



December 15, 2010 Meeting Summary

The thirty fourth meeting of the Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership was held on Wednesday, December 15, 2010 from 4:00-6:00 pm at the Port of Vancouver Administrative Offices.

Attendance:

Member Present

Vernon Veysey
Jane Van Dyke
Don Jacobs
Gary Kokstis
Thom McConathy
David Page
Brian Carlson
Kevin Gray
Steve Prather
Chris Hathaway
Bruce Wiseman
Patty Boyden
Jeroen Kok
Iloba Odum

Member Seat

Citizen
Citizen
Citizen
Citizen
Citizen
Citizen
City of Vancouver
Clark County Dept of Environmental Services
Clark Public Utilities (alternate for Doug Quinn)
Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership (alternate for Debrah Marriott)
Port of Ridgefield
Port of Vancouver
Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation (alternate for Pete Mayer)
Washington Dept of Ecology

Other Agency Members

Lisa Willis
Andrew Ness
Dorie Sutton
Loretta Callahan
Brooke Porter
Jeff Schnabel
Ron Wierenga

Association:

Port of Vancouver
Port of Vancouver
City of Vancouver
City of Vancouver
City of Vancouver
Clark County Department of Environmental Services
Clark County Department of Environmental Services

Public in Attendance:

Joanne LaBaw
Gary Bock
Lehman Holder
Harvey Claussen
Nancy Olmstead

US Environmental Protection Agency
Vancouver Watershed Council
Sierra Club
Vancouver Lake Sailing Club
Winzler & Kelly

Project Management

Phil Trask	PC Trask & Associates, Inc.
Eileen Stone	PC Trask & Associates, Inc.
Corie Ingram	PC Trask & Associates, Inc.

Not in Attendance:

Member	Member Seat
Jacqueline Edwards	Citizen
Nancy Ellifrit	Citizen
Jim Meyer	Citizen
Tom Gonzales	Clark Public Health
Lee McAllister	Fruit Valley Neighborhood Association
George Medina	US Army Corps of Engineers
Anne Friesz	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Nancy Lopez	Washington Department of Natural Resources

Opening of Meeting/Agenda Review and Public Comment

The Project Manager opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending. After reviewing the agenda, Phil asked if there were any changes to the agenda, to which there were none. Introductions were made around the room.

In public comment Lehman Holder noted that the first Partnership meeting was held on the same day six years ago.

Washington Department of Ecology Triennial Review

Jeff Schnabel discussed Ecology's Triennial Review, which serves as a forum in which the public can request updates to water quality standards throughout the state based on technical information and public input. Vancouver Lake currently does not have water quality criteria. Based on Thom McConathy's recommendation and Jeff's conversations with Ecology staff, Eileen drafted a letter from the Partnership and a letter that individual Partners may use to request that Ecology establish nutrient criteria for Vancouver Lake. The draft letters recommend utilizing the USGS study to determine appropriate criteria. The letters also propose that the Partnership work with Ecology to ensure that the study is done in a fashion that fits Ecology's needs, and to assist Ecology, as feasible, in the setting of nutrient criteria for the lake.

The deadline for submitting comments to Ecology is December 17th. The group discussed the wording of the draft Partnership letter. Thom mentioned he would like the letter to include an evaluation of the watersheds in addition to the lake. The group agreed and the letter was revised, printed and passed around the room for signature.

Lake Sediment Sampling – US Environmental Protection Agency

Phil introduced Joanne LaBaw of US EPA. Joanne presented the results of the EPA Site Investigation of Vancouver Lake. The Site Investigation Report was completed in May, 2010. She gave a brief

history of the project, which began as a result of a Citizen's Petition from the Rosemere Neighborhood Association to conduct a Preliminary Assessment at Vancouver Lake.

