

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

### Meeting Summary

August 13, 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, Gil McGee, Greg Sweeney, Sandra Roath (alternate for Lynne and Dick Anderson), Howard Rowley, Bev Rowley, Jeff Storms, Sally Storms, Jill Short, Luke Short, Jim Peterson, John Harkness, Karen Averitt, Linda Cannon, Kathleen Werr (messenger and alternate for POCD), Darrell Johnson, Mary Sterling, Mike Carney, Mike Lithgow, Pam Zarko, Rick Noll, Max Smith, Jim Wood, Pat Wood, Tammera Kirk (alternate for Kitty and Carolyn Russell), Josh Roath, Diane Wear, Brad Wear, Brian Farmer.

**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).

### **June 25, 2007 Meeting Summary Review:**

The draft June 25, 2007 meeting summary was accepted by the Committee without changes. The final meeting summary will be posted on the web site at <http://www.spokanecounty.org/wqmp/projects/ASP/WestBranch.asp>.

### **Public Comment:**

- Karen noted that Governor Gregoire will be in Pend Oreille County on August 25 at 4 pm at the Krog Ranch (milepost 6 on Hwy 211) to meet the people of Pend Oreille County. This dinner meeting is open to the public. The meeting will be non-partisan and is sponsored by the Krog family, the Cattleman's Association and the Pend Oreille County Democratic Party.
- Luke asked if there is any additional information on the questions asked to the state Attorney General on the Holman vs Griffith ruling. Brian said that he just provided documentation on the correspondence between Ecology and the state Attorney General to Greg Sweeney. Ecology provided the questions to the state Attorney General. The Attorney General's office reviewed the questions and after analysis of what it would take to address the questions, Ecology's water resources program withdrew the request due to the higher priorities of instream flow and other priority water issues. Bryony noted that the WRIA 55/57 Planning Unit has considered the Holman vs Griffith ruling in the past. The WB LSR Committee could make a recommendation to the WRIA 55/57 WIT if there is an agreement from this group. The action to clarify the ruling is noted as a potential action currently within the WB LSR Committee's draft watershed action plan.
- Sandra noted that there is currently no water flow out of Horseshoe Lake.

- Howard noted that 18 acres, including Devils Well and Xley Falls, is for sale. Karen said that would call the owners and suggest that they contact the Nature Conservancy.
- Jeff asked if the expenses for the SEPA and JARPA that the Sacheen Lake Sewer District submitted to the POCD will be paid soon.
- Rick Noll said that WSU has provided a report to Ecology with the TMDL load analysis for the WB LSR. Ecology is now negotiating with WSU to improve the report. The TMDL meetings will start up again in a few months.

### **Updates:**

#### ***Sacheen Lake Sewer and Water District Beaver Tube Replacement Project***

The comment period for the Sacheen Lake Sewer and Water District beaver tube replacement project closes on August 23. The hearing for the substantial shoreline development permit for the project is scheduled at the September 6 Pend Oreille County Planning Commission meeting in Lone at 7 pm at the library.

Jeff said that a letter was written on the substantial shoreline development permit. Jeff confirmed that he is a resident on the WB LSR Committee.

Committee members asked if the Sacheen Lake Sewer District is represented on the WB LSR Committee. Since the beaver tube replacement project is being sponsored by the Sacheen Lake Sewer District, members of the Committee felt that there should be representation by the District on the Committee. In addition, there is an existing permit that notes that the Sacheen Lake Sewer District be represented on the WB LSR Committee. This permit expires in September 2007. Jeff said that this was brought up at the last District meeting and that he does inform the Sacheen Lake Sewer Board of what happens at the WB LSR Committee meetings. Jeff said that he has spoken with Jeff Lawlor and confirmed that the existing substantial shoreline development permit is not a regulatory permit. Mike confirmed that conditions of a substantial shoreline development permit can be enforced by Pend Oreille County.

#### ***Rustler's Gulch***

The sale of the land is still in progress. Tammera said that she had found an advertisement in the Wall Street Journal for the property.

