

October 19, 2005 Meeting Summary

The tenth meeting of the Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership was held on Wednesday, October 19, 2005 4:00-6:00pm at the Port of Vancouver administration Offices.

Attending

Partnership members in attendance:

Pete Capell, Brian Carlson, Brian Calkins for Carl Dugger, Nancy Ellifrit, Martin Hudson, Don Jacobs, David Judd, Lee McCallister, Thom McConathy, Chris Hathaway for Deb Marriott, Clark Martin, Jim Meyer, Iloba Odum, Maureen Chan-Hefflin for Larry Paulson, Randy Phillips, Doug Quinn, Lisa Faubion for Scott Robinson, Victor Ehrlich

Partnership members absent:

Gary Kokstis, Jane Van Dyke, Vernon Veysey, Bruce Wiseman

Public Information Committee:

Loretta Callahan, Jeanne Lawson, Amanda Garcia-Snell

In the audience:

Steve Bollens, Dick Carroll, Dick Chandlee, Justin Clary, Tim Dean, Jacquelin Edwards, Vinton Erickson, Annette Griffy, Jeroen Kok, Tim Kraft, Curt Loop, Bob Moser, Ed Strohmaier, Ron Weirenga, Bob Zak

Committee Business

09/21/05 Meeting Minutes

Changes to the minutes are:

Page 6, 4th paragraph, "He also mentioned that" needs to be deleted

Page 13, 4th paragraph, "loose" should be changed to "lose"

Page 14, 3rd paragraph, "Diegart" should be changed to "Dygart"

David Judd introduced Dr. Steve Bollens of WSU Vancouver. Steve is the director of Science and a teaching faculty member. Later in the meeting Steve will share some of the things that WSU Vancouver has been considering for how they might be involved with the VLWP project.

Jeanne then had the members introduce themselves.

Follow up from the September meeting

Refined Values

Jeanne asked the group to look over the refined values that were sent via email. She reminded the group that Maureen was charged with crafting a value statement that was consistent with the discussion concerning economic development.

Thom mentioned that he thought that the terms “swimmability” and “fishability” were included in the value statements. Jeanne clarified that “swimming” and “fishing” are included in the value statements that that “smimmability” and “fishability” are in the vision statement. She also mentioned that aside from the value statement that Maureen crafted, the value statements are unchanged from the last meeting. She then asked the group if they need to revisit any of the values.

Clark mentioned that there could be a possible conflict between environmental, social and economic needs which is mentioned in the first value statement. He thought that the group had decided that there was a potential conflict and that it is slightly ambiguous to include all of those things in one statement. Jeanne reminded him that it was a discussion but it was set aside once the group decided that this is the definition of sustainability. Clark then asked if sustainability refers to the lake or does it refer to the environmental, social and economic needs of all future generations. Jeanne clarified the vision for the lake. She reminded the group that they need to finalize the value statements as soon as possible.

Pete suggested that the value statements have an introduction that clarifies that this is the “draft unrestrained” vision and value statements. The group then adopted the values.

Public Comment (this comment was actually taken at the end of the VLWP discussion of the final vision)

Vinton Erickson mentioned that he thinks that this is great if it meant that but would we all want to go down there tomorrow and go swimming because that is what the vision says.

Jeanne reminded that the group that this is an unrestrained vision and it will have an intro statement up front to determine the context. She clarified that the vision is saying that this is what the VLWP wants to eventually get to but it will not be there tomorrow.

Vinton also mentioned that he thought that the VLWP meetings were supposed to be working on getting that done. But all they have been doing is dreaming but you have to have a dream to get things done.

Jaquelin Edwards asked who will make the decisions about who will be on the watershed council, and who will be on the watershed council. She wanted to know if it was too early in the process to ask this question.

Thom mentioned that it is partially mandated by law; all jurisdictions will be on the watershed council. It does describe in the Washington state statutes that stakeholders will also have a place on the council. They will probably consolidate those positions as they have done on other watershed councils.

