

WRIA 55/57: Little Spokane River and Middle Spokane River Watersheds
WRIA 56: Hangman/Latah Creek

Joint Watershed Implementation Team (WIT) Meeting

Wednesday, Nov 3, 2010

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Spokane County Conservation District Conference Room
Spokane, WA

Committee members recorded on the sign in sheet were:

Reanette Boese, <i>Spokane County</i>	Mike Hermanson, <i>Spokane County</i>
Steve Skipworth, <i>Vera Water & Power</i>	Bill Rickard, <i>City of Spokane Water Dept</i>
Rusty Post, <i>Dept of Ecology</i>	Walt Edelen, <i>Spokane Co Conservation District</i>
Lindsay Chutas, <i>Spokane Co Conservation District, Facilitator</i>	
Howard Rowley, <i>Horseshoe Lake, WB-LSR</i>	Gary Ostheller, <i>Fairfield Grange</i>
Greg Sweeney, <i>Eloika Lake Association</i>	Peter Grunte, <i>Hangman Valley Resident</i>
Rick Noll, <i>Spokane Co Conservation District</i>	Ty Wick, <i>SAJB and Hangman Hills Water District</i>
Dale Gill, <i>Little Spokane Resident</i>	Bryan St. Clair, <i>Modern Electric Water</i>
Charlie Peterson, <i>Spokane County Conservation District</i>	

Part I: WRIA 55/57 Issues 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Introductions: Lindsay Chutas called the meeting to order and committee members introduced themselves.

Project Updates

West Branch-LSR: A West Branch meeting was held on October 25. The meeting discussed the pending TMDL. There was a presentation about the Rustlers Gulch property by the CAG co-chairs. The CAG will be meeting with a WSU graduate student who will be providing a master plan for restoration work and weed control in the area.

Conservation: The LSR rebate program officially launched on Nov 1. The Spokesman Review had an article on November 3rd and the Deer Park newspaper will have an article soon. Rebates up to \$300 are available for residents of the Little Spokane River watershed who install water-saving washing machines and toilets. The offer covers two toilets certified by the WaterSense label and an Energy Star-certified washer, each for \$100. However, the toilet rebate is available only for homes built in 1994 or earlier. Homes built after 1994 were required to have water-saving toilets. About 8,000 households are eligible for the rebates, offered by a coalition of government agencies and water purveyors dubbed the Little Spokane WaterSmart Alliance. The coalition includes the WA State Department of Ecology, which put up the \$50,000 for the rebates. Additional grant money will be used for conservation education.

LSR Seepage Run: The SCCD completed a seepage run on the LSR in September. Rick Noll presented the data from the study. The study was conducted at the same sites as the 2009 seepage run and showed similar results. The flows were slightly lower than last year, most likely due to the lower snow pack, but showed similar trends. The stream was gaining in all areas except for the Milan area, where it was losing.

Spokane River Mitigation Projects: Charlie Peterson presented about how the SCCD is working on using WDFW mitigation money to do restoration projects on the Spokane River. The proposed projects include large restoration projects at the Appleway Bridge at Stateline, Barker Road Bridge, and Sullivan Park, as well as a variety of smaller planting projects in areas of bank damage from river access along the upper stretches of the river.

If you have questions or comments about the summary, please contact Lindsay Chutas of the SCCD at (509) 535-7274 or lindsay-chutas@sccd.org

Lake Roosevelt Forum: Howard Rowley announced the Lake Roosevelt Forum will be taking place on November 15 and 16. He will be attending and reporting about the forum at the next meeting.

Implementation Matrix:

The group discussed updating the implementation matrix. Reanette and Lindsay decided to work together to simplify the matrix by grouping projects together into categories. It was also suggested that the matrix contain more information about work that has been done on projects, with completion dates, to better show steps taken to complete tasks, whether or not they are finished or were successful. It was also suggested that the matrix be an update topic for quick discussion at each meeting, in order to simplify updating.

Special Program Grants:

Rusty reminded the group that the FY 11-13 Special Program Grants deadline is quickly approaching: December 10 for Operating Projects (including stream gaging) and December 17 for Capital Projects. He reminded the group to bring their proposals to the next meeting so the group can prioritize them. Spokane County announced they will be submitting proposals for the Little Spokane Aquifer, Mackenzie Conservation Area, and an operational project for xeriscaping development regulations.

Watermaster for WRIA 55/57:

Rusty asked the group to decide if we wanted to pursue a watermaster for the joint watershed. The group decided that while it is a very high priority position that would be great to have in the watershed, it is an unreasonable request given the current economic outlook at Ecology. The group decided to continue to discuss the possibility in the future.

Part II: Joint WRIA 56 and WRIA 55/57 Issues, 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

Introductions and Meeting Summary: Lindsay Chutas called the meeting to order. Committee members introduced themselves. The meeting summary for Joint WRIA meeting on October 6, 2010 was approved with the following changes: Walt changed the wording in the comments section from the WRIA 55/57 meeting about the CCPI program; Rusty changed the wording about the Ecology report to the legislature.

CCPI Presentation: Gary Mitchell from NRCS discussed the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI) program. The CCPI is a voluntary conservation initiative that enables the use of certain conservation programs along with resource of eligible partners to provide financial and technical assistance to owners and operators of agricultural and nonindustrial private forest lands. The program can cover up to 75% of the cost of the improvements. It is a very flexible program that utilizes the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) or the Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP). The application window for this year has not opened yet, but is expected to soon. Once the application announcement opens, the deadline will be 60 days from that date. The WIT was very interested and encouraged to bring potential projects to the next meeting.

Announcements:

Gary Mitchell announced that RC&D is working with Bonneville Power to work with irrigators to make energy and water use more efficient. Bonneville Power has been tasked to be more efficient. RC&D will work with local utilities to help promote the program.

Lindsay announced the next meeting will be December 1, 2010 at the SCCD.

Part III: WRIA 56 Issues, 11:15 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

If you have questions or comments about the summary, please contact Lindsay Chutas of the SCCD at (509) 535-7274 or lindsay-chutas@sccd.org

Project Updates:

AWEP Proposal Report: Walt reported the SCCD will be sending a letter to Idaho and Washington State conservationists requesting \$450,000 for Phase 2 of the Hangman Creek Comprehensive Watershed Restoration Initiative.

Leak Detection Program: Walt and Lindsay met with Brian and Steve to discuss the best option for leak detection service providers and their estimates for the program in the small towns of the watershed. It was decided that American Leak Detection Services will receive the contract to do the leak detection work in the small towns. Work is expected to be done this winter to early spring 2011, before irrigation in the towns commences.

Irrigation Efficiency program: Walt, Lindsay, Brian and Steve decided the Freeman High School football field would be the pilot project location for the irrigation efficiency program. The first step in the program will be to set up an irrigation efficiency class with Ewing Irrigation in late spring 2011, followed by an audit of the system.

Groundwater Project: Drilling of an additional well will commence next week in Valleyford. Geochemical water sampling will be conducted on this well. The project should be finished by early 2011.

Implementation Matrix:

The group discussed updating the implementation matrix. Walt and Lindsay decided to work together to simplify the matrix by grouping projects together into categories. It was also suggested that the matrix contain more information about work that has been done on projects, with completion dates, to better show steps taken to complete tasks, whether or not they are finished or were successful. It was also suggested that the matrix be an update topic for quick discussion at each meeting, in order to keep it better updates. Finally, the group decided to incorporate a time element for each project, be it monthly, continuous, or a one-time project to better describe the project completeness and their status in the matrix.

Announcements:

Rusty announced that the muni water bill was settled. He would pass it along to the group in an e-mail.