Bryony said that Karen Divens of WDFW called and thanked the Committee for their letter of support for State purchase of the property to the Governor. Karen asked if we could send another letter and refer to the property as the West Branch of the Little Spokane River (and not Rustlers' Gulch). WDFW feel that the name "Rustlers' Gulch" sounds too western. Karen informed Bryony that the Legislature has awarded WDFW \$3 million to date for purchase of the property (which is listed at \$12 million). WDFW is currently appraising the land. Karen expects that the Legislature will provide funding for the property in phases and requests that the Committee send additional letters at each phase of the project. The Committee agreed that Bryony send an additional letter.

Howard said that he had suggested to the WRIA 55/57 WIT that they also send a similar letter to the Governor.

### ***Field Trips***

Burt informed the group of the July field trip to Eloika Lake. About 20 people joined the trip. Bill Harmon demonstrated how much silt is in the bottom of the lake by putting a 13 foot rake into the lake bed. The rake hit the bottom of the lake at about 4 feet below the water surface and continued through the silt until the rake extended about 9 feet into the silt. Because of the average depth of the lake at between 6 – 7 feet, the barges were frequently stuck. Committee members reported that they really enjoyed the trip and learned about the weed issue and that there are a number of small streams that flow into Eloika Lake (although there is currently no water outflow from the lake). The Committee discussed the following as reasons for the loss of water from the lake that results in no outflow: 1) evaporation; 2) seepage from the lake into the ground; and 3) illegal diversion of water (if any) from the lake. The Committee noted that inflow and outflow monitoring would help to better understand the water balance for the lake.

Sandra said that she would look into hosting a field trip to Horseshoe Lake.

### ***CD Copies of the Fertile Valley – Harworth Road Wetland Delineation Report***

Kathleen provided 12 CD copies of the report and asked that others wanting CD copies write their names on a list. The POCD said that they could provide another 6 CD copies at the next meeting.

### **Grant Administration:**

Kathleen provided the following update on behalf of the Pend Oreille Conservation District (POCD):

- Kathleen introduced herself as the coordinator for the Salmonid Recovery program in the Pend Oreille River watershed.
- Kathleen is a volunteer landowner Committee member and has also assisted the POCD as needed to prepare materials for WB LSR Committee meetings.
- Russ Fletcher resigned as the POCD administrator.
- The grant timeline for the current \$75,000 has been extended (verbal approval given by Dave Burdick at Ecology) to December 31, 2007. The paperwork for this will be completed by the POCD over the next couple of weeks.
- At this time, the POCD has received \$12,122 in billings through July 2007 from Golder and have expended about \$9,704 since November 2006 on POCD salaries and administration. The balance remaining is \$51,885 (about \$29,000 on the Golder contract and about \$22,885 to cover the \$15,000 for the beaver tube replacement project and administration costs through the grant period).
- This grant can be extended as needed by the Committee so long as there is budget remaining.
- The POCD has received a letter of award for the second \$75,000 that will come to the POCD through Community Trade and Economic Development (CTED).
- There is a POCD Board meeting on August 20.

**WB LSR Streamflow Monitoring:**

Rick Noll provided a handout with information on the June 7, 2007 WB LSR seepage run flows and the five gages established by the Spokane County Conservation District on the WB LSR. Seepage runs are used to characterize the nature of the surface water – groundwater connections by providing information on losing and gaining stream reaches. The Spokane County Conservation District is hoping that there will be funding through Ecology to continue gaging. Ecology should know by the end of September. Rick said that the Spokane County Conservation District would like to gain access to the LSR in the Fan – Horseshoe – Buck Creek area to improve the resolution of future seepage runs.

**Issue Consolidation:**

Bryony made sure that everyone had a copy of the following:

- Draft technical memorandum dated August 13 and entitled, “Draft consolidated list of West Branch Little Spokane River Issues to Consider for WRIA 55/57 DIP.”
- Draft tables summarizing the issues, objectives and actions developed by the Committee for the consideration by the WRIA 55/57 Watershed Implementation Team.

