

Shoreline Master Program
SAG Meeting October 24, 2007

Caucus Representatives

Jerry Barnes – Agriculture
Absent Raleigh Chinn – Business/recreation
Lee Bernheisel – Environment / Conservation
Absent Jon Wyss – Natural Resources
Absent Wendy Witt – Homeowners / Property Owners
Absent Chris Johnson – City of Okanogan
Absent George Brady – Town of Pateros
Absent Chris Branch – Cities of Tonasket and Oroville
Dolores Castillo – Colville Confederated Tribes
Vicky Welch – Methow Watershed Council
Absent – Town of Winthrop
Absent - City of Omak
Absent – Town of Brewster
Absent – Town of Twisp

Introductions

Mike Parton, ENTRIX Aquatic Biologist, introduced himself

Member reports

There were questions about where we were in the process. Clynda explained the funding timeline and how it relates to grant cycles. Ecology now expects SMP updates to take three years. Kurt said that we should be done with the update by fall of 2008.

Jerry Barnes said that there was an article in the paper about docks on Pateros Lake within the city limits.

Kurt explained that FERC licensing allows a total of 75 docks on the pools created by Rock Island, Rocky Reach, and Wells dams. The general assumption is that 25 docks will be allowed on each pool. The number may be re-visited during re-licensing.

Clynda noted that it is important for cities to do public access studies, in order to have leverage with FERC during re-licensing. If the cities can show a demand for more public access/docks on the pools and write local plans in response to that demand, the cities then have a basis for asking that FERC be consistent with local plans.

There was a question about whether that includes the urban growth boundaries, within Pateros and Brewster.

Kurt explained that we will need to look at dock standards, including light transmission standards (BAS may require that docks allow 80% of light to pass through) and planting to replace vegetation disturbed when docks are built. HPA and Corps permit will have more impact than SMP.

SMP outline

Sandra went over the outline explaining that it was still in draft form, but that it tried to address some questions about where things would fall in the final document.

Clynda explained restoration plans; intent is not to duplicate restoration planning work but prioritize projects. Sandra explained off-site restoration as an aspect of mitigation.

Lee asked if cumulative impacts might lead to the SEPA process being followed. Kurt replied that this was a possibility.

Lee asked about administration and compliance and variances. Clynda explained environment designations and the variance process.

Vicky asked what cumulative impacts analysis was based on. Kurt said it is an iterative process, documented so that tweaking can happen as necessary.

Inventory and Analysis (PowerPoint presentation)

Lee asked how much ground truthing would be involved. Sandra said not much because we don't have funding to ground truth all theories, just rely on best available science. Lee asked what about if someone (i.e. one of the group) knows that something being presented isn't right. Kurt said that is one of the sources that we can use is information from long time residents.

Mike Parton said that his role is to listen and make sure this is a defensible process. He is interested in data sources and their validity.

PowerPoint presentation slide 14, "Approach and Process"

Mike then explained the geomorphic framework that he proposes to use for analysis—based on local lake and stream types, natural history and processes. He will evaluate what's here, how it's functioning, and how shoreline functions can be maintained in the context of human use and development.

Inventory is currently underway, in data identification phase. In linking mechanisms and conditions, will work at two scales, watershed and analysis unit. Will analyze functions and values at scale of analysis units, then amalgamate into reaches.

PowerPoint presentation slide 15, "Approach and Process"

The second "Approach and Process" slide elaborates on the two final steps in the previous slide, showing an iterative loop that represents the process of generating scenarios and making planning decisions based on the data.

To analyze cumulative watershed effects: determine factors in watershed health, where we are now, what are the reasonably foreseeable effects of various planning decisions and jurisdictional actions. If the result of a particular scenario shows that there would be too much loss of function, may revise assumptions about jurisdictional actions.

A stressor is something that affect mechanisms that create values, such as loss of vegetation.

Clynda said that in building the SMP not much has happened since the initial process in 1972, but now it has to be updated every 7 years. The inventory process now underway will allow us to establish a baseline and identify anticipated cumulative effects, which will allow us to see what works and make revisions during the next update process (seven years from now).

Lee asked what the timing to the inventory and analysis process was. Mike said we hope to have the first debut at the January meeting.

Jeremy added that the TAG provides peer review all through the process.

Clynda said the draft SMP then goes to Ecology for review. Lee asked whether that would happen in January? Clynda said a timeline has been established and deadlines set.

Mike gave an example of linking watershed scale mechanisms (stream flow) with conditions and functions at a site scale.

Lee asked how much peer review is there as well as are there other scientists looking at this. Mike said there is a need to have local people review, reinforcing the need to break analysis into chunks.

Vicky asked where in the process will we be playing with different parameters, e.g. 2% rip rapped vs. what happens if 20-30% of shorelines are rip-rapped, playing with amounts of rip rap or vegetation removal, cumulative effects play around to see what happens.

Jeremy said we will keep working with models and explained how models work. Kurt noted that regulations will address factors such as setbacks and vegetation removal; the effect of the regulations on values is part of the cumulative effects analysis. Mike said that ENTRIX will identify factors and apply ratings; if we don't like the score we can attack methods or collect more data or suggest restoration.

Vicky said there are so many variables, somewhere we should be able to play with them to see the effects. She would like to see a list of parameters.

Clynda gave an example of the importance of knowing the basis for analysis—King County arrived at one set of findings based on tree canopy coverage, and a very different outcome when the impervious surfaces beneath the canopy were factored into the analysis.

Vicky said it seems important part of the process to see different combinations of factors. Mike said that a product of the initial analysis will be a ranking that enables us to answer such questions.

Lee said the concept in assessing environmental effects is human use; recreation et cetera are also looked at. Mike said haven't captured that fine a level but if something is developed and valued it will part of the score. Clynda said it is part of the regulatory aspect of the plan and is for new development not existing.

Lee said if we allow development closer to the river or water, members of the public seeking shoreline access will be more likely to be intimidated. Kurt said that we will look at that through this process.

Mike said one of the things being looked at is the CMZ, streams and rivers don't behave, move back and forth, sometimes gently, sometimes violently, which is something we need to look at. He described channel migration and, generally, watershed processes.

Lee asked about floodway. Mike said it is where water could go, where is an area where large quantities of water can go, inundation zones, flood prone zones.

Lee said for example Wolf Creek did not flow for some time because of irrigation diversion, but now does flow due to conversion to wells.

Next Steps

- No meetings in November or December
- Next meeting January 23rd to view early parts of analysis and get feedback