

FINAL
Meeting Summary
WRIA 54 - Lower Spokane River Watershed
March 25, 2009

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	Larry Guenther, Stevens County Commissioner
Lloyd Brewer, City of Spokane	Brian Crossley, Spokane Tribe
Bryan St. Clair, City of Airway Heights	Linda Kiefer, Stevens County Watershed Planning
Hank Nelson, Avista	Charlie Peterson, Spokane County Conservation District
Al Bendle, Citizen	Craig Volosing, Landowner and Palisades Neighborhood
Laurie Clift, Citizen	Dinah Reed, Planning Student, Eastern Washington University
Bart Haggin, Lands Council	Ann Fackenthall, Lake Spokane Protection Assoc.
Dave Jones, Spokane County Planning Commission	
Cynthia Carlstad, Tetra Tech	Bryony Stasney, Golder Associates Inc.
Wes McCart, Stevens County Farm Bureau, Stevens County Water Conservancy Board and Landowner	
Jeanne Barnes, Spokane Association of Realtors and Lake Spokane Park Homeowners Association	

Call to Order

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

Review and Approve January 2009 Meeting Summary

The draft January 28, 2009 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/project54/asp/home.asp>.

Public Comment

- Larry Guenther said that the Stevens County Commissioners received feedback from Rob Lindsay and Mike Hermanson at Spokane County on the comments that Stevens County submitted on the public review draft Watershed Plan. Larry thanked Rob and Mike for their time. Larry said that as a result, Stevens County is comfortable with most of the changes.
- Bryony noted the following conferences:
 - The Lands Council is hosting a forum entitled "Working Beavers" on March 31 and April 1.
 - The 7th Annual Washington Hydrogeology Symposium will be held in Tacoma on April 28 through April 30.
- Sara said that the House and Senate will have their budgets finalized soon. Until the budgets are finalized, Ecology is not certain of the budget reductions for Watershed Planning. Sara suggested that the Planning Unit have a very lean Detailed Implementation Plan and apply as much Phase IV year one funding to project implementation. Larry asked if any stimulus money is expected for Watershed Planning. Sara noted that some Federal Stimulus monies are available for drinking water systems and for water reclamation and septic systems. Sara encouraged the Planning Unit to submit the Phase IV application after Ecology has finalized their budget.
- Sara has asked Cathy Hubbard to see if there are watershed council funds available for WRIA 54. Sara noted that the availability of these funds will depend on the final state budget.

Discussion of the Public Review Draft Watershed Plan – Cynthia Carlstad, Tetra Tech

Cynthia provided the following handouts:

- Log of comments received on the public review draft Watershed Plan;
- Three-page list of discussion items for today's meeting.
- Pages 6-1 and 6-2 of the draft Plan to support discussion on formatting recommendations versus actions to consider;
- Revised draft Chapter 13, based on comments received; and,
- Letter dated March 10 from the Stevens County Board of County Commissioners to Spokane County Commissioner Mark Richard.

Cynthia noted the following agenda:

- Proposed schedule for finalizing the Plan.
- General overview of comments received.
- Items for discussion.

Cynthia reminded the group of the schedule previously discussed in January to finalize the Plan:

- March 2009
 - Comments due on Public Review Draft Plan - March 11
 - Planning Unit meeting – March 25 - discussion of major comments
 - Final draft Plan available
- April 2009
 - First Planning Unit approval of Plan – April 22
 - Planning Unit second approval?
 - Celebrate!
- May – June 2009
 - Counties adoption process (each County will need to schedule a public hearing)
- August 2009
 - Initiate Phase 4

Because of the number of comments received, the draft final Watershed Plan will not be available for approximately a week following tonight's meeting. If the Planning Unit agrees, first approval on the Watershed Plan will be sought at the April 22 Planning Unit meeting. Second approval would then be sought at the May Planning Unit meeting which would be rescheduled for May 6 (three weeks earlier than normal) to allow more time for the County adoption process. Rob Lindsay noted that he is working with Spokane County's SEPA person and will be conducting the SEPA review and notification once the draft Plan is finalized.

General Overview of Comments

- All comments on the public review draft Plan and the proposed response to comments are included on the comment response log. Cynthia encouraged the group to review their comments and the responses and make sure that their comments are included. Cynthia noted that this log will be included as an appendix to the Plan. Cynthia described the criteria used to respond to comments and requested edits:
 - A requested edit was made if it was a minor (wording only) edit that did not affect language requested by another Planning Unit member or the Planning Unit as a whole.
 - A requested edit was not made if it affected language requested by another Planning Unit member or had previously been discussed by the Planning Unit.
 - No recommendations were added based on comments received. Several requests for new recommendations were flagged for discussion at tonight's meeting.

