

1-8-04 Citizen Coordinating Council Meeting

Post Falls Library, 6:30pm, Post Falls, ID

Attendees (who signed in and/or announced themselves)

Bret Bowers	Woody McEvers
Jerry Boyd	Mike Mihelich
Linda Boyd	Ed Moreen
Lloyd Brewer	Suzan Scott
Roland Craft	Rusty Sheppard
Renee Dagseth	Luke Russell
Jack Domit	Bill Rust
Bob Flagor	Dan Whiting
Terry Harwood	Nick Zilka
Jim Hollingsworth	
Jana McCurdy	

Meeting Overview

The January 8, 2004 meeting of the Citizen Coordinating Council (CCC) of the Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission (Basin Commission) covered the following topics:

1. Board Update
2. Proposed projects (recommended to the TLG) for 2004 Clean Water Act (CWA) funding—Round 2
3. CCC Priorities/Administrative Needs

Opening

Woody McEvers, CCC Vice-Chair, welcomed participants to the meeting and chaired the meeting in Chairman John Snider's absence. Woody asked attendees to introduce themselves and state whether they are commenting on behalf of themselves or a larger organization or group.

Board Update

Luke Russell, IDEQ and interim core staff, provided an update of Board activities and decisions since the last CCC meeting. The Board met on November 12, 2003 and then again by conference call on December 15, 2003. At their face-to-face meeting, the Board approved five projects for funding under the Clean Water Act (CWA) representing approximately \$500k in project work. The Board then directed the TLG to identify other potential projects for CWA funding. The Board also discussed steps needed to hire an Executive Director for the Basin Commission.

The Board's December 15 conference call focused on staffing issues for the Basin Commission. On the call, the Board agreed to task Ross & Associates to develop a path-forward strategy for the selection of the Executive Director, including recruitment plans, funding considerations, and staffing needs. The Board discussed, but tabled for later discussion and action, the \$150k offered by IDEQ to help provide funding support to the Basin Commission. Commissioners asked that they be given time to review the draft cooperative language proposed by IDEQ and agreed to act on the money at their February 11 meeting.

CCC members wanted to know if the \$150k was earmarked for Basin Commission staff or whether it would be spent during the Executive Director search process and as the Commission staffs up. CCC members were also interested to learn what kinds of monies might be available to fund the Basin Commission (including indirect rates on the Superfund grant, using DEQ's Superfund "match" monies, etc.) and recommended that the Ross & Associates product document the full range of costs/needs associated with running the Basin Commission (including, for example, supporting the CCC and TLG chairs). The group also recommended that the Ross & Associates product discuss where the Basin Commission offices could be located and the Executive Director's salary. Participants suggested that citizen input on these various decisions would be useful.

Luke also distributed a draft Basin Commission "2003 Annual Report." The Basin Commission is required to prepare an Annual Report describing activities and accomplishments of the previous year. Luke invited participant comment on the draft report, and noted that the citizen outreach section (which highlights CCC activities) begins on page 20. *Please submit comments on the report to Anne Dettelbach, anne.dettelbach@ross-assoc.com or 206.447.0956 (fax) by January 16, 2004.* The updated report will be included in the Basin Commission Board packets to be distributed on January 28.

TLG Update

Phillip Cerner, Coeur d'Alene Tribe, TLG Chair, and interim core staffmember, made the TLG presentation. Phillip reminded the CCC that the TLG has been asked to recommend to the Board projects for funding under the 2003 Clean Water Act appropriation—approximately \$1.3 million are still available for projects. The Clean Water Act projects must be "demonstration" or "learning" projects to qualify for this funding.

[NOTE: Dan Whiting, representing Senator Craig's office, also announced that an additional \$2 million in Clean Water Act monies will be requested/appropriated in 2004.]

Phillip explained that the TLG opted to focus this round of proposed projects on nutrient management in Lake Coeur d'Alene and to consider projects related to other lake management issues. [NOTE: The 1995 Lake Management Plan is currently being updated by IDEQ and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe.] Phillip then briefly reviewed the 14 projects being considered by the TLG at their January 13 meeting.

CCC members made the following comments on the CWA proposals.

