

Deschutes River, Capitol Lake, and Budd Inlet TMDL Advisory Group Meeting

Thursday, April 15, 2010 -- 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Tumwater Fire Department, 311 Israel Rd. SW

Attendees

Ecology, WA State Dept. of

- Scott Collyard
- Tonnie Cummings
- Betsy Dickes
- Kim McKee
- Lydia Wagner

Fish & Wildlife, WA State Dept. of

- Hal Michael

General Administration, WA State Dept. of

- Nathaniel Jones

LOTT Alliance

- Karla Fowler

Natural Resources, WA State Dept. of

- Jack Shambo
- Craig Zora

Olympia, City of

- Laura Keehan

Olympia Yacht Club

- John DeMeyer
- Jim Lengenfelder

Puget Sound Partnership

- Roma Call
- Duane Fagergren

Squaxin Island Tribe

- John Konovsky

Thurston Conservation District

- Kathleen Whalen

Thurston County Water Resources

- Rich Doenges

Thurston Public Utilities District

- Chris Stearns

Tumwater, City of

- Tim Wilson

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

- Dave Ragsdale

WSU Thurston Extension

- Bob Simmons

Weyerhaeuser Company

- Steve Barnowe-Meyer

New Zealand Mud Snail in Capitol Lake Update

Guest speaker: Nathaniel Jones, General Administration. He gave us a summary of the New Zealand Mud Snail (NZMS) invasion that has occurred in Capitol Lake. We learned what the snails eat, where they live, how they procreate, how they infest waterbodies, and how quickly they can spread to new areas. A considerable amount of effort and coordination has occurred between multiple agencies (state, local, and federal) to try and manage this situation. Here are some highlights from his presentation:

- A single snail can produce a colony of more than 70 million snails in just one year.
- The NZMS were found in Capitol Lake in October 2009. It is unknown exactly how long they have been there.
- The Capitol Lake Response Committee was formed to investigate the problem and identify potential solutions.
- December 9, 2009: During an early winter freeze, the GA lowers Capitol Lake 2-3 feet and the WDFW conducts a freezing experiment.
- February-March 2010: Saltwater back flush conducted as an alternative treatment to reduce or eliminate the snails.

For this unusual and unwanted situation, General Administration is focusing on:

Containment: Keep snails from spreading.

Control: Keep snail population below exponential growth threshold.

Eradication: Eliminate risks for spreading.

More information about how the General Administration is handling this issue is available on their website at www.ga.wa.gov. (This presentation is available online at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/tmdl/deschutes/advisorycomm/041510/DeschutesAdvMtg-NZMS-NJones.pdf>.)

Upper Watershed Summary

Speakers: Lydia Wagner & Kim McKee, Department of Ecology.

Lydia provided an overview of the discussions and presentations we've heard during the past year pertaining to the upper watershed.

Kim distributed a discussion paper highlighting the upper watershed allocations. The information comes from the "October 2008 Technical Review Draft for the Deschutes River, Capitol Lake, and Budd Inlet Temperature, Fecal Coliform Bacteria, Dissolved Oxygen, pH, and Fine Sediment Total Maximum Daily Load Water Quality Study Findings". The discussion paper focuses on allocations or targets related to the upper watershed. It accompanies the slides on load/wasteload allocations or targets that are included in the PowerPoint presentation. (The paper is available online at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/tmdl/deschutes/advisorycomm/041510/DeschutesAdvMtg Upper Watershed Allocations.pdf>.)

Here are some highlights from the presentation:

Slide 2: **Pollutants of Concern**

- We need cooler water temperature.
- We need to reduce the amount of fine sediments deposited in the gravels.
- By addressing temperature and fine sediment issues, we can potentially achieve significant benefits to dissolved oxygen and pH.

Slide 6: **Partners & Presenters**

- This slide identifies some of the key partners for this part of the watershed. Representatives from each of these organizations provided us with specifics about their roles and responsibilities. The primary issues addressed Forests and Fish.

Slide 12: **Riparian Protection**

- Forested buffers along stream banks in private forests address critical needs for healthy fish. Initially buffers provide shading to moderate stream temperatures. Over time, trees in the riparian zone will contribute to the large woody debris in the streambed that is important for fish habitat and spawning.

Slide 15: **Fine Sediments**

- Fine sediments are a key concern in the upper watershed. Too much in the water has a negative impact on fish spawning and oxygen exchange in redds. It can also affect water temperature, nutrients, and fish habitat.

