

**Dungeness River Management Team Meeting  
August 13, 2008**

Notes prepared by Shawn Hines and Judy Larson

**Team Members/Alternates in Attendance:**

Steve Tharinger, Clallam County  
Scott Chitwood, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe  
Shawn Hines, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe (alt)  
Cynthia Nelson, WA Department of Ecology  
Virginia Clark, Dungeness/Quilcene Planning  
Mike Jeldness, Water Users Association  
Bob Caldwell, Water Users Association (alt)

Walt Blendermann, Sports Fisheries  
Judy Larson, Protect Peninsula's Future  
Robert Brown, Dungeness Beach Association  
Scott Hagerty, U.S. Forest Service (alt)  
John Cambalik, Puget Sound Partnership  
Michael Blanton, WDFW

**Others in Attendance:**

Frank Needham, City of Sequim  
Elizabeth Van Sickle, Property owner, resident  
Steve Rankin, Streamkeepers  
Jim Casey, Peninsula Daily News  
James Karr, Resident  
Gary Smith, Water Users Association  
Ann Seiter, Property owner

Byron Rot, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe  
Sarah Ferguson, WA Department of Ecology  
Welden Clark, Dungeness R. Audubon Center  
Bob Boekelheide, Dungeness R. Audubon Center  
Greg Good, North Olympic Land Trust  
Amanda Cronin, Washington Water Trust  
Bruce Aylwood, Ecosystem Economics

**2:10 P.M. Meeting called to order.**

**I. Introductions /Review Agenda / Approval of 7/09/08 Meeting Notes**

- Chairperson Steve Tharinger called the meeting to order and introductions were made.
- Steve suggested that Washington Water Trust and Ecosystem Economics representatives introduce themselves more thoroughly during the public comment period.
- Virginia Clark moved to approve July DRMT notes as submitted; Mike Jeldness seconded the motion. Cynthia requested to clarify last sentence to bottom of page 3 – to say that the Quilcene-Snow area planning unit will likely argue the statutory interpretation of the priority date of the WRIA 17 rule. Motion to approve notes as modified passed unanimously.

**Public Comment:**

- Amanda Cronin introduced herself as the representative for Washington Water Trust, the group that responded to Ecology's request for proposals to help create a Water Exchange, which will go alongside the water management rule for East WRIA 18. The Water Trust will be working closely with the WRIA 18 Executive Committee and Ecology in this effort. Preliminary findings, when available, will be presented to the WRIA 18 Executive Committee. DRMT will be updated. The consultants are currently interviewing parties that have a history on the issues or that can provide information about goals, needs, etc. relevant to the project.
- Amanda introduced Bruce Aylwood as a partnering consultant. The process is expected to take six to twelve months. A guidance document describing the Water Exchange and how it will work will be the end result.
- Cynthia Nelson noted that the WRIA 18 Work Group meetings have been postponed until October.
- Greg Good introduced himself as a new employee at the North Olympic Land Trust, in today for Allison Lutz.
- Judy Larson provided follow-up information about her inquiry made at DRMT's 7/09 meeting regarding solid wastes from the City of Sequim Water Reclamation Facility (WRF). She noted that subsequently Darlene Schanfald, Tyler Ahlgren, Mayor Laura Dubois, Interim City Manager Bob Spinks and the head of the WRF had a constructive meeting on 8/6 to discuss some issues concerning past, recent and future "land applications" of such wastes. The Team expressed support for having this as an agenda topic at a future DRMT meeting, possibly in October. Frank Needham indicated he thought the City could provide background for this in October.
- Bob Boekelheide reminded the Team that the Dungeness River Festival is coming up, September 27-28. If organizations who haven't already applied for a space at the festival would like to, please contact Bob. Many of the organizations represented by individuals on the DRMT already do have booths planned for the festival. The DRMT does not have its own booth.

