

DRAYTON HARBOR SHELLFISH PROTECTION DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE SEPTEMBER MEETING SUMMARY

Date: Wednesday, September 19, 2007
 Time: 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.
 Place: Marine Drive Harbormaster Conference Room – Blaine

Agenda

1.	4:00	Review Agenda and Previous Meeting Summary
2.	4:05	Water Quality Project Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine Water Quality • Wet-Weather Monitoring Project • California Creek • MST Project
3.	4:35	Updates on Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSS • Agriculture • Stormwater
4.	5:25	Shellfish Protection District Fee
5.	5:45	New Business
6.	5:55	Next Agenda / Meeting Date

Committee Members Present: Jan Hansen, Charlie Hawkins, Pam Taft, Bjorn Hrutfiord, Bob Williams, and Geoff Menzies

Others: Ed Halasz and Henry Doan (WC Health), Jim Thomspson (WC PDS), Greg Combs (WS Health), Carl Weimer (County Council), Beth Chisholm (Whatcom Conservation District), Remy Stratton and Erika Stroebel (WC Public Works), Jason Pentzer (WS Agriculture), Mak Kaufman (WS Ecology), Jackie Goodsir (Hobby Farmer), and Don Hrutfiord (Farmer)

Members Absent: Kathy Cullen

1. Review Agenda and Previous Meeting Summary

The meeting was called to order at 4:13 p.m. Previous summary distributed for review. Comments on the summary should be directed to Erika.

2. Water Quality Project Updates

- Marine WQ

Greg Combs from Washington State Department of Health (DOH) discussed marine water data in Drayton Harbor. He provided various summary handouts referencing area stations and different classifications (prohibited, unclassified, or conditionally approved). A review of water sampling at the stations indicated whether or not standards were met. Under the Conditional Approval conditions, the majority of stations are meeting the shellfish water quality standards. Station status was additionally analyzed under different rainfall conditions.

Some issues that were raised included the effect of the sewer outfall outside the Semiahmoo Spit, watershed vs. shellfish protection boundaries, standard changes, and statistics of closures.

- Wet-weather Monitoring Project

Geoff reviewed the wet-weather monitoring project that was recently completed. The final report (prepared by Puget Sound Restoration Fund for Whatcom County Public Works) was sent to committee members and agency representatives via e-mail. The goal of the project was to sample 10 rain events between 3/06 and 5/07. The project was specifically focusing on events with between 0.75 and 1.0 inches of rain in 24 hours. With this focus in mind, we weren't able to capture ten rain events. Fecal coliform counts of the different stations were discussed, particularly noting any exceedances during the period including the first major flush event in May. This study supported the current classification.

There was discussion on continuation of expenditures on this project. Data should be scrutinized to determine if there is a clear relationship at each station. Questions regarding future attempts to do more thorough bacterial tracking in the upper watershed were also discussed.

- California Creek

Erika had received the final report for the California Creek Monitoring Project (Hirsch Consulting Services and Puget Sound Restoration Fund) and circulated a few. Copies will be mailed to the advisory committee (if requested) and will be distributed to agencies. There were 10 stations sampled, with 10 samples from each except for a few stations in the dry months that had no flows. Erika noted the different colored highlighted areas on a map depicting priority drainages identified through the project. High priorities identified were based on loading (concentration and flow/discharge at the site—helps compare amounts) and areas with multiple samples with concentrations over 1000 cfu/100mL. There was further discussion of continued water quality monitoring (currently being done by County staff), what happens when there are extremely high counts, and ways to do follow up with failing systems. Public Works is coordinating with the Health Department, DOE, and WSDA to follow up in drainages that have fecal coliform counts exceeding 1000 cfu/100 mL.

Erika discussed the recommendation to continue sampling at California Creek over the next year was to help adequately characterize seasonal variation. Committee members asked questions including funding and the process involved of advising other agencies of high counts. As at the last meeting, the committee supported continuing the monitoring program in California Creek and there was discussion of expanding this to Dakota Creek as well. Erika will send out an RFP (request for proposal) on this project and will ask for help from an advisory committee member.

- MST (Microbial Source Tracking) Project

Geoff described that the project partners are still waiting for results from IEH (Institute of Environmental Health). Preliminary results from EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) have been received for both marine and freshwater. There were 5 samples taken from 5 sites (monitoring at California Creek and marine stations). In the harbor, 52 samples were collected with 29 having levels that were below standard. There was not a single human detection in Drayton Harbor. Ruminant sources were found in a few stations. Of six samples, five were ruminant (cows, sheep, but not horses) and one unknown. This is encouraging particularly because of the underwater sewer line.

