

FINAL
Meeting Summary
WRIA 54 - Lower Spokane River Watershed
September 24, 2008

Location: Lakeside High School Library, Ninemile Falls, WA.

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

Mike Hermanson, Spokane County	Sara Hunt, WA State Dept. of Ecology
Rob Lindsay, Spokane County	Lloyd Brewer, City of Spokane
Brian Crossley, Spokane Tribe	Dick Price, Stevens PUD #1
Bart Haggin, Lands Council	Ann Fackenthal, Lake Spokane Protection Assoc.
Stan Miller, Citizen	
Dinah Reed, EWU Planning Dept.	Misha Van Mansum, Spokane County Community College
Cynthia Carlstad, TetraTech	Bryony Stasney, Golder Associates Inc.
Wes McCart, Stevens County Farm Bureau, Stevens County Water Conservancy Board and Landowner	

Call to Order

Bryony opened the meeting at 6:00 pm. Attendees introduced themselves. Bryony requested that each attendee complete the sign-in sheet.

Public Comment

- Bryony informed the group of a free Water Management and Field Auditing Strategies Workshop (organized by the WRIA 55/57 WIT) on October 22, 2008, 8:30 - 3:30 pm at Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District, 22510 E Mission, Liberty Lake, WA.
- Bart asked if the EPA's decision to reject phosphorus as background level at the ID-WA state line affects this planning process. Cynthia noted that the WRIA 54 Plan will defer to the TMDL collaboration process to implement the TMDLs when they are approved. The draft TMDL includes identification of data gaps in WRIA 54 on how non-point sources are addressed. The WRIA 54 Planning Unit has developed a plan for a Ninemile non-point source monitoring program, in part to address this data gap. Cynthia said that she does not think that there is a direct link between the EPA decision and the need for the Ninemile monitoring. Mike concurred that the Ninemile work intends to quantify phosphorus inputs to Lake Spokane from non-point sources.

Presentation and Discussion of the Draft Issue Modules – Cynthia Carlstad, TetraTech

Cynthia Carlstad (TetraTech) made sure that those present had hard copies of the September 2008 working draft of the WRIA 54 Watershed Plan. Cynthia said that she intends to walk through the working draft and make suggested edits electronically. Cynthia requested that the group not circulate the document since it is a working draft. Cynthia noted that she will only include the edits made on the screen into the draft Watershed Plan that will be mailed out to the Planning Unit in a couple of weeks. Cynthia encouraged the Planning Unit to review the preliminary draft Plan and provide comments on specifics / details by the November meeting.

Purpose of presentation

- Overview of table of contents
- Introduction to the technical modules
- Opportunity for questions
- Opportunity for electronic edits
- Review schedule

Bryony will note items that will require significant discussion on the flip chart. These items will form the agenda for the October Planning Unit meeting.

Cynthia reminded the group of the WRIA 54 Planning Unit mission statement:

WRIA 54 Mission Statement (revised 9-27-06) - The WRIA 54 Planning Unit will create a living watershed management plan providing implementation strategies to manage water resources while improving water quality. The plan will support economic well-being, and, protect and enhance the environment through collaborative citizen, business, and government partnerships.

Cynthia walked through the working draft. Each issue module includes the following:

- An overview of the recommendations on the first page of each issue module.
- A brief synopsis of background information from technical studies.
- Consideration of options section is a discussion on how / why the work group selected the recommendations.
- Lists recommendations and suggested activities. The Planning Unit will approve / be responsible for the recommendations. The suggested activities could be implemented to support the recommendations.

Cynthia asked the group if they were comfortable with the Watershed Plan format.

Wes said that he is concerned that some of the detail documented by the work groups does not appear to be included in the Plan. Cynthia noted that she consolidated and rearranged the issue papers and cut out some descriptive information that she felt was not necessary for the Plan. It will up to the Planning Unit to decide whether or not to include the issue papers as an appendix to the Plan.

Mike noted that almost everything from the issue papers is captured in the Watershed Plan. The issues and supporting information are rearranged, so the work group members may not be familiar with the way the information is structured in the Plan.

Sara noted that most Plans include a matrix listing recommendations and obligations and implementing entities. Cynthia said this would be discussed at the October / November meeting. Cynthia noted that any of the suggested activities could be upgraded to a recommendation if an entity decides to obligate themselves to take on the suggested activity.

