

**Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority
Lewis County Courthouse
351 NW North St.
Chehalis, WA 98532**

**August 20, 2009
Meeting Notes**

Members Present: Ron Averill, Lewis County; Dolores Lee, Town of Pe Ell; Jim Cook, City of Aberdeen; Karen Valenzuela, Thurston County; Dan Thompson, City of Oakville; Terry Willis, Grays Harbor County; Chad Taylor, City of Chehalis; Tim Browning, City of Centralia; Ron Schillinger, City of Montesano; Mark White, Chehalis Tribe

Members Absent: Town of Bucoda

Handouts/Materials Used:

- Cover memo from ESA Adolfson
- Agenda
- Meeting Notes from Work Session and Business Meeting on July 16, 2009
- General Investigation Study
- Letter from Congressman Baird to Colonel Wright, USACE
- Ripe and Ready Update
- Flood Authority Brochure
- ESA Status Report No.12
- Memo re: July Work Session
- August Financial Report
- EESC Progress Payment No. 3
- EESC Status Report
- Resolution 09-259 endorsing Congressman Baird's letter to USACE

1. Call to Order

Chairman Averill called the meeting to order at 1:32 P.M.

2. Introductions

Members and attendees introduced themselves.

3. Review and Approval of Agenda

Without objection the agenda was approved.

4. Approval of Meeting Notes

There were no corrections or additions and the meeting notes were approved.

5. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

6. Reports

a) Chairman's Report

Commissioner Averill stated Lewis County Resolution 09-191 approved the ESA Adolfsen contract and Resolution 09-192 approved the personal services agreement with Earth Economics.

Lewis County published a Request for Qualifications for the Early Warning System and will open those on August 24. After the consultant and advisory committee has had an opportunity to review the submittals they will come to the Flood Authority in September with a recommendation for approval by the Flood Authority.

Provided to the Flood Authority was a report done for the Chehalis Basin Partnership, a section 905b analysis which was the original GI study that the Partnership had with the Corps. It has nothing to do with what we are currently working on for a new statement of work for the joint continuation of that GI study under the purview of the Basin Partnership and the Flood Authority. That process is continuing. There will be some additional meetings in the next couple of weeks and the Corps is hoping to issue a statement of work around the 4th of September, which means it would be brought to the Flood Authority for the work session and meeting on September 17.

At the last meeting, Chairman Averill discussed a letter received from the Oregon Trucking Association. This was discussed with the Governor's office and Attorney General's office and the result was a letter sent by Mr. Mackey to the truckers association stating that we would be happy to meet with them. Mr. Mackey will explain during his report where that issue currently stands.

Another report that came out was a draft Executive Order on flood plain management to the President. This order existed previously during the Carter administration and is now being resurrected. The order puts huge restrictions on future development in the flood plain and the types of activities that might be pursued in a flood plain, including water retention, levees, etc. The Chair believes this order is a long way from approval and between now and when it is signed by the president there will most likely be a lot of changes made to it. If anyone would like to see a copy of it, please contact the Chair and it will be forwarded to you.

Commissioner Willis asked, regarding the GI Study, if the USGS was gathering data at this time. She stated some of her constituents have had USGS test well heights in the Grays Harbor area.

Mr. White stated USGS is canvassing the area to gather data.

b) Member Reports

There were no member reports.

c) Correspondence

The City of Centralia sent a letter to Chairman Averill stating that in Bill Bates' absence at the Flood Authority work sessions, Mr. Kahle Jennings would represent the City.

Congressmen Brian Baird sent a letter to the Corps asking the Corps to look at the flood reduction project and to consider the water retention studies. The Lewis County Commissioners endorsed the letter.

Chairman Averill stated it is not uncommon for the Commissioners to receive letters from the public with suggestions for solving the flooding problems. The Chair asked the members if they wished to see these letters or how they should be handled. After discussion, it was decided to give the letters to ESA Adolphson and they would outline the major comments for distribution to the Flood Authority board.

d) Facilitator's Report

Mr. Mackey stated the Report on Actions Taken is a summary of what the various jurisdictions have already undertaken in terms of flood mitigation. It was distributed at the last meeting and ESA Adolphson asked the technical staff and the board members to review it for accuracy and completeness. No responses have been received. The purpose of the report is to document what the Flood Authority is doing as well as what jurisdictions have done or are doing. It would be useful for public outreach and for the plan in the future. Mr. Mackey urged the members to respond.

Chairman Averill stated he did not respond because he thought the Board Advisory Committee's response would be taken into consideration, and would cover the Counties.

Ms. Lee stated that was her understanding also. If the report is re-sent to her, she will respond.

Mr. Mackey spoke with Mr. Batker of Earth Economics who has been working with the Corps. He will be at the September work session to report on his progress and will explain what Ecosystem Services are and how they could potentially be used.

