

WEST BRANCH LITTLE SPOKANE RIVER WATERSHED COMMITTEE

Meeting Summary

Monday, June 25, 2007

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, Burt Covert, Dolores Storms, Dan Peterson, Lynne Anderson (alternate for Dick Anderson), Gil McGee, Greg Sweeney, Howard Rowley, Bev Rowley, Jeff Storms, Sally Storms, Jill Short, Luke Short, Jim Peterson, John Harkness, Don Hill (alternate for Linda Cannon and Karen Averitt), Kathleen Werr (alternate for Russ Fletcher), Diane Wear, Darrell Johnson, Mary Sterling, Mike Carney, Mike Lithgow, Pam Zarko, Dan Ross (alternate for Rick Noll), Rob Lindsay, Thomas Wimpy, Tammera Kirk, Sandra Roath, Josh Roath, Brian Farmer (alternate for Jaime Short), Jim Wood, Pat Wood.

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, 208-676-9933 (office) and 208-755-1010 (cell).

May 21st 2007 Meeting Summary:

The group went through the previous meeting summary for comments and edits. The following corrections were discussed and made to the summary.

- Dolores Storms' name is misspelled. Correct spelling is Dolores.
- Rustlers Gulch property totals 2,853 acres. This amount in acres will be added in parentheses.
- Top of Page 2, after the word "release" add in "destruction of Kokanee spawning habitat" to end of sentence.
- Bryony received comments via email from Jeff. Jeff asked to clarify information on the first of the HPA's and requested that the second sentence be changed to read "One of the HPA's (for reducing the height of existing beaver dams and removal of any new beaver dams) was active for one year between April 2006 - April 2007 (Expired April 3rd 2007).
- Bryony noted a typo on page 2, first sentence, last paragraph and suggested that the sentence be changed to, "Bryony noted that the WRIA 55/57 implementation team has completed a preliminary project ranking."
- Mary asked that the 3rd paragraph on Page 5 be reworded to better represent what she said. After discussion, the Committee agreed to reword with text that Mary had intended to bring to the meeting: "Mary said that, as a landowner, (re: proposal of 4 ft. diameter beaver tubes), that she would need to be assured that these larger tubes would not cause too rapid a release of water & sediments,

which then results in a depleted wetland, which then impairs the in-stream flow of water to her downstream neighbors during the time it takes for the wetland to recharge itself in the area that has been manipulated.”

- Bill asked that the first sentence, 6th paragraph on Page 5 be reworded to, “Bill Harmon said that Spokane County provided him with a 3 by 4 foot aerial map of Eloika Lake, including overlays for delineation of the flood plain and wetlands for \$28.”
- Page 11, last issue posting under Horseshoe Lake. A Committee member asked if the issue (beavers – over population) can be removed. Bryony said the issue must remain on the list because someone posted the issue and it is therefore someone’s concern. It may have possibly been posted on the wrong board. Bryony will check on it.
- Page 11, first paragraph under issue consolidation, DIP will be spelt out as Detailed Implementation Plan.

The group agreed to finalize the meeting summary with the discussed corrections. The final May 2007 meeting summary will be posted on the WB LSR Committee website at: <http://www.spokanecounty.org/wqmp/projects/ASP/WestBranch.asp>.

Public Comment:

Bill said that he would talk with the Eloika Lake Association and ask if they would OK with hosting a field trip to the lake for this Committee.

Updates (WRIA 55/57, Rustler’s Gulch, Field Trip):

Rustler’s Gulch

Sandra said that the assessors have been out to the Rustler’s Gulch property. Sandra will give another update at the next meeting.

Sacheen Lake Field Trip

Jeff noted that the Sacheen Lake tour is scheduled for Saturday June 30th from 9 – 11 am. Attendees should plan for at least two hours and are to meet at Jeff’s house, 8682 Fertile Valley Road. Jeff’s can be reached at 447-3706 (home) or 951-5119 (cell).

WRIA 55/57

Rob Lindsay noted that the WRIA 55/57 Planning Unit is close to finishing their evaluation of the Watershed Plan recommendations for inclusion into the Detailed Implementation Plan. The Planning Unit decided whether or not each recommendation is a priority for the group. Initial actions were discussed for each of the priority recommendations. Some recommendations did not receive any actions from the planning unit. The Planning Unit is looking forward to receiving input from this group over the next couple of months.

The WRIA 55/57 group has held off working through recommendations that are specific to the West Branch of the little Spokane River. They are now in the part of their process where they need to address those recommendations as a group to come up with

suggestions for implementation actions to address those issues. Greg requested that they look at these recommendations at this meeting. Bryony called Susan (contractor for WRIA 55/57). Susan's response to Bryony was that she would like to know the priorities of this group and any ideas for implementation actions for those priorities. Bryony asked the group if they can identify priorities at this time, and if there are any ideas for implementation actions for those priorities.