Chapter 4 - Water Rights Administration

The Planning Unit discussed the following:

- The recommendation for a water master is echoed by adjacent Watershed Plans (WRIA 59 and WRIA 55/57). The role of a watermaster is changing and now includes compliance, education and outreach.
- Wes noted that the WRATs database is continually updated as Ecology finds errors.
- Lloyd said that he would check with the City of Spokane regarding the recommendation for adjudication.
- Cynthia said that she would check how the City of Spokane's water rights are documented in the Plan and correct as necessary.
- Cynthia noted that the suggestion that Ecology update the Planning Unit on water rights activity would involve an Ecology representative informing the Planning Unit of water rights applications received, processing and public comment periods as well as water rights policy development and updates on working groups such as the exempt-well working group.

Chapter 5 - Promoting Efficient Use of Water

The Planning Unit discussed the following:

- Need for increased water resources / natural resources staffing for Spokane, Lincoln and Stevens Counties and Spokane Tribe – add to last suggestion on page 5-3 of the preliminary Plan and consider as a more general recommendation in the Plan.
- Add the WA-ID regional dialogue to the list on 5-1.

Chapter 6 - Providing Water for Future Needs

The Planning Unit discussed the following:

- Lloyd noted that WRIA 54 includes a portion of the Spokane Valley Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer, where water is available and supplied by water systems. Lloyd noted that this information should be included in the background section.
- Lloyd noted that the description of the inchoate water rights on page 6-1 does not appear to include the City's inchoate water rights. Lloyd and Cynthia said that they would check this information and revise. The City of Spokane's service area extends into WRIA 54. The City's inchoate water rights can be used in the City's service area in WRIA 54.
- Cynthia will check zoning and growth predictions and dates (i.e., 2025) noted on page 6-1 in the background section – and will revise / add references (e.g., OFM medium level for Spokane County) as needed.
- Wes noted on page 6-5 that transfers can be processed through Conservancy Boards.

Chapter 7 - Water Storage Opportunities

Cynthia noted that this section is a synopsis of the WRIA 54 storage assessment.

Chapter 8 - Integrating Land Use and Water Supply Planning

This module includes the following components:

- Considering water supply in long range planning
- Land use regulation and water supply permitting (i.e., short range planning and water supply)
- Impacts of land development on water quantity, quality and habitat
- Maintaining and enhancing sustainable agriculture
- Public access to water-related recreation areas
- Land use impacts associated with beavers

The Planning Unit discussed the following:

- Mike noted that Counties in general are not required to review water system plans (WSPs). Washington State Department of Health (DOH) is required to ensure consistency between local planning documents and WSPs with the exception of Watershed Plans. Ecology is required to review WSPs to ensure that the WSPs are “not inconsistent with” Watershed Plans. As part of the Coordinated Water System Plan (CWSP) Spokane County reviews aspects of the WSPs to ensure consistency with the CWSP. Spokane County does not review other plans (e.g., the Comprehensive Plan) for consistency with Watershed Plans. WDOH is responsible for review of water system plans for consistency with other local land use plans.
- Mike noted that consistent format should be used for the recommendations and the suggestions.
- Dick suggested adding a recommendation that encourages use of reclaimed water for agriculture – in the section on maintaining and enhancing sustainable agriculture.
- Wes expressed concern that a number of the actions designated as suggestions maybe should be considered as recommendations or obligations.
- Mike noted that the work groups did not have time to detail each of the suggestions. However, some entities did put specifics to some recommendations and suggestions since those entities are ready to implement these recommendations / suggestions.
- Stan noted that in some processes (such as WRIA 55/57) details were addressed twice – once in the planning phase and a second time in the implementation phase. By including general suggestions that can be detailed in the implementation phase, the Planning Unit is not having to do this twice.
- Bryony noted that actions to be taken on by entities as either recommendations or obligations will be discussed at the next meeting, once the implementation matrix has been compiled.
- Rob noted that he needs to work with his staff over the next month to select which actions will be recommendations or obligations for Spokane County.
- Lloyd suggested editing the recommendation on page 8-8 to read, “Tax incentives should be considered

for agriculture land where practices promote sustainable agriculture and/or sustainable communities.”

- Ann confirmed that there are beaver issues on Lake Spokane.

