

BOARD OF MASON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS

MAY 4, 2004

Acting Chairperson Jayni L. Kamin called the special meeting to order at 6:09 p.m. at Mary M. Knight School Modular Building, 2987 W. Matlock Brady Road, Matlock, WA. Commissioner Herb Baze was also in attendance. Commissioner Wesley E. Johnson was on scheduled leave.

CHEHALIS BASIN WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN

Acting Chairperson Jayni L. Kamin explained it is a special meeting to receive public comment on the final draft of the proposed Chehalis Basin Watershed Management Plan. It is a common community vision to help guide the management of the water resources of the Chehalis Basin Watershed.

Attendance: Herb & Jerry Brehmeyer; Christopher Harper; and Jeff Hawkins.

Staff: Bob Fink, Planning Manager; Mark Swartout, Thurston County; Lee Napier, WRIA 22 Project Manager and Deputy Director of Grays Harbor County Department of Community Development.

Lee Napier explained that Grays Harbor and Lewis Counties have already had their public meeting. Thurston County will be the last public meeting.

She explained that the Chehalis Basin Partnership is a planning unit, which was formed informally in 1997 and by an intergovernmental agreement in 1998. The geographic boundaries follow the water resource inventory areas (WRIA) 22 & 23. They have combined together as one unit for planning to begin to address water resource issues in the Chehalis Basin.

Originally, Lewis County was the lead agency and they turned that responsibility over to Grays Harbor County in 1999. The membership includes Lewis, Thurston, Grays Harbor, and Mason Counties, which are actively involved. It also includes a tribal government; 2 water districts; 12 cities; 3 ports speak as one voice by the Port of Centralia; citizen representative from each county; four major interest groups and four state agencies.

There are three phases which are established by law:

Phase 1 - Organizational Phase – People talk about water resource issues and adopt an intergovernmental agreement to participate in the Chehalis Basin Partnership. (1998)

Phase 2 – Technical Assessment Phase – Resulted in a Level 1 & 2 assessment.

Phase 3 – Planning Phase – Current phase which they develop mission, goals and objectives, outline for the plan. This process started in 2000 in developing the Plan. They began with their outline, goals and objectives. They held public meetings which went to April 2002. The remainder of 2002 and 2003 they began to write the Plan. As they began to write the Plan they used the issue statement. They had collected over 150 issues and then tried to compile and format it so that it was useable. The Plan grew into a large draft which they then realized needed to be reorganized.

The Plan was reorganized and it now has an introduction, which shares the overview of the Chehalis Basin for someone who is not familiar. There is information about the current water resource status. There were sections with questions and answers concerning the plan. There are sections on recommendations and suggested actions.

The last section is unresolved suggested action. People could see the alternatives considered.

The Watershed Management Plan includes recommendations that if implemented would provide a vision and framework for water resource management in the Chehalis Basin. The Plan can be a vehicle for designing and establishing water programs to protect water resources while still in good shape. There was a lot of discussion about what the recommendations would cost. They realized it is more cost effective to preserve the water resources rather than invest cost if they were degraded. Also, the theory if there was local control it would be more cost

**BOARD OF MASON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
MAY 4, 2004 – PAGE 2**

effective. The Plan has recommendations to provide tools to determine whether water is available for out of stream uses.

The Plan was approved by the Chehalis Basin Watershed Partnership on April 9, 2004. The original plan is used as a technical resource to help make decisions contained in the smaller plan. After the Partnership approved the Plan, the law states that it must be sent out to the four counties for public hearings which is being conducted in Mason County at this meeting.

A joint session is scheduled for Friday, May 28, 2004; 9:00 a.m. at the Lucky Eagle Casino in Rochester, WA to consider acceptance of the Plan.

After the Plan is accepted the Chehalis Basin Partnership will submit the Plan to the state.

Herb Brehmeyer stated they have great habitat. They have had 160 dead salmon in his field at one time. He noted that Dry Bed Creek is going dry, there is about fifteen miles of fine gravel. He asked that the creek be baled which was done once. However, in 45 minutes there was 20,000 salmon. He was told the government is not interested in the fish because they are too competitive to hatchery fish. He stated he likes the elk but he can't afford them.

Cmmr. Kamin asked if this has been occurring for years.

Mr. Brehmeyer stated that it has been going on since the beginning when he can recall. The creek is basically a big gravel bar.

Chris Harper concurred that there are dead fish everywhere at Dry Bed Creek.

Cmmr. Kamin explained that Mason County holds 7% of the Chehalis Basin boundary and most of that is in either government owned or Simpson land. Mason County local citizen landowners don't have as big a chunk within the Plan. Most of the timberland is all managed similar to Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties by the forest and fish laws.

Chris Harper also stressed that Dry Bed Creek runs year round underground.

Cmmr. Kamin asked what makes the creek go underground.

Mr. Brehmeyer noted that it is gravel ground.

It was noted that the Chehalis Basin Partnership meets regularly on the 4th Friday of each month at 9 am at the Lucky Eagle Casino in Rochester and individuals are welcome to attend. It has been difficult getting representation from the county to serve on the board.

It was pointed out that Mason County is involved in four watersheds. WRIA's 14, 15, 16 & 22.

Lee Napier explained that there are technical reports available on the website.

Cmmr. Baze/Kamin moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting and continue this matter until May 28, 2004 at 9:00 a.m. at the Chehalis Room at the Lucky Eagle Casino in Rochester, Washington. Motion carried unanimously. B-aye; J-absent; K-aye.

ADJOURNED

The meeting adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

**BOARD OF MASON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
MAY 4, 2004 – PAGE 3**

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MASON COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Absent 5/4/04

Wesley E. Johnson, Chairperson

ATTEST:

Jayni L. Kamin, Commissioner

Rebecca S. Rogers, Clerk of the Board

Herb Baze, Commissioner