

Walla Walla Watershed Management Partnership

Water Resource Panel Meeting Minutes

Date: November 17, 2009

Time: 2:00PM–4:00PM

Location: WWCC Water and Environmental Center, 500 Tausick Way, Walla Walla, WA

Present: Gerald Anhorn, Tanner Boone, Bob Bower, Amanda Cronin, Greg Farrens, Jace Greiner, Gary James, Judith Johnson, Victoria Leuba, Kay Mead, Jack Myrick, Bill Neve, Matt Rajnus, Cathy Schaeffer, Jonathon Thompson, Brian Wolcott.

Minutes: The WRP was updated on the passage of a Project Plan for Water Banking, and the timeline for approval of the Local Water Plan and Water Banking guidelines (January 5, 2010) by the Partnership Board was discussed. The WRP proceeded to comment on draft versions of guidelines for Local Water Plans and Water Banking.

Consensus Recommendations:

- Adopting baseline water use criteria that are identical to Ecology’s or do not consider historical use are not preferable.
- The determination of baseline water use needs to:
 - Determine the facts, i.e. “wet” water.
 - Be mindful of the divergence between duty listed on paper rights and actual use.
 - Be more flexible than current Ecology guidelines
- Further develop options for determining baseline water use that: shorten the “look-back” period to 5-15 years.
- Determining how best to measure and monitor success will be key aspects of successful Local Water Plans.
- We cannot assume that instream flows are static, based on a number of factors they are likely declining, ergo we may not be able to show a rise in flows at gauges.