

Lake Chelan Collaborative Meeting Summary

DECEMBER 3, 2025

CHELAN FIRE STATION, 232 E WAPATO AVENUE + CALL-IN OPTION

Attendees:

In person: Dan Haller (Aspect); Mike Kaputa (CCNRD); Elle Robinson (CCNRD); Gretchen Muller (Cascadia); Nate Hough-Snee (Meadow Run); Lucas Lachica (Cascadia CD); Mallory Hirschler (WDFW); Brian Gatson (WDFW); Bret Gardner (Rockwell Pumps); Brian Patterson (Chelan Basin Conservancy); Richard Uhlhorn (All Things Lake Chelan); Clay Patmont (LCRI, Anchor QEA), Phil Long (LCRI), Anna Galipeau (LCRI), Jared England (Manson Growers), Travis Denham (City of Chelan), John Olson (Resident), Tim Hollingsworth (Chelan City Council).

Online attendance: Kelsey Mach (Aspect); Adam Pfleeeger (CCNWB); Amber Brooks (WDFW); Brad Hawkins (BOCC); David Bowen (DOE); Ginger Wireman (DOE); Holly Krake (USFS); Larissa Rohrbach (Anchor QEA); Lisa Dowling (WDFW); Lloyd Stevens (DOE); Mike Kirk (Manson Community Council); Nate Schmidt (WDFW); Nic (Unknown); Patrick Sawyer (CCT); Robin Pittman (Manson Parks and Rec); Sarah Peck (CPUD); Steve Wilkinson (Roses Lake Community); Travis Maitland (WDFW); Rodney Cawston (CCT)

Action Items:

- Provide any additional feedback on issues list or prioritization.

Decisions Made:

- Voted to finalize the Operating Procedures with the caveat that a land acknowledgement will be added.

Agenda Items:

General

The webpage on the County's website will host meeting materials/meeting information:

<https://www.co.chelan.wa.us/natural-resources/pages/watershed-plan-lake-chelan>

[Online SharePoint folder for saving background resources](#)

Agenda Item #1: Watershed Planning Approach Presentation

Kelsey provided an overview of the watershed planning approach, emphasizing the differences between this initiative and the 2012 effort, and explained how the previous plan will inform current work. She walked the group through the planning requirements of the WaterSMART grant program and highlighted key issues identified in the grant. Key elements of the approach include a topic-driven structure for LCC meetings, with each presentation focusing on areas such as data gaps, ongoing activities, recommended projects, critical concerns, and planning goals.

Group Discussion on Planning Horizon

Participants discussed what planning horizon makes most sense for the watershed plan. Suggestions ranged from 5 to 20 years. Several participants emphasized the importance of keeping the plan fresh and relevant through periodic reviews and updates, suggesting a 20-year horizon with updates every 5 years. Others highlighted the benefit of an adaptive, living document that can be adjusted as goals and conditions change, and noted the need to consider the time required for natural resources and ecological changes. It was also suggested to review the 2012 plan to assess what remains relevant and to inform future timelines.

Agenda Item #2: Issue List and Prioritization

The group discussed the 19 “issue” categories (distilled from 59 issues) to identify any questions on those listed and identify any missing issues. Participants noted the issues fall into three main groups: recreation, land, and aquatics. Cultural resources protection was identified as being needed to add to the prioritization list. Education and outreach was noted as a key component of all issue categories.

During the group prioritization, online and in-person participants were each allocated six votes to distribute among the identified issues as they saw fit, whether voting for multiple issues or concentrating all six votes on one issue.

The group’s discussion noted that some of the issues, such as protecting cultural resources, might be more straightforward to address, while others like managing land use changes would require more complex solutions.

There was discussion of how some issues might be combined (such as forest management impacts and forest fire prevention, waterfowl populations and nutrient loading, recreational impacts with trash accumulation) and then grouped together into broader categories.

There was emphasis about the need for long term water supply planning in the basin.

There was discussion of how PFAS may not be a major issue in the lake currently based on existing sampling, but that the City of Chelan noticed turbidity levels at treatment plant have gone up and they assume it’s related to forest fire.

It was noted that Chelan County is due for its GMA plan update this year which may provide an opportunity to address some land use planning considerations, although it’s last minute.

The results of the prioritization were as follows:

Category	Total Votes
AIS proactive management and control	24
Wapato Basin (Lake Chelan) Nutrient loading and nearshore algal accumulations	20
Long term water supply planning/Water quantity (including conservation and drought mitigation)	18
Fish habitat restoration	16
Forest fire prevention and management (including water quality impacts)	15

Fish populations - Bull Trout Reintroduction, Kokanee, land locked Chinook	12
Recreational access	11
Land use change management (generally)	10
DDT and relic toxics in fish from ongoing agricultural drainage	10
Recreational impacts (BTEX, wave generation, noise)	9
Microplastics and emerging toxics (e.g. PFAS)	8
Trash accumulation	8
Lake stratification/Lake dynamics/Lake water temperature	7
Forestry management impacts to lake water quality	7
Water fowl populations and pathogens (e.g. swimmers itch)	7
Roses Lake nutrient loading and nearshore algal accumulations	6
Holden Mine compensatory habitat restoration opportunities (Railroad Creek)	6
ESA Listed or Other Species/ Reintroduction (Western Gray Squirrels, Beavers)	4
Cultural resources impact	3
Other	2
Irrigation district consolidation	1

Agenda Item #3: LCC Group Action: Adopt Operating Principles

The LLC Group voted to formally adopt the suggested edits with future language acknowledging the Tsillan Tribe historical inhabitation and current presence in the valley.

Agenda Item #4: Technical Presentation on Water Quality (DDT and Nutrient Loading)

Clay Patmont's Technical Presentation focused on Lake Chelan water quality issues, with a focus on DDT and nutrient loading. While no additional DDT is being introduced in the basin, existing DDT in the soil is leaching into the lake. The primary contributor to DDT leaching and nutrient loading into the lake is irrigation from orchards. Clay discussed a DDT study that is underway to better understand and map DDT sources (estimated 10-15,000 acres of orchard) and confirm the hypothesis that DDT is still leaching into Lake Chelan. Findings will be presented at the next LCC meeting. Additionally, a periphyton study is underway which should be complete before the next LCC meeting in early 2026.

A potential solution is constructed wetlands which uptake DDT and nutrients before they are able to enter the lake. There is a need to identify source parcels and work with landowners to develop projects. While a smaller scale constructed wetland study in the Manson Lakes area showed success, a key data gap is the effectiveness of these constructed wetlands at a larger scale.

Other potential solutions to address DDT and nutrient load management into the lake include improved irrigation efficiency measures. There was also mention of an "Ag Waste Round Up" similar to what was completed in Okanogan, which could be hosted by WA AG "to get the drums out of the back shed". There was discussion around setting goals related to DDT, and that it makes sense to wait to set goals until the ongoing studies are complete. It may make sense since the Ecology standards are "aspirational", to consider more realistic goals set by the LCC.

Agenda Item #5: Wrap Up & Timely Topics

Review of 2025. Phil provided an update and recap of the 2025 monitoring efforts conducted under the Lake Chelan Long-term Monitoring Program, and presented the proposed 2026 LCRI work plan. The group voted to approve 2026 plan.

Upcoming Meeting Date:

Date: Wednesday, March 11, 2026

Time: 1-4 PM

Location: TBD + Call-In Option