

**FINAL**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**WRIA 54 - Lower Spokane River Watershed**  
**August 27, 2008**

**Location:** Airway Heights Community Center, Airway Heights, WA.

**Planning Unit members and guests recorded on the sign-in sheet were:**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Mike Hermanson, Spokane County   | Sara Hunt, WA State Dept. of Ecology                  |
| Rob Lindsay, Spokane County  | Charlie Kessler, Stevens County Conservation District |
| Brian Crossley, Spokane Tribe  | Cindy Reddekopp, City of Airway Heights               |
| Charlie Peterson, Spokane County Conservation District                                       |   |
| Reanette Boese, Spokane County   | Dave Jones, Spokane County Planning Commission        |
| Jim DeGraffenreid, Lincoln County Planning   | Craig Volosing, Landowner and Palisades Neighborhood  |
| Linda McCollum, EWU Geology Dept.  | Mike McCollum, Citizen                                |
| Dinah Reed, EWU Planning Dept.   | Jay Peltier Jones, EWU Planning Dept.                 |
| Cynthia Carlstad, TetraTech  | Bryony Stasney, Golder Associates Inc.                |
| Wes McCart, Stevens County Farm Bureau, Stevens County Water Conservancy Board and Landowner |   |
| Jeanne Barnes, Spokane Association of Realtors and Lake Spokane Park Homeowners Association  |   |

**Call to Order**

Bryony opened the meeting at 10:00 am. Attendees introduced themselves. Bryony requested that each attendee complete the sign-in sheet.

**Review and Approve June 2008 Meeting Summary**

The draft June 25, 2008 WRIA 54 Planning Unit meeting summary was reviewed and approved as final with no changes by those present. The final summary will be posted on Spokane County's web site at <http://www.spokanecounty.org/wqmp/wria54.htm>.

**Public Comment**

- Wes McCart noted that the Stevens County Conservation District and the Stevens County Farm Bureau hosted a public workshop for the USGS hydrogeologic study of the Chamokane Creek basin on August 26. Sue Kahle of the USGS and Brian Crossley of the Spokane Tribe presented at the meeting. About ninety-five people attended. Wes said that he has a recommendation that he would like to suggest for inclusion in the draft WRIA 54 Watershed Plan:
  - Recommend that a local sub-watershed group be formed comprising but not limited to residents of the Chamokane Basin and Spokane Tribe to solve water quantity issues specific to the Chamokane Creek Basin outside of the federal court.

**Presentation and Discussion of the Draft WRIA 54 Watershed Plan – Cynthia Carlstad, TetraTech and Bryony Stasney, Golder Assoc.**

Cynthia Carlstad (TetraTech) noted that there is still some work to be done to review the issue papers and to prepare the best first draft watershed plan that consolidates the work group efforts and avoids presenting the results as a laundry list of issues and recommendations. The topics covered in today's presentation are listed below. A copy of the presentation will be posted on Spokane County's web site at <http://www.spokanecounty.org/wqmp/wria54.htm>.

***Topics***

- Progress on draft Watershed Plan
- Status of adjacent WRIAs
- Inter-WRIA coordination
- Looking ahead to implementation

Rob Lindsay introduced Reanette Boese as the lead for the WRIA 55/57 Watershed Implementation Team (WIT). Rob also reminded the Planning Unit that Spokane County, as the lead entity for WRIA 54, first received Phase 3 Watershed Planning grant funds for WRIA 54 in September 2005. The Watershed Planning Act requires the WRIA 54 Watershed Plan to be completed and approved by the Planning Unit in four years, i.e., by September 2009.

### ***Progress on Draft Watershed Plan***

- Issue polling about 2 years ago.
- Issues consolidated into 6 categories.
- 6 work groups (Instream Flow, Water Management, Water Quality, Land Use, Technical Information and Education) were initiated to develop issues and potential solutions.
- Technical module approach (see updated draft table of contents).
- Initially thought one technical module for each work group (6), but now proposing breaking Water Management into 4 modules (Water Rights Administration; Promoting Efficient Use of Water; Providing Water for Future Needs; and Water Storage Opportunities).
- Attempting to consolidate/summarize recommendations as much as possible so that the Plan includes general recommendations rather than a huge number of specific actions.
- Avoid jargon and too much detail.
- Include general priorities in the Watershed Plan (e.g., high, medium, low) and identify early implementation items.
- Identify early implementation items.

**Q:** Will the Plan include sections for the WRIA 55/57 and 54 instream flow work for the Spokane River and the WRIA 54 instream flow planning for the tributaries?