Chapter 9 - Instream Flow

This module includes the following components:

- Spokane River main stem above Nine Mile Dam
- Spokane River main stem below Nine Mile Dam
- WRIA 54 tributaries

The Planning Unit discussed the following:

- Lloyd noted that withdrawal of water in the West Arm portion of the SVRP aquifer has no measureable effect at the Spokane gage (based on modeling) however, there may be a reduction of flows (and potentially impacts to senior water rights) in the river reach downstream of the West Arm.
- Wes noted that the WRIA 54 and 55/57 memo does not provide a recommendation for instream flow – and the Spokane River main stem section should state this clearly in addition to what was agreed on and the additional work that the State has agreed to conduct.
- Cynthia noted that the WRIA 54 and 55/57 memo will be included as a hard copy appendix to the Plan.
- Cynthia asked the Planning Unit if they want to identify a process to continue the instream flow process for the Spokane River main stem – the Planning Unit did not consider this further.

Chapter 10 - Water Quality

Cynthia walked the Planning Unit through this module.

Chapter 11 - Technical Information Base

Cynthia walked the Planning Unit through the technical information matrix (Table 11-1).

Chapter 12 - Water Resources Education

Cynthia walked the Planning Unit through this module.

Review Schedule:

- Draft Watershed Plan to Planning Unit by second week in October.
- Review implementation matrix at the October 22 meeting.
- Comments on the draft Watershed Plan by November 19.
- The Watershed Plan for submission to Councils is anticipated in January / February 2009.

Flip Chart Notes:

The list below summarized the notes taken on the flip chart:

- Section 1 - develop and add goals for Water Storage.
- Implementation matrix - sort obligations & recommendations in October/November
- Consider including issue papers in appendix – OR - Planning Unit to identify specific details from the issue papers to include in the Plan.
- Additional natural resources staff for counties and Spokane Tribe - add as general recommendation.
- Add the Washington-Idaho regional dialogue to list on p5-1.
- Section 6 – note SVRP as a water source and clarify that a portion of the SVRP (West Arm +) occurs in southeastern WRIA 54.
- Section 6 – check accounting of inchoate water rights (in Phase 2 Tech Assessment accounting does not include the City of Spokane inchoate WRs). Call out separately and explain City of Spokane inchoate water rights.
- Page 6.1 – check growth / build out numbers and dates.

- Page 8.8 – Wes suggested after the meeting that the first bullet on this page be edited to read, “Encourage cluster development that results in more open space”.
- Consistent bullets and indentation for recommendations and suggestions.
- Section 8 – Include a recommendation for the use of reclaimed water for agriculture.
- Page 9.2, first paragraph under Recommendation, “little to no impacts ... at the Spokane gage” – Planning Unit discussed that groundwater pumping does have the potential to impact /reduce flows in the lower river (where instream flow work indicates that habitat flows are less). Consider wording /add sentence to clarify this.
- Page 9.2 – Clarify that the instream flow work group “agreed to disagree”. The Planning Unit is not recommending instream flow values at this time. The work did capture agreement on control points and additional work [a) Spring flows; b) Delineating groundwater]. Add more detail about the memo and what the Planning Unit is recommending to Ecology. Consider a recommendation from WRIA 54?

Review and Approve August 2008 Meeting Summary

The draft August 27, 2008 WRIA 54 Planning Unit meeting summary was reviewed and approved as final with no changes by those present. The final summary will be posted on Spokane County’s web site at <http://www.spokanecounty.org/wqmp/wria54.htm>.

Public Comment

Sara noted that the solicitation period for Ecology’s next biennium of watershed grants will be out on October 1. Submissions will be due to Ecology on about Dec 1 – 5 for the administrative grants and a little later for the capital grants. Mike said that he would review and evaluate the current list and ranking and may host a Committee meeting to discuss.

Administration and General Schedule Announcements

The following meetings are scheduled and open to everyone:

OCTOBER 2008:

- WRIA 54 Planning Unit, Wednesday October 22, 10 am – noon, Airway Heights Community Center, Airway Heights, WA.

NOVEMBER 2008:

- WRIA 54 Planning Unit, Wednesday November 19, 6:00 – 8:30 pm, Lakeside High School Library, Lakeside, WA.

DECEMBER 2008:

- WRIA 54 Planning Unit, Wednesday December 17, 10 am – noon, Airway Heights Community Center, Airway Heights, WA.

Next Meeting Date and Adjourn

The next WRIA 54 Planning Unit meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 22, 2008, 10:00 am – noon, Airway Heights Community Center. Bryony adjourned the meeting at 8:05 pm.