- It is not clear how these projects relate to implementation of the 2002 Record of Decision (ROD), the basis of the Basin Commission's workplan. [A: *Phillip noted that the Basin Commission also has the discretion to address issues that pertain to the Lake Management Plan, as well as related RODs. Bill Rust, TLG member, noted that the TLG broadened the proposal criteria for this round of projects because it was unable to agree on sufficient other projects.*]
- These proposed projects are well-conceived but do not address the important heavy metal issues. Why? Metals are the focus of the Superfund Cleanup. [A: *TLG members explained that managing sediments helps control the introduction of phosphorus to the Lake (which in turn helps reduce the amount of bioavailable lead). Lead binds to phosphorus that is carried to the lake in sediments, and thus becomes soluble (which is more harmful). Therefore, reducing phosphorus levels helps lower the amount of soluble lead in the water. As well, nutrients/sediments can cause algae to bloom in the Lake. Dying algal blooms decompose and establish anaerobic chemical conditions in the Lake which, in turn, causes metals resuspension. Preventing metals resuspension is at the heart of the Lake Management Plan. Therefore, managing sediments and nutrients indirectly advances several goals of the Basin Commission.*]
- Several of the proposed projects will help inform remedy selection for contamination problems across the Basin.
- These proposed studies may be useful for amending the Lake Management Plan.
- The Spokane River and Lakeshore Homeowners Associations oppose most of the proposed projects and recommend that the Basin Commission wait for the Lake Management Plan to be finalized (and to outline appropriate remedies) before implementing any projects related to the Plan's implementation. These associations are concerned that implementing these projects could represent a mismanagement of Clean Water Act monies and cause "the wrong dirt to be dug."
- Will the TLG consider streambank stabilization projects? [A: *At this time, the TLG is not focusing on streambank stabilization projects. Streambank stabilization projects proposed for 2003 ran into technical difficulties (e.g., related to site selection and design) and have since been deferred. A Lower River Forum is being established to work through these technical issues and hopes to have a project on the ground. Funding already committed to streambank stabilization projects (\$445k) will continue to be earmarked for such projects. The Streambank Stabilization Project Focus Team is also planning to meet in January to continue its discussions.]*

NOTE: Jana McCurdy volunteered to bring these comments forward to the TLG at their January 13, 2004 meeting. Additional CCC comments that are received by January 12 will also be passed along to the TLG at their meeting. As well, the CCC will make a presentation to the Basin Commission on February 11. As always, CCC members are also welcome to present their own perspectives at the Basin Commission meeting.

CCC Plans, Priorities, Needs

Woody McEvers asked the CCC to consider its activities and accomplishments over the past year (its first year) and led an open discussion during which the CCC considered the following questions:

What is the goal of the CCC and are we accomplishing it?

How should the CCC focus its energy in 2004?

What kinds of administrative/professional support needs will the CCC need to be successful?

How should the CCC organizational structure change to accommodate new directions?

CCC members offered the following comments:

Overall Impressions

- The CCC is a useful forum for exchanging information and ideas about the Basin Commission and remediation projects in the Coeur d'Alene Basin.
- The fact that fewer people are attending these meetings can be seen as a sign of success—people attend when they are upset with processes or outcomes. This is an open, successful process.
- The CCC depends on communications, updates, email messages/reminders to do its work well. This support function is critical to the group's ongoing usefulness. The Basin Commission needs to hire administrative/communications staff.
- Do we, as the CCC, have influence on the Basin Commission?
- The CCC has influence, especially through the elected officials (i.e., county representatives). The commissioners will not support Basin Commission projects that the citizens do not recommend.

CCC-TLG Interactions

- CCC members with less technical training learn from the TLG. Can CCC members attend TLG meetings? We are not always aware of when these meetings take place.
- CCC members should receive TLG meeting/conference call summaries. [NOTE: *From now on, Anne Dettelbach will distribute weekly TLG conference call summaries to CCC members.*]
- Every PFT should have its own tab on the Basin Commission website.
- The PFT structure is working—citizens interested in specific topics or projects are staying informed.
- As the Basin Commission starts implementing projects, the CCC and TLG may need to reconsider how to inform and involve citizens in specific projects. The SIG representatives may become critical communication linkages for these efforts.

Membership

- CCC membership seems to have declined since November 2002. We should advertise. We should invite reporters to the meetings and include newspapers on our distribution lists.

Structure

- The chair/vice-chair structure works reasonably well (as long as someone is responsible for managing the group's communications).

Next Meeting/Upcoming Events

The next Basin Commission Board meeting will take place at the Kootenai County Administration Building, 451 Government Way, Coeur d'Alene, ID on **February 11, from 10 AM to 4 PM.**

The next Technical Leadership Group meeting will take place on **January 13** at the USFS Building.