Bryony noted that the WB LSR Committee will need to present implementation actions for consideration by the WRIA 55/57 WIT at the August 29, 2007 WIT meeting.

Bryony worked with the Committee to confirm the issues, objectives and actions in the draft tables. The following points summarize the discussion:

- New water rights are not available within the WB LSR watershed.
- Unless it can be proved otherwise, groundwater withdrawn from wells is assumed to be in hydraulic continuity with surface water.
- Practically, it is very difficult to regulate permit-exempt wells.
- Educational programs and incentives to promote water conservation could be recommended by the Committee. The Spokane Aquifer Joint Board (SAJB) has an ongoing water conservation program.
- Planning and zoning for land development density is likely to be a more practical way to reduce the impact of additional future water use on streamflow and lake levels.
- Pend Oreille County is starting to update the Shoreline Master Program. Keyhole development could be addressed via the county Shoreline Master Program.
- The Sacheen Lake Sewer District has a current HPA for maintenance of beaver dams nos. 1, 2 and 3 and for removal of start-up dams that are upstream of dam no. 3.
- Any activities related to Trout Lake should be removed since Dan Reiner is not represented on the Committee. The Committee requested that Dan be included on the Committee’s email list so that he can respond / become involved if he wishes.
- Activities related to dredging / vegetation removal are associated with Eloika Lake (and not Trout Lake). The cause of sedimentation in Eloika is believed to

be related to weed decomposition, wood debris input from past logging activities, and silt input to the lake from upstream / streamside activities. Saltero (1999?) developed potential solutions for Eloika Lake and the no. 1 action recommended in the report by Saltero was a water control structure along with water level manipulation. A water control structure would also allow for release of stored water for downstream benefits. Ken Merrill (1987) came to similar conclusions.

- Landowners at the downstream end of Eloika Lake may not support higher lake levels.
- Spokane County replaced the culvert at the outlet of Eloika Lake over 20 years ago and installed the culvert at too low an elevation. This is likely to have resulted in lower lake levels (maybe a lowering of about 2 feet) which have exacerbated the weed growth problem.
- All lakes are sediment traps. Mineral based sediment input to lakes can be assessed by water quality sampling / sediment coring. Plant debris decay is a natural process. A sediment core may clarify the proportions of mineral sediment vs. organic debris. A sediment characterization study is underway for Loon Lake (in WRIA 59) and is being conducted by DNR.
- It is a natural process for lakes to fill with sediment over time and eventually grass over. It is more important to understand if this natural process is being accelerated by activities that can be controlled.
- If a lake depth is shallower than about 9 to 10 feet, weed growth appears to accelerate.
- Milfoil is a water quality issue and will be addressed by the Committee after the actions related to water quantity are presented to the WRIA 55/57 WIT.
- Public purchase of key pieces of land for is a potential action to support land conservation.
- The tributaries to the LSR are closed to further water rights appropriation.
- The Committee agreed to include an action to conduct an instream flow assessment for the WB LSR.
- The Diamond Lake Water and Sewer District water rights needs may be addressed through the WRIA 62 Watershed Planning process and through purchase of water rights (100 connections) from Mr. Bob Monahan. John Harkness / Bryony to check with Ray King about this. The Diamond Lake Water and Sewer District may be considering drilling a new well.
- The need for sewer will be addressed through the water quality issue development.
- Dan Peterson noted that it is important to consider the needs of the Sacheen Lake homeowners since the Committee's funding is largely the result of concerns they expressed at a Pend Oreille County Commissioners' meeting where Senator Morton happened to also be present.

**Public Comment:**

- No additional public comment.

**Membership:**

- No membership additions / removals.

**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 **5:30 – 9 pm** on Monday August 27, 2007. This meeting will focus on confirming the WBLSR watershed actions for presentation to the WRIA 55/57 WIT on August 29, 2007.

**Adjourn:**

- Bryony adjourned the meeting at 9:10 pm.
- Digital recording files for this meeting will be mailed to the POCD. The digital recording file of this meeting is:
  - WBLSR Committee 081307.wav