

## WEST BRANCH LITTLE SPOKANE RIVER WATERSHED COMMITTEE

### Meeting Summary

August 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:** Greg Sweeney (alternate for Mike Carney and Dean Fanara), Bill Harmon (alternate Mary Harmon and Burt Covert), Dolores Storms (alternate for Sally Storms), Darrell Johnson, Mary Sterling (alternate for Kathleen Werr), Jim Wood, Pat Wood, Luke Short, Jill Short, Mike Lithgow (Pend Oreille County), Richard Stafford, Bonnie Stafford, Pam Zarko, Tammy Kirk (alternate for Howard Rowley, Dick Anderson, Lynne Anderson Bev Rowley, Sandra Roath and Josh Roath), Gil McGee, Dan Peterson, Jon Jones (Ecology), Dan Reiner, Tom Wimpy.

**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:**

- Bryony noted that Andy Huddleston (Pend Oreille Conservation District) is on vacation and will not be attending the meeting tonight. Andy wanted the Committee to know that the Sargents are proceeding with their bank stabilization work. The Sargents may coordinate with the Committee next year on additional stabilization work on their property.
- Jim and Pat Woods said that they are also planning to conduct their bank stabilization project with their own funds this year.
- Greg asked if any agencies are planning to apply for grants on behalf of / in the WB LSR watershed. Jon said that the Pend Oreille Conservation District is applying for Clean Water funds.
- Bryony noted that applications are due to Ecology on September 12 for Terry Husseman funds. Bryony suggested that the Committee consider applying for Terry Husseman funds for one of the top tier Sacheen Lake bank stabilization demonstration projects. Mike Lithgow agreed to write an application with help from Andy Huddleston. Jon Jones said that he would be happy to sponsor an application if the Committee is looking for an Ecology staff person to sponsor. The Committee agreed to submit an application and to select a tier one Sacheen Lake project from the June 2008 list.
- Bryony noted that Richard Allinger (PBS&J) will be speaking on water storage at the Committee's September meeting.
- Dolores noted that a man was killed at Sacheen Lake during a wind storm by a tree that fell down along the shoreline.

- Luke Short said that the Sacheen Lake level last Thursday was about 8.7 ft. Mary Sterling noted that the Sacheen Lake level is now just above 8.6 ft and the lake is dropping.
- Darrell updated the Committee on what is happening with the tubes and deceivers at beaver dam nos. 2 and 3. Darrell noted that the deceiver that he installed at dam no. 3 has been problematic. There is a lot of vegetation that floats down the river that tends to clog the outside of the deceiver. The deceiver needed to be cleaned about every two days. Darrell said that he removed the deceiver at dam no. 3. With regular maintenance of the tubes, the Sacheen Lake level did come down to 8.3 ft in July. However, there was a period of time over which the tubes were not regularly cleaned out by the Sewer District staff and the tubes did become clogged. Pat Woods said that the Sewer District is hiring a new person to work on the tubes. Darrell noted that Perry Pearman and Don Hill cleaned out the tubes with high pressure fire hose and maintained the existing dams this last weekend and will continue maintenance work this week. Perry suggested considering a “trash rack”, similar to those used at hydroelectric properties to catch debris prior to the tubes. The Committee agreed that there needs to be a focus on maintenance activities to keep the tubes clear.
- Bryony said that the survey information that she has received from WDFW indicates that the Grand Dam does not impact Sacheen Lake levels.
- Greg noted that there is a need to have coordinated flow and elevation information for the West Branch of the Little Spokane River Committee and a need to have all agencies coordinate on this and to make the information available to the public.
- After discussion, the Committee agreed to consider an action to develop / host a website where all information on the West Branch of the Little Spokane River can be posted (i.e., data repository). Dan Reiner suggested that the requirement to post data could be included within any contract for work completed on the West Branch of the Little Spokane River.
- Greg asked that those on the Committee and those representing lake associations gather information on elevations and flows for the West Branch of the Little Spokane River and pass this information on to Richard Allinger of PBS&J ([rjallinger@pbsj.com](mailto:rjallinger@pbsj.com) / 509-220-2956). Greg noted that the Eloika Lake Assoc. has been collecting and graphing information since the start of the spring melt this year and will pass this information on to Richard. Greg said that he would happily pass on information from others also. Darrell noted that the Spokane County Conservation District should also pass on their information to Richard. Tom Wimpy said that he would try to communicate with the Diamond Lake Water and Sewer District and pass on any available information to Greg. Tammy said that she did not think that there was any available information for Horseshoe Lake. The SOS website may include elevation data for Sacheen Lake. Dan Reiner said that he does not take elevation measurements at Trout Lake but has noticed that it seems to take about three days for the elevation of Trout Lake to rise after a rain.