Thirty three sediment samples were taken from Vancouver Lake, the flushing channel, Columbia River, Burnt Bridge Creek, and Lake River. Six clam samples were taken from the same locations, excluding Lake River. The results were compared to background samples. The results show that metals, arsenic, beryllium, and cobalt were found in the sediment samples and low levels of metals and PCBs were found in the clam samples. Samples are considered contaminated if: 1) a contaminant is present in the site sample but not in the background sample; or 2) if a contaminant is present in the background sample, then it has to be at least 3 times that level in the site sample. Samples were also compared to NOAA Screening Quick Reference Tables (SQiRTs).

The NOAA SQiRTS have designated threshold effects levels (TEL) and probable effects levels (PEL). Concentrations below the TEL levels pose no potential threat, and concentrations above PEL levels probably have toxic effects.

Four of the 33 sediment samples from Vancouver Lake contained concentrations that exceeded TELs. No samples contained concentrations that exceeded PELs. The site was also evaluated using the Hazard Ranking System and the EPA determined that no further remedial action is warranted by the EPA. The basis of the decision is that the site is not National Priority List ("Superfund") caliber and it does not present a risk to human or environmental health based on toxic components. EPA will send a letter out with this decision in January.

The presentation was then opened for questions:

Q: How should we interpret levels that were three to four times the background levels?

A: Three to four times higher than background levels doesn't necessarily mean it's a problem, but it's a spot to examine. EPA isn't recommending further action because it doesn't meet EPA's level of concern. If the State would like to take action, it could.

Q: Did one site have all of the elevated contaminants or were they spread out in different locations?

A: They were spread out. One sample exceeded for mercury, two samples exceeded for lead, and one sample exceeded for chrysene, fluoranthene, and pyrene.

Q: Were the 33 samples taken at 33 separate sampling locations throughout the study area or were there fewer locations with replicates?

A: The samples were at 33 separate locations throughout the study area.

With the close of questions, Phil thanked Joanne for her presentation.

Outreach Plan

Eileen presented the draft outreach plan, requesting that partners give feedback either at the meeting or afterwards. This draft was sent to partners on December 8th to get conversations started: the more ideas put forth, the better. During the presentation partners raised the following ideas:

- When presenting to local groups/attending events, it could be more cost effective to have volunteers from the Partnership give some of the presentations instead of relying solely on the Project Management Team. Local citizens could also help in this manner.
- Discussion of a Vancouver Lake Day: there is a spectrum of possibilities for this type of event; from higher to lower visibility and costs and from an open house to a planting or clean up day.

- Could set out our own date, or set up on a special date such as Earth Day which may draw in more people as the date would already be on some people's radar. We could take advantage of events that are already happening at the lake, like REI outdoor event, and others.
- The first year could be a stepping stone and each year the event could evolve.
- A Water Trails event (following a trail by boat) was suggested, especially between Vancouver Lake and Ridgefield. It would bring people and families that want to participate in activities. Maps could be printed and distributed. Willamette Riverkeeper planned a successful water trail event this past fall. Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation is in the process of expanding water trails. The Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership has water trail maps and has two canoes that carry 18 people each that could be utilized.
- A boating event should be listed as an event possibility, for the public and/or for elected officials.
- Note that insurance for water events may be costly: this is something to keep in mind when planning. We could find out how much other groups pay for their boating event insurance (REI, Alder Creek Kayak). Proof of liability insurance is required when applying for a Vancouver Lake Park permit.
- If holding water events, have concurrent shore-based events to inform visitors of the history of the area and the environmental factors.
- Having a major event at the park can bring in new groups who aren't already involved at the lake. Also, having events that include more than one group would be beneficial. Look to have an event to demonstrate, especially to youth, that there are activities they can participate in on a regular basis; show youth that the lake is a good place to go and do fun things.
- Potential activities, which could involve competitions with prizes include: a carp fishing derby, a literary or art contest.