Regarding the trucker's letter, Mr. Mackey responded on July 24 offering to meet with the Oregon Truckers Association. The attorney representing the association left a voice message stating they would like to meet but would like more information prior to a meeting. Mr. Mackey sent the link to the Flood Authority web site and to the Army Corps and has not yet received a response.

Chairman Averill stated earlier in the week there was a joint meeting of the Chehalis and Centralia City Councils at which Mr. Phillips, Mr. Donahue, Mr. Goss and Mr. Gernhart presented briefings on the Twin Cities Project. He asked Mr. Donahue to elaborate.

e) State Team Report

Mr. John Donahue stated he would let Mr. Goss recap the joint meeting. Mr. Donahue does have copies of the PowerPoint presentation. It is too large to e-mail but a CD can be provided. Ms. Schave, Chehalis City Clerk, offered to make the presentation available to

other interested parties. She is on vacation this week and Mr. Donahue will contact her next week.

Mr. Donahue stated preparations are continuing for the Twin Cities Project open houses.

Chairman Averill stated the open houses are not just for the Twin Cities Project. There will be tables from USGS, the Flood Authority and others with materials that can be reviewed by the public and questions can be asked. There will not be a formal presentation.

Mr. Donahue has been interacting with the National Weather Service, FEMA, the Partnership and others. They are interested in the open houses and have approached us about participating. People may be interested in speaking to emergency management and Mr. Donahue will ask emergency managers if they wish to come and asked if the Flood Authority would host them.

Chairman Averill stated the state legislature passed a bill during the last session which requires the military department and contractors to look at the warning systems throughout the State. They are now collecting data for that project and are going to the jurisdictions. Chairman Averill referred them to ESA Adolfsen since a lot of this information has already been collected.

Mr. Donahue stated the Corps is preparing for some field visits for the Twin Cities Project where levees are being considered. This is part of their design evaluation and as part of that process they are working on their right of entry on private properties. They will be contacting local law enforcement and public works departments so they are aware of the Corps' presence.

Mr. Donahue stated the open houses will be held on September 16 at the Rochester Swede Hall; September 23 at the Montevano City Hall; and September 30 at the Centralia Middle School. All times are from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM.

f) Corps of Engineers Report

Mr. Bill Goss stated for the basin-wide GI, the Corps is considering all projects which address flood risk management and eco system restoration and water retention is within that realm of projects. For the project management plan (PMP) for the basin-wide GI, we will get a preliminary draft out on September 4. We will work with all the concerned parties towards getting this document to be a mutually agreeable draft of the PMP and finalize it as our plan. The PMP can be revised as changes come along or different parties come along.

Mr. Goss would like responses within a couple of weeks of the distribution of the draft. Chairman Averill suggested Mr. Goss be put on the September work session agenda for discussion and feedback.

Mr. Goss stated another meeting would be held, or possibly a teleconference, after the feedback is reviewed so the next iteration of the plan can be drafted.

g) Lewis County PUD Report

Mr. Dave Muller stated the status report on water retention was included in the member packets, particularly the geotechnical and fisheries and environmental aspects. The field reconnaissance has been completed and a request has been made of Weyerhaeuser for photographs so we can look at the history of the area dating back as far as we can go to see what changes have taken place in the landscape, regarding erosion and slides, etc.

There is preliminary work being done on the seismic question regarding earthquake activity. The closest main fault is the Doty fault; there is nothing in the vicinity of the two sites with recent activity. The Doty site is not as active as the Nisqually or Olympia areas, but it will be addressed.

Regarding fisheries and environmental, we have preliminary meeting notes and they are available if anyone wishes to see them. Shannon and Wilson and EES Consulting are comparing notes and consolidating information.

It is expected that draft reports will begin in the next couple of months, with the idea that by early November Part A of the Phase II study will be completed.

h) Congressman Baird's Office Report

Mr. Murphy stated Congressman Baird asked questions of the Corps on how everything is working together. Congressman Baird wants everything to be reviewed and looked at, and as soon as a response is received, it will be shared with the Flood Authority.

OLD BUSINESS

7. Ripe and Ready Studies Report

Mr. Mackey quickly recapped the update, which was included in the member packets. He suggested that the BAC make recommendations on the applications for the RFQ and bring those back at the next meeting. There was no objection.

Mr. Dave Carlton stated in his new position he spends a lot of time in the FEMA office and it has been very helpful for coordination on several matters. He introduced Mr. Ted Perkins who is a FEMA engineer, has nine years engineering experience with the Corps and a very good understanding of the Basin.

FEMA is currently scoping their projects for the upcoming year. One of these projects is an update of the flood insurance study for Thurston and Grays Harbor Counties for the Chehalis River and the coast. With that they are also obtaining LiDAR information from the Wynoochee down. We want to coordinate closely with FEMA for two reasons: It is a federal agency and they have their own process for doing things, plus it is their money they are spending rather than ours.

