

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

***Joint Watershed Implementation Team (WIT)  
Meeting***

**Wednesday February 13, 2013  
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
Spokane County Water Resource Center  
N. 1004 Freya**

**Committee members recorded on the sign in sheet were:**

Walt Edelen, <i>SCD</i>	Rob Lindsay, <i>Spokane County Utilities</i>
Bill Rickard, <i>City of Spokane</i>	Linda Kiefer, <i>Avista</i>
Rick Noll, <i>SCD</i>	Amanda Parrish, <i>Lands Council</i>
Howard Rowley, <i>WBLSR (Horseshoe Lake)</i>	Greg Sweeney, <i>Eloika Lake Association</i>
Doug Greenlund, <i>City of Spokane</i>	Dale Gill, <i>Resident – Little Spokane</i>
Rusty Post, <i>Department of Ecology</i>	Ty Wick, <i>SAJB</i>
Susan McGeorge, <i>Whitworth Water District</i>	Doug Rider, <i>SC Water Conservancy Board</i>
Harvey Morrison, <i>Trout Unlimited</i>	Peter Grunte, <i>Resident, Hangman Creek</i>
Wes McCart, <i>Stevens Co. Commissioner</i>	

The meeting was called to order by Rob Lindsay and the committee members introduced themselves. The December 2012 meeting minutes were approved with no changes. There was no meeting in January 2013.

**Issues/Announcements/Public Comment:**

Greg Sweeney announced that the Pend Oreille Conservation District is holding their annual meeting at the Camas Center in Cusick on Saturday February 16 from 10 am to 2 pm. Greg also announced the West Branch Little Spokane River Committee will be meeting on Monday April 22, 2013 from 6-8 pm at the Riverside Fire Station. Agenda to include updates on projects/funding and the upcoming Pend Oreille Critical Areas Ordinance.

Walt Edelen announced the Friends of the Little Spokane River Valley are hosting a banquet on the evening of February 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Dale Gill expressed frustration with the status of the FEMA flood hazard maps and channel migration zones for the Little Spokane River in the vicinity of his property. He noted the maps indicate unrealistically high flood water levels. Rob Lindsay noted he is aware of other areas of the County (Saltese Creek, Chester Creek) where problems with flood hazard maps have been noted and are being addressed. Rick Noll provided information regarding the establishment of channel migration zones. Dale also noted that he recalled a comment at a previous WRIA meeting about the possibility of establishing fees for funding of future watershed planning related activities. Dale announced he is opposed to such fees as a landowner as he will be spending his money

to address the flood hazard issues related to his property. Rick Noll suggested those fees could be used to update the flood hazard maps. Dale announced he would not be attending future watershed planning meetings and left at that point.

### **Project Updates:**

Spokane River Forum Conference – Rob Lindsay announced the conference is scheduled for March 26 and 27, and provided a brief description of the topics to be covered. Rob encouraged those interested to contact the Spokane River Forum website for more information.

Idaho Washington Aquifer Collaborative – The most recent meeting was February 12. Ty Wick noted the group is still developing administrative procedures but the process is moving forward, albeit slowly. The meetings are well attended and there clearly is interest from the water purveyors on both sides of the state line to communicate and coordinate.

Little Spokane Hydrogeology Project – Rob Lindsay noted the USGS continues their work and are on track for delivering their basin wide assessment in June, 2013. Rob also noted that additional grant funding (\$3,000) has been acquired from the state to provide for printing of 500mcopies of the report.

Water Availability Workshops – Rob Lindsay noted the meetings are done and the process has been completed; the final report will be issued very soon. Once the report is distributed Rob will coordinate a presentation to the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners. Rob will make announcements to all WRIAs and the workshop members of the presentations.

Spokane County CARA Evaluation – Rob announced the next meeting of the CARA evaluation advisory committee will be Feb. 20, 2013. Rob provided a brief description of scientific evaluation conducted by the County's consultant. Rob encouraged all interested parties to attend the upcoming meeting for additional information.

Various projects at the Spokane Conservation District – Walt Edelen provided updates on the following projects:

Eloika Lake / \$25K grant to address milfoil

Deep Creek – Non Point Source / A DIF(?) grant from Ecology

Hangman Creek Hydrogeology Study - the SCD will receive \$9,700 grant funding from the state to conduct additional age-dating analyses and contour mapping in the west plains area and to look at well drawdown issues in the Freeman area.

5 star EPA Grant for the Garden Springs rehabilitation project in coordination with the City of Spokane and The Lands Council

Shoreline project in the upper Hangman basin (?)

The Livestock and Land program has a variety of projects underway. The SCD has been very active on projects in the Hangman Creek basin. Other projects

include a livestock bridge on Bear Creek and a project near Paradise Road on the Spokane River

Two separate projects were submitted in the 319 program, awaiting decision.

A bulkhead relocation project in Lake Spokane will have activity later this month.

An irrigation project in Tekoa, Washington; project is associated with a park.

### **Budget Update**

Rusty confirmed that Ecology will fund \$3,000 for the Little Spokane Hydrogeology project and \$9,700 for the Hangman Hydrogeology project as described above. There were approximately \$25,000 unallocated FY13 watershed funds statewide; projects brought forward by Spokane Conservation District and Spokane County were well-received. These funds will need to be spent by June 30, 2013.

Rusty also noted another local project under consideration is a feasibility study to develop a local water bank as mitigation for exempt wells. The effort is estimated at \$3,000 to \$4,000, and would be conducted by Ecology staff/consultants. The study would not address the extent and validity of local water rights; that effort would be the next step and is estimated to be between \$15K and \$30K. Doug Rider noted that there are a lot of confusing records in the Little Spokane River basin regarding extent and validity of rights and pending claims.

### **Legislative Update**

Wes McCart gave a brief report on HB 1350. HB 1350 addresses a variety of water resource issues including:

- Whether counties have the right to restrict water use beyond the maximums (i.e., 5,000 gpd) currently in statute (aka the "dimmer switch")
- Limiting the equivalent of 1 well per 40 acres for rural development
- Water banking authority (questions include: who has the capital to start the bank? who charges/collects funds? how is use tracked?)

Wes was not sure the bill would get much attention, but the issues with respect to water banking were relevant and would need to be addressed locally if water banking becomes a mitigation strategy in this area.

### **Regional MOA Discussion:**

The subcommittee established to review the issue of regionalization met on Jan. 22, 2013. Attendees included Susan McGeorge, Rob Lindsay, Rusty Post, Doug Greenlund and Mike Hermanson. The subcommittee recommended that Spokane County develop a 2 year extension of the current MOA so that the regional watershed groups can pursue a more comprehensive agreement. Rob reported that he has modified the current WRIA 55/57 MOA similar to the 2 year MOA extension for WRIA 54 and will be distributing that soon. Susan then distributed a document that summarized the comments of the subcommittee with respect to: name, authority, purpose/goals/objectives, structure, voting, participants, etc. After discussion of the

various functions it was decided that the WRIA 55/57 watershed participants would provide comments on purpose/goals/objectives to Susan by February 28. The subcommittee will meet again before the next joint WRIA 55/57, 56 meeting, scheduled for March 13, 2013.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 pm. The next meeting was set for Wednesday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013. It will be held at 10 am at the Spokane Conservation District offices at N. 210 Havana.