

## **WEST BRANCH LITTLE SPOKANE RIVER WATERSHED COMMITTEE**

Meeting Summary

February 25, 2008

Riverside Fire Station, 3818 E. Deer Park – Milan Rd., Riverside, WA

### ***FINAL***

Bryony Stasney (facilitator) opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

**Attendees Present:** Bill Harmon, Mike Carney, Burt Covert, Greg Sweeney, John Harkness, Bubba Scott (Pend Oreille PUD and alternate for Dan Peterson), Brian Farmer, Daryl Johnson, Mary Sterling (alternate for Kathleen Werr), Jill Short (alternate for Pam Zarko, Jim Wood and Max Smith), Luke Short (alternate for Pat Wood), Tom Wimpy, John Harkness, Karen Averitt (alternate for Linda Cannon), Andrew Huddleston, Mike Lithgow, Diane Wear, Howard Rowley (alternate for Josh Roath and Dick Anderson), Bev Rowley (alternate for Tammera Kirk, Sandra Roath and Lynne Anderson), Jim Peterson, Dan Reiner.

**Introductions:** Everyone introduced themselves. Bryony asked everyone to sign-in to the meeting and to check and edit the information on the sign-in sheet. Bryony introduced herself as the Committee's facilitator. Bryony's contact information is: Bryony Stasney, [bstasney@golder.com](mailto:bstasney@golder.com), 208-676-9933 (office) and 208-755-1010 (cell).

### **Public Comment:**

- Karen noted she sent an email to Bryony listing relevant bills in the legislature to support managers for watersheds across the state. Bryony said that she had received the email and has passed it along to the Committee. Greg said that it will be important for Committee members to comment soon since legislative session is ending soon.
- Howard said that he has tried to communicate with the Buck Creek property owner regarding removal of gravel in the stream bed in the vicinity of where Buck Creek enters Horseshoe Lake. Mike Lithgow said that he could help Howard find the property owner through the County's records.

### **February 11, 2008 Meeting Summary Review:**

The following corrections were discussed and agreed to by the Committee. The final meeting summary will be posted on the web site at <http://www.spokanecounty.org/wgmp/projects/ASP/WestBranch.asp>.

- Page 1, Public Comment, second bullet will be revised to read, "Howard Rowley discussed the need to remove gravel from the Buck Creek stream channel where Buck Creek flows into Horseshoe Lake to allow fish passage to the lake."
- Page 3, third paragraph, a new sentence will be added: "Casseron is not currently an approved aquatic herbicide; it has been used in the past."
- Page 3, fifth paragraph, a new sentence will be added: "The City of Spokane combined sewer / stormwater overflow will not impact the West Branch LSR."

- Page 5, fourth bullet, a new sentence will be added: “Also, the channel below Dam #3 could be considered for sediment removal.”

**Pend Oreille County Shoreline Master Program Update. Presentation by Mike Lithgow (Pend Oreille County)**

Mike Lithgow is a planner with Pend Oreille County. Mike’s contact information is: Pend Oreille County Planning, 509-447-4821, [mlithgow@pendoreille.org](mailto:mlithgow@pendoreille.org). The following points summarize Mike’s presentation:

- Pend Oreille County has received a \$350,000 grant from Ecology to update the Shoreline Master Program.
- Mike showed a series of slides of lakes > 20 acres and streams which are larger than 20 cfs annual average. The largest shoreline occurs along the Pend Oreille River. One of the first project tasks is to make sure that all the County’s lakes and streams that meet these criteria are included in the Shoreline Washington Administrative Code (WAC).
- One of the main reasons that Pend Oreille decided to update the Shoreline Master Program early is that the County’s maps are very difficult to use to enforce shoreline designations (and therefore regulations) since they are hand drawn on three 11x17 sheets.
- Most land in Pend Oreille County is federal or state owned and are resource lands (i.e., timber and agriculture). Urban areas are minor in terms of land use. There are also private rural lands of 10 – 20 acres.
- The project goals are preserve, educate, protect, restore and utilize. These are all important and difficult to balance since some may conflict.
- The County is responsible for enforcing regulations and issuing shoreline development permits.
- Stakeholders involved in the update include Metaline, Metaline Falls, Newport and Lone. These entities have signed on to the grant and will adopt the new designations and regulations. Cusick is in the process of completing their own Shoreline Master Program but has not yet delivered their final program to the state. It is not clear if Cusick will adopt the County Shoreline Master Program Update.
- Ecology is an important member of the team. Other stakeholders include WDFW, Seattle City Light, Kalispel Tribe and Pend Oreille PUD.
- The update steps will include:
  - Look at existing plan and maps.
  - Consider what has changed since the original Shoreline Master Program was developed in 1974 (e.g., bladder boats, milfoil harvesting, use of chemicals).
  - Identify and fill data gaps as best as possible with available funding.
  - Work with stakeholders to develop policies and goals.
- The Planning Commission will hear the input and will make recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners. The Board of County Commissioners will adopt the Shoreline Master Program Update components.
- It is a three year project, ending in June 2010.