Discussions

Finalize Vision – Vision Sub-Committee

Jeanne asked someone from the visioning sub-committee to discuss the latest version of the vision statement. Thom mentioned that they tried to maintain a passionate active voice and incorporate elements of the discussion at the VLWP meeting and subsequent correspondence into the vision statement. Overall it was a lively and good discussion. Brian also mentioned that the group consisted of himself, Thom, Larry, Loretta, Maureen and Clark who was not able to join but provided input later. The initial group was able to determine the primary language, Clark added some active voice, and Brian made the final changes. He also mentioned that it was a fun group. Jeanne then asked the VLWP what they thought of the final product.

Iloba commended the sub-committee for working on the vision. He mentioned that he feels that the vision is lacking the desire for the future. It describes what is going on but it does not have the snap that he thought it should. He tried to work with it a little bit and read his version. His version read: A valued community treasure and resource that will support healthy ecological functions, and a variety of recreational uses. A fishable swimmable lake of high water quality that thrives amid economically vibrant developments; with contributing watersheds that are holistically managed and a watershed council that will provide oversight/accountability.

Jeanne asked the VLWP for any thoughts concerning Iloba's version. She asked the group if they feel that it reflects that the VLWP cares about the resource.

Lisa Faubion wanted to clarify that this is an unrestrained vision. She also mentioned that the DNR is concerned about the broad base of the vision, particularly the sentence that reads: contributing watersheds are actively and holistically managed to promote a healthy, sustainable water system. It is not very focused on how this will be accomplished. This is partly because it is an unrestrained vision at this point of the process.

She also asked for clarification on the last sentence which reads: A watershed council provides ongoing collaborative oversight and accountability. She wanted

to know who is being held accountable; the council, the watershed, or another entity. Thom answered that the visioning committee was looking at accountability to the vision as well as accountability to specifics. He thinks it would be similar to the Clean Water Commission in Clark County in which the accountability is to the specific programs, to the commissioners, and would include regulatory elements. There are a lot of things to be accountable for and a watershed council is the best choice for doing this. Lisa asked if this means that the watershed council would hold other groups accountable. Thom responded that watershed councils develop MOUs that amount to contracts between various agencies which would be upgraded with the changing requirements of a management plan.

Jeanne also mentioned that in the past there has not been a clear line of accountability for implementation of suggested plans. As she understands it the watershed council would not always be the body responsible but the body that would make sure that the responsible parties were acting responsibly.

Brian also mentioned that watershed councils are a mix of agency and public to have different representatives from different interests. This group would help coordinate activities and foster better stewardship. Jeanne used Clackamas Watershed Council (CWC) as an example. CWC consists of the agencies that use the water out of the river, agencies that discharge to the river, agricultural community, timber community and power companies. It includes all of the direct stakeholders that affect and depend on that resource. It is distinct from Vancouver Lake because it does not have as much recreational use. Brian then passed out a one page summary about the Tualatin River Watershed Council.

Jeanne clarified that part of the process if mentioning that this is an unrestrained vision which is what the group would like to and hopes they achieve but at a minimum they would like to have some body that covers the functions that are described. Chris mentioned that there are several different types of watershed council models but in most cases they do not have any regulatory authority to do much of anything. It is all done by partnerships, volunteers, and collaborations between agencies and stakeholders. That is why the word accountability is questioned because he personally would not want to be held accountable for this if he had no authority. Lisa explained that this did not seem like the appropriate wording and wanted to ask for clarification about what is meant by that. If it is holding the agencies that have bought off on the plan accountable by continuing to advocate for the lake and its interests then she understands that. Having that statement follow the contributing watershed statement makes it seem more like the entire watershed and everyone in it is being held accountable for the actions that they are taking; if someone hasn't bought into the plan that will be difficult to do.