Bill suggested that completion of definitive wetlands delineations for the West Branch of the little Spokane River watershed would be a priority action to suggest to the WRIA 55/57 group. Rob said that this action would fit well into the WRIA 55/57 Detailed Implementation Plan.

Mike Lithgow clarified that Pend Oreille County has national wetlands inventory maps available and that these are a rough tool that give an indication of where wetlands may occur. Pend Oreille County would like more definitive and up to date wetlands delineations. Dan Ross said that Spokane County currently has a similar type of inventory mapping that can be used as a rough tool.

Burt asked what the significance is of understanding the wetlands in an area. Bryony said that wetlands affect the timing of flows by providing water storage within a watershed as well as providing water quality and habitat benefits. Bill said that the nature of the existing wetlands may provide a means of prioritizing areas of the watershed for future actions.

Bryony said that she is hoping that this Committee will consolidate issues relevant to the current WRIA 55/57 Watershed Plan and develop actions to address these issues that can be presented by the Committee to the WRIA 55/57 group in time for inclusion in the draft WRIA 55/57 Detailed Implementation Plan. In the future, when the WRIA 55/57 group updates their Watershed Plan (potentially every five years in concert with Comprehensive Plan updates), there may be an opportunity for this group to present additional recommendations and actions. The next WRIA 55/57 meeting is July 11 in Chattaroy (9am to noon). Greg asked Rob if it would be possible to include an addendum to the implementation matrix. Rob encouraged the Committee to develop their own recommendations and actions and that he would help the Committee to incorporate actions into the relevant sections of the WRIA 55/57 Detailed Implementation Plan. For those actions that do not fit into the current WRIA 55/57 Detailed Implementation Plan, an addendum may be a reasonable way to have these actions included. Rob also noted that the Committee could consider funding sources other than the WRIA 55/57 Planning Unit.

Greg asked if others who attend the WRIA 55/57 are comfortable with this approach. Mike and Jeff said that they are comfortable with this process. Bryony handed out the WRIA 55/57 Detailed Implementation Plan matrix for members to review. Members may call Rob and / or Bryony if they have any questions. Request was made by the Committee for Bryony to attend the WRIA 55/57 meeting. Bryony said that she will talk to Russ to make sure if it is OK for her to attend.

Update on West Branch Implementation Project

Jeff noted that copies of the project JARPA that was filed June 1st with Pend Oreille County. The County mailed the SEPA and JARPA to everyone around Sacheen Lake to Harworth Road. There was a \$350 fee for filing the SEPA. The planning commission hearing for the project is on August 2nd, in Cusick.

Jeff noted that he filled out the JARPA to the best of his ability with help from Jeff Lawlor and presented it to the County commissioners. Jeff also provided copies to the WRIA 55/57 group. Jeff asked the WRIA 55/57 group whether or not they would support the project. The WRIA 55/57 group decided that they wanted to wait to see what this group decided.

Bryony scheduled the next Committee meeting for Monday July 2nd at 6pm-9pm to give Committee members time to review the JARPA and discuss the project further prior to the July 6 deadline for comment. Brian noted that the project JARPA is also posted on the State SEPA registry online.

Jeff stated that it will be hard to monitor flows and sediment with the \$15,000 available for this project. If the planning commission says a contractor is needed to install the tubes, this group does not have the funds available to do complete the project.

Mike asked those that did not receive a copy of the JARPA in the mail to check that their address is correct with the assessor's office. Mike suggested that comments focus on mitigations measures that could help improve the project.

Update on Attorney General's Review of Little Spokane River Navigability

Brian Farmer (Ecology) said that Ecology's Water Resources Program had asked the Attorney General to review what would be required to review the Griffin v. Holmon case. The Attorney General's office provided information back on what would be involved in terms of time and resources. Ecology's Water Resources Program decided to withdraw the request due to the higher priorities of adjudication and instream flow rule writing.

The memorandum of understanding states that activities will be undertaken as time and resources allow so Ecology feels that they have met their obligation. Brian said that the Attorney General's office indicate that the review would take several years due to the amount of case law.

Greg asked that if documentation can be provided to the Committee. Brian said that he would find whatever is in writing and provide what he can to the Committee.

Issue Consolidation

Bryony made sure everyone had a copy of the memo entitled, *Draft Consolidated List of West Branch Little Spokane River Issues to Consider for WRIA 55/57 DIP*. The memo contains a consolidation of the verbatim WB LSR issues and categorized the issues into flow control, land use, instream needs and adaptive management.

