

Meeting Summary
WRIA 54 - Lower Spokane River Watershed
October 24, 2012

Location: Spokane County Water Resource Center, WA.

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

Mike Hermanson, Spokane County
Rob Lindsay, Spokane County
Bill Rickard, City of Spokane Water Department
Rusty Post, Department of Ecology
Al French, Spokane County Commissioner
Charlie Peterson, Spokane Conservation District
Dick Price, Stevens PUD

CALL TO ORDER / INTRODUCTIONS

Rusty Post opened the meeting at 10:00 am. Participants introduced themselves. The group approved the August 22, 2012 meeting summary.

PUBLIC COMMENT/WIT MEMBER UPDATES

Rob Lindsay told the group about the current call for abstracts for the Washington Hydrogeology Symposium that will be held next April in Tacoma and encouraged WIT members to submit projects they are working on or have recently completed.

Dick Price reported that Stevens PUD is proceeding with the next phase of a water storage project funded by Ecology's Office of the Columbia River. HDR has been hired to do an alternatives analysis which will include an update to the Mill Creek storage project cost, a water needs assessment, pump exchange projects (water is pumped into the Colville River during low flow periods), water bank, and storage projects in Cottonwood Creek and in Deer Creek. The project will last approximately one year.

PHASE IV PROJECT UPDATES

Mike Hermanson provided an update on the watershed planning grant projects that are occurring in WRIA 54. Currently there are three grant projects: 1) WRIA 54 Phase IV, 2) West Plains Groundwater Elevation Monitoring and Mapping, and 3) The Stevens County Conservation District education project.

The following project updates were provided on a handout and discussed by the group:

WRIA 54 Phase IV Project Update – October 24, 2012

Lake Spokane Water Quality Project – Stevens County Conservation District

Monitoring was conducted 3 times in August. The last monitoring on the 27th coincided with the Landsat pass over the lake. Starting in August, the District added measuring dissolved oxygen, water temperature, pH, and specific conductance at all sites. Matt Scheidt has been using the Troll 9500 to measure these parameters, Eric Staggs of Lake Spokane Association provides the boat and driving skills and collects fecal coliform samples, and Charlie Kessler gets Secchi depths and optical brightener concentrations.

The optical brightener data has not been very definitive with generally low readings at all the sites. In August there were elevated fecal coliform bacteria levels at 2 sites. The elevated levels were found twice at site 12 located on the Stevens County side upstream of the Willow Bay area and once at the site of our boat launch near

the Nine Mile Falls Park and Boat Launch. At the first site, high readings were 430 and 120 colony forming units per 100 milliliters (cfu/100 ml). At the Nine Mile site on the Spokane County side of the lake, the high reading was 390 cfu/100 ml. Some of this at the Stevens County site might have been caused by water fowl as they like to congregate in this area. In the Nine Mile area, the neighboring property has had septic problems in the past. This site also often has higher optical brightener readings as well. There will be a bulkhead replacement project conducted at this site during the 2013 drawdown.

South Stevens / Lake Spokane Education Project – *Stevens County Conservation District*

The WRIA 54 Watershed Implementation Team agreed to continue funding the educational efforts for another year. Charlie Kessler met with Teri Sardinia at Lakeside High School and Jeana Simpson at the middle school on August 29th to coordinate the activities for the fall.

The District applied for a Bonneville Power Administration education grant to help work with all grade levels in Nine Mile School District. Under this funding, students would learn about reservoir management and be able to make models of different reservoir/dam configurations to better understand how Lake Spokane is more than just a recreation area, but a power storage pool.

On September 17th, Matt Schanz of Northeast Tri-County Health District provided benthic macroinvertebrate training for Teri Sardinia's class at a site on Dragoon Creek. Ten students were involved in the class. Two sites were sampled, one in moving water and one in a quiet pool area. At each site several students entered the water to help with the kick net and look around for aquatic insects. Students examined each sample and sorted the insects into ice cube trays. Matt helped identify them to major groups. They found a few mayflies, lots of stoneflies, lots of empty caddis fly cases and a few snails. Matt explained to the students many interesting things about each critter and discussed why some were more sensitive to poor conditions than others.

