

Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership Technical and Future Implementation Funding Strategy

Introduction

This document sets forth key elements of a funding strategy for the Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership (Partnership). It outlines a pathway for funding development to support future technical work and potential project implementation. To-date, the majority of Partnership funds have been provided through Steering Group agencies and the Corps of Engineers through their Section 536 Feasibility Study. This level of funding has allowed current levels of Partnership planning activity to sustain itself and provide for the development a Work Program. As elements of the Work Program move forward, a large portion of the Partnership's success will be tied to its ability to secure additional funds.

This document is intended for the Steering Group, Partnership and other interested citizens who wish to understand how the Partnership proposes to secure funding for future technical work and management alternative implementation. It is hoped that those who read it can provide feedback and additional ideas for how this goal can be achieved.

Strategy Elements

Below are components of the funding strategy that will be worked on concurrently throughout the year. Elements include, solidifying the Partnerships technical strategy to develop a clear funding request, forming and developing relationships with the legislature and other partners to create a unified support network on behalf of the Partnership, and applying for applicable grant programs.

Solidify Technical Strategy and Project Objectives

Background

Currently the Technical Group and Partnership are underway with identifying Vancouver Lake's technical information needs and outlining a technical strategy. By solidifying this strategy and identifying critical technical projects that require funding, the Partnership can develop a clear statement of what they request funding for. This step is essential for a successful legislative or grant request process because a politician or granting agency will be less likely to spend money on a project without knowing exactly what that money will buy. In addition to developing the technical strategy, the Partnership will need to define its priorities for Vancouver Lake to help inform the technical studies.

Next Steps

- 1) Develop a technical strategy for the Partnership by evaluating technical questions posed and collected by the Partnership. In this way, the Technical Group will identify studies to be implemented that will help answer the Partnership's most urgent questions. Examples of potential future studies include water and sediment quality monitoring, fish sampling, or hydraulics modeling.
- 2) Develop Partnership objectives that will help inform technical studies. Currently the Partnership's vision is very broad. The Partnership needs to refine its vision and identify objectives they wish technical studies to help inform.
- 3) Begin to identify potential management alternatives and research their potential cost of implementation. By learning about potential management alternatives, the Partnership can begin to educate themselves on the different possibilities and outcomes available for Vancouver Lake. Management alternative implementation efforts could range in scale from small volunteer plantings, to large scale construction projects with federal involvement. Such projects would require a significant local funding match and such alternatives need to be identified so that large scale funding can be secured.

Legislature

Background

The 2008 60-day Legislative session convened on Monday, January 14 and adjourned on Thursday, March 13. Steps to secure funding for Vancouver Lake during this supplemental year were made by the project management team. In late 2007 a budget request was drafted with help from the Steering Group, and contact was made with Steering Group agency lobbyists to discuss how to best approach the state legislature. The agency lobbyists recommended several legislators from the 49th district and in February 2008, the project manager and technical lead went to Olympia to meet with Representatives Fromhold and Moeller and Senator Pridemore. Results from this effort are pending but whatever the outcome, the stage has been set for a scaled up legislative lobbying effort

Next Steps

- 1) Reconnect with Steering Group agency lobbyists for feedback about the 2008 session. Discuss legislative approaches for 2009-2011 biennium.
- 2) Meet and build relationships with local government and elected officials (i.e. city, county, port). By communicating the needs of Vancouver Lake and providing officials with information on Vancouver Lake and the 22 member Partnership, they will be better positioned to generate support on behalf of the Partnership through their own avenues. By fall of 2008 a unified message can be brought from the region to the state legislature. Potential officials to be in touch with over the next year can be seen in Table 1.
- 3) Meet with state legislators and the Governor's office in Olympia to address the goal of securing a line item in the House, Senate and Governor's 2009-2011 biennial budgets. Coordinate meetings between Steering Group members and legislators to exemplify regional support.
- 4) Work with the PIO group and Partnership to develop approaches for garnering public interest and support. Develop pathways for Partnership members and general public to express their support. Continue to work with local partners within Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation and WSU Clark County Extension to stay informed about the local volunteer base. Conduct outreach with local interest groups to develop relationships and educate them about the project. Learn from their experiences raising funds and implementing projects in the area (if applicable).

Grants

Background

The Department of Ecology administers three sources of competitive funding for water quality projects through the annual funding cycle: the Centennial Clean Water Grant and Loan Program, the Section 319 Nonpoint Source Program, and the Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund. The state Legislature appropriates funds for the Centennial and Revolving Fund programs through the capital budget and the Section 319 program through Ecology's operating budget. In addition to the water quality grants, Ecology also administers a Freshwater Algae Control Grant Program. This program provides funding for projects dealing with the problems caused by freshwater algae such as blue-green algae.