The items to be discussed at the meeting today are edits that need confirmation from the group.

- Cynthia noted that the review of technical information developed during this Planning Process (included in Chapter 3 of the Plan) is a review of the technical studies completed and does not include updates to the information based on recent advancements in science etc.. Where these advancements / new information are relevant to the recommendations, this new information is included in the appropriate

technical issue modules (i.e., Chapters 4 through 12).

Discussion of Comments on Public Review Draft Watershed Plan

Cynthia reviewed the discussion items for today's meeting using the handout provided. The group agreed with the fourteen items listed and added two additional discussion items. The following list summarizes the items discussed and the actions agreed by the Planning Unit to address the discussion items.

1. Cover photo – replace? **Yes. Planning Unit OKed Cynthia to select the new picture(s).**
2. Objectives are not included in the Plan, should Planning Unit develop objectives to include in the Watershed Plan? **Planning Unit agreed to include text in the Plan that describes the mechanism that will be utilized during implementation to incorporate objectives. Lloyd suggested adding this text to C13 in the section that discusses the interlocal agreement.**
3. Linkage between recommendations, mission statement and goals, and legal requirements – preview proposed presentation of this. **Planning Unit liked the idea of incorporating this information as a table. Linda Kiefer will provide Cynthia with a table that illustrates how this was done for WRIA 59.**
4. Recommendations format – provide example of proposed format, get input/approval. **Planning Unit liked the format that Cynthia recommended and approved the language “actions to consider in implementation” versus “suggestions”. Planning Unit requested that the actions be numbered (e.g., WFN-1-1) and a note included throughout the technical modules saying that the recommendations, obligations, actions and project components (pg 11-5) etc. are not listed in priority order. Planning Unit asked that there be an explanation in the text and executive summary of what recommendations and obligations are and how the recommendations and obligations differ from and are linked to the actions to consider.**
5. Request that Planning Unit read and consider the 3/10/09 Stevens County comment letter to Spokane County Commissioner Mark Richard included with this set of comments as it related to Section 13 - Implementation. The following items noted in the letter need further discussion by the Planning Unit as the group works toward Phase 4 Implementation:
 - (a) Funding considerations for jurisdictions where projects will be implemented.
 - (b) Equitable considerations for implementing projects and funding, with respect to the natural differences between the tribe, rural and urban counties, and others.
 - (c) Management by local jurisdictions through interlocal agreements for portions of the implementation work within the rural counties and tribal lands.
 - (d) Increased Citizen Participation - work to increase public participation and coordinate projects more closely with local jurisdictions, to increase public involvement.**The Planning Unit discussed and favored the idea of regional work groups that work within their communities to develop implementation projects and then for these regional groups to present projects to the Planning Unit for funding consideration / implementation. The Planning Unit agreed that they would evaluate each of the projects proposed on their merit. Linda Kiefer said that she would provide additional edits to Chapter 13 to Cynthia via email.**
6. Implementation recommendations – review edited structure and content. **Cynthia provided an overview of the revised draft Chapter 13 (provided as a handout). The Planning Unit agreed with the format and content of the revised Chapter 13.**

7. Content of Table 2-5 (Fisheries of WRIA 54) – Hank Nelson and Brian Crossley are working together to agree on table content. **Hank and Brian agreed to resolve the contents of Table 2-5 in the next day or two and provide resolution to Cynthia. Wes asked that the dotted lines in the table be removed.**
8. Request for the following suggestions under WFN-4 be elevated to recommendation:
 - WRIA 54 Planning Unit, Ecology, Counties, and Stevens, Spokane and Lincoln County Water Conservancy Boards should explore water rights trusts, banking, water leasing and acquisition as potential solutions to limited availability of new water rights in WRIA 54. **Planning Unit agreed to elevate to a recommendation. Stevens County agreed to take the lead. Spokane County and Lincoln County and Stevens County Water Conservancy Board will be added as supporting entities.**
 - The state Legislature should amend current law to allow water banking throughout the state. **Planning Unit agreed to elevate to a recommendation.**
 - Also, this is not currently in the Plan, but one commenter requested adding the following as a recommendation: **Encourage the legislature to allow Water Conservancy Boards to establish water banking programs and trust water programs, where the Water Conservancy Board holds the contract for the water. Planning Unit agreed to make this an action to consider in implementation beneath the first recommendation above (WRIA Planning Unit, Ecology, Counties, and Stevens, Spokane and Lincoln County Water Conservancy Boards should explore water rights trusts, banking, water leasing and acquisition as potential solutions to limited availability of new water rights in WRIA 54).**
9. Relinquishment rule (law) section – pg. 4-4 – Request that group discuss this topic again with goal of reaching consensus on including a recommendation in the Plan. **Planning Unit agreed to add a new recommendation: WRA-7: Planning Unit will review, discuss and development improvements to the relinquishment law. Stevens County Farm Bureau (represented at the meeting by Wes McCart) agreed to take the lead.**
10. Group B systems – Rec WFN-4, pg. 6-7 – include, delete, and/or modify? **Planning Unit agreed to revise this action to consider to read: “Encourage Ecology and WDOH to develop consistent guidance and rules for Group B systems and permit exempt wells.”**
11. Sustainable agriculture (pg 8-8) – removed word sustainable and definition - Confirm this decision. Look at suggested item #2 under this recommendation where this terminology has not been deleted. **After discussion, the Planning Unit agreed to remove the definition of sustainability (in the call-out text box on the right of the page) and to remove sustainable from the title of the section, so that the title will read, “Maintaining and Enhancing Agriculture”.**
12. Recommendation WUE-1 (pg. 5-3), suggested item #3 – remove word “ordinance”? **Planning Unit agreed to reword the action to read: “Participate in development and implementation of a regionally consistent ordinance and / or educational outreach”.**
13. The following items were requested to be considered to be added as recommendations:
 - **Eliminate septic tanks and replace them with a sewer system in the Lake Spokane UGA. Planning Unit agreed to add as an action to consider (in the WQ section – Chapter 10) and to make the action general across the watershed (i.e., not only specific to the Lake Spokane UGA).**

