

ECB Stormwater Subcommittee Meeting Summary

March 22, 2011

Master Builders Association Housing Center

ECB Stormwater Subcommittee Members:

Sam Anderson (MBA), Fred Jarrett (King County), Josh Baldi (Ecology), Allison Butcher (MBA), Linda Berry-Maraist (North Central Action Area/Poulsbo City Council), Naki Stevens (DNR), Dave Peeler (People for Puget Sound), Jeanne Burbridge (city of Federal Way) and Dan Wrye (South Puget Sound Action Area).

Observers and Guests:

Joanna Richey (King County), Pam Bissonnette (Bissonnette Environmental Solutions, LLC), Bruce Wulkan (PSP), Joan Lee (Parametrix), Lincoln Loehr (Stoel Rives), Rob Dudra (Pierce Co.), Tom Putnam (Puget Soundkeepers Alliance), Susan Saffery (city of Seattle), Grant Nelson (AWB), Mel Oleson (Boeing), Mike Cummings (PSRC) and Ken Miller (city of Federal Way).

Target Setting Related to Stormwater

Bruce Wulkan gave an update on the Puget Sound Partnership's effort to develop candidate objectives for assessing harm from stormwater runoff in the built environment. Bruce has convened a group of stormwater specialists to develop these candidate objectives. This effort is part of the target setting exercise that the Partnership is undertaking this year. March 23 is the deadline for submitting a technical memo on this topic internally, and the memo will be posted on Partnership's website by Friday, March 25.

Bruce then outlined the process that is being planned to solicit public input on the candidate objectives for stormwater (and those being developed by other pressure reduction groups), including three stakeholder workshops to be held April 14, 18 and 19. All of this is moving toward a June 17 deadline for the Leadership Council to adopt targets for a dashboard of indicators and the new pressure reduction objectives.

Bruce provided an electronic version of a document listing all the key dates related to this effort for distribution to the Stormwater Subcommittee and interested parties email lists.

Draft Stormwater Vision for Puget Sound

Pam Bissonnette provided an overview of the agriculture/rural and forestry sections of the Draft Stormwater Vision for Puget Sound and sought feedback from the group. Following is a summary of just a few of the comments raised during the discussion:

- Appendix A – “Planning Processes capable of implementing the Puget Sound Action Agenda” should not be limited to state-approved plans and should not be construed to mean state approval is required when it comes to carrying out the Action Agenda. There are other plans; these are just some that the state has a role in.

- The ag piece could be considered the weakest in the Draft Vision due to a lack of quantifiable information about funding.
- The ag section does not adequately address what some consider to be a large gap in livestock waste management in the state.
- One suggestion for increasing investment in stormwater management is to eliminate the existing forest lands exemption from local SWM fees.
- In the section dealing with “Protection of Sensitive Lands,” the proposal to tap into the unused capacity of the REET would be a politically challenging one to implement, although there would be benefits to pursuing as well.

Next Steps

Dan Wrye reviewed his “Strawdog Discussion Starter” document and expressed his hope that the subcommittee will submit some recommendations to the ECB around stormwater funding that can ultimately be sent to the Leadership Council.

In his view, this document should validate the Urban Stormwater Runoff Preliminary Needs Assessment, recognize the current state of the economy while still advancing a timeframe that meets the 2020 goal, boldly recommend funding for stormwater, elevate the target for cost-sharing between local, state and federal government and propose efficiency and effectiveness recommendations that could lead to reducing costs.

Following is a summary of some of the comments made during the discussion:

- Where possible, this document should use more general language as opposed to providing too many specifics, especially given the short timeframe for turning it around.
- We need to make sure that all plans local jurisdictions have for addressing stormwater are consistent with the Action Agenda as a criteria for providing additional funding, so that we are taking an integrated approach.
- With regard to the 2020 deadline, we need to be mindful of the political realities/challenges of getting legislative approval for additional funding. Also, can the Partnership successfully convince people it’s the right thing to do? Just how far can we really get by 2020?
- In some locales, operations and maintenance may be the best and most efficient use of funds, but for others, retrofitting makes the most sense.

After a discussion of next steps, the subcommittee decided to revise Dan’s document so that it’s acceptable to the group and to transmit it as a report, along with the Draft Stormwater Vision for Puget Sound, to the full ECB at its April 1 meeting.