Brian mentioned that the watershed sentence is trying to recognize that what is happening elsewhere in the watershed has an impact on Vancouver Lake. The

appropriate agencies will need to address those issues as well. Vancouver Lake has to be addressed holistically; it can not be looked at by itself. He reiterated that this is an unrestrained vision. Jeanne suggested that the term accountability would be difficult to remove because it is a critical point that people are looking for out of this process.

Thom mentioned that he likes Iloba's version, because it is more concise describes ecological functions making it more complete from that perspective. Jeanne asked the group if they liked Iloba's version and wanted to adopt it. She asked Lisa if DNR was ok with this version. Lisa clarified that she was not asking for the word accountability to be removed she just wanted clarification as to what that meant. Brain mentioned that he appreciated her comments because he wasn't looking at a watershed council as a legislative body perspective. David mentioned that this is just a different kind of accountability. The state agencies will still have all of the mandates and whatever mandates that will accumulate over time. This concept says that management on an ongoing basis will be stewarded in some way by some group, like a watershed council, that does not have finite distinctions but more responsibility with less authority, more clout in the public eye.

The VLWP officially adopted the vision and the values.

Partnership Next Steps – Steering Committee

Jeanne asked Steve Bollens to come to the table. David then mentioned that as the VLWP gets closer to identifying the action steps and research questions that need to be asked it seems to be an important time to engage WSU in the process. There is so much access to academic expertise in the local area. He mentioned that the Dr. Steve Bollens and his colleagues met with the ST to discuss how this could work.

Steve has been asked to come and talk about their view of VLWP and how there work might fit into the process. He wanted to make some very brief comments on where the academic community might be able to contribute to the VLWP. He then gave a brief overview of his background and the programs at WSU.

His training is in biological oceanography, primarily coastal estuarine work. He has graduate degrees from the University of Washington. In his first academic appointment he focused on coastal shallow water oceanography. He then took a position at San Francisco State University as a researcher and an administrator. In San Francisco his work moved into fresh water habitat primarily in lower food web dynamics such as plankton. He has looked at the relationship between plankton as a food base for fisheries and environmental forcing of that biological production. He has studied in both contexts of long term change, such as climate change, and the more immediate anthropogenic influence such as invasive species and freshwater diversion. Last August he accepted a position at WSU Vancouver as the director of the sciences program with an active research and

teaching program in aquatic ecology, not just marine but freshwater systems also. On the Vancouver campus there are two major degree programs in the sciences; a BS in Biology and a graduate degree, Masters or PhD, in environmental science. Starting next August they will be offering degrees in earth systems science and biomedical science. Within sciences there are about ten faculty members whose specialties span the whole range of sciences. He is enormously pleased and proud to be able to represent the science faculty at WSU. A lot more information concerning the programs and the faculty is available on the WSU webpage.

He then mentioned that it was an opportunity, to come up to speed on a new set of issues in a new environment. His colleague Steve Sylvester and he met with the ST. He also briefly chatted with Larry about a couple of ideas and/or concepts concerning the VLWP. Larry asked that he share these with VLWP.

The three ideas/concepts are;

1) To establish a science advisory panel or technical advisory group to help with the interpretation and synthesis of all of the technical and scientific information available about the lake and its watershed. He understands that there is a fair amount of information available albeit fractured and diverse. Not just collect information but to evaluate the information to make initial recommendations for future studies. This panel would not conduct the future research but identify where information gaps are and how do they get what is needed to close them. Steve has had experience on two groups that are similar to this type that he is suggesting. The first experience was an unpaid commitment or contribution to a consortium of twelve other academic institutions. Although it was very useful in moving a broader agenda forward they were not charged with making specific recommendations for future studies. The second experience was with a group in Cape Cod in Massachusetts. The county sponsored a science advisory panel that hired as consultants a group of academics to evaluate the technical data and information and make recommendations for future research.

