmueller if he could do this. Merrill Ott agreed with Lloyd that documentation on why transects are selected would be good to have to pass on to the Planning Unit members to improve understanding. Rob said that a good summary of the March 29 field work and subsequent meeting would likely provide this information. Merrill noted that the group needed to be careful not to ask the consultant to do out of scope work. Cynthia said that she felt that this was a reasonable request and could see the information being a summary of the field notes and field discussion supported by photographs. John Patrouch said he would like this information posted on the County's web site. Cynthia said that transects are selected in part because they represent a particular habitat type. Experience is needed to identify these transects and this is why a number of people will be involved in the March 29 fieldwork to confirm the study transects.

Rob Lindsay noted that the IFTT meeting scheduled for this afternoon (March 22) has been cancelled since the team has completed the work that was originally planned for this meeting. Rob also informed the group that Spokane County would like to host an instream flow field trip after the consultant team has had time to collect some data. The field trip date is to be announced and will likely occur in late spring / early summer.

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

Final Approval of the draft WRIA 54 Operating Procedures

Bryony made sure that everyone had a copy of the draft Operating Procedures and brought everyone's attention to the note at the top of today's meeting notice – that the second approval of the draft Operating Procedures will be sought at this meeting.

Bryony reminded the group that the draft Operating Procedures (dated 020806) were discussed and first approved at the February 22, 2006 Planning Unit meeting. The changes made to the previous version of the draft Operating Procedures to achieve the 020806 version are noted in the February 22, 2006 Planning Unit meeting summary. Bryony asked the group if they would like her to go over the February 22, 2006 discussion. Those present said no. Bill Gilmour made the motion to approve for the second time the draft Operating Procedures (dated 020806). Jim DeGraffenreid seconded. All present agreed.

Merrill Ott reminded those present to follow the Operating Procedures regarding proxy votes and to notify the Lead Agency (i.e., Spokane County) prior to the meeting if someone is going to vote by proxy. Rob said that Planning Unit members can call or email the County in advance.

Confirm Planning Unit Membership Roster

Bryony provided handouts of the draft membership roster and described how the roster was developed (i.e., the list of potential members was considered initially and representation was added based on attendance since May 2004). Per the Operating Procedures an entity / individual is eligible for Planning Unit membership once they have attended three consecutive meetings. Also, if an entity / individual misses three consecutive meetings they can be removed from the membership roster (by approval of the members). Bryony asked those present to make sure that they understand the membership section of the Operating Procedures (Section 5, starting on Page 2).

Bryony asked those present to take a couple of minutes to look through the membership roster and confirm that the entity, primary representative and alternates are noted correctly. Bryony asked that those present to make

corrections to the handout and provide corrections for a final OK at the next meeting. Bryony said she would update the roster while those present reviewed the information.

After a few minutes of review time, Bryony asked if anyone had questions. David Luders responded to make sure that there was no misunderstanding about his affiliation. David said that he will represent primarily Fairchild Airforce Base and would have only one vote at a meeting. In the event of a vote where he felt that the Indian Village Estates Water Association needed to be represented, he would find an alternate to take his place to represent Fairchild Airforce Base. Jeanne Barnes noted that she would primarily represent the Spokane Association of Realtors and would bring an alternate in the event that she felt a need to vote on behalf of the Lake Spokane Park Homeowners Association.

Bryony informed the group that she had received an email from Merrill Ott confirming that the Stevens County Water Conservancy Board (currently represented on the WRIA 54 Planning Unit by Wes McCart) is considered an advisory board to Stevens County and would therefore not have a separate vote. Wes McCart will have one vote as the representative of the Stevens County Farm Bureau. Jerry Warner will be primary representative for the Palisades Neighborhood. Bruce Smith will be a landowner with Linda Smith as his alternate. John Patrouch plans to attend on behalf of the Northwest Whitewater Assoc. / Spokane Canoe and Kayak Club (as one paddlers' vote) and will confirm this via email (*Note – confirmation received from John via email 032706*). Craig Schwyn will represent the Spokane County Water Conservancy Board, an advisory board to Spokane County, and will therefore not vote.

Discussion followed regarding one person attending meetings and representing more than one entity even though they would not vote twice. Bryony said that for the attendance log, if Jeanne Barnes attends for example, this will be recorded as attendance at the meeting by both the Spokane Association of Realtors and the Lake Spokane Park Homeowners Association. However, Jeanne could vote only once. Lloyd expressed concern that those voting need to have been involved and understand the issues and that this may not be the case if they have not attended Planning Unit meetings on a regular basis. David Luders noted that the meeting summaries are detailed enough to inform those who are unable to attend meetings.

