

Upper Wenatchee Community Lands Plan Steering Committee Kick-off Meeting Summary

January 14, 2014

Chelan Technology Center, Wenatchee WA

“Steering Committee” Attendees: Al Murphy (Evergreen Mtn Bike); Dan Action (Leavenworth Real Estate), David Holland (Wa Dept of Ecology); Pete Cruickshank (Chelan County Natural Resources (CCNRD)); Rollie Schmitten (Nason View Partnership, Lake Wenatchee); Jerry Duffy (Nason View Partnership); Brandon Rogers (Yakama Nation); Scott Lynn (US Forest Service); James Schroeder (The Nature Conservancy); Keith Goehner* (Chelan County Commission); Amanda Barg (WaDFW); Steve Raymond (Chumstick Wildfire Stewardship Coalition); Bill Miller (Kahler Glen); Brian Patnode (Wa State Parks); Larry Leach (Wa Dept. of Natural Resources);

Other invitees: Terry Twitchell*(Peshastin/Blewett); Bill Towey (colville Tribes); Shaun Seaman (Leavenworth Winter Sports Club); George Wilson (lake Wenatchee Info); Dave Moazad (Trout Unlimited Leavenworth Chapter); Annie Schmidt (Chumstick Wildfire Stewardship Coalition); Andrew Holm* (Tierra Learning Center); Nancy Smith (Leavenworth Chamber of Commerce); Byron Newell (Plain); Dick Smithson* (Peshastin/Blewett). *Attended Sounding Board meeting 1/8/15)

Other attendees: Mike Kaputa* (Chelan County Natural Resources), Mickey Fleming* (Chelan Douglas Land Trust), Bob Bugert (Chelan Douglas Land Trust), Pete Hill* (the Trust for Public Land), Sandra Tassel (Look at the Land, Inc.), Hanne Beener (CDLT) Jennifer Hadersberger (CCNRD). .

Background:

Chelan County, the Chelan Douglas Land Trust (CDLT), the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) have been discussing the possibility of preparing a vision for the Upper Wenatchee River watershed for several years. Representatives of these entities (collectively referred to here as the conveners) have talked to many stakeholders during this time and gained general support for the concept. It was a testimonial to these prior communications that nearly twenty individuals (not associated with the project conveners) turned out for the kick-off meeting even with only a week’s prior notice about the gathering. The invitations did not indicate that participants would be the core of a Steering Committee for the project.

The attendees were mostly associated with one of the agencies or NGO’s with interests in the Upper Wenatchee basin, in part because the meeting was held during the day.

Many of the participants were familiar with one or both of the two prior planning efforts in Chelan County which involved the same conveners. The Wenatchee Foothills Community Strategy and the Stemilt/Squilchuk Community Vision similarly engaged a full spectrum of local stakeholders and produced maps and reports with are fairly comparable to the products anticipated as outcomes of the Upper Wenatchee Community Lands Plan (UWCLP) project. The ongoing “Chelan County Lands Dialogue” also is a good foundation for the new planning process. The North Central Washinton Forest Health Collaborative also shares issues in common with this effort.

Introduction

County Commissioner Keith Goehner welcomed by attendees, expressed appreciation for their participation and emphasized the importance of the land to the communities within the planning area. He focused his brief comments on the value of bringing people together to identify their common interests with the goal of creating a cohesive vision for the landscape and an implementable plan.

Bob Bugert, Executive Director of CDLT introduced the conveners and their basic objectives for the planning process. He allowed everyone to introduce themselves.

Mike Kaputa, Director of the Department of Natural Resources showed a couple of PowerPoint slides depicting maps from the Stemilt/Squilchuk Community Vision to demonstrate that the current project is essentially the third in a series of planning process in Chelan County. In addition, he showed how GIS can identify priority lands that meet community needs. Bob followed up with a short description of the Wenatchee Foothills Community Strategy emphasizing how useful it has been to the partners and other entities. He mentioned that over \$8 million was raised privately to implement the recommendations for conservation in the Foothills area.

Bob introduced the Project Management Team for the UWCLP: Mickey Fleming, Pete Hill, and Sandra Tassel, a consultant to TPL who will be facilitating the public portions of the project, and also Mike Kaputa and himself.

Project Scope and Process

TPL’s consultant, Sandra Tassel, provided an overview of the project.

- Upper Wenatchee Community Lands Plan **description and scope:**
- Public vision development, mapping and implementation (like other 2 plans)
- Cashmere to Stevens Pass
- 3 subareas: Nason/Coulter, Blewett/Peshastin and Chumstick (showed on a map)
- as in other examples, broad citizen engagement and input is key
- Inspired by approximately 50,000 acres possibly in play (about 38,000 in these 3 areas), but is a thorough investigation into local goals for whole planning area
- Together, identify priority places and properties

➤ **Process** – - 16 mos. from start to finish

Step 1) Gather insight from stakeholders about local land-related values

- The kick off was portrayed as the start of that work
- The results of the meeting are essential to the success of the project
- Public outreach and meetings in subareas, possibly end of February
- Review list of “values”

Step 2) Translate those values into “goals and criteria”

- Mapable information, used to create GIS model
- Model identifies specific places, public and private, that are key for retaining values
- Committee will review, test model
- Refine

Step 3) Create GIS model

- Committee will review and test
- Refine

Step 4) Create maps and prioritization

- Committee will review and test
- Refine

Step 5) Developing action plan

- Tool box of methods to achieve goals and address threats
- Could include voluntary conservation
- Take advantage of opportunities
- Voluntary land management recommendation
- Committee will lead action plan development

Step 6) Final report and maps

- Tool for community action
- Final review by committee

➤ **Role of Committee**

- Leaders and advisors
- Ideas, insights and information
- Connections: geographic, social and professional
- Help convene 3 subarea meetings
- Meet 3 more times, over course of year
- Be face of effort

Sandy acknowledged that the participants did not realize that they were viewed as the core of a Steering Committee. Expressed hope that they would all accept the leadership role.