2) To hire a coordinator to help with, at least, the week to week management of these data sets. Making them available to people. This could be done concurrently with establishing a science advisory panel or the panel could help advise the VLWP on what they need in a coordinator. This person would be someone with specific scientific skills, managerial skills or policy experience. This person would serve a day to day or week to week function for handling all issues of the VLWP including the technical and scientific material

3) Conduct a workshop specific to evaluating technical and scientific information and prioritizing research for future studies. That could be a broader based workshop, scientists and technical people who might be interested in bidding or proposing future studies as well as lay people who are interested in hearing and learning more about these issues. The specific focus would be to try to establish

a prioritized list of what needs to be done to address the water quality or related problems in the lake and the watershed.

Steve felt that all three of these might be able to be done in the coming three, four or six months.

Thom asked if Steve had any working models for the workshop method. He also wanted to know if he had ever worked on workshop to achieve the elements that he had described. Steve answered that yes at several different times and in several different contexts. Thom asked him to describe them.

Steve mentioned that these types of workshops are frequently sponsored by a larger federal agency. A specific problem is posed and people come together for 1-3 days to hash-out how to address a plan of attack. They have large plenary sessions and individual working groups to determine; specific questions, what is needed in terms of resources and what expertise are needed as well. They come together a couple of times a day to compare their notes. Out of this, a report is generated trying to prioritize what the research needs are.

He has also participated in similar processes in smaller groups that focus on more regional scientific issues. These might have a group of 20-40 people who are called together to brainstorm on what is needed to address the issue. They will usually put together recommendations for that issue as well.

Martin mentioned that LCREP and the Corp have hosted several of these types of information gathering sessions and science panels; although they did not focus on future needs or evaluation of current data.

Jeanne clarified to the group that the ST is looking for input about this idea not necessarily a decision made about the level of involvement.

Steve clarified that these are his thoughts on the matter; he is not suggesting that WSU Vancouver has to play a role in any of his suggestions. It could be that other agencies may be able to follow through on these recommendations.

Brian mentioned that what the VLWP is lacking is the expertise to pull all of this together. Jeanne also clarified that a technical advisory panel would not replace the VLWP.

Thom explained that he is intrigued with the idea of the scientific review but he does not think that a coordinator is needed. He is not sure how a workshop would produce any more information than the jurisdictions could. When the community meets, they don't leave the decisions to scientist; instead everyone works toward arriving at a body of knowledge and makes a decision together. He can't imagine leaving the decisions about Vancouver Lake in the hands of academics from WSU.

Jeanne clarified that today is about finding out what ideas and concerns the VLWP has about including WSU Vancouver.

Steve wanted to clarify that he wasn't at all suggesting that anyone of his ideas be charged with decision making. His understanding was that there are unsettled technical and scientific questions in which a group of could make suggestions about. He is not suggesting that decision authority be given to anyone at all. Brian also clarified that this was not the intention of the ST either. Jeanne clarified that a coordinator would not necessarily be anyone that was on staff currently.

James mentioned that the Vancouver Lake issue does have a lot of technical aspects. The VLWP does need some kind of technical advisory body in some form to assist. Although he does not know what the make-up of that would be he does think that this is a very sound concept in addressing technical issues.

Clark mentioned that he is unclear about who would start collecting the data set. He wanted to reemphasize that so far there has not been an iterative process between the VLWP and the scientific information. There has not been a direction or coordination to do any technical studies. He asked the ST again if they will getting any information to the VLWP about shallow lake management that is state of the art.

Jeanne mentioned that there was some discussion of potentially having another background presentation. She did not bring the diagram that used at the last meeting that pointed out what stage the VLWP is currently in. The VLWP will be going into a scoping process to identify what technical studies need to be done and laying out a plan to do those.

Clark mentioned that as a preliminary to that step, the VLWP needs to be exposed to and agree that they have mined the best available science. That somebody has collected the best available material and present it to the VLWP before they can begin to discuss what studies need to be done.