Mr. Perkins stated FEMA is just now getting its 2009 funding. To start the scoping project, FEMA will go out to the communities to gather information that is already available and fill in the gaps. There is already work being done on the upper Chehalis and the model will be extended to the coast, and coastal work will be done that will include some of the Chehalis River. As part of that, FEMA has worked with the Corps with updates on the Wynoochee and the combined LiDAR includes the coast up the Chehalis to the Wynoochee.

FEMA will be contacting the Flood Authority in the next couple of months to coordinate meetings and discussions. There are other authorities that will go beyond just the flood insurance maps with other information that will give communities a better understanding of their flood risks.

Mr. Swartout asked if this will be restricted to just the Chehalis Basin, or if it will include Thurston County.

Mr. Carlton stated currently it is just for the Chehalis Basin.

Mr. Perkins stated that if during the scoping meeting we discover there is an updated hydraulic model that covers a significant area and is not too expensive to incorporate, we would try to do that.

Mr. Carlton stated he was updated on the status of Executive Order 11988 which, as Chairman Averill stated, was signed in the 1970's by President Carter. It affects federal agencies and how they spend their money for their programs. That is still in effect, and although it was signed in the 1970's some federal agencies did not develop their policy guidelines on how to comply with that Executive Order until the 1990's. Even if something came about this year, not every federal agency would change its guidelines. It would especially affect FEMA. EPA and FEMA have committees to update this and it is similar to what is already in effect.

8. Twin Cities Project Open House Materials

Mr. Mackey stated there are materials in the member packets regarding the Twin Cities Project open house. He also distributed a color copy of the brochure and stated there would be a poster similar to the brochure. He asked for changes to the brochure if necessary.

Mr. Ron Schillinger complimented Mr. Mackey on the appearance and content of the brochure. He stated this is the type of information that is needed to get out to the public.

Mr. Mackey asked if there would be local people or flood authority members at the meeting.

Chairman Averill stated it would be mostly locals and volunteers from the Flood Authority. He personally would make an attempt to attend all three meetings.

Mr. Taylor stated the brochure asks what has been done to reduce flood damages and a couple of the items do not actually reduce damages.

Mr. Mackey stated perhaps a different title is needed there. That is the type of feedback he would like so improvements can be made to the brochure.

Commissioner Willis asked if there would be an opportunity to actually talk about these issues at the open houses. Some things have been done; for example, we were better prepared for the last flood than the previous flood.

Chairman Averill stated the gauge installation is an active project that has been worked on. It is recommended that the emergency management people attend because they use the early warning system. Chairman Averill agreed with Commissioner Willis that there was less damage in the last flood due to earlier warning.

Mr. Mackey stated the brochure needs to be clearer about what the Flood Authority is doing and what has been done by local jurisdictions.

Mr. Fred Chapman, Lewis County Building Official, stated 72 homes have been elevated, which is a project that reduces damages. Every year there is an outreach to property owners in the flood plain and a brochure like this could be incorporated in the letter, which contains information about flooding, links to FEMA and other entities that are part of the flood program.

Mr. Taylor stated all the projects that have been done have been beneficial but nothing has been done to reduce the water level. He wants to stay focused on that and eliminate flooding.

Mr. Mackey stated there is a dual focus and that is a health and safety issue. We need to make people understand that the flooding will happen and how to get out of harms way. You can do that prior to putting in structures. There are two issues and one is not more important than the other.

NEW BUSINESS

9. Expenditure Review

Mr. Chapman reviewed the expenditure report and stated with the actual money spent and the money that is encumbered for projects there is not very much money left to work with. The encumbered funds are fairly accurate but they could go up or down.

Chairman Averill stated Mr. Johnson used the outside highest figure on the encumbered funds. At the work session in September perhaps we could spell out what has been encumbered so we can make decisions on going ahead with certain projects. We need to provide ourselves some room to maneuver.

Commissioner Willis stated there are ripe and ready studies listed in the Comprehensive Plan for which funds have been allocated but there are not lists for projects. Are we going to be able to fund projects? We have talked about them but will there be funds to do them?

Chairman Averill stated the \$2.5 million was appropriated under House Bills 3374 and 3375 to this body. Under the provisions of that law, there are additional monies that we may be able to tap into if there is some association and the Corps agrees that it can act as local share for the Twin Cities project. It would have to be something that would be an actual commitment to the Twin Cities Project, so most likely it would be a project in the upper basin rather than in the lower basin. Also, there are a lot of projects that were recommended that are more likely candidates for state and/or local funds.

Mr. Schillinger stated it was his understanding that the original \$2.5 million was for studies, not projects: basin-wide information gathering, analysis and studies in order to prioritize projects.

