

Meeting Summary
WRIA 54 - Lower Spokane River Watershed
August 25, 2010

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

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

Mike Hermanson, Spokane County
Brian Crossley, Spokane Tribe
Rob Lindsay, Spokane County
Craig Volosing, Palisades Neighborhood
Linda McCollum, Eastern Washington University
Dick Price, Stevens County P.U.D
Bill Rickard, City of Spokane Water Department
Rusty Post, Department of Ecology
Jeanne Barnes, Spokane Association of Realtors, Lake Spokane Park Homeowners Assoc.
Kelly Williquette, City of Airway Heights
Charlie Kessler, Stevens County Conservation District
Wes McCart, Stevens County Farm Bureau, Resident, Stevens County Water Conservancy Board
Dave Moss, Spokane County
Bart Haggin, Lands Council
Cynthia Carlstad, Tetra Tech
Lloyd Brewer, City of Spokane
Ken Mills, Washington Coordinated Resource Management (CRM) Program

CALL TO ORDER / INTRODUCTIONS

Cynthia Carlstad opened the meeting at 10:00 am. Participants introduced themselves.

REVIEW OF JULY 2010 MEETING SUMMARY

Cynthia asked for corrections and edits needed on the draft July 28 meeting summary. Three corrections were made:

- Pg 3 - Per capita water consumption used in USGS study – seems high. Need to confirm.
- Pg 5 – Request for watermaster, second paragraph – Rusty Post clarified language:
 - “They are supportive of the request, but are still recovering from staff reductions during the recent budget cuts”
 - “Rusty indicated that he will follow up with Keith Stoffel, and specifically discuss with Keith how the WRIA 54 Planning Unit could elevate the priority of this within the agency’s budget requests by by providing additional information for the request”
- Wes McCart asked if a group letter was sent to Ecology requesting a watermaster. Rob Lindsay clarified that he sent an email to Ecology as a follow-up to Stevens PUD’s letter stating that WRIAs 55/57 and 56 both supported establishing a regional watermaster.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Charlie Kessler announced that Clay White left Stevens County and will be moving to Snohomish County. Rob Lindsay asked if someone else at Stevens County would be picking up the work that Clay was doing with water resources zoning overlays. Wes McCart indicated that Clay had delivered a proposal to Ecology, so Stevens County is now waiting for Ecology response. Rob commented that Spokane County is interested in the work that Clay had done, and would like to be kept informed.

Charlie Kessler announced that the Chamokane Watershed Council meeting the previous evening focused on forestry. There was a lot of interest, and Charlie felt it was worthwhile for the local residents to hear from the

forest management agencies. The next meeting will be a field trip, probably in October.

DETAILED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN – PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

Cynthia provided a brief presentation on the draft Detailed Implementation Plan. Initial comments generated at the meeting were documented on a flip chart.

Schedule for Finalizing

The following schedule was agreed upon:

- Deadline for comment on for draft DIP – September 13
- Cynthia will compile comments and distribute compilation to WIT on September 20
- Cynthia will address editorial comments and distribute a revised draft, showing markups to the WIT on September 20
- At the 9/22/10 WIT meeting the group will focus on discussing/resolving major items and agreeing that the revised DIP is ready to finalize
- 10/6/10 – Final DIP available
- Individual entities can then go through any process necessary to give final approval (e.g. City Council approval, Board of County Commissioners approval, etc). When that is complete, the WIT will formally approve the DIP

Because the comment period was short, the group also agreed that the September meeting could be postponed if all commenters weren't able to complete their review in time.

Presentation and Discussion

Executive Summary

Introduction and Background

- WRIA 54 overview, technical issues, description of planning process
- Table 1-1 – Overlapping and Adjacent Management Activities
- Public outreach

Implementation Approach

- Prioritization
 - Description of process
 - Prioritization results – all recommendations plus “high priority projects”
- Detailed development of high-priority projects
- States of support and position

Rusty Post commented that he recalled discussion during prioritization that the prioritization tables showing quantitative ranking of recommendations was not to be included in the DIP. Others recalled discussion but no definitive decision. Wes McCart commented that he felt the tables were useful, especially since he had not been present during the prioritization process. This item was noted on the flip chart.