In the freshwater sampling, there were 29 samples, with majority ruminant. Two samples collected at station CA14 indicated both human and ruminant sources each time. Next week Geoff is currently scheduling a meeting with project partners to jointly review the preliminary results. Questions were raised about the project proposal, the contractor, and the techniques used. Once all the data is in, hopefully by year's end, a final report will be distributed to the committee.

3. Updates on priorities

- **Small Farms- Beth Chisholm, Whatcom Conservation District**

Beth from the Conservation District (CD) distributed a flyer for a small farm management workshop in the Drayton Harbor watershed on 10/9/07 at the Birch Bay Fire Hall. Topics to be discussed include elements of farm planning such as living with livestock near water and protecting wetlands, water quality, and fish habitat, as well as mud, manure, and pasture management. She encouraged folks to sign up and spread the word. It's uncertain if enforcement of the CAO (critical areas ordinance) will be covered. Beth noted that at site visits, they help people with issues on barns (putting up fences, keep roof clean, down spouts, etc.), particularly to hobby farmers. Things may change when a formal agreement is made with the County. The CD is currently moving forward with stewardship practices. Mak from Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE) indicated they could help make a strong recommendation for relative parties to attend workshops.

The CD has been waiting for an MOU (memo of understanding) from the County PDS (Planning and Development Services). There was some discussion as to the status on the agreement since there has been such a staff turnover at PDS. This is a necessary agreement since the CD cannot fund this alone and needs County funding solidified to continue working in Drayton Harbor. There was additional discussion regarding non-compliance of the CAO and consequence, BMPs (best management practices), incentive program, and enforcement

Carl Weimer touched on the County's Comprehensive Water Integration Project (CWRIP) which is exercise looking at over 40 water resources plans that the county has approved and the hundreds of associated projects to prioritize and hopefully to move forward on.

- **OSS- Ed Halasz, Whatcom County Health Department**

OSS (On-site septic) inspection is supposed to be done on every system every year or every three years for conventional gravity systems. In 7/07, Ed took the OSS coordinator position and is working on an OSS local management plan to include how the inventory and evaluation of OSS systems will occur. All Puget Sound counties are required to develop this 5-part plan that includes the following: Database enhancement, designation of sensitive areas, operation and maintenance, marine recovery area (MRA) strategy, and education. MRA strategy is what particularly applies to Drayton Harbor, and that's where initial efforts will be. This is the first time the County has had a pro-active OSS O&M program. Ed distributed a handout outlining the OSS program and its requirements. Over 300 inspections have been done countywide so far and more are expected to be completed after implementation. There now are 12 certified OSS inspectors with a few more coming on board.

Health Department staff plans take the plan to the Board of Health in the near future and then to the State by end of year. The plan was reviewed initially with some edits and it is moving forward. Ed indicated initial phasing in OSS O&M requirements will occur in the Drayton Harbor watershed.

Residents are responsible for paying for inspections, and it is hoped that there are future possibilities for financial assistance for those in need. Enforcement was discussed for those who do not comply.

- Agriculture

Jason Pentzer from Washington State Department of Agriculture distributed a draft quarterly report of the Performance Summary in the Livestock Nutrient Management Program section. He noted they don't do many inspections in Drayton Harbor due to the low number of dairies, but there are a few of interest including dairies in California Creek. They are up on target for inspections, 6 follow up, and 5 investigations in 2007. At California Creek, he did do some ground truthing to follow up on high counts found through the water quality monitoring project and will get some updated info in the next report. Jason noted program improvements being looked at and lagoon assessments. More time and staff will be spent out in the watershed during the winter. He also indicated nearing completion of some file reviews for Geoff.

- Stormwater

Staffing issues were discussed in relation to a Public Works-Stormwater funded position to assist the Health Department with OSS. Erika indicated that marine resource funds could be used to fund a short-term position to help respond to high counts in Drayton Harbor and Portage Bay. She asked the committee if they would be in support of this. This person would initiate communication with public regarding any failures, maintenance required, and follow-up issues. The committee supported this recommendation as it addresses a priority identified through the Drayton Harbor Shellfish Recovery Plan.

4. Shellfish Protection District Fee

The ordinance on the shellfish protection district fee was introduced a week ago. This would provide funding for the district. The proposal is for \$40/parcel flat fee. The hope was for it to kick in money beginning in 2008, but the timeline does not meet the tax roll for 10/1/07 fees to be applied to 2008. There are 8,400 parcels, and there was discussion regarding the use of flood funds for the shellfish district, legislation, exemption of commercial dairies, and determination of state use of classifications.

5. New Business

No new business was discussed.

6. Next Agenda/ Meeting Date

Next meeting is scheduled for 11/14/07. Meeting adjourned at 6:16 p.m.