Patty raised the point that there are many types of events, but we need to get at a timely decision on what type of event we want. There was discussion on the formation of an ad-hoc group. Phil asked the group if there was consensus to create an ad-hoc group to examine potential outreach events. This group would recommend a Partnership event to the Steering Group. The group agreed to form an outreach event ad-hoc group. Those interested raised hands, which included: Thom, Jeroen, Andrew, Gary, Jane, and Vernon. Eileen will contact the group to set up a meeting in January or February, as coordination to needs to take place so that a decision can be made at the next Partnership meeting in March 2011.

The Outreach Plan itself is to serve as the foundation for outreach, to guide potential outreach efforts, but is not a scope of work with task funding. Specific event decisions do not need to be part of the general plan. The plan will be completed by the end of the year.

Other notes on the outreach plan:

- Other events at which we could present:
 - Boat Show: It is too late to plan for 2011 (it is in January), but we should plan for 2012. Space is free for non-profits
 - Vancouver Farmer's Market: Hand out fliers. It could be a good value for the time spent.
 - Have USGS present their work at some events.
- Potential partners include Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge: the Refuge does an excellent job of busing kids in from all over the county.

Eileen is aiming to complete the Outreach Plan by the end of the year. Please email her with ideas, corrections, and comments by Monday, December 20.

Partnership Business/Project Manager Update

Phil gave an overview of activities by the Project Management Team. Eileen has met with all but one person in regard to in-reach efforts. Her progress has been very valuable, and she will give an overview at the March Partnership meeting.

Phil mentioned that at a recent meeting he attended for WRIA 27/28 the group asked him for an update on Vancouver Lake. There was a good variety of people who are less familiar with the lake issues; the update was received well.

The project management team has been working on updating the Technical Foundation document, which was developed in 2008. Sandra from PC Trask & Associates is leading the updating process and will be working with the Technical Group. The document will be revised as needed with new information, including adding the Research Plan and information on the work being done by USGS and WSU.

Phil presented a conceptual timeline – looking to where we are along the research and decision making process, and where we will be with an ‘initial’ preferred management alternative by end of 2013. Phil and Sandra will develop the timeline with more detail to include in the Technical Foundation. Phil asked for questions and comments:

- The concept is nice as it gives a sense of time. We are in a long process.
- The last plan was completed in 1976. It is important to look at historical documents, such as this one, so mistakes aren't repeated.
- There needs to be an understanding of the history of lake issues before the lake can be managed well. We also should recognize that we are looking to do something for the lake that hasn't been done before. There also have not been budget constraints like the ones we are experiencing now. Be sure to examine many ideas so that history isn't repeated.

The annual newsletter is being developed and a draft has been sent to the Steering Group. As of now, it is four pages and is highlighting USGS and WSU work. How much detail to include is still being worked out. The report will be sent out to the Partnership the last week of 2010/first week of 2011.

Tech Group Update

Jeff Schnabel gave the Technical Group update. WSU completed the final report on their three year study of Vancouver Lake's planktonic food web. The Steering Group submitted a letter of support for WSU to Ecology for a study of toxin genetics. The Technical Group will meet in January to discuss updating the Technical Foundation.

General Partnership Announcements

Phil opened the floor to general comments and announcements.

Jeroen distributed handouts from Vancouver Parks and Recreation about the new water trail plan and about the Vancouver Lake trail extension. Parks is looking to expand the existing Vancouver Lake Park Trail to where the pavement ends on Reeder Highway. This is currently in the permitting phase. Building is likely to be implemented in 2012 by volunteer groups. This could be another way to increase involvement in Vancouver Lake. Also, the annual trail count was conducted; report will be completed next month. The trail count gives a good idea of trail users.

Patty thanked everyone for their work on developing the letter to Ecology and getting it signed today.

With no further public comment, Phil thanked everyone for coming and brought the meeting to a close.

Next meetings:

Steering Group: The next Steering Group meeting is January 19, 2011 at 3:30 pm.

Partnership: The next meeting of the full Partnership is March 16, 2011 at 4 pm. Thom will show Vancouver Lake videos he found posted on YouTube before the meeting.

All meetings are at the Port of Vancouver offices.