Bryony worked with the Committee to clarify the consolidated issues and identify potential actions to address the issues. Results of the issue consolidation will be documented in a later version of this memo.

Rob noted that the following recommendations within the WRIA 55/57 Watershed Plan that connect to the water storage concepts discussed:

- What land management methods could be employed to slow the release of winter snowmelt and runoff into streams thus augmenting baseflows in the watershed? These include protection and restoration of wetlands and limiting growth densities.
- What types of storage could be employed to slow the release of winter snowmelt and runoff into streams in the Little Spokane River to augment baseflow in the watershed using storage in existing lakes or new lakes and reservoirs. These include site identification and feasibility studies for all types of water storage (instream or out of stream).
- Promote management practices that help meet the instream flow rule at the Dartford gage. This could include flow control structures for example.

Points made during the discussion include:

- The West Branch of the Little Spokane River is a small tributary in comparison to the main stem (about 10% of the total flow at Dartford in the summer).
- Flow gages are needed to understand the contribution of the West Branch of the Little Spokane River to the main stem.
- The Spokane County Conservation District is gaging flows on the West Branch of the Little Spokane River.
- It is not worthwhile to redefine Washington State forestry regulations.
- Rustler's Gulch should be conserved and not logged / developed.
- Pend Oreille County currently has no staff to enforce regulations.
- The Spokane County Conservation District has completed a seepage run on the West Branch of the Little Spokane River. Seepage runs give an idea of the losing and gaining reaches of the river and can help with siting conservation areas / development / future water use to minimize impacts to the instream flow.
- The Spokane County Comprehensive Plan does note that if areas are known to be strained for water resources then the County is instructed to reducing densities in these areas.
- The Spokane Health district requires proof of 1 gpm before issuing building permits. However, the lending institutions are more commonly requiring 5 gpm before they will provide a building loan.

- WDFW installed fish barrier dams in the late 1950s and 1960s (e.g., Sacheen Lake, Trout Lake).
- A fish barrier survey has not been completed throughout the watershed. Beaver dams do not qualify as barriers in this program.
- Seeps and springs are important to support streamflow in many parts of the watershed.
- Jeff noted a need to clarify *Griffin v. Holman* (Supreme Court 1900). Still not clear how far up the watershed this applies and if the tributaries are included. Rob said that if an argument can be made that a clarification could result in stream management changes that would in turn result in more water in the stream – then a recommendation could be included in the WRIA 55/57 Detailed Implementation Plan. During preparation of the WRIA 55/57 Watershed Plan, the WRIA 55/57 Planning Unit debated this and decided not to include a recommendation to clarify *Griffin v. Holman* (Supreme Court 1900). Rob asked what the objective of this would be. Committee members said that the objective would be additional water instream as a result of activities on the stream such as beaver dam removal / barrier removals. Clarification would allow certainty on what can and cannot be completed on land adjacent to and under the stream (e.g., installation of flow control structures).
- Water streamflow quantity and quality are linked.

Public Comment:

Jeff asked the Pend Oreille Conservation District if Senator Morton has obtained the money for 2007-2008. Kathleen said she could not answer that question. Diane said that Jeff could come to the Pend Oreille Conservation District board meeting tomorrow night and ask.

Luke suggested that it would be beneficial to have a publication produced that summarizes all the activities in the West Branch watershed. This would help keep people informed and help to integrate activities within the watershed. Greg said that lack of integration of state sponsored activities is a concern in the watershed.

Rob said things may not be moving as fast as we think. Rob noted that the group has done a great job of keeping people in the West Branch informed on the watershed activities. Rob said that at this point the group should not be worried about other activities that are occurring in the watershed that aren't being communicated.

Bryony noted that there could be a recommendation made by this group that agencies have to report to this group if they are going to pursue projects in this watershed.

Membership:

Burt Covert, Sandra Roath, Josh Roath, Lynne Anderson and Dolores Storms requested membership from the group. The Committee granted membership to all five participants.

Next Meeting:

- Next meeting will be held between 6 – 9 pm on Monday July 2, 2007 at the Riverside Fire Station, 3818 E. Deer Park – Milan Road, Riverside, WA.
- Group will discuss the Sacheen Lake beaver tube replacement project and continue to go through priority issues and recommended actions.

Adjourn:

- Bryony adjourned the meeting at 9:15 pm.
- Digital recording files for this meeting will be mailed to Carolyn Russell and to the POCD. Digital recording files of this meeting are:
 - WBLSR Committee 062507a.wav
 - WBLSR Committee 062507b.wav