Rob noted that there have been 18 Planning Unit meetings since May 2004 and between each Planning Unit meeting a Steering Committee meeting is usually scheduled. Both the Planning Unit and Steering Committee meetings are open to everyone to attend. The intent of Steering Committee meetings are to discuss issues such as the agenda for the next Planning Unit meeting and other issues that do not make sense to discuss with the entire Planning Unit. Rob invited any others who want to join the Steering Committee to give him a call. Rob said that he wants the process to be as transparent as possible. Merrill said that in processes like this it really helps to have some guidance in sorting through issues prior to Planning Unit meetings. Merrill said that he senses that Spokane County is working hard to keep this process transparent. Merrill asked those present to always feel that they can identify and discuss problems. Jim DeGraffenreid invited Dave Luders to attend a Steering Committee meeting so that he can understand what happens at these meetings. Jim said that everything that is voted on at a Steering Committee meeting comes in front of the Planning Unit. The purpose of Steering Committee meetings is to keep the Planning Unit moving through the Watershed Planning process efficiently.

Lloyd pointed out that in Section 8 (3), page 5 of the Operating Procedures it states that, "The Planning Unit may recognize a single individual as representing more than one membership." Bryony clarified that at present she plans to log attendance so that if an individual attends and is representing two entities, both entities will be noted as having a representative at that meeting. Lloyd said that this needs to be approved by the Planning Unit on a case by case basis. Bill Gilmour made the motion that the Planning Unit approve: 1) David Luders representing both Fairchild Airforce Base and the Indian Village Estates Water Association; and, 2) Jeanne Barnes representing both Spokane Association of Realtors and the Lake Spokane Park Homeowners Association. Merrill Ott seconded. David Luders abstained. All others agreed.

Bryony suggested that the Planning Unit table further discussion on Planning Unit membership until the April meeting so as to keep to the agenda. Those present agreed. Bryony asked that those present review the roster and get back to her via email with any edits within one week (i.e., by end of the day March 29, 2006).

Columbia Water Bill Update – Keith Holliday

Keith Holliday noted that this bill (Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 2860) went through the House and Senate in about three days after 30 years of argument and discussion. The opportunities of the bill are not well understood. The bill makes reference to a number of geographic areas:

- The Columbia Basin within WA;
- The Columbia River, including surface water within the Ordinary High Water Mark and the groundwater within one mile of the Ordinary High Water Mark;
- The Snake River, including surface water within the Ordinary High Water Mark and the groundwater within one mile of the Ordinary High Water Mark;
- The Columbia Basin irrigation project; and,
- The Odessa Subarea (defined in WAC).

The bill has 11 sections:

- 1) Legislative Intent
- 2) Water Supply Development Account
- 3) Use of Water Supply Created
- 4) Voluntary Regional Agreements
- 5) Water Supply Inventory and Demand Forecast
- 6) Water Resources Information System
- 7) Appropriations
- 8) Account Management
- 9) Authorization
- 10) Effective July 1, 2006
- 11) Funding required or act is null and void

From section to section the geographic areas that the section refers to are not clear.

In Section 1, the legislative intent is clearly defined as, "... development of new water supplies that includes storage and conservation in order to meet the economic and community development needs of people and the instream flow needs of fish." Section 1 is specific to the Columbia River and the Snake River. In a follow on paragraph, this section directs Ecology to aggressively pursue storage and conservation.

Section 2 has to do with a water supply development account. It specifies that 2/3 of the funds can be used to assess, plan and develop new storage projects and 1/3 of the funds can be used for improving / altering existing storage facilities, implementing conservation projects or any other actions that provide access to new water supplies. This section is fairly silent on where these projects can occur. Ecology is therefore interpreting this as meaning that the projects may occur anywhere in the Columbia Basin within WA. Section 2 also states that these funds may not be used for: acquiring / transferring water from one WRIA to another without legislative authority; or, constructing new storage facilities until Ecology evaluates water use, quantity and benefits and costs of uses, including short-term and long-term economic, cultural and environmental effects.

Section 3 talks about how water that is supplied through conservation and storage should be used:

- 1/3 of active storage must be used for instream flows; and,
- 2/3 of active storage can be used for out-of-stream uses and prioritizes the uses as:
 1. Alternatives to groundwater use in the Odessa Subarea;
 2. Source for pending water rights applications on the Columbia River mainstem;
 3. Uninterruptible supply for interruptible water rights on the Columbia and Snake River; and,
 4. New municipal, domestic, industrial and irrigation water needs.

Section 4 has to do with the ability to set up voluntary regional agreements to provide new water for out-of-stream uses with the following caveats:

- No negative impact on the Columbia River or Snake River instream flows; and,
- Must be in harmony with adopted watershed plans.

Ecology is not sure what “harmony” means but is currently interpreting this to mean that if Planning Unit members are agreeable with what is included in these agreements that that is OK. However, if there is a large outcry and Legislative Representatives start to hear from Planning Unit members that the contents of these agreements are not supported by the Watershed Plan, there will likely be issues to discuss. Section 4 expires June 30, 2012. Previous bills did not pass the Legislature because they were addressing specific projects. This time the bill was not geared towards specific projects although there are projects that are implied within the bill. It seems that the Legislature is giving the authorization and funding to whichever group is most organized i.e., has regional agreements drafted and has projects developed to the point where Ecology can take them through the permitting process. It will therefore be a very competitive process.