**Membership:**

- The Committee accepted Bonnie and Richard Stafford as new Committee members.
- Greg said that Dean Fanara is interested in continuing as a member.
- Bryony said that she will ask the Pend Oreille Conservation District to call Max Smith and Jim Peterson to confirm that they are still interested in being Committee members.

**June 23, 2008 Meeting Summary Review**

The following corrections were discussed and agreed to by the Committee. The final June 2008 meeting summary will be posted on the web site at <http://www.spokanecounty.org/wqmp/projects/ASP/WestBranch.asp>.

- Page 7, No. 3, 5<sup>th</sup> item on list: the ownership details for land on either side of beaver dam nos. 1, 2 and 3 will be documented as:
  - Mary Sterling and Darrell Johnson own the property on one side of dam no. 3 and the start up dams below dam no. 3. Silver City owns the property on the other side of dam no. 3 and the start up dams below dam no. 3. Silver City owns the property on one side of dam no. 2 and Jim Hance owns the property on the other side of dam no. 2. Silver City owns the property on one side of dam no. 1 and Dan Reiner owns the property on the other side of dam no. 1.
- Page 8, public comment: light bulb donations were made by Pend Oreille PUD and not Avista. Comment will be edited to read:
  - Mary asked the lake associations to pick up boxes of energy efficient light bulbs that have been donated by Pend Oreille PUD.

**Presentation on Little Spokane River Water Quality Improvement Plans and Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) by Jon Jones, Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology).**

Jon noted that this presentation is primarily focused on the WB Little Spokane River and not the lakes, since the TMDLs are not being completed for the lakes in the watershed. A copy of the presentation will be posted on the web site at <http://www.spokanecounty.org/wqmp/projects/ASP/WestBranch.asp>.

***What is a Water Quality Improvement Plan?***

- It's a PLAN for better water
- It's a PROCESS
- It's a DOCUMENT
- It's an AMOUNT OF A POLLUTANT (including temperature etc.)

***The Value of a TMDL***

- It emphasizes action over planning and assessment
- It enhances public and private partnerships
- It targets important nonpoint sources of pollution (polluted runoff)

- Does not become a rule or regulation (however, local governments may adopt ordinances)
- Is not prescriptive to individual landowners

**Q:** What are the point sources on the Little Spokane River?

**A:** Griffith Springs (fish hatchery near mouth of Little Spokane River) and Colbert Landfill.

***What is a TMDL?***

- TMDL = Total Maximum Daily Load = “the amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can receive and still meet water quality standards”.
- TMDL is also a process.

***Allocations***

Waste Load Allocations (WLA) - are allocations for point sources of pollution

- End of pipe discharge
- Usually from a facility such as a wastewater treatment plant or a factory

Load Allocations (LA) - are allocations from nonpoint sources of pollution

- From diverse sources
- Exact source not easily determined
- Examples include: runoff from streets, runoff from pastures and fields (which is likely to be significant in the Little Spokane River watershed), fertilizer from lawns and crops, faulty septic tanks

The TMDL pie contains the maximum amount of pollutant divided into allocations for each source

**Q:** Who measures point sources of pollution and how often?

**A:** It depends – this information is stipulated on the discharge permit for the point source. The facilities usually do the monitoring and send the results to Ecology.

**Q:** Are there different growth allowances for point and non-point sources?

**A:** No. The growth reserve is combined.

***Parts of the Process***

- Problem Assessment
- Technical Analysis and Allocation
- Implementation Strategy
- Monitoring

***Why do TMDLs?***

- 1) To protect water
- 2) It's the law
- 3) Lawsuit compliance

**Q:** Are ponds that are connected to the river required to comply?

**A:** Yes. These ponds are waters of the State.

### ***The Law***

- The Clean Water Act (CWA) requires states to set water quality standards for surface waters to protect public and environmental health.
- These standards protect water for beneficial uses such as: drinking water, aquatic habitat, recreation, irrigation, fishing, and livestock.

### ***The Clean Water Act***

- Streams and lakes not providing these beneficial uses are placed on a list of impaired waterbodies (i.e., the 303(d) list).
- Waterbodies on the 303(d) list must have a TMDL developed for them to correct the impairment.
- Water quality data is entered by Ecology into EIM and used to develop water quality status reports.