- Public meetings will be at the Planning Commission meeting on the third Thursday of every month at the Cusick Community Center. Information will be published in local newspapers and meetings will be recorded. Draft documents will be placed in local libraries.

**Q:** Why does the Comprehensive Plan allow bulkheads to be built on lakes?

**A:** Mike said that he is not familiar with this section of the Comprehensive Plan and would like an email clarification.

**Q:** How will Pend Oreille County enforce the shoreline regulations?

**A:** Pend Oreille County does not currently have enforcing staff. However, there is hope that this will be addressed over the next few years.

**Q:** Are there any incentives?

**A:** No monetary incentives. There may be an opportunity for example, for decreasing setbacks if particular types of vegetation are planted or restoration approaches taken. Good examples are the Conservation District incentives working with cattle owners to keep cattle from watering in streams.

**Q:** Can other stakeholders join?

**A:** Yes, groups such as the Betterment Associations and Sewer Districts can be represented.

**Q:** What is the first step in the project?

**A:** Improved mapping and GIS. We will compile information available from the Conservation Districts, Kalispel Tribe and Pend Oreille PUD, identify data gaps and fill any gaps we can, considering our budget. Then we will move on to development of policy and regulations.

**Q:** What is the scope of the Shoreline Master Program? Could you give us examples of some of the issues you will be dealing with?

**A:** Issues I can anticipate are: improvement of dock regulations on lakes; shoreline stabilization projects and clarification of what is and is not acceptable; preferred methods for addressing beaver dams could be included within the policies.

**Q:** The WB LSR has a recommendation to complete a proper functioning condition study on the LSR. Is this something that could be done as a component of filling data gaps?

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** Can septic issues be addressed?

**A:** Yes. Currently the shoreline master program defers to the Northeast Tri-County Health District's 100 foot setback for septic systems from open water.

**Q:** Can boat wake be addressed?

**A:** Yes. But we are not sure exactly how this will be addressed.

**Q:** Can this program result in signs posting speed limits for waterways.

**A:** Yes.

Karen noted that she and Diane were part of a group that developed boating regulations. The group designed signs but the Sheriff's department did not use the available funds to produce the signs.

Bryony asked if the Committee would like to be represented in the Shoreline Master Program update and if Committee member(s) would be interested in volunteering on the stakeholder group or citizens' advisory group. Tom Wimpy said that he would consider this role if others on the Committee would be interested in taking this role as well (so alternates could be available). John Harkness said that he would be interested. Jim suggested that someone attend the first meeting and give the group feedback. Karen said that she would attend on behalf of the Sacheen Betterment Association.

The next Shoreline Master Program update meeting will be at the Cusick Community Center, 7 pm on Thursday March 20.

**Draft Action Table Review and Project Priorities for 2008:**

Bryony noted that two requirements are needed for the beaver tube replacement project: a wetland monitoring plan or QAPP; and a work plan. Brian informed the Committee that Ecology has met with Jeff Storms and provided guidelines for the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) that would be needed to support the wetland monitoring. Wetland monitoring will involve monitoring a couple of sites that were characterized by Shannon and Wilson during the wetland delineation project. Monitoring would involve photographs and occasional test pits over a five to ten year timeframe. The QAPP would document procedures and activities that would need to be taken as a result of various findings. Ecology offered the services of their wetland biologist to help the Sacheen Sewer District write the QAPP.

Mike noted that Pend Oreille County received a letter from the Sacheen Sewer District asking what will be expected from the Sacheen Sewer District for the work plan to support installation of the beaver tubes. Mike noted that a good example of a work plan is a 3-page plan submitted to Pend Oreille County recently for bridge construction. The work plan for the beaver tubes does not need to be extensive but does need to address what action will be taken when the level of Sacheen Lake reaches the desired level (7.9) to avoid the level dropping lower.

Karen informed the group that the Sacheen Sewer District is on hold with the beaver tube project until they understand what they need to do. Karen asked if the Committee could consider different types of beaver deceiver projects.

