

Meeting Summary
WRIA 54 - Lower Spokane River Watershed
August 22, 2012

Location: Spokane Conservation District, Spokane, WA.

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

Mike Hermanson, Spokane County
Rob Lindsay, Spokane County
Doug Greenlund, City of Spokane
Bill Rickard, City of Spokane Water Department
Brian Crossley, Spokane Tribe
Rusty Post, Department of Ecology
Charlie Kessler, Stevens County Conservation District
Charlie Peterson, Spokane Conservation District
Amanda Parrish, Lands Council
Michael Hamilton, Independent Geologist working with EWU
Chad Pritchard, EWU
Linda Kiefer, Avista
Jeanne Barnes, Spokane Association of Realtors
John Patrouch, Northwest Whitewater Assoc./Spokane Canoe and Kayak Club

CALL TO ORDER / INTRODUCTIONS

Rusty Post opened the meeting at 10:00 am. Participants introduced themselves.

The group approved the July 25, 2012 meeting summary.

Doug Greenlund requested that a discussion of the WRIA 54 MOA be added to the agenda.

WRIA 54 MOA

Rob Lindsay reported that the current WRIA 54 expires at the end of August. There is a provision in the current MOA to allow a 2 year extension. The group discussed two options: 1) creating a new MOA or 2) developing an amendment to the existing MOA for a two year extension. Several perspectives were discussed:

1. WRIA 54 has approximately one more year of eligibility for Watershed Planning Phase IV funds. When those funds are no longer available the group will need to determine how the group will operate. At that transition point is an appropriate time to develop a new MOA. Therefore, a two year extension makes sense.
2. The purpose of the current MOA is to develop the DIP. Since that is completed it makes sense to develop a new MOA
3. In some organizations the administrative process may be simpler for an extension rather than an MOA. In other organizations, though, there is no difference.
4. It will take much more time to develop a new MOA as compared to developing an amendment to the existing MOA for a 2 year extension.

Rusty asked the group if there were objections to moving forward with a 2 year extension amendment to the existing MOA. Those present, with the exception of the representatives of the City of Spokane, did not object. The City of Spokane will need to review this option with others at the City before they can make a determination.

PROJECT/MEMBER UPDATES

Charlie Kessler reported that on Saturday August 11 Avista, Stevens County Conservation District, and the Spokane River Forum sponsored a canoe/kayak/boat trip on Lake Spokane with approximately 30 teachers. Teachers were able stop at stations along the lake to learn about water quality.

Rob Lindsay reported that he gave a briefing to the Board of County Commissioners yesterday about a letter that was sent to residents with property along Deep and Coulee Creek requesting information on the seasonality of stream flow through their property, and asking if they are interested in Spokane County staff measuring stream flow on their property. The letter is part of the Deep and Coulee seepage run project. The briefing also included a discussion of other issues such as rural water use, watershed planning activities, the water availability and sustainability advisory group, etc.

PHASE IV PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

Mike Hermanson presented results from the groundwater age dating project that was completed with WRIA 54 Phase IV funds. The project included sampling for routine constituents, stable isotopes (oxygen 18 and deuterium), and radioactive isotopes (carbon 14 and tritium). The main conclusion from the results is that the water found in the Grande Ronde aquifer is younger than would be expected based on results from the Hangman Watershed and that tritium was present indicating water recharged in the last 75 years was present. This indicates mixing between the paleochannel, wanapum, and grande ronde aquifers.

Mike Hermanson also gave an update on the Water Availability and Sustainability project. The goal of the project was to evaluate if a water availability standard for land development could be developed that is cost effective, technically sound, and legally defensible. An advisory group of stakeholders with diverse interests was developed to look at the issue. The group met six times. At the conclusion of the last meeting the group was evaluating draft recommendations. The group will meet three additional times this fall to continue evaluating the recommendations and develop a report that discusses the positions of the group.

INSTREAM FLOW UPDATE

Rusty Post reported that the State Caucus has finalized their instream flow recommendation and will present it on September 19, 2012 at the Spokane County Water Resource Center. Ecology management is currently evaluating whether or not it will move forward with rulemaking this year.

ADMINISTRATION & GENERAL SCHEDULE ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next WRIA 54 meeting will be on September 26, 2012 from 10-12 at the Spokane County Water Resources Center.

ADJOURN

Rusty Post adjourned the meeting shortly after 12:00 pm.