Slide 16: **Forest Roads**

- Existing roads: Mandatory road maintenance and abandonment plans (RMAPs) for all road systems that provide for:
 - Routine, on-going maintenance including plans to address storm events
 - Repair of roads and related fish passages in sub-standard condition, and
 - Abandonment of certain roads
- New roads:
 - Sediment delivery does not exceed 50% above background levels
 - Revegetate erodible soils
 - Install culverts and bridges to meet 100-year flood standard to ensure passage of fish and woody debris

Slide 28: **Fine Sediments – Load Targets**

- There are no numeric standards for fine sediments. Instead, there is a percent (%) target reductions.
- Much of the problem with the accumulation of fine sediments is considered a “legacy” issue of what was already in the system.

- The data for this slide was gathered in 2004. The Road Maintenance & Abandonment Program (RMAP) began in 2001 so by 2004 Weyerhaeuser was already several years into RMAP implementation. More work has been completed in the subsequent years. If monitoring were to occur now the data will most likely reflect continued improvement. Known issues for these areas include the presence of horses and all terrain vehicles (ATVs).
- We need to control loading while allowing natural activity.

Slide 35: **What Next?**

- A suggestion was made to break the information from this slide out into two sections: restoration and recovery.
 - Restoration: Promotes growth.
 - Recovery: Proactive by strategically placing vegetation.

Slide 36: **Challenges**

- Funding: It's ever too early to look for grant opportunities. There is money available right now for Puget Sound restoration. The Squaxin Island Tribe and Thurston Conservation District are working together on a grant proposal.
- Education
- Public Perception
- Regulations (local, state, and federal)
- Mixed use areas (for example forest lands and agriculture)
- Time

(The presentation is available online at

[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/tmdl/deschutes/advisorycomm/041510/DeschutesAdvMtg-Upper Watershed Summary.pdf.](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/tmdl/deschutes/advisorycomm/041510/DeschutesAdvMtg-Upper%20Watershed%20Summary.pdf))

Potential grant funding: The Squaxin Island Tribe (SIT) and the Thurston Conservation District are collaborating on a EPA grant application. John Konovsky will provide an update at the next advisory group meeting. He provided us with a copy of nine items of "...early actions to consider while the implementation committee develops its comprehensive plan." The following two items will be included in the grant application:

- Set instream flows for the summer months; WAC 173-513 set flows only for December 15 to April 15.

- Concentrate early actions in the upper watershed along a sensitive, losing reach from Huckleberry Creek to Lake Lawrence – plant riparian vegetation, improve channel morphology and conserve prime habitat via acquisition/easement. The actions will benefit temperature, dissolved oxygen, channel width/depth ratios, pool/riffle structure, flow velocity variability, sediment storage & sorting, and salmonid food, shelter and spawning.

(The entire draft list is available online at

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/tmdl/deschutes/advisorycomm/041510DeschutesAdvMtg-EPA Grant Appl text-Draft.pdf>.)

General Discussion

We began discussing what implementation activities are already happening in the upper watershed. Here’s what we came up with so far:

Entity	Activity	Notes
City of Olympia	Lake Lawrence Outlet	G
Thurston County	Thurston County Shoreline Master Program (SMP)	P
Thurston County	Thurston County Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO)	P
Forest Landowners	RMAP/Forest & Fish, Riparian Buffers	G&P
Forest Landowners	Forest Riparian Easement Program (FREP)	P
Large/Small Forest	Channel Migration Zones	G
Thurston Conservation District	21,000 (feet?) of fencing	G
Various entities (ex. South Sound Green)	Water quality monitoring	G
Thurston Conservation District, Thurston County Stream Team (Thurston County, Olympia, Lacey)	Environmental outreach and education	G
Thurston Conservation District	“Clear Choices for Clean Water” Program	G
Capitol Land Trust	Land acquisition	G

G: On the ground

P: Policy

Note: Let’s further clarify these activities by specifying if they are current or projected.

Open Comment

Jim Lengenfelder: He noted that there has not been any discussion about either water withdrawals in the watershed or chemical usage.

Chris Stearns, Thurston PUD: He referenced data gathered by Nadine Romero, Thurston County Water Resources. The data is from the Tumwater Airport on rainfall, particularly significant events. Chris said there is a noticeable effect on data seasonally. Spring months are wetter. Winter and summer months are drier. The data indicates there are more significant events in greater frequency and amounts. As a result, we can expect serious scouring to occur in this watershed. *(Note: He said the report on this data is very new and is not yet available online.)*

Next meeting

It is on Thursday, May 20, from 9:00 a.m. – 12 noon, at the Tumwater Fire Department, 311 Israel Rd. SW.

Draft agenda items:

- Scientific study information for Middle Watershed
- Implementation Effectiveness Monitoring
- Begin discussion on the middle watershed. Identify key issues and areas of concern.
- EPA Grant Application from Squaxin Island Tribe/Thurston Conservation District