Bryony passed out some handouts describing and illustrating beaver pond levers and deceivers. Mike Carney said that this leveling concept is used in Canada and appears to be effective. Andrew said that he had spoken with Jake Jacobson at Snohomish

County. Jake has experience with various beaver devices. Jake noted that tubes are high maintenance (as experienced at the dams downstream of Sacheen Lake) and beavers will continue to build up when they hear the sound of running water.

Andrew noted that flexible levelers are quiet since the flexible pipe is submerged. Beavers therefore do not try to build the dam higher to stop the water flow. These devices also require little maintenance and are cheap at \$300 - \$400. Luke noted that the LSR has a lot of debris and floating vegetation and that this is why the tubes require so much maintenance. Luke also noted that there may be a limited number of sites that the levelers could be installed due to the stream depth.

Daryl said that he thought the flexible levelers would work well. Daryl noted that the current tubes were last cleaned out on October 9, 2007. Daryl noted that by October 23, 2007 the screens on the tubes were blocked and that the water level in the stream was about 12 inches over the inlet of the tubes. Daryl removed the screens a few days ago and observed an increase in stream flow. Daryl said that he took a flow measurement before and after he removed the screens. Prior to removing the screens, the flow was 10.86 cfs on Saturday February 23, 2008 at the barrier dam. About two hours after removing the screens from both tubes, the flow was 17.78 cfs at the barrier dam on Sunday February 24, 2008.

John Harkness noted that beavers build dams when they hear moving water. The levelers work because the water flows from one side of the dam to the other below the water surface.

Andrew noted that the flexible leveler is a water leveling device. The upstream and downstream tube(s) can be surveyed in to certain elevations and this allows the water on either side of the dam to equilibrate. This design therefore provides a control on the minimum level that the lake will reach. Andrew noted that a number of levelers may be needed to achieve the objective.

Bryony asked the group if they would be interested in obtaining and watching the DVD entitled, "Co-existing with Beavers". The DVD includes information on installing a flexible leveler. The Committee said that they would like to watch this at the next meeting.

Jim said that he spoke to Jeff Storms. Jeff told Jim that he is not going to pursue the four-foot tube installation project. Karen suggested that this project be redesigned and the installation funded with the CTED funds. Bryony agreed that the flexible levelers would be eligible for funding with the CTED funds. Mary noted that the current HPA already allows for 2-foot tubes, beaver deceivers and maintenance for Dam nos. 1, 2 and 3 and removal of startup dams for 500 feet below Dam no. 3. So a new HPA and substantial development permit would not be needed. Mary asked that if the Committee funds levelers, that the Committee should request some investment in terms of funds or labor from the Sacheen Sewer District.

Karen suggested that Daryl install the beaver deceiver fencing now and that the Committee work on design and installation of the flexible levelers during 2008.

Mary asked if the \$15,000 that was held for the 4-foot tube project could be used for administration and facilitation since the CTED funds can be used to support the installation of the levelers. Andy said yes, and that he had confirmed this with Dave Burdick (Ecology's grant administrator).

Bryony summarized that the group has the following funding available:

- \$15,000 that can be used for administration, facilitation, planning, grant writing and project implementation.
- \$75,000 that can be used for implementation projects related to beaver mitigation.

Bryony asked that the group spend the rest of the meeting confirming how they would like to use these funds and to identify the priority implementation projects.

Brian said that there is a risk in not using the \$15,000 this year.

Greg said that he had spoken to the Eloika Lake Association and the WRIA 55/57 WIT to see if there any Watershed Planning funds to bridge transition of the Committee from a facilitated group to a self governing group. Greg said that he had identified 3 steps: 1) extend facilitation for about 6 months; 2) transition to a Committee structure and run meetings without a facilitator; and, 3) look for grants to cover facilitation and project implementation. Mike noted that the WRIA 55/57 WIT supports the WB LSR and the majority of the WIT do not want the WB LSR to lose momentum. Mike said that the WRIA 55/57 may be able to provide \$1,500 to support facilitation. Bryony noted that there may be some additional funding for facilitation available through Coordinated Resources Management. This funding would be administered through the Pend Oreille Conservation District.

Jim said that he would like to see implementation projects happening on the ground and expressed concern that some Committee members, he included, may lose interest if rocks are not moved. Jim said he would be more comfortable with assigning \$5,000 for facilitation at this stage.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to apply up to \$10,000 to continued facilitation through 2008 with the goal of developing a self-governing Committee within six months or so. Bryony will work with Andy to extend her contact during the six month or so transition period. Andy will confirm that the \$15,000 can be used during 2008.

