

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

Joint Watershed Implementation Team (WIT) Meeting

Wednesday September 12, 2012
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Spokane County Water Resource Center
Spokane, WA

Committee members recorded on the sign in sheet were:

Ty Wick, <i>Hangman Hills Water District</i>	Doug Greenlund, <i>City of Spokane</i>
Bill Rickard, <i>City of Spokane</i>	Rob Lindsay, <i>Spokane County</i>
Howard Rowley, <i>Horseshoe Lake Association</i>	Amanda Parrish, <i>Lands Council</i>
Susan McGeorge, <i>Whitworth Water District</i>	Dale Gill, <i>LSR Resident</i>
Harvey Morrison, <i>Trout Unlimited</i>	

Guests:

Brian Hood, <i>Lake Sacheen</i>	Don Hill, <i>Lake Sacheen</i>
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Joint Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Rob Lindsay and the committee members and guests introduced themselves.

Review Agenda Rob suggested that “agenda setting” be added to the regular agenda to assist the County and Conservation District in setting agendas for future meetings.

Review Previous Minutes The meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

Other Issues/Announcements

Spokane County Update Rob noted that he recently made a presentation to the County Commissioners re: an upcoming project in WRIA 54 to collect flow data in the Deep and Coulee Creek basins. The presentation included a discussion of the water availability workshops and the tools the planning units are developing to address rural water supply issues. As part of the discussion, the commissioners expressed an interest in the County establishing a water resource advisory committee. Rob also noted that Mike Hermanson gave a presentation at the recent Council of Governments (COG) meeting including rural and municipal issues. According to Mike the County Commissioners expressed interest in the advisory committee at the COG meeting as well. Susan McGeorge asked Rob if the if the recent discussions with the Commissioners included the idea of a fee to support ongoing water resource issues. Rob responded yes, but that the purpose and objectives need additional refinement. A fee to simply fund more studies would likely not be well received.

IWAC The regional Idaho Washington Aquifer Collaborative continues to meet. The group continues to develop the goals and objectives. SAJB continues to provide facilitation with assistance from an intern from North Idaho College. Rob noted that he has yet to make a briefing to the County Commissioners about that group, but will once there is more to report on the progress of the group.

Water Right Transfers Susan McGeorge expressed concern over the slow pace of water right transfers by WDOE and that, according to the Spokane County Water Conservancy Board, Whitworth Water District will receive only 1 gpm in water right transfers when they take over failing systems. The difficulty for the water district is that they are being asked to take on these failing systems and provide water to new users using their existing rights. Susan remarked that Whitworth will be hesitant to do that in the future and the failing systems will revert to the County.

Water Quality Dale Gill distributed a white paper on the use of the herbicide 2,4 D and the potential for health and environmental impacts associated with this herbicide. Dale noted that the labels on these products transfer liability to the purchaser. Dale questioned...since the buyer is the Spokane Conservation District and WDOE, do the taxpayers in Spokane County and State of Washington assume the liability? Dale noted that Avista is conducting a study of milfoil treatment in Lake CDA and will report to the group once he receives results.

Sacheen Update Rob asked Don Hill and Brian Hood about recent events at Sacheen Lake. Don reported the lake is still high and milfoil treatment occurred recently. There have also been discussions with Diamond Lake about their high water level issues. Maintenance of the beaver tubes continues to be a challenge. It was also reported that a sewer system to connect approximately 90% of the lake properties is underway. Proposed completion is 2014. Funding came from a 2% loan to the local community. Don reported interest in developing a drainage district to address flow issues throughout the West Branch of the Little Spokane. It was also reported that a fluvial scientist reviewing the conditions around Diamond Lake noted that the high lake level could also be due to the logging of large trees around the lake. Large evergreens can consume 100's of gallons per day, which could be affecting lake recharge from groundwater.
Next WBLSR meeting is October 22, 6 pm at the Riverside Fire Station.

Regional MOA Discussion

The WRIA 55/57 and 56 MOAs that the City of Spokane brought forward following the adoption of the Watershed Plans, will expire this month. A similar MOA for WRIA 54 expired last week. The MOAs do have language that allows for two year extensions. The City of Spokane is currently reviewing proposed language supplied by Spokane County that would allow for the 2 year extension of the WRIA 54 MOA. Rob noted that the recent discussions with the County Commissioners indicated support of the notion of taking a more regional approach to watershed planning. Questions were raised about the effect on individual stakeholders if the group became larger, what other groups would be invited to join, how to address those members that no longer participate, and whether the regional approach would also include Pend Oreille and Stevens County. These issues have yet to be addressed. Also, concern was raised that advisory groups, such as proposed by the Commissioners, could be biased. Doug Greenlund noted that the City will definitely need to have a MOA in place to move forward, particularly if a joint funding is pursued. Rob expressed interest in working with the City of Spokane in developing a draft regional MOA.

Agenda Items for next meeting

Ideas included: prioritization of FY 13-15 proposals, instream flow meeting update, an update on the Avista / CDA water quality study by Dale Gill, and facilitation assistance for the County and Conservation District.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.