**Q:** How often does Ecology update the list?

**A:** Supposed to be every year. However, our draft list to EPA for 2007 has just been submitted to EPA.

### ***Lawsuit Compliance***

- 1990's: Several citizen lawsuits around the US claimed that EPA was not implementing section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act in a timely manner.
- 1998: In January 1998, Ecology, EPA, and two environmental advocate groups agreed to a clean up schedule directing how Washington state will improve the health of nearly 700 water segments by the year 2013.
- This agreement was outlined in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).

**Q:** Are there any segments in the West Branch LSR that are on the clean up list?

**A:** Yes. The Little Spokane River is listed for temperature. I can separate out the water quality data for the West Branch of the Little Spokane River if the Committee wants.

**Q:** Is the Little Spokane River TMDL process connected to the Spokane River mainstem TMDL process?

**A:** Yes, the Spokane River mainstem group has given the Little Spokane River a phosphorus allocation.

### ***Major Causes why Water Bodies Fail to Meet Water Quality Standards***

- Based on 1998 303(d) list:
  - Bacteria - 285
  - Temperature - 282
  - Dissolved Oxygen (DO) – 133
  - pH – 87
  - Toxics – 78
  - Flow – 38
  - Nutrients - 28

### ***How the process works***

- A water body fails to meet the state water quality standards
- It is placed on a list of impaired water bodies (the 303(d) list)
- The water body is prioritized and then scheduled for a TMDL (water clean up plan)

### ***Ecology Works With***

- Tribes, local interest groups, Watershed Planning Units, individual citizens, local governments, businesses, conservation districts and landowners ... to prioritize which waterbodies to start TMDLs on and to develop plans to reduce the pollution.

### ***Advisory Groups***

- An Advisory Group may be formed to help complete the TMDL
- Sometimes an existing group (such as a Watershed Planning Unit) fills this role
- This group may help develop strategies to achieve the necessary pollution reduction
- These strategies are included in the TMDL Submittal Report to EPA for approval

**Q:** Is there a local advisory group?

**A:** Yes, there is a Little Spokane River TMDL advisory group that started prior to the West Branch Little Spokane River Committee.

### ***How can you be involved?***

- Volunteer to be on an Ecology TMDL Advisory Group
- Keep in touch through local groups
- Work with others already improving water quality
- Sign up for Ecology's mailing list

### ***Quick Review of the TMDL Process***

1. Waterbody violates water quality standards
2. Waterbody is listed on 303(d) list (i.e., Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act)
3. Problem(s) verified
4. TMDL study to determine water's capacity to assimilate pollutant
5. TMDL study used as a tool to develop strategies to reduce pollution
6. TMDL study and strategies sent to EPA for approval
7. After EPA approval develop a detail implementation plan (1 year to complete)

### ***TMDLs in the Little Spokane River Watershed***

- Temperature
- Fecal Coliform
- Also listed for turbidity, pH, dissolved oxygen
- Possibility of adding pH and dissolved oxygen to TMDL

**Q:** Is phosphorus on this list?

**A:** No. However, dissolved oxygen and phosphorus are connected. Algae blooms (caused by excess phosphorus) use and can deplete oxygen. Excess phosphorus can be connected to septics, detergents, plant decomposition, fertilizers and usually involves direct runoff into surface water since phosphorus tends to bind to soil / rock particles.

**Q:** Can you explain pH?

**A:** pH is how acid / base a stream is? I do not know the specifics for the Little Spokane River.

***On the Little Spokane River we found ...***

• **Fecal Coliform**

- Possibly from failing septics
- Possibly from pets (including hobby farms)
- Possibly from wildlife
- Possibly from commercial livestock operations
- Standard is: "Freshwater coliform organism levels shall both not exceed a geometric mean value of 100 colonies/100 mL, and not have more than 10 percent of all samples obtained for calculating the geometric mean value exceeding 200 colonies/100mL"

• **Temperature**

- Not enough shade (need 70% shade to comply)
- Standard is 17.5 degrees C (63.5 degrees F)

**Q:** Who takes the samples?

**A:** Ecology or an Ecology contractor in accordance with a QAPP. Samples are usually taken bi-monthly during critical conditions (e.g., during low flows).

**Q:** Can we control temperature? How did the State decide on the 17.5 degrees C (63.5 degrees F) standard?

**A:** Yes, by increasing shade. Modeling indicates that 70% shade is needed to meet temperature standards. However, there are limitations in the effectiveness of shade trees when the river is wide. The temperature standard is based on optimum conditions for fish. The critical time of year for temperature is the summer.