In fall 2007 grant proposals were submitted on behalf of the Partnership to Ecology's Centennial Clean Water Program and the Freshwater Algae Control program. Unfortunately neither request was successful.

Next Steps

- 1) Continue to revise and resubmit grant proposals. Despite the unsuccessful result of the previous grant cycle, the Partnership was able get a foot in the door with each program. It is important that

the Partnership work with the feedback received and continue to develop better proposals for the next funding cycle.

- 2) Interact with the Ecology programs staff that administer these programs. Developing relationships with program staff to help increase their awareness of Vancouver Lake and hopefully increase the projects' chances for success. Contacts for the programs are listed in Table 2.
- 3) Staff from the Department of Ecology southwest region currently involved with Vancouver Lake includes Iloba Odum - Regional Director, and Tonnie Cummings – TMDL Lead, Water Quality Program. Arrange discussions with them about how to raise awareness regarding Vancouver Lake within the Department of Ecology.

Table 1. Federal, State and Local contacts		
Federal Contacts		
U.S. Representative	Brian Baird	3 rd District
U.S. Senators	Maria Cantwell	
	Patty Murray	
Environmental Protection Agency	Elin D. Miller	Region 10 Administrator
	Tom Eaton	Washington Office
Army Corps of Engineers	Col. Thomas E. O'Donovan	Portland District Commander
	Robert E. Willis	Chief, Environmental Resources Branch
State Contacts		
Governor's Office	Jim Jacks	Southwest Washington
Local State Representatives	Bill Fromhold	49th District
	Jim Moeller	49th District
	Jaime Herrera	18th District
	Ed Orcutt	18th District
	Deb Wallace	17th District
Local State Senators	Craig Pridemore	49th District
	Joseph Zarelli	18th District
Department of Ecology	Position Open, Sally Toteff, acting	Southwest Regional Director
	Dave Peeler	Water Quality Program Manager
	Garin Schrieve	Southwest Water Quality
Department of Fish and Wildlife	Guy Norman	Regional Director
Washington State University, Vancouver	Hal Dengerink	Chancellor
Local Contacts		
Clark County Commissioners	Betty Sue Morris	District 1
	Marc Boldt	District 2
	Steve Stuart	District 3
Mayor, City of Vancouver	Royce Pollard	
City Council, Vancouver	Pat Jollota,	Larry Smith
	Tim Leavitt	Jeanne E. Stewart
	Jeanne Harris	Pat Campbell
Mayor, City of Ridgefield	Ron Onslow	
City Council, City of Ridgefield	David Taylor	Matt Swindell
	Lee Wells	Darren Wertz

Public and Interest Group Contacts		
Friends of the Vancouver Public Library		
Fruit Valley Neighborhood Association		
Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership		
Salmon Creek Watershed Council		
Ducks Unlimited		
Washington Waterfowl Association		
LooWit Sierra Club		
Vancouver Audubon Society		
Vancouver Wildlife League		
Friends of Ridgefield Wildlife Reserve		
Friends of Clark County		
Columbia Riverkeeper		
Watershed Stewards	Jennifer Naas	

Table 2. Funding Opportunities			
Funding Opportunity	Description	Contact	Opening/ Closing Date
Freshwater Algae Control Program Grant	Provides financial and technical assistance to prevent and control excessive and freshwater algae growth.	Joan Clark (360) 407-6570 jcla461@ecy.wa.gov	Oct 1 / Nov 1
Centennial Clean Water Program Grant	Provides grants for water quality improvement projects, stormwater control projects, sanitary/sewer projects and planning projects.	Jeff Nejedly 360-407-6566 jne461@ect.wa.gov	Sep 1 / Oct 31
Centennial Clean Water Program Loans	Provides loans for water quality improvement projects, stormwater control projects, sanitary/sewer projects and planning projects.	Jeff Nejedly 360-407-6566 jne461@ect.wa.gov	Sep 1 / Oct 31
Section 319 Grants	Nonpoint activity projects that meet state and federal criteria	Jeff Nejedly 360-407-6566 jne461@ect.wa.gov	Sep 1 / Oct 31
Pollution Control State Revolving Fund Loan Program	Loans for programs similar to that of the Centennial Program	Brian Howard 360-407-6510	Sep 1 / Oct 31