## **II. Dungeness Collaborative Stewardship Project – Scott Hagerty (U.S. Forest Service)**

- Scott Hagerty provided a handout and an update about the Collaborative Stewardship Project, a collection of restoration activities identified by the Dungeness Stewardship Group (Tribe, WDFW, and others) to improve aquatic and wildlife habitats by reducing road densities (decommissioning), restoring wetland and riparian areas, and improving elk habitat by increasing available forage through commercial thinning.
- So far, as a result of the project, 6.8 miles of road have been decommissioned, 6 acres of wetland and riparian areas have been restored, and 69 acres of land have been commercially thinned to improve elk habitat.
- During thinning process, there was an attempt to buffer snags and protect minor species that are beneficial to wildlife. Bower Logging of Sequim was awarded the contract to conduct the thinning. The work was completed this summer and subsequently approved by USFS.
- Receipts from the sale of lumber produced from the thinning go toward restoration projects in the Dungeness watershed. Seven miles of road are to be decommissioned starting in September. This will be at the site of the last segment of the 2875 Road, adjacent to a wetland. Enhancement and rehabilitation of the wetland and campground will also be conducted. Hoping to complete this aspect by mid-October. In spring, will finish up three to four miles of other road decommissioning (off of 2870 Road), hopefully to be completed by summer of next year.
- When the work is completed, will provide an update presentation with photos to the DRMT.
- Members of the Team suggested having a field trip to these work sites, possibly next year.
- Steve noted that the Team supports this concept, of using proceeds from thinning to do restoration projects such as road decommissioning.
- Scott Hagerty said he wasn't sure when will be doing more work in Dungeness, but that the Dungeness is definitely within the ten-year plan.
- Walt Blendermann sensed that there is likely an unhappy user group out there in reference to the decommissioning. Scott Hagerty said that within the three miles of road that is being closed, there is shooting going on. The problem isn't with people having target practice, but with people who shoot signs, trees, etc. Mike Jeldness suggested an organized, planned out area for a shooting range would be useful.

## **III. Rule Priority Date Follow-up – Cynthia Nelson and Sarah Ferguson (WA Department of Ecology)**

- Cynthia Nelson reminded the Team that this topic was introduced last month – the issue of having the priority date of the rule be 2000 (as interpreted by statute) or having it be some other agreed upon date such as date of rule adoption. For today's meeting, Ecology planned to provide refined data to help determine how much water has been put to use since 2000. However, this information is not available yet, so we will postpone this until the September DRMT meeting.
- Cynthia reminded the Team of the details -- that we are currently working on a water management rule. Under statute, the priority date of the rule is two years after funding for 2514 watershed planning was received. For WRIA 18, that would mean a priority date of around July 2000, unless the planning unit (at the time of WRIA 18 plan approval) unanimously votes otherwise.
- This is important in that once the rule is in place, all provisions of it must be held up by individuals who are junior to the priority date. For example, all wells that are put in after the priority date are subject to the rule.
- Last month, Ecology provided handouts with general information (# of wells drilled, # of building permits issued since 2000). Plan to get further, refined information with help from Ecology's hydro-geologist.
- Cynthia opened it up for discussion and questions, but reiterated that we will have a more in-depth discussion next month with the additional data.
- Sarah Ferguson noted that the unanimous vote means that abstentions count as voting "no".
- Judy Larson asked "who" would be able to vote, noting she had a letter dated October 2004 in which Craig Ritchie had noted City of Sequim had not agreed to the plan.
- Discussion was had about the fact that we're being asked to vote on something that we don't know what it will say. Sarah responded that essentially, the way it stands now with a priority date of 2000, it means that the 1,800 folks that have dug wells since 2000 would be subject to the Rule. So, the question is – do we make those 1,800 people turn off their water when flows aren't met.
- Cynthia said there are other options for addressing the issue.

- Judy Larson asked if we are looking at water use or water consumption when making this decision (i.e. what about water returned to the watershed?). Cynthia said that a USGS study says that 87% of water is returned via septic. Judy noted that for WRIA 18 users on municipal water AND sewerage the average “return” was presently no more than 20%, with 80% of Sequim’s WRF Class A effluent being delivered to outfall in Sequim Bay.
- Steve Tharinger clarified that we are only talking about new water used since 2000.
- Michael Blanton asked if it was true to say that an earlier priority date would be more beneficial for in-stream flows. Cynthia said the problem is that the water has already been developed/put to use. Steve asked if that amount of water is worth the political hassle when what we really want to do is move forward with the Rule and with better management of the River.
- The County’s position is that the priority date should be date of rule adoption.

After short break, Shawn Hines passed around copies of new DRMT logo. **(V. Other Business)**

