



April 15, 2009 Meeting Summary

The twenty eighth meeting of the Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership was held on Wednesday, April 15, 2009 from 4:00-6:00pm at the Port of Vancouver Administrative Offices.

Attendance:

Member Present	Member Seat
Andrew Ness	Port of Vancouver (alternate for Patty Boyden)
Loretta Callahan	City of Vancouver Department of Public Works (alternate for Brian Carlson)
Pete Capell	Clark County Department of Public Works
Anne Friesz	WA Department of Fish and Wildlife
Iloba Odum	WA Department of Ecology
Jane Van Dyke	City of Vancouver
Chris Hathaway	Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership (alternate for Deb Marriott)
Gary Kokstis	Citizen
James Meyer	Citizen
Thom McConathy	Citizen
Jacquelin Edwards	Citizen
Nancy Ellifritt	Citizen
Donald Jacobs	Citizen
David Page	Citizen
Vernon Veysey	Citizen

Public in attendance:

Dvija M. Bertish	Citizen (Riverkeeper)
Margaret Oscilia	Citizen (PBS Engineering)
Ben Dennis	Citizen

Other Agency Members Present:

Dorie Sutton	City of Vancouver
Ron Wierenga	Clark County Public Works
Victor Erlich	City of Vancouver Public Works
Jim Gladson	Clark County Public Works
Jessie Belston	Port of Vancouver
Dorie Sutton	City of Vancouver
George Medina	US Army Corps of Engineers
Steven Bollens	Washington State University–Vancouver
Gretchen Rollwagen-Bollens	Washington State University–Vancouver
Jennifer Duerr	Washington State University–Vancouver

Project Management Team:

Phil Trask	PC Trask & Associates, Inc.
Sabrina Litton	PC Trask & Associates, Inc.
Mardy Tremblay	Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership

Introductions

The project manager welcomed the group to the 27th meeting of the Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership and thanked everyone for coming.

General Partnership Announcements

The project manager asked if there were any general Partnership announcements. There were none.

George Medina from the US Army Corps of Engineers advised that their final report was undergoing an independent technical review and the target date for release is May 15, 2009.

Gary Kokstis stated that the Lake is being used and suggested that the PIO Group put together a calendar of events for the website.

Agenda/Discussion Topics

The project manager introduced the agenda and asked if there were any additions or modifications. There were no additions or modifications.

It was noted that an EPA presentation was not on the agenda. The project manager said he was trying to get them scheduled as soon as possible. However, they were not able to attend this meeting.

Year 2 Plankton Monitoring Update WSU – Vancouver

The project manager introduced Dr. Steven Bollens and Dr. Gretchen Rollwagen-Bollens from Washington State University–Vancouver and thanked them for coming to provide a presentation on the status of the Year 2 Plankton Monitoring Study.

Dr. Steven Bollens said their presentation would include:

- Introduction and Summary from Year 1
- Update on Year 2: Objectives and Preliminary Results
- Next Steps and Power of Leveraging

Key Questions:

- What factors influence the growth of cyanobacteria blooms in the lake?
- What can we do about them?

Dr. Steven Bollens talked about potential trophic interactions in Vancouver Lake. Algae and cyanobacteria are consumed by protozoa. Protozoans are consumed by zooplankton. Zooplankton also consume cyanobacteria.

Summary of Year 1 Findings

- Little geographic variability throughout the Lake
- Extended summer bloom with high abundance of cyanobacteria
- Protozoan grazers may be influencing cyanobacteria blooms
- Zooplankton grazers may also be influencing cyanobacteria blooms.

Dr. Gretchen Rollwagen-Bollens next talked about the objectives and preliminary results in Year 2:

Year 2 Objectives

Extend monitoring period to discern seasonal and inter-annual variable in abundance
Measure the dynamics and rate process
Measure grazing and growth rates

Preliminary Results in Year 2

- Vancouver Lake experienced another large Cyanobacteria bloom in the summer/fall 2008
- Water quality parameters were similar between 2007 and 2008
- Protozoan grazing experiments were conducted bi-weekly during 2008 algae bloom season (April through October). Growth and grazing rate decreased 6/3/08-7/14/08. This is an unexpected decrease that WSU is exploring.