Chairman Averill stated Mr. Schillinger was mostly correct; we still may need to look for funds for the projects. The project that Montesano did was part of the plan, although it was not funded by the Flood Authority.

10. Flood Authority Role and Projects

Mr. Mackey stated the BAC looked at projects that would require a funding expenditure, both structural and non-structural projects. If you raze a home, that is considered non-structural but it requires money to do it. There were 28 projects and the BAC wrestled with the criteria for those projects and that will be discussed at the next work session. With the added task of looking at the budget, we can do a more detailed analysis and look at what is appropriated and look at the math so the Flood Authority will know the range of possibility of funds that are at its discretion.

Mr. Mackey drafted a memo that captured the topics the Flood Authority discussed at the last work session. The goal was to summarize the work session and then talk about the next steps. One is to analyze current budget allotments to see if there are available funds for one or two local projects and we are working on that now and will bring it to you at the next work session. The BAC did run the local projects through a prioritization process to see what might be funded and that will also be brought back to you at a work session.

Chairman Averill stated that the BAC had some trouble with finding projects that might qualify.

Mr. Mackey stated he would get back to that shortly.

Another step is a draft plan for governance and finance. That will also be brought to the Flood Authority.

To answer Chairman Averill's question, question 3 is a prioritization process that would be used to look at the 28 projects that will require structural work and the BAC looked at this and used this tool. There were some refinements made to the tool and it could work but there are some things that happen when it is actually applied.

Mr. Taylor asked about the projects that have already been approved, such as studies and rain gauges. Those won't need to go through this process again.

Mr. Mackey stated that is correct. The projects that require structural funds, with the idea that the Flood Authority might want to use some of its current funding to look at those, are entirely different from the \$2.5 million where you have looked at studies. This would be for items in the future.

Mr. Taylor stated that if Phase II of the study proves that it is doable and it would require structural funds, would it have to come back and be run through the tool?

Mr. Mackey stated he is looking at the smaller projects.

Chairman Averill stated we still don't know what the Twin Cities Project will cost and there is still the PUD project. Earth Economics is identifying other sources of money, also.

Mr. Taylor stated the \$124 million quoted in 2003 for the Twin Cities project did not include the land acquisition.

Chairman Averill stated originally it did include the land, but these are 2003 figures and depending on when they get to design that figure could change dramatically. The land would need to be the local share because the federal government cannot acquire land; it must be state and local. That does count against our share, however, so it will become part of our 35% share.

11. Flood Plan

The Flood Plan was sent out via e-mail and board members received hard copies of the plan. As each chapter was completed it was sent out for review and comments and challenges were incorporated into the draft the Flood Authority now has. We would like questions and comments to go to the BAC, Ann Root, Spencer Easton or Mr. Mackey. We will be contacting some jurisdictions about some items in the plan that need to be more specific. There are some studies we still want to include and flood detail we are still trying to accumulate. Perhaps we can take all the comments and use the BAC to pull all those together and bring them back to the Flood Authority. This could happen more than once. The goal is to have that completed by April, 2010 and have final approval by the first of June, 2010.

Chairman Averill recognized that the Flood Authority Board members have many other things to deal with besides Flood Authority business but he encouraged members to get the plan to their planning people so they can look at it in terms of how it impacts each

jurisdiction and ask question and get those back to us. This plan may not be universally adopted by all of us but we need to run it against each plan we have. We are looking for some type of consistency throughout the basin and that is the intent of the plan that has been drafted to date.

12. Confirm Next Meeting and Board-Requested Topics

The next meeting will be on September 17 with a work session beginning at 9:00 at the Veterans Museum and the business meeting convening at 1:30 at the Lewis County courthouse. Chairman Averill gave a couple of suggestions for agenda items. Anyone may contact Mr. Mackey with other suggestions.

Mr. Schillinger stated he did not believe the Montesano projects would affect the Flood Authority projects. The Camp Creek project for Montesano and Grays Harbor is going to bid on August 24 and the project should be completed before the end of this year.

Chairman Averill stated that reinforces the comment made earlier that there are a number of projects on the list which can be accomplished by local resources. He also suggested they not come off the list because they are contributing to the basin. This is a basin-wide flood authority and there are many things that are taking place on the river. A lot of attention is being given to the Twin Cities Project and the PUD retention study and there is another retention project in Grays Harbor. All projects need to stay in the overall picture of what we need to do in the basin.

Mr. Schillinger stated that while the Flood Authority is looking at basin-wide flooding remedies, each jurisdiction and a lot of property owners are doing all that they can do, also.

Mr. Cook stated a monumental step in flood mitigation has been taken with the collaborative work of all the jurisdictions and agencies. For years each entity has worked on its own to do something but this joint effort is huge.

13. Adjourn

The business before the Board was completed and the meeting adjourned at 2:58 P.M.