Early Action and Immediate-Term Project Summaries

- Strategies to provide sufficient water

- Project summaries

Lloyd Brewer asked whether there was grant funding supporting the Lake Spokane Nonpoint source project. None was identified.

Rusty asked about the value of adding estimated costs to project summaries. Pros and cons were discussed:

- Cost estimates can become outdated quickly
- Cost concepts are important for planning
- Flexibility to phase and configure projects in discrete pieces increases ability to fund projects

The group liked the concept of cost categories (high, medium, low), and identifying whether a project could be phased if full funding is not available. This was added to the flip chart list.

Implementation Schedule

- Recommendation implementation schedule
- Schedule for updating DIP

Discussion ensued about the importance of documenting progress, so that successes can be readily communicated to policy makers and funding agencies.

Regarding the update schedule for the DIP, Dick Price cautioned about locking in an update schedule regardless of funding assurance. Other discussion supported flexibility for the update schedule – possibly using language like “review” or “consider whether an update is needed.” Rusty reminded the group that there is no legal update requirement. A revision to the DIP does not require a formal approval process. Lloyd Brewer commented that the City of Spokane would require that an end date or review date be specified, otherwise it is perceived as an open-ended commitment for the city.

Cynthia suggested that (1) keeping the project summaries updated to show progress, and (2) writing a concise annual report to capture accomplishments would be valuable to the group, whether or not they update the DIP itself.

Four comments were documented on the flip chart:

- Add acronym or page reference
- Add life cycle of each project
- A project summary should be added for Recommendation WFN-3 (Chamokane Watershed Council)
- Add the MOU as an appendix

Planned Future Use of Inchoate Municipal Water Rights

- Compilation of WRIA 54 water purveyor water rights and projected use, based on water system plans

Lloyd commented that he believes the DIP can state that municipal purveyors intend to use the inchoate right to serve future needs. Discussion to clarify ensued. Lloyd agreed to draft suggested language. Bart Haggin asked if future climate variation that may impact available water is considered. Participants indicated no. Lloyd reiterated that he wants the WIT to address the legislative requirement to their best ability to preempt this from being considered a deficiency in the future. He also noted that the word “available” in the Table 5-1 is not entirely accurate.

The following comments were recorded on the flip chart:

- Note that for the City of Spokane, only the wells in WRIA 54 were included, with their associated water rights
- A statement should be added that inchoate rights will be used to fulfill future needs.

WRIA 54 Governance

- Lead agency
- Implementation team
- Role of subcommittees
- Coordination with adjacent WRIsAs

Appendices

- A. Legal requirements checklist
- B. Project plans (for a few projects)

Rusty Post volunteered to provide the Ecology review checklist.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Rob Lindsay announced that Department of Ecology notifications went out this morning about possible interruptible water right curtailment on the Little Spokane watershed. Bart Haggin commented that these letters were issued later in the year than previously.

Lloyd Brewer announced that City of Spokane still has its ongoing water conservation incentive programs. The internal rebate program recently exhausted its current funding, with approximately 480 households benefiting from the program. There as not been as much interest in the outdoor program.

ADMIN & GENERAL SCHEDULE ANNOUNCEMENTS

WRIA 54:

- September 13 – Comment due to Cynthia on the draft DIP
- September 22 – WIT meeting

Other schedule announcements:

- Sept 28 – Ecology Instream Flow meeting
- Chamokane Watershed Council field trip – to be scheduled in late September or October

Rusty Post announced that the state budget cutbacks may impact watershed planning funding for next year. Currently all grant requests are on hold.

ADJOURN

Cynthia adjourned the meeting at 12:03 pm.