David agreed that what has already been collectively put on the table as well as information on similar bodies of water and after they what is left to answer questions that have not been answered. There might be scientifically oriented things as well as other aspects such as how a watershed council would work. David feels that this is in keeping with where Clark wants to go. He also mentioned that the ST felt that Steve and his other WSU Vancouver colleagues would be an important resource to be able to have to guide the VLWP in their next steps. Clark agreed that they are a good resource but there still needs to be someone who will collect and funnel information to the VLWP. Jeanne reminded the VLWP that there is no technical advisory committee to guide them. She also suggested that the challenge to what Clark is suggesting is to get defensible information and agreement on who the experts are and what is the best available

science. The next stage is to get defensible information. Clark asked who will spearhead this and who will do the footwork to get this done. Jeanne clarified that the ST is working with this and WSU Vancouver is one of the avenues that they have considered for help on advising who the experts should be.

Don is definitely in favor of involving WSU Vancouver for technical advising. Using this resource will keep the VLWP from flying blind. The VLWP needs this resource to gather all of the research that has been done already and determine what needs to be updated. As well as tell them answers to questions that are still unclear about Vancouver Lake.

David also mentioned that Martin and Martin bring some much interesting background to the project as they have used academic research in the past. Martin clarified that if the Corp is involved in a project that includes construction or restoration of a resource, the technical data has to be science based and peer reviewed.

Chris mentioned that the first idea of panel would be great. It is something that the VLWP needs. It does not necessarily have to be an academic, just the best available person for the task.

Thom suggested that the panel should be broadly based and not be overly led with academia or any other entity. There is a huge amount of material for the VLWP to cover. Lenora's bibliography is very large collection of material that deals directly with Vancouver Lake. Thom would like the technical meetings to be open so that the public could observe what is being discussed.

Don asked if it is a fair assumption that bringing in a panel of experts would increase access to funding. Martin suggested that it may be possible for the technical experts to find funding to fill some of the data gaps. Steve also suggested that there would not be greater access to funding by simply involving academia but it would put the VLWP in a better position to competitively seek funds.

Jeanne asked the ST to discuss the next steps. Brian stated that the next step is for the ST to meet in two weeks to discuss this further. He then asked the VLWP if there were any other comments about this conversation.

Iloba wanted to follow up on what Thom had said. He hopes that the VLWP does not spend too much time trying to do a big study that would take too much time. He does like the three options that Steve suggested.

Pete mentioned that as they developed the timeline, the next step was to develop a scope. However, as they went through all of the data gathering and review of available information it became clear that there are some gaps that need to be filled. But it wasn't clear enough that any of the technical people that the VLWP

has available to them were really prepared to develop the scope for the next steps. That is where he feels that these resources can be of great assistance to the VLWP so that they can put together a work plan that will get the VLWP from where they are today to a position where they know what research needs to be done. Then they can fill those gaps and get the necessary information to take some action. Hopefully this will happen in a timely manner.

Steve wanted to know what is meant by timeline. If there are specific narrow gaps that have been identified then by all means go for it, no sense wasting time. If there is some uncertainty as to what the relative priorities should be in addressing those gaps then how big or narrow a particular gap is will require some thoughtful preparation. Not necessarily a big study but they will need to develop a scope of work, get bids, allow people to do conduct the studies and evaluate the resulting data. What kind of timeline are people envisioning to affect some positive change?

Pete clarified that some of these same types of problems were addressed 20 years ago and they have to be addressed again now. He would like to be able to do it right this time so that the VLWP is not back in another twenty years to address the same problems. However, the group does not want this to be a perpetual study, they do want action. But they want to make sure that their actions are viable and that they are going to achieve the results that they want. Pete also mentioned that part of what a technical advisory panel could do is help the VLWP determine a timeline.

Jeanne explained that this effort could provide a neutral best available science approach that could help resolve some of the VLWP's questions about whether or not specific factors concerning the lake need further exploration. This will hopefully clarify what the primary questions that need to be resolved are.

Chris asked Steve about what the potential timeline could be for putting an initial group together and making recommendations to determine what studies should be conducted. Steve explained that it really depends on identifying the right people, their willingness to serve and if any resources are available. Whether or not people are asked to participate on a voluntary basis or if they are being compensated will determine how long the process may take. The timeline can also depend on what the charge of the group is. Realistically, some number of months, more than weeks and less than years. The extent to which the future directions are not clear can dictate the timeline as well.