The Committee confirmed the following projects that could be funded by the \$75,000 CTED monies:

- Installation of beaver deceivers around mid-April.
- Installation of beaver pond levelers downstream of Sacheen Lake.
- One or two bank restoration / revegetation projects to address erosion caused by elevated water behind beaver dams (e.g., at Sacheen Lake)
  - Potential for collaboration with POCD for additional funding.
  - Karen will communicate with Don Hill to see if he is interested in considering his property for a bank restoration / revegetation project.
  - Jill will confirm in Pam Zarko and one additional property owner that they are interested in considering projects on their property.
  - Andy will visit potential sites and report back to the Committee in March.
  - Mike noted that permitting through WDFW and Pend Oreille County will take about 3 months so it would be good to have the bank restoration / revegetation project scoped by April or May and submitted to WDFW and Pend Oreille County for permitting. Implementation would be scheduled for August – September.
- Stream gaging at Diamond Lake to better understand inflows and outflows and how beavers are impacting / diverting water.
- Sediment removal from the WB LSR stream channel below Sacheen Lake (and below Dam no. 3 in particular). Sediment in this area has resulted from activities related to beaver mitigation.

In addition, Andy noted that the POCD has some education funds that could be used to fund gift baskets containing products that are friendly to lakes / streams. These gift baskets could be presented to organizations within the WB LSR Watershed by a Committee member who can explain the purpose of each of the products. Example products include phosphorus free detergents, phosphorus free fertilizers. The gift baskets would range between \$70-100. Mary will work with Andy to identify the products to be included in the gift baskets.

Diane asked that the Committee communicate with the Spokane County Conservation District regarding gaging at Diamond Lake.

Jim said that the Committee should obtain confirmation from the Sacheen Sewer District on whether or not the four foot tube project is going ahead. Mary noted that since the Sewer District holds the HPA and the access / liability agreements, they need to be involved in the installation of deceivers and levelers. Andy will ask a member of the Sacheen Sewer District to attend the March 24, 2008 Committee meeting.

Bryony suggested that a Committee member attend the next Sewer District meeting and inform the Sewer District of the Committee's concept for deceivers and levelers and see if the Sewer District is interested in being the lead for this project. Andy said that he will attend the next Sewer District meeting.

After discussion, the Committee agreed not to include beaver trapping as an implementation project.

**Public Comment:**

- Burt asked that the Committee consider signing a letter / card for Jeff Storms. Karen said that she could prepare this for signature at the next meeting.
- Diane Wear said that she had written a letter to the Pend Oreille County Commissioners asking that they impose no wake zone throughout Pend Oreille County during the high water and thaw. Diane asked the Committee if they would be interested in sending a letter from the Committee requesting no wake zone during the high water and thaw. The Committee did not agree by consensus to submit a letter to the Pend Oreille County Commissioners.
- Andy informed the group that the POCD has been identified as a lead for a project to review existing information related to studies and assessments in the Little Spokane River drainage in support of identifying potential storage sites.
- Mike said that he could work with Howard to apply for Terry Hussman funding to fund the project to remove gravels at the inflow of Buck Creek to Horseshoe Lake.

**Membership:**

The Committee made no membership changes.

**Next Meeting (agenda, tasks and announcements):**

The next Committee meeting will be at the Riverside Fire Station, 3818 E. Deer Park – Milan Road, Riverside, WA at **6 – 8:30 pm** on Monday March 24, 2008. Bryony will bring coffee for the next meeting. The meeting will include:

- Viewing of a DVD on construction of a flexible leveler.
- Continued work on prioritization of implementation projects and the draft action table.

Additional ideas for workshops / educational presentations:

- Work Plans and Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs).
- Hydrology of the WB LSR watershed by the Spokane County Conservation District (based on review of the gaging completed to date by the Spokane County Conservation District).
- DNR presentation on forest practice regulations and lake sediment studies.
- Ecology / Spokane County Conservation District presentation on WB LSR water quality impairment and TMDLs.
- WDFW on WB LSR wildlife habitats and Corridors (contact Jeff Lawlor / Steve Zender)

**Adjourn:**

- Bryony adjourned the meeting at 8:40 pm.
- Digital recording files for this meeting will be mailed to the POCD. Digital recording files of this meeting are:
  - WBLSR Committee 022508.wav.