#### **IV. Other Watershed Planning Follow-ups – Cynthia Nelson (WA Department of Ecology)**

- Cynthia Nelson provided two handouts that reminded the Team of the recommendations that are in the WRIA 18 Watershed Plan, and went on to provide history and background information about how we got where we are today.
- A pilot project was started in the early 1990s, under what was called the Chelan Agreement, where everyone sat at the table in a collaborative process to produce a plan for the Dungeness – which resulted in the Dungeness-Quilcene Plan (or the “DQ Plan”). It was an innovative process in that previous processes tended to be top-down, rather than collaborative. There were two pilots – the Dungeness and the Methow. Dungeness eventually became the poster-child for the 2514 process – with the DQ Plan.
- The legislature didn’t totally buy into it, so they developed their own process – known as 2514 Watershed Planning. This process was based on WRIA boundaries. Because the east and west sides of WRIA 18 were in different stages of planning - with the east side (DRMT) being more experienced and further along with information gathering and the west side (Elwha-Morse Management Team) being newly formed – the two groups met separately when coming up with recommendations for their individual sub-basins. There is also limited overlap in participants or potential solutions to water supply issues. The end result was the Elwha-Dungeness Watershed Plan for WRIA 18.
- Initiating Governments (IG) for the planning process included: Sequim Dungeness Water Users Association (irrigators), Clallam County, Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe, Lower Elwha Tribe, City of Port Angeles. Department of Ecology was invited and attended IG meetings, but was not an IG member.
- The final plan took many elements of the DQ plan, but updated and modified in some cases the DQ recommendations. The in-stream flow recommendations in the DQ plan were reviewed by biologists and carried forward into the WRIA 18 Plan with approval from Team and IGs. The plan was required to address water quantity, but also included the optional elements of in-stream flows, water quality, and salmon habitat.
- Cynthia went over the handouts that showed the recommendations from the WRIA 18 Plan, and answered questions as they came up.
- Walt Blendermann recalled Jim Bay discussing potential of drilling a deep 1,000-foot well at Port Williams and noted the consideration of whether drawing from wells in the deeper aquifers mitigated impacts on surface waters flows. Cynthia indicated she wasn’t sure of the status of Jim’s plan, but Department of Ecology paid for a recent well drilling on PUD property. The 5<sup>th</sup> layer, an aquitard, was hit at about 300 feet. Judy Larson noted she had borrowed some references from Ann Soule and had found tables showing records of some extremely deep well drilling logs associated with oil exploration activities on the peninsula. (REF: WRI 83-4227, USGS in cooperation with CCBC & WA DOE)
- Discussion ensued about metering. Cynthia suggested that now that we are talking about the water exchange and having to pay into it, people will probably start embracing the concept of metering – since if people are going to be paying, they’ll want to make sure they are getting the amount of water they pay for, and that neighbors are using appropriately, as well.
- Ann Seiter stated that the fish critical basins are now required to meter. She asked why the Dungeness does not fall into that category; is it because the irrigators have such a large proportion of the water rights? Cynthia said that 80% of the total water used must be metered according to a lawsuit settlement agreement. In the 1990s Ecology had limited funds and staff to implement the

metering statute and was sued by CELP. In Elwha-Dungeness, irrigators and City of Port Angeles are already being metered – and they cover more than the 80%. Mike Jeldness noted that the irrigators here are using as much as the entire City of Seattle. Cynthia said that the 80% requirement for metering has changed to 90%, which is still probably largely “covered” by the irrigators and P.A.

- Mike Jeldness reminded the Team that the irrigator’s real time gages can be accessed online from Department of Ecology website.
- There will be a caucus of water purveyors for Elwha-Morse to coordinate systems per Water Planning Act and phase 4 of watershed planning.
- Highlights from the watershed planning recommendations include: setting flows, protecting late season flows, restoring in-stream flows, encouraging the use of public water systems for new development and emphasizing conservation.
- For Quilcene Snow (WRIA 17) rulemaking, Cynthia projected a Winter ’09 timetable and Steve Tharinger summarily noted how City of Sequim is involved (Johnson Creek area), how Jimmy Come Lately project demonstrates mitigation process, and how there are possible fish issues for Miller Peninsula, Eagle Creek and Chicken Coop areas.

#### **VI. Puget Sound Partnership Update – John Cambalik, PSP**

John stated that July 17 Workshop information was in process of being put online, and that additional input will be accepted through 8/15 regarding the profiles or priorities. Also on line will be more details about a planned early September executive committee session. . John thanked all those who had attended in July or otherwise submitted input.

**Public Comment: (none in second session)**

#### **VII. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 P.M.

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#### **Handouts:**

- From Scott Hagerty, USFS: Title II Fund Project Summary for Dungeness Collaborative Stewardship & 2875 Decommission
- From Cynthia Nelson, DOE: Watershed Plan Recommendations (17pp dated 1/17/2007)
- From Cynthia Nelson, DOE: 7pp Recommendations Excerpted from Elwha Dungeness Watershed Plan
- From Bob Boekelheide, DR Audubon Center: 2pp DR 2008 Festival
- From Shawn Hines, JSKT/DRMT: 7/9/08 Meeting Notes by Melissa Coughlin & 8/13/08 Agenda & new DRMT Logo Copy