- Ecology shall keep the planning unit updated on all TMDL and clean up plans within WRIA 54. Planning Unit and Sara Hunt (Ecology) agreed to add as an obligation for Ecology (to the WQ section).
 - Please change Recommendation WRA-2 into two separate recommendations: The first being that the State legislature provides more staff and funding for new water right applications. The second being that the planning unit recommends establishing a regional water master. A water master can do compliance, but is much more than that, as they can write permit, give technical assistance and other. I oppose providing more staff for merely compliance as this recommendation now states in the first line. **Planning Unit agreed not to change WRA-2 and to leave as is.**
 - Stevens County (could include other counties, tribe, or entities) establish a storage project data base as a management tool for future water supply needs. This should be an obligation. Also, Stevens County has started this. **Planning Unit agreed to include as an action to consider. Planning Unit agreed that they would be OK with this becoming a recommendation with Stevens County as the lead – if the Stevens County Commissioners agree. Wes agreed that the Stevens County Farm Bureau would be a lead for the Chamokane recommendation.**
 - Determination of quantity and validity should be part of the due diligence for NRCS cost share of water projects. Water Conservancy Boards could provide support in helping NRCS with their determinations. Planning Unit agreed not to include this in the Plan.
14. Permit exempt well water use – total estimated volume for WRIA 54. Two or three commenters provided data/methodology from the Colville River watershed on estimating permit exempt water use. This methodology, based on actual data, provides an estimate that is approximately half of the estimate in the Public Review Draft Plan. The new information provided by these commenters has been added to Chapter 6 (pg. 6-5). **Linda Kiefer will email Cynthia with additional wording.**
15. Rec WRA-1 (page 4-2) Adjudication. **Lloyd Brewer informed the Planning Unit that the City of Spokane will not object to WRA-1 now but that the City Council may object in the future. Lloyd will update the Planning Unit at the next meeting.**
16. Specific Comments (time allowing). **Cynthia will work on the list with Wes McCart.**

Cynthia will provide the revised Public Review Draft Plan to Spokane County to post on the web site (<http://www.spokanecounty.org/wqmp/project54/asp/home.asp>) by middle of next week (early April 2009). Spokane County will send out an email noting that the Plan is posted and that recommendations have been added / edited. Spokane County is expecting all comments to be received within two weeks of the revised Draft Plan being posted. Cynthia encouraged the Planning Unit to contact her or Spokane County staff with any issues as soon as possible. Cynthia noted that the Planning Unit should expect to provide the first approval at the April 22 Planning Unit meeting and the second approval at the May 6 Planning Unit meeting.

Public Comment

- Larry Guenther thanked the Planning Unit for the discussion and said that he is comfortable with the changes that have been made.

Administration and General Schedule Announcements

The following meetings are scheduled and open to everyone:

APRIL 2009:

- WRIA 54 Planning Unit, Wednesday April 22, 9 – 11:30 am, Airway Heights Community Center.

MAY 2009:

- WRIA 54 Planning Unit, tentatively scheduled for Wednesday May 6, 6 – 9 pm, Lakeside High School Library.

Next Meeting Date and Adjourn

The next WRIA 54 Planning Unit meeting is scheduled for Wednesday April 22 2009, 9 – 11:30 am, Airway Heights Community Center. Bryony adjourned the meeting at 9:15 pm.