***Status of TMDLs in the Little Spokane River Watershed***

- Technical Study Completed by WSU
- Waiting for modeling results
- Logistics of Main Spokane and Hangman
- Personal guess as to when final report will be completed ... ???

***Questions?***

[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/links/impaired\\_wtrs.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/links/impaired_wtrs.html)

Contact: Jon Jones, TMDL Specialist, Water Quality Program,  
Ecology ERO (509) -329-3481 / [jojo461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:jojo461@ecy.wa.gov)

**Q:** Can you identify the locations of the monitoring stations and is this information available?

**A:** Yes. WSU is finalizing the technical report and this will be available after peer review.

**Q:** Are you monitoring flow for the TMDLs? We would like to see this information. We are aware of eight different agencies that are or have collected flow data on the West Branch Little Spokane River. It is frustrating that we are unable to obtain flow data.

**A:** Yes. Flow is needed to quantify loads. You can send me an email to obtain the flow information. This is the data that is being collected by the Spokane County Conservation District. Rick Noll is the contact at the Spokane County Conservation District.

**Q:** When will the WSU data be available?

**A:** I am not sure – maybe in the Spring 2009. We are waiting for some additional modeling information from WSU and analysis by Ecology. You can look at the draft report now. Ecology is working on rolling out the Little Spokane River, Hangman Creek and the mainstem Spokane River TMDL reports at the same time.

**Q:** When does the Little Spokane River TMDL group meet?

**A:** We do not have a meeting date set. Mary said that she would inform this group when the next meeting is scheduled.

### **CTED Project Funding**

Bryony noted that Andy has submitted the applications for funding.

### **Grant Applications**

Bryony noted that the POCD received \$2,500 from a CRM grant through June 2009 to support monitoring of water level elevations behind the beaver dams.

### **Review Draft Watershed Action Plan**

Bryony handed out the latest version of the draft action plan.

Bryony suggested that an issue / action be included in the plan to address the need for easier access to stream flow data or development of a data repository. Mike suggested that this issue / action be compiled into an existing issue / action (possibly WB.SW2-2). After discussion, the Committee agreed to identify a new issue / actions and to tie with processes that are funded, e.g., the TMDL process and Watershed Planning.

Greg said that he received new information today: the actual data points where flow is being monitored by the Spokane County Conservation District (SCCD); and, that phosphorus is being addressed through the TMDL process. Bryony noted that the SCCD has presented the flow data to the Committee in the past. Jon Jones noted that the data is in the public domain. Greg suggested that for any project on a lake / river reach, the project must include a summary of historic flow data. Bryony noted that the

Phase 2, Level 1 Technical Assessment for WRIA 55 / 57 (completed by Golder in 2003) is a good flow data summary.

Bryony asked the Committee to review and comment via email on the draft watershed action plan (dated 012808) prior the September meeting and be prepared to work on the plan at the September meeting. Bryony noted that her goal is to finalize the action plan by the end of the year.

**Public Comment:**

- Eloika Lake is currently working on a lake management plan (with grant funds from Ecology).
- Dan Reiner noted that he has tried to call Richard Allinger of PBS&J and has not received a call / email back to date. Bryony said that she would email Richard and ask him to call / email Dan.
- Mike noted that Pend Oreille County is just starting work on the inventory and analysis. Pend Oreille County will be hosting a field trip on September 4 for northern Pend Oreille County.
- The PUD is surrendering their FERC license for Sullivan Lake dam and there will be a process starting up to address this.
- Greg passed around raffle tickets for Eloika Lake poker paddle which will occur on Saturday September 20.

**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 September 22, 2008**. The Following Committee meetings will be scheduled for: October 27, November 17 and December 15. Mary will check room availability at the Riverside fire station.

Bryony will bring coffee for the next meeting. The meeting will include:

- Presentation by Richard Allinger of PBS&J (assuming that the project is at the appropriate stage) and discussion with the Committee on possible water storage options within the West Branch Little Spokane River watershed.
- Continued work on the draft watershed action plan.

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).
- WDFW on WB LSR wildlife habitats and Corridors (contact Jeff Lawlor / Steve Zender).

**Adjourn:**

Bryony adjourned the meeting at 8:37 pm. Digital recording file (WBLSR Committee 082508.wav) for this meeting will be mailed to the POCD.