**A:** Yes. The Plan will document the WRIA 55/57 and 54 instream flow work for the Spokane River and will lay out a path for the WRIA 54 tributaries.

Cynthia said that she would send out the draft WRIA 54 instream flow issue paper for review via email.

**Q:** You talk about recommendations. I assume that the Plan will also include obligations.

**A:** Yes. Identification of obligations will occur as the implementation matrix is developed.

Wes suggested that as much information on prioritization is included in the DIP since there is a short time frame (1 year) to complete the DIP. Rob noted that the various entities planning are likely to have different priorities.

Reanette suggested that general recommendations in the Plan include information on the specific steps / actions needed to implement the recommendations. Rob Lindsay concurred. Rob noted that Spokane County is considering the recommendations in the WRIA 54 Watershed Plan and how the recommendations are likely to impact policies throughout Spokane County.

### ***Schedule for Completion***

- September, 2008
  - Present draft Watershed Plan; Identify areas that need discussion
- October, 2008
  - Focus on areas that need further discussion; Draft Implementation Framework (a matrix)
- November, 2008
  - Revised draft Watershed Plan (or push to December depending on extent of revisions and meeting schedule); Implementation Framework
- December, 2008
  - Revised draft Watershed Plan, including implementation framework
- January, 2009
  - Draft final Watershed Plan; SEPA

- February, 2009
  - Final Watershed Plan; Planning Unit approval (second approval meeting in March?)

Reanette noted that Spokane County has a SEPA checklist for projects.

### ***Overview of Adjacent WRIAs***

#### ***WRIA 59 (Colville) – Year 4 of Implementation***

- Governance
  - Water Resource Management Board and Executive Committee
    - Coordinate implementation beyond watershed planning
    - Working on MOA with state agencies
  - Watershed Management Partnership (RCW 39.34)
    - Administer and apply for funding
    - Includes Stevens County, PUD, Cities of Chewelah, Colville and Kettle Falls and Conservation District
- Implementation projects
  - ISF for main stem & tributaries (rule-making this winter)
  - Water storage feasibility studies
  - Adjudication (streamlined)
  - Regional water master

**Q:** What is the role of the lead entity?

**A:** Stevens County is the lead entity and is now one of the members of the partnership. The Board is a stakeholder group that could file for non-profit status and apply for funding if needed / desired in the future.

#### ***WRIA 55/57 (Little & Middle Spokane)—Year 2 of Implementation***

- Completed Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) in February, 2008
- Watershed Implementation Team (WIT)
- Implementation projects
  - Regional message on water conservation (RWCC)
  - Water storage/recharge feasibility studies
    - Wetland restoration (incl. Saltse Flats)
    - Forestry/ag practices that increase recharge
    - Preserving natural drainageways
  - Instream flow for Spokane River
  - Regional watermaster/compliance staff
  - Land use planning/water availability

**Q:** Does the WRIA 55/57 MOA address shared governance of water resources between state and local entities?

**A:** No. The MOA defines administration and operation of the WIT.

#### ***WRIA 56 (Hangman / Latah) - Year 2 of Implementation***

- Completed DIP in February 2008; Working as a WIT
- Implementation projects
  - Water Conservation
  - Groundwater Monitoring
  - Hydrogeologic Characterization
  - Water Quality Monitoring
  - TMDLs
  - Instream Flow
  - Streamflow Gauging
  - Riparian Action Plan

**WRIA 34 (Palouse) - Year 1 of Implementation**

- DIP due Dec 2008 / Jan 2009; Working as a Planning Unit
- Priority implementation projects -
  - Capital projects:
    - Pullman reclaimed water study
    - ASR and recharge enhancement
    - Water conservation & efficiency
  - Operational projects:
    - Hydrogeological studies that include understanding of groundwater withdrawals on stream flows of Cow and Rock Creeks
    - Stream flow gaging and groundwater monitoring
    - Public education on water resources (incl. conservation)

Rob noted that Spokane County is participating in WRIA 34 Watershed Planning and Implementation. Hydrogeologic characterization of the West Plains area is a top tier priority for the WRIA 34 group; however this planning unit is likely to focus its funds in the Moscow – Pullman area as opposed to the West Plains. Spokane County will pursue funding for West Plains hydrogeologic characterization work through WRIA 54 rather than WRIA 34. Rob added that there will be opportunities for WRIA 54 and WRIA 34 to coordinate and provide support for work / grant applications associated with the West Plains.