In Section 5 there is some direction to Ecology to develop reports on implemented conservation projects and potential water supply and storage projects related to the Columbia River, both of which are due on November 15, 2006. The water supply / demand forecast must be updated annually and the water supply inventory has to be updated every five years.

In Section 6, Ecology is required to develop a Columbia River mainstem water resources information system, including compilation of total aggregate quantity of water rights that have been issued (estimated at 4,000 – 6,000 rights) and total aggregate volume of current water use (i.e., puts more emphasis on the need to meter water use). This data must be published no later than June 30, 2009. Ecology is considering putting together a GIS system for the Columbia River mainstem and Snake River mainstem.

Section 7 deals with two specific appropriations:

- \$6 million for:
 - Off-mainstem storage feasibility studies;
 - Impacts of changing operations at Potholes reservoir; and,
 - Purchase / installation of water measuring devices (e.g., stream gages). Ecology is not clear on the area to which this applies but is considering this throughout the Columbia Basin in WA.
- \$10 million for storage development / enhancement projects, including the specific projects:
 - Surface water supply for the Odessa Subarea within the Columbia Basin Federal Reclamation Project;
 - Water supply enhancement for the Walla Walla River (ASR) and Yakima River (Blackrock); and,
 - Investments resulting in water use efficiency.

Considering the cost estimates that have been projected for projects like Blackrock (\$2-6 billion), the total appropriation for this bill may not go far if these projects are well organized and have support.

The following questions were asked:

- Will irrigation efficiency projects be considered for funding throughout the Columbia River Basin in WA or will the funds be applied to the Fish Critical watersheds? Keith said that the funds are most likely to go to the Odessa Subarea and Columbia Basin Federal Reclamation Project.

Bryony noted that a copy of Keith’s presentation will be posted on the County’s website along with the meeting summary (<http://www.spokanecounty.org/wqmp/wria54.htm>).

Identify Potential Early Action Items

Bryony asked that Keith Holliday explain the concept of an early action item. Keith said that the Planning Unit can use some of the Phase III Watershed Planning funds (totaling \$250,000) to implement early action projects. As an example, the WRIA 56 group completed Phase III with about \$60,000 remaining for early implementation projects. Keith clarified that early action items are not the same as costs estimates that Ecology is currently requesting from Planning Units to help them develop 2007 through 2009 budget estimates.

Keith noted that it is often necessary to complete Phase II (the technical assessment phase of Watershed Planning) so that the Planning Unit has a good technical understanding of the watershed prior to identifying early action projects. Merrill asked if the Phase III funds can be used to leverage other funds. Keith said they cannot be used to leverage other state funds.

Lloyd Brewer said that he understood that much of the technical assessment work for WRIA 56 was completed by the Spokane County Conservation District so the group was able to save money during Phase II and Phase III of Watershed Planning. In contrast, WRIA 55/57 spent all of the Phase II and III funds. Lloyd said that it seems premature to identify early action items now before the technical assessments and Watershed Plan are complete.

Cynthia noted that early action projects are a good idea to keep Planning Unit members energized but that Lloyd is right that it is a little early to identify specific projects. One idea might be to convene another workgroup to develop these ideas and bring them back to the Planning Unit. Some of these projects may not need to use Phase II funds and may be funded through other mechanisms (e.g., flow monitoring, water rights work, and extension of on-going work). Keith went on to say that this can be a good idea because in some cases data needs for projects can be identified early and can be completed during the technical assessment phase to support later implementation. The group agreed to consider convening a workgroup at the next meeting.

Merrill noted that the WRIA 59 group started up the Stevens County Water Conservancy Board as an early action item. Bill Gilmour noted that there might be opportunities to collect additional data on streams to support the instream flow project.

Public Comment

Bill Gilmour said that the next meeting will be held at the Lakeside High School library and will hopefully be more comfortable than the Tum Tum Community Center. Fran said that there is also the option to use the Lakeside High School cafeteria. During the summertime the library will be closed so we will likely use the cafeteria in the summer.

On April 19 Bill Gilmour will give a WRIA 54 watershed presentation at the Spokane Flyfishers meeting. The meeting starts at 7pm at St. Francis School, 1104 West Heroy, Spokane. Chris Donnelly (WDFW) will be giving a presentation on the fishing forecast for the upcoming year.

Adjourn

The following meetings are scheduled:

- The next Planning Unit meeting is scheduled for April 26, 2006, 6:00 – 8:00 pm at the Lakeside High School.
- The next Steering Committee is scheduled for April 12, 2006, 10 am – noon at the Spokane County building, Conference Room 4A.
- An Instream Flow Technical Team open meeting is scheduled at 4 pm at the TetraTech/KCM office in Spokane on Wednesday March 29. The office is located at 1235 North Post Street, Suite 101 (Tel: 509-744-9271). An email will be sent out to the Planning Unit as a reminder for this meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm.