



## Grays-Elochoman and Cowlitz Rivers WRIA 25-26 Watershed Planning Unit

Are you interested in how our region's water resources will be managed to meet the needs of cities, rural communities, businesses, farms, homes, recreation, fish and wildlife? Would you be willing to participate on a planning group charged with reviewing the region's water resources, weighing the many and varied needs for water, and making recommendations on how our region's water resources should be managed? If so, you are invited to apply for a position on the Watershed Planning Unit for the Grays-Elochoman and Cowlitz Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIA). Applications are currently being accepted for up to 5 positions on the Planning Unit to represent varied interests across the WRIsAs.

The Planning Unit was established pursuant to state law (RCW 90.82) by Lewis, Cowlitz, Wahkiakum, and Skamania counties along with the major cities and water purveyors in the WRIsAs. Its purpose is to develop and coordinate implementation of a watershed management plan addressing water supplies, stream flows, water quality, and fish habitat. The Cowlitz WRIA includes the upper and lower Cowlitz, Cispus, Tilton, Toutle and Coweeman River basins. The Grays-Elochoman WRIA includes the Grays, Elochoman and Skamokawa River basins and the Mill, Abernathy, and Germany Creek watersheds.

The Planning Unit completed the current watershed plan in 2004 and it was adopted by counties in 2006. In an action intended to implement parts of the plan, the Department of Ecology recently proposed a water management rule allocating water for various uses and setting minimum stream flows. The adequacy of the water use reservations and the basis for proposed minimum stream flows were widely questioned during the public hearings on the rule. The Planning Unit has asked, and the Department of Ecology has agreed, to suspend its rule-making while the Planning Unit undertakes a review of watershed plan elements relating to water supply needs and instream flows.

As it embarks on a review of the plan, the Planning Unit wishes to add 2 to 5 members to once again help ensure a range of interests are represented. During the development of the current plan, the membership of the Planning Unit represented a range of water users and interests from across the WRIsAs. However, a number of members chose not to continue on the Planning Unit following its adoption. To restore a broader range interests on the Planning Unit landowners, agriculture and business interests, rural community leaders, and recreation and fishery interests are encouraged to apply. Planning Unit members are not paid or reimbursed for expenses. Applicants should have an interest in water issues and management and be willing to work in a consensus based process that involves tough decision-making. The ground rules for Planning Unit members are attached.

The Planning Unit generally meets on the second Thursday of each month from 2:00 to 5:00 PM in Kelso. However, some meetings may be held in the evenings and at other locations within the WRIAs. Planning Unit meetings are open, public meetings. The Planning Unit may establish smaller work groups to focus on specific issues and report to or make recommendations for consideration by the full Planning Unit.

Parties interested in becoming a Planning Unit member  
are asked to **submit a letter of interest**  
**by 5:00 PM, Friday, October 8, 2010.** Letter should be sent to:

WRIA 25/26 Planning Unit  
c/o the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board,  
2127 8th Avenue, Longview, WA 98632  
Or via email to [info@lcfrb.gen.wa.us](mailto:info@lcfrb.gen.wa.us)

The letter should explain your specific interest in watershed planning or water management issues, any special skills you have that would assist the Planning Unit in its work, and what contribution you hope to be able to make as a Planning Unit member in addressing water management challenges in the region. Your letter should also identify the watershed and county in which you reside. The selection of new Planning Unit members will be made by the local governments and water purveyors that established the Planning Unit.

If you have questions, please contact Jeff Breckel at 360-425-1553 or Bernadette Graham Hudson at 360-425-1552.

## **WATER RESOURCE INVENTORY AREAS (WRIA) 25 AND 26**

### Planning Unit Ground Rules

December 9, 1999

The members of the Planning Unit for Water Resource Inventory Areas 25 and 26 adopt the following ground rules for the conduct of their business.

1. We will focus our discussions on the issues associated with developing a plan for the management and use of water resources. We will avoid debating issues beyond the scope of that effort.
2. We represent a broad range of interests, each having an interest in how our water resources are used and protected. We recognize the legitimacy of each other's interests and concerns in our efforts to forge an effective and viable management plan.
3. All participants will be treated with respect and dignity. We will not tolerate personal attacks directed at individuals and agencies.
4. We commit to understanding each other's interests and concerns. There should be no hidden agendas. We will openly and candidly share our concerns and interests and engage in thoughtful dialogue. We will listen carefully. We will ask questions for clarification. We will respect each other's right to disagree.
5. We commit not to characterize each other's motivations, values, or positions in any discussions that we may have with the press. We will not attribute specific statements or positions to a participant without their prior approval. We commit to work out our differences at the table rather than in the press.
6. We commit to search for opportunities and creative solutions. We will focus on problem solving, rather than stating positions.
7. We commit to making decisions by consensus. Consensus does not require that all members endorse or agree with the proposal or decision, but at a minimum all members must be willing to accept the proposal or decision. Members may be polled to determine their position on an issue or decision. If consensus cannot be reached, the participants may:
  - a. Determine if the decision is critical to the group's work. If not, the group may decide to drop the decision or proposal;
  - b. Consider appointing a subgroup to examine the issue and, if possible, submit a revised proposal to the full group for consensus consideration;
  - c. Consider adopting several alternatives or options for addressing an issue;
  - d. Delay the decision; or
  - e. Caucus.

8. We agree that this planning effort is a priority in terms of committing our time and resources. We agree that consistency in participation is critical. Accordingly, we commit to make every effort to attend meetings of the planning unit and read meeting minutes. However, in recognition that events may periodically arise which prevent attendance, each participant may name an alternate to attend meetings on his or her behalf. The alternate will not simply be an observer, but will have the same authority to act as the principal participant. The participants shall be responsible for ensuring their alternate is informed and fully prepared to participate.
  
9. All participants accept the responsibility of keeping their associates, organization, or constituency informed of planning unit's progress and issues under discussion. Each participant also accepts the responsibility of representing the needs and interests of their associates, organization, or constituencies. Adequate time will be provided prior to major decisions to allow participants to consult with their associates, organization, or constituency. Agendas will clearly identify all action items. Strategic checkpoints will be established to allow participants to review progress made with their associates, organization or constituency and report back any concerns to the group. A participant may ask the group to reconsider any decisions within two months following the decision.
  
10. The use and protection of our water resources is an important public issue. Our meetings will be open to the public and we will make time available at each meeting for the members of the public to share their concerns, interests, and suggestions with us. Meeting notices will be sent to newspapers within WRIA 25 and 26.
  
11. We agree that anyone may resign from the planning unit at anytime. If the reason for resignation stems from a concern with the work or conduct of the planning unit, the participant will advise the other participants of this concern and allow them to the opportunity to resolve the problem before resigning.
  
12. We will keep minutes of our meeting. The minutes shall summarize the discussions and document the decisions of the planning unit. They will not attribute statements to specific participants.

DEFINITION OF CONSENSUS FOR WRIA 25/26						
Consensus is defined in terms of agreement along a continuum. Team Members may register the degree of their agreement with the language in any of the first six columns:						
<b>Endorse</b>	<b>Endorse with a minor point of contention</b>	<b>Agree with reservation</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Stand aside</b>	<b>Formal disagreement but will go with the majority</b>	<b>Block</b>
"I like it"	"Basically I like it"	"I can live with it"	"I have no opinion"	"I don't like it but I don't want to hold up the group"	"I want my disagreement to be noted in writing but I'll support the decision"	"I veto this proposal"
(Adapted from: "Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making," 1996)						
<b>The last (shaded) column on the right side of the continuum is <i>not</i> considered acceptable for consensus in this process.</b>						
However, anything to the left could be considered "agreement by consensus."						