Next Steps

- Continue analyzing water quality and plankton samples
- Continue analyzing experimental samples
- Analyze feeding samples

The Power of Leveraging

Dr. Steven Bollens said that Washington State University–Vancouver has been able to draw in a number of funding partners for Vancouver Lake in addition to the Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership. Some of the additional partners are Murdock Charitable Trust, the Water Research Center and Department of Ecology. Washington State University–Vancouver is grateful to the Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership for funding that has made this leveraging possible.

Dr. Steven Bollens and Dr. Gretchen Rollwagen-Bollens answered questions from the Partnership members.

- Is there a correlation in the dynamics that create algae blooms with low oxygen and fish kills like what is happening in Hood Canal or the Coastal Ocean? Hood Canal and Coastal Ocean are affected by marine waters. There is probably no direct relationship between Vancouver Lake and low oxygen in coastal waters.
- Has Washington State University–Vancouver been looking at the difference between the grazers present during the day and those that are present at night? There is a definite rhythm between night and day, but not normally a large difference in numbers.
- Is there any way to determine what organisms came into the Lake this spring from the Columbia River? That is interesting and would take a different sampling strategy than is currently being used.
- Have there been studies done in Lake River? How is phytoplankton affecting Lake River? Washington State University–Vancouver has not been studying Lake River.

Project Manager Update

Phil said that the Vancouver Lake nutrient loading project was submitted to the Centennial Clean Water Program for grant funding. Currently we are scheduled for partial funding. The Governor's capital budget request is \$35 million. The House budget is at \$30 million and the Senate budget is at \$32 million. If the budget was passed at \$30 or \$32 million, we would not get funded as we would be below the line. Ecology's larger water quality program is being expanded to include part of the stimulus package/projects. It is impossible to predict how this will turn out. A new project list is expected to come out on April 17, 2009. Local legislators are aware of this project. Senator Pridemore has indicated that this project is important and he is strongly supporting it. The Centennial grant is crucial to the Partnership to understand how nutrients and hydrology influence dynamics in the Lake.

Technical Group Update

Phil said the Technical Group met at the end of March and discussed options if only part of the Centennial grant was received. How could the project be scaled back? What are the most important things to do first?

Phil reported the Project Management Team has met with water quality program staff from the US Geological Survey (USGS) Tacoma office to see if there are any opportunities for partnering on research at Vancouver Lake. The USGS is an agency that is respected for its research. From that meeting it was learned that there are cooperative funds that could allow them to match a project up to 50%. However they currently do not have funds available until the next fiscal year that begins in October 2009. A scope of work and cost share has been developed. They would be a good candidate in helping the Partnership move forward in developing a nutrient budget.

Pete noted that Sabrina, Phil and Ron have done an exceptional job with grant applications.

Phil was asked about long-term relationships with the US Army Corps of Engineers. Phil said his opinion was that this is the end of the work with the Corps at this point. However, if Federal monies came to Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership, it would come to us through an agency like the Corps. It is important to maintain this relationship into the future.

The Year 1 report from Washington State University–Vancouver has been received by the Technical Group and is under review and comment.

The Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership was awarded a \$48,137 grant by the Washington Department of Ecology for the Fresh Water Algae grant. The Partnership now has a contract with Ecology and is working on the contract with WSU–Vancouver. The Partnership will match 25% (approximately \$15,000). This money will be used for continuing the plankton sampling and incubation experiments in year 3.

The Technical Foundation Executive Summary draft has gone to the Steering Group for review and comments.

Ron said he appreciated WSU Vancouver coming in today and their building of expertise on understanding algae blooms and nutrients in the Lake. Chris Hathaway added that a long term partnership with WSU–Vancouver is critical for Vancouver Lake. If there is some work done on the Lake, it will be important to have continued monitoring.

Phil reported that the project management team has been exploring potential categories of management options that might be available to the Partnership in the future. Stay tuned.

PIO Group Update

Jim Gladston provided the PIO Group update. The following are the items on their list.

- News release when/if the Partnership gets the Centennial Grant.
- Work with WSU Vancouver on a press release about their 2008 work.
- Post card at parking check-in at Vancouver Lake advertising the website.

Public Comment

It was asked what was happening with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) contaminant assessment at Vancouver Lake. Phil said it is likely that the EPA would be giving a presentation at the next Partnership meeting on the assessment effort at Vancouver Lake. The presentation will hopefully cover what is being done and the results (if available).

Next Steps/Close

The project manager thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting.

Next Meetings:

Full Partnership Meeting on June 17, 2009– 4:00-6:00 p.m.

Steering Group Meeting on May 26, 2009– 3:30-5:00 p.m.