Mickey Fleming, Project Manager from CDLT described some specific objectives of the project, and gave examples that led into the small group breakout sessions.

Small Group discussion

Sandy explained objective and exercise. Divided participants into 3 groups, each with a facilitator/ recorder. There were two questions that participants were asked to answer:

The landscape that is most important to me and my community is ____ because _____.

What would success of the Upper Wenatchee Community Lands Plan look like? What should its objectives be?

Each person was given a sheet of paper with these questions. They took 5 minutes to think about and respond in writing before the group discussions.

In the attached summary of responses, the participants' written answers are combined with the input from the small groups and the discussion.

Themes from small group discussions

Although there is a variety of subthemes and nuances, some clear values surfaced. They are listed below. (For a more complete understanding of the spectrum of ideas, please refer to the attachment.) It would not be appropriate to conclude that the list below is exhaustive or fully representative of the values of all the stakeholders in the Upper Wenatchee basin. As was noted several times during the meeting, in several different contexts, the attendees did not represent all the important stakeholder groups. It is critical that the project have the benefit of the land-based values of the other interests, including more landowners, business, motorized recreation, development, and city/town government. y.

➤ **Starting list of values for use in the model**

- **Healthy forests** that are a renewable and sustainable resource which can be part of the county's future economy
- Pattern of land ownership that is conducive to **consistent management of forests**
- **Reduced fuel loads** in areas at high risk of catastrophic wildfire
- **Water quantity** sufficient to serve the needs of residents and businesses; orchards in particular
- **Clean water** for human uses and to serve other species
- **Protected and restored habitat** for fish and wildlife, especially for endangered species including salmonids
- Preservation of **corridors for wildlife's** seasonal movements

- Assured future **access to recreation** resources (understood generally to mean trails) which are used throughout the year by residents and visitors
- Land available for constructing the types of **housing** needed to attract and retain new residents, particularly those who work in service businesses

➤ **Other key issues associated with the project**

- Ensuring broad public participation and input
- Addressing unique needs of the three sub-areas
- Respecting private property rights
- Creating an implementable plan with the backing of citizens and electeds alike
- Obtaining upfront commitments from government agencies that control majority of local land
- Reinvigorating a timber-based element of the economy
- Weyerhaeuser owns most of the land that impacts success of the plan, but we don't know the company's direction or motivations
- Need for funding to implement recommendations, especially if acquisition is involved
- Desire to influence how private lands are managed (particularly forests)
- Want to keep working lands working

After the three small groups' facilitators reported on the key topics raised in their groups, it was clear that some of the attendees would have additional thoughts after having time to contemplate the questions.

Mickey Fleming will circulate these notes and the attachments to everyone and solicit additional input.

Technical Advisory Team and Current Conditions

Sandy asked participants to think about individuals who would be good choices for the Technical Advisory Team (TAT). The TAT will help the Steering Committee gather data that can be used to help map the goals that result from the public goal setting workshops. She asked for suggestions to be sent to Mickey.

Also she described the types of reports, articles, data or other information that would be the basis for the Current Conditions Report. Mike's staff will develop an ftp upload page at the County's website to make it easy for committee members to provide materials.

Outreach and sub-area public workshops

Mickey explained that there would be public meetings in each of the sub-areas to learn what the larger community values in the project area's landscape. She appealed to the participants for their assistance in reaching their friends, family,

colleagues and other local leaders. The workshops are likely to be held in late February.

Mike and Mickey delineated some of the ways for disseminating information about the planning process and encouraged the meeting participants to offer other ideas.

It is important that the survey which is supposed to be available online and in a print version be ready before the subarea meetings.

The conveners anticipate a full schedule of presentations at existing meetings of irrigation districts, service clubs and other community organizations over the coming months.

We distributed the one-page description of the project and promised to provide a pdf of this document to everyone who attended the meeting. We encouraged them to forward the pdf to anyone that might want to get involved.

Conclusion

Mike wrapped up the meeting by thanking everyone and asking them to continue their participation as the project goes forward. He reminded the attendees to think about other individuals who would be good additions to the committee.

Next Steps

- Sandy to word process notes and create this summary
- Mickey to circulate it to attendees, together with the one-pager and a contact list
- Mike and his staff to set up a project page on the county website and an ftp site
- Conveners will have a conference call with Kelley Hart to review roles and responsibilities. The survey will also be an important topic of that call.
- A conference call to plan the subarea public meetings was scheduled for 10AM on Thursday, February 12th.