Deep and Coulee Creek Restoration – *The Lands Council*

The four restoration sites were watered and maintained. Each site received water at least twice a month, but more often than not once a week. Maintenance included cutting back the reed canary grass around willow whips and other small plants, continued application of Plantskydd (herbivore deterrent) on some plants, and addition of tree tubes or caging on other plants. Baseline monitoring was also conducted. Tree vigor was recorded for all plants on one of the two Coulee Creek sites, and hydrology data was collected on the site as well. Hydrology data collection was based on the Rosgen Stream Assessment protocol. All four of the property owners were asked to consider where they believe restoration is most needed in the watershed and if they know any property owners along Deep and Coulee Creeks that would be interested in riparian restoration. Follow up with the newly-suggested landowners will take place later this fall.

West Plains Groundwater Elevation Monitoring – *Spokane County*

Monthly measurements were taken on July 9, 2012, August 3, 2012 and September 6, 2012. A draft map of the wanapum potentiometric surface was completed.

Deep Creek and Coulee Creek Seepage Run – *Spokane County*

All property owners with some portion of Deep Creek or Coulee Creek were sent a letter requesting information on creek flows on their property. The letter also inquired if they were willing to allow Spokane County staff to measure creek flow on their property. Based on information acquired from this mailing, locations for creek flow measurements were chosen and a Quality Assurance Project Plan for the seepage run project was developed. Creek flow measurements on Deep Creek were completed on September 24, 2012 and September 25, 2012. Creek flow measurements on Coulee Creek are scheduled for October 1, 2012.

West Plains Recharge Estimate – Spokane County

All property owners with some portion of Deep Creek or Coulee Creek were sent a letter requesting information on creek flows on their property. The letter also inquired if they were willing to allow Spokane County staff to measure creek flow on their property. Based on information acquired from this mailing, locations for creek flow measurements were chosen and a Quality Assurance Project Plan for the seepage run project was developed. Creek flow measurements on Deep Creek were completed on September 24, 2012 and September 25, 2012. Creek flow measurements on Coulee Creek are scheduled for October 1, 2012.

Subsurface Projection of the Stratigraphy of the Columbia River Basalt Group and Paleochannel Units in the West Plains Area – WRIA 54 - EWU

The basalt geochemical sampling and analysis QAPP was prepared and submitted to Ecology for review. A portion of the basalt samples have been collected. Additional samples will be collected and all samples will be analyzed in December. Existing hydrology and geotechnical reports that will be used to better define basalt contacts and paleo drainage locations were collected.

SPOKANE COUNTY CRITICAL AQUIFER RECHARGE SCIENTIFIC EVALUATION

Rob Lindsay reported that Spokane County Utilities is conducting a scientific evaluation of the non-residential waste water requirements outside of the UGA, which is essentially a limit of 90 gallons per day per acre in medium and high susceptibility areas. The Spokane County Commissioners requested an evaluation of the basis for that limit. The development of the susceptibility areas is not under evaluation. The evaluation is being done by HDR in conjunction with a review committee comprised of various stakeholders. At the end of the project a presentation will be made to the Planning Commission and to the Board of County Commissioners on the findings of the project and potential recommendations.

FY 13-15 PROJECT PROPOSALS

Project proposals for the next biennium were discussed by the group. Project ranking is not necessary at this point. Submission of applications for grant funding will occur at some point next year, with the date dependent on the budget process during the legislative session. At that point a project ranking is necessary. Spokane County is proposing a project aimed at synthesizing the hydrogeologic information that has been collected on the West Plains. There have been various watershed implementation projects that have targeted specific hydrogeologic information, but there has not been an overall evaluation of the hydrogeology since 1995, and there has been significant amount of new data collected since then. The Lands Council is proposing a Lake Spokane Beaver Study. The Spokane Conservation District is proposing a Scenario Planning project in WRIA 55/57 and 56 and WRIA 54 could also join that project so it would include all Spokane River Watershed Planning groups. Charlie Peterson provided some information about the project and it was discussed by the group.

ADMINISTRATION & GENERAL SCHEDULE ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next WRIA 54 meeting will be on November 28, 2012 from 10-12 at the Airway Heights Water Reclamation Facility.

ADJOURN

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