Mike McCollum noted that the EWU geologists have done a lot of work on the geology and hydrogeology of the West Plains area and have developed a hydrogeologic database over the last five years. The EWU geologists are interested in collaborating with the WRIA 54 Planning Unit and Spokane County on West Plains studies. EWU may be able to contribute limited funds.

Rob noted that Spokane County will be pursuing funds to build upon the current geophysical pilot study on the West Plains. Rob said that he looks forward to a cooperative relationship with EWU.

**WRIA 43 (Upper Crab-Wilson)—Year 1 of Implementation**

- DIP due fall 2008; Working as a Planning Unit
- Priority implementation projects:
  - Small-scale (< 10 acre-ft) water storage
  - Starting TMDL process
  - Passive rehydration feasibility study (ranked #2 for Columbia River Management Program funding)
  - Would love reclaimed water from Spokane!

**WRIA 53 (Lower Lake Roosevelt) – just initiated Watershed Planning (i.e., in Phase 1 Organization)**

**WRIA 58 (Middle Lake Roosevelt) – have not initiated Watershed Planning**

**Possible Areas for Inter-WRIA Coordination**

**Why Coordinate with Adjacent WRIs?**

- Most planning units identify a similar suite of problems – coordinated solutions are easier and more economical for implementing governments
- Each local government has its own distinct preferences and focus areas
- WRIA boundaries aren't always logical study/planning areas

**Recommendations that Overlap with Adjacent WRIs - Water Rights**

- Regional Watermaster – Wenatchee area watermaster may be a model for this region (note that the Wenatchee area has two recent instream flow rules).
- More resources for water rights – faster decisions, enforcement, cleanup WRATS database
- Possibility of adjudication

Sara noted that Ecology is requesting funding to initiate adjudication in the Spokane River Basin. Ecology is planning to move some of these positions from the Yakima area since the adjudication there is wrapping up.

***Recommendations that Overlap with Adjacent WRIAs — Water Conservation***

- Regional message
- Priority in all adjacent plans

***Recommendations that Overlap with Adjacent WRIAs — Instream Flow***

- Develop integrated recommendation for Spokane River

***Recommendations that Overlap with Adjacent WRIAs — Water Storage/Recharge/Wetland Restoration***

- Big emphasis in all adjacent plans
- Several active implementation projects associated with wetlands
- Infiltration/enhanced infiltration emphasized

***Recommendations that Overlap with Adjacent WRIAs – Integrated Land Use and Water Supply Planning***

- Consistency with Comprehensive Plans
- Criteria for demonstrating water availability
- Identify and plan for areas of strained water resources
- Need for cooperative water supply planning for West Plains area recognized in WRIA 34 Plan; WRIA 43 Plan recommends possibility of Groundwater Management District

Rob noted that Spokane County is currently conducting a water availability analysis in the Little Spokane River Basin (WRIA 55) in coordination with Pend Oreille County with the objective of identifying critical supply areas / strained water resource areas. This project (and the methodologies / assumptions) could be used as a template by the WRIA 54 group. Rob noted that this project also involves projecting water demand. Wes noted that the WRIA 59 Board is also conducting a build-out analysis and that water supply and demand forecasting is helpful to guide land use development.

***Recommendations that Overlap with Adjacent WRIAs – Technical Information Needs***

- Hydrogeologic study for West Plains region – recommended by WRIAs 54, 56, 34, and 43
- Stream gauging
- Improved runoff forecasting/drought planning

Reanette noted that the National Weather Service and NRCS and currently have websites with some level of streamflow forecasting.

***Thinking Ahead to Implementation***

***What Happens after the Planning Unit approves the Watershed Plan?***

- Lincoln, Stevens, and Spokane Counties each adopt the Plan (this can take some time)
- Once all counties have adopted the Plan, then the Planning Unit can apply for Phase 4 funding
  - Required step in the first year of Phase 4 is to develop a Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP)
  - Early Action Projects can be implemented in advance of completing the Watershed Plan or DIP
  - Advantage to write Watershed Plan so transition to DIP doesn't require reworking.

Mike McCollum asked how the Planning Unit will implement education and outreach to the public for the Watershed Plan and DIP. Mike McCollum noted that he and Linda have developed a database of over 1,000 wells across the West Plains area and that during communication with landowners, Mike McCollum noted that none of the landowners have heard of Watershed Planning and WRIAs and that the landowners are not aware of the educational opportunities provided by Ecology and the State. Mike McCollum said that he feels that the educational outreach conducted to date has not been effective in reaching these landowners. Mike McCollum also noted that EWU was contacted recently by the Spokesman Review to comment on the West Plains and that

local newspapers are one of the best ways to reach the public.