Thom wanted to make the VLWP aware that this is not the full extent to which WSU can help the VLWP. Through the WSU Extension Services, Mr. Blair Wolfley and others have been building the Extension Service towards the serving of watershed councils. Thom is impressed with some of the products that they have produced and feels that the VLWP should speak with them also.

Jeanne clarified that at this point the question of WSU involvement will go to the ST for further discussion. She also explained that it is important that the VLWP feel that they are making good use of their time in order to stay together and stay effective.

Pete mentioned that he does not see how, based on the productive meeting today; there can be a meaningful and productive agenda a month from now. He thinks they need little more time before they can really have anything meaningful to discuss.

Clark feels that until the literature is reviewed and summarized for the VLWP that a meeting will be very productive.

Jeanne asked the group if they would like to do a brief meeting in December to check-in on the ST's work.

Thom fears that if the VLWPO stops meeting they will not have the advocacy. In the past this community has fallen apart on its commitments before with regard to Vancouver Lake. He wants to hold onto this to make sure that it works; he really wants this to work and does not it to be another failure.

Brian mentioned that he is not sure what the agenda would be for a November meeting; unless someone has something meaningful to discuss.

Thom reminded him that the VLWP had discussed some potential meeting topics such as funding. He would like to see the VLWP diversify in their approach to funding. He does not think they should rely solely on the federal government for funding. He would also like to see Mr. Blair Wolfley or someone else from WSU Extension talk to the VLWP.

Martin mentioned that one of the things that the Corp put together with the Willamette River restoration, in conjunction with the State of Oregon was a menu of programs on how to get money and what kind of programs they are. Maybe the next meeting could be based around funding mechanisms. There is the Corp GI program. Martin also mentioned that he will no longer be able to participate in the meetings as he is being deployed to Iraq. Curt will be sitting in for him.

Jeanne recapped that the ideas being put on the table for future meetings are for funding and more watershed council information. She suggested that the VLWP could convene knowing that they can not get much done in terms of scoping between now and November. Or the VLWP could skip a month and reconvene in December to discuss the funding, watershed council and an update on the scoping. She also clarified that even though the VLWP is taking a break the ST will not take a break.

The VLWP briefly discussed changing the December meeting date. They decided not to change the existing date and plan to have the meeting on the 21st of December.

Lisa also mentioned that the VLWP should think about contacting the State governments concerning funding as well as the federal governments.

David mentioned that it will be easier to hone in on funding strategies once the scope of work is better defined. It is possible to develop the scope of work while the VLWP is seeking funding.

Public Comment

Vinton Erickson mentioned that if they are going to work on cleaning up Vancouver Lake then they need to focus on Burnt Bridge Creek, Chicken Creek and other places like that will need to be cleaned up also. Jeanne clarified that it is likely that how much additional work is needed to identify contributors to the Lake problem will be part of the next steps.

Vinton also asked grants. He was wondering how the grants work and if people such as Bill Dygert would work with the legislature to identify grant money. Jeanne suggested that this comment be given to the ST.

Dick Chandlee mentioned that he has not heard much discussion concerning Lake River. It is important to remember that Lake River is an integral part of the whole process and if we continue to forget about Lake River then they should forget the entire clean-up process. It is important to remember that this is a tidal lake. He thinks that someone really needs to look into what is going on with the Lake and Lake River. Jeanne clarified that Lake River has been on previous agenda and one of the outcomes of that discussion is that very little is known about Lake River

Nancy mentioned that she has copies of the SW Loop of the Great Washington State Birding Trail Map which include Vancouver Lake.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held Wednesday, December 21st, 2005 from 4:00pm to 6:00pm. The location will be confirmed and sent out via email meeting notice. The focus of the next meeting will be to discuss the funding, watershed councils and a potential scope of work.