

Meeting Summary
WRIA 55/57 Watershed Implementation Team
Little Spokane - Middle Spokane River Watersheds
January 6, 2010

Committee members recorded on the sign in sheet were:

<i>Reanette Boese, Spokane County</i>	<i>Susan McGeorge, Whitworth Water Dist.</i>
<i>Ben Brattebo, Spokane County</i>	<i>Todd Henry, Vera Water</i>
<i>Mike Hermanson, Spokane County</i>	<i>Greg Sweeney, Eloika Lake</i>
<i>Rob Lindsay, Spokane County</i>	<i>Dave Jones, Spokane County Planning</i>
<i>Rick Noll, Spokane Conservation District</i>	<i>Ty Wick, SAJB</i>
<i>Walt Edelen, Spokane Conservation District</i>	<i>Rusty Post, Department of Ecology</i>
<i>Bill Rickard, City of Spokane</i>	<i>Mike Peterson, Lands Council</i>
<i>Lloyd Brewer, City of Spokane</i>	<i>Steve Skipworth, Vera Water</i>
<i>Lars Hendron, City of Spokane</i>	

Guests Present: *Dale Gill, LSR Property Owner, Bert Covert, Eloika Lake, Mike Carney, Eloika Lake*

Introductions and Meeting Summary: *Reanette Boese called the meeting to order. Committee members and guests introduced themselves. The corrected meeting summary of November 4, 2009 was approved. The meeting summary of December 2, 2009 was approved as presented.*

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

West Branch LSR: *Greg Sweeney reported the next meeting would be held January 25, 2010 at the Riverside Fire Station at 6:00 p.m. Agenda items will include the Rustler's Gulch purchase and DOE budget cut implications for the West Branch.*

Conservation: *Reanette Boese indicated the next Irrigation Efficiency workshops will be on March 15th and 16th and they hope to hold these at the Conservation District facility. Announcements on the classes will be mailed and posted in the near future.*

Ben Brattebo indicated that as of December 21, 2009, 510 rebate applications had been submitted to Spokane County for water efficient toilets and clothes washer and that most of the rebates were for the washers. The County is currently renegotiating a rebate program contract for next year. Lloyd Brewer said that the City had processed about 600 rebate applications with the majority also being for the washers.

Legislation: *Reanette indicated that both she and Dave Jones had sent a letter or e-mail to various State legislators regarding the possible loss of funding for the watershed program and that Dave had received a number of responses back on the issue. Dave felt it was important to present your points on the issue in as brief a manner as possible.*

Stormwater: *Lloyd Brewer gave a brief overview of the process with various departments and agencies that related to the Phase II stormwater permitting process.*

Aquifer Protection Council: *Reanette Boese reported that items discussed at the last meeting had to do with the Urban Water Initiative, the City's critical metals and the Spokane County water reclamation facility.*

LAND'S COUNCIL BEAVER PROJECT:

Mike Peterson updated the Implementation Team on their project relating to re-introducing and relocating beaver throughout Eastern Washington in order to provide water storage and late summer flows in the Columbia River Basin. Their study to date has been focused on quantifying the volume of water in existing ponds in the area and then identifying the stream miles that have suitable habitat for beaver. So far they have studied 12 Eastern Washington counties and have found that each beaver dam has the potential to store between 17.5 and 35 acre feet of water and that 6880 miles of stream appear to meet the necessary criteria and have the vegetation necessary to support the beaver. Through a beaver relocation program there is a potential to store (+-) 15 million acre feet of water. The Land's Council has plans for a pilot project beginning this year and plans to continue to work with the Spokane County Conservation District on this project.

SALTESE FLATS AND NEWMAN LAKE WETLANDS STUDY:

Ben Brattebo gave an update on the wetland study for the Saltese Flats and Newman Lake areas. The PBS&J study indicates about 1100 acre feet a year of water flow through Saltese Flats. Water to restore part of the wetland could come from a combination of both natural and reclaimed water and that the use of natural water only is also a viable option. Drawings of what the site could look like were also presented and these included both shallow and deep water areas and islands.