Cynthia said that the Planning Unit meetings are all advertized and Spokane County has conducted outreach and provided presentations throughout the watershed. Rob said that, as a part of the Plan adoption process, each of the Counties will be required to advertize and hold a public hearing. In addition, Spokane County will be notifying the local periodicals about the Plan. Rob noted that Spokane County has conducted and documented outreach activities far above those stipulated by Watershed Planning per RCW 90.82. Rob said that staff from the Spokesman Review has contacted him and John Covert of Ecology regarding water resources issues and studies on the West Plains.

#### ***Governance Structure for Implementation***

- Some options:
  - Planning Unit or WIT continues
    - Continues to meet monthly and deals with all WRIA 54 implementation items as a group
    - ***Breaks into interest-based work groups; Planning Unit meets infrequently (quarterly or semi-annually) to coordinate efforts***
  - Transform to another governmental group (e.g. Watershed Management Partnership in WRIA 59)
  - Nonprofit entity (e.g. Tri-State Water Quality Council)

#### ***Break into Interest-Based Work Groups; Planning Unit meets infrequently (quarterly or semi-annually) to coordinate efforts***

- Tie in with WRIA 55/57 for Spokane River main stem, SVRP aquifer, and urban-area items
- West Plains Work Group – could tie in with WRIA 34 communities
- Stevens County / Spokane Tribe Reservation
- Topic-specific Work Groups (water quality, instream flow, west end tributaries)

Rob asked if this break out would occur prior to or after development of the DIP. Cynthia said that the break out could occur either before or after the DIP. The linear process would involve developing the DIP first as a Planning Unit and then breaking out into implementation groups. Rob said that the County supports the idea of interest based workgroups.

Craig said that he sees two basic challenges for Watershed Planning groups: 1) buy-in and support of the Watershed Plan by the public and the Commissioners; and, 2) continued outreach during implementation. Craig said that he feels that the WRIA 54 Planning Unit should concentrate on public outreach and communicate with the media and getting their help to inform the public. Craig said that he thinks that the WRIA 54 Planning Unit should consider hiring a media expert to help promote, educate and publicize information about Watershed Planning and Implementation.

Rob said that the County could advertize and hold a public workshop. However, based on experience in WRIA 55/57, it is very difficult to get people to attend Watershed Planning workshops. Mike McCollum said that it is important to understand what will bring people to the workshops and to hold the workshops in the evening. Cynthia suggested that the County communicate with Craig to identify ideas on how to encourage the public to attend outreach workshops. Craig suggested that the Planning Unit work with a media expert on this. Mike Hermanson noted that the Watershed Plan covers a variety of topics and it is therefore difficult to convince the public to attend workshops to learn about all the issues. Mike Hermanson noted that if one topic is considered at a workshop (e.g., permit-exempt wells across the West Plains), landowners in the West Plains are likely to attend. Sara noted that Ecology has a number of outreach and education experts that could help the WRIA 54 Planning Unit to develop an effective outreach strategy. Sara said that she would communicate with the Ecology outreach staff on this.

**Public Comment**

Rob informed the Planning Unit that Spokane County is hosting a field trip tomorrow (August 28) for the West Plains geophysical assessment work. The team will meet at Ecology's office at 9 am.

Brian Crossley noted that the tribal water quality standards are out for public comment as a component of the triennial review until September 26. Also, CEQUAL modeling of the Spokane Arm is expected to start soon.

**Administration and General Schedule Announcements**

The following meetings are scheduled and open to everyone:

**SEPTEMBER 2008:**

- WRIA 54 Planning Unit, Wednesday September 24, 6:00 – 8:30 pm, Lakeside High School Library, Lakeside, WA.

**OCTOBER 2008:**

- WRIA 54 Planning Unit, Wednesday October 22, 10 am – noon, Airway Heights Community Center, Airway Heights, WA.

**NOVEMBER 2008:**

- WRIA 54 Planning Unit, Wednesday November 19, 6:00 – 8:30 pm, Lakeside High School Library, Lakeside, WA.

**DECEMBER 2008:**

- WRIA 54 Planning Unit, Wednesday December 17, 10 am – noon, Airway Heights Community Center, Airway Heights, WA.

**Next Meeting Date and Adjourn**

The next WRIA 54 Planning Unit meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 24, 2008, 6:00 – 8:30 pm, Lakeside High School Library. Bryony adjourned the meeting at 12:15 pm.