At the Newman Lake site, survey work was completed on about 100 acres at the north end of the lake that is a promising site for a wetland. A contractor will drill wells and monitor the groundwater and streamflow there through spring and complete a wetland delineation study to see how a wetland might be restored at this location.

WATER DEMAND PROJECT:

Mike Hermanson indicated the County has hired a contractor with a state watershed grant funds to create a model and is developing a study plan that will detail water demand in Spokane County. WRIA 54 has been asked to consider funding the continuation of this study. Mike invited those interested to a meeting on this issue on January 26, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. in the Public Works Building, Conference Room 2B.

BUDGET ISSUES:

Reanette Boese reported that the Governor's proposed budget for fiscal year beginning July 1, 2010 eliminates watershed planning totally. The Department of Ecology was also directed to cut their current budget and as a result the WRIA 55-57 budget has been reduced by \$10,000 between now and July 1, 2010. The \$15,000 supplemental grant will most likely continue in order to administer existing grants that are currently in effect. The Implementation Team discussed extensively the items and projects in the current budget and they were able to reduce \$10,000 from several areas as required. The majority of the money came out of the Project Management and Administration, Irrigation Efficiency Classes, Xeriscaping and Little Spokane Gauging tasks.

Rob Lindsay informed the group that a conference call had been held with a number of Watershed lead agency people statewide and those involved in the call would be providing a list of the specific on-going, real time, funded projects, not planning related, that are currently in place as a result of the Watershed Planning Unit process to the State watershed representative. There was no indication as to what would be done with this information after it was received.

LETTER TO REGIONAL HEALTH DIRECTOR REGARDING WATER AVAILABILITY: *Held over until the next meeting.*

ANNUAL REPORT: *Held over until the next meeting.*

WATER REUSE:

Lars Hendron spoke about the City water reuse program and the pilot projects being undertaken at this time at Qualchan Golf Course and Downriver Golf Course. Class A reclaimed water is being trucked to these courses from the Riverside Park Reclamation Facility and is being pumped and applied to rough, green, fairway and tee box sites on the course. Washington State University has been taking soil samples at the sites and is making comparisons of before and after soil conditions and turf health in order to assess any changes noted as a result of the use of reclaimed water. So far the results have been positive and minimal effect on the soil or turf has been noted. Possible implementation projects being discussed are the piping of reclaimed water to Downriver Golf Course and the Bowl and Pitcher area and use of the water in some industrial applications. Water rights and emerging contaminants are the biggest concerns.

Reanette Boese said that the County's reclaimed water study was completed in May 2009. It identifies potential uses and users of the reclaimed water. For urban landscape irrigation Esmerelda Golf Course, Painted Hills Golf Course,, the Interstate Fairgrounds and Plantas Ferry Park are possible sites. Industrial use projects might be possible at Western Concrete and Inland Empire Paper depending on their willingness and interest to participate. Wetlands restoration might be possible uses at Chester Creek wetland and Saltese Flats. The current County reclaimed water use concept includes three phases. Phase I would extend pipe to the Fairgrounds and then to the Painted Hills Golf course, Phase Ia would extend the pipe to the Chester Creek wetland restoration area and Phase II would extend pipes to Saltese Flats for wetland restoration/enhancement and groundwater recharge. It is the County's intent to treat the water to Class A standards.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OTHER ISSUES:

Rusty Post, DOE, suggested that the Implementation Team begin to prioritize outstanding projects and work and how they might be funded after June 30, 2010. He feels it is important to look for other possible funding sources, the restructuring of the group into another type of legal entity that could continue implement projects and move forward in the Watershed Planning processes.

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, February 3, 2010, 9:00 – 12:00 and the Spokane County Conservation District. This will be a Joint Meeting with WRIA 56.

Possible Agenda Items: *SMP/CAO updates by Spokane County and the City of Spokane*
Water Rights/Water Banking by DOE
Planning Unit Self-Sufficiency Options
Letter to Regional Health Director regarding Water Availability
Annual Report for 2010