

Technical Group Members Present:

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| Jessi Belston | Port of Vancouver |
| Tonnie Cummings | WA Department of Ecology |
| Ted Labbe | WA Department of Fish and Wildlife |
| Thom McConathy | Partnership Member |
| Dorie Sutton | City of Vancouver |
| Jeff Schnabel | Clark County Public Works |

Project Management Team:

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| Phil Trask | PC Trask & Associates, Inc. |
| Sabrina Litton | PC Trask & Associates, Inc. |

General Tech Group Meeting Business

Phil Trask welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. He welcomed a new member to the group from Washington Department of Natural Resources, Ted Labbe. The group went around the table and introduced themselves. Phil provided an overview of the Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership and the Technical Group. He described the need for and purpose of the Technical Foundation document and how it had been developed.

Prior to today's meeting a second draft of the Technical Foundation document had been sent out to the group. This second draft incorporated thoughts from the previous Technical Group meeting and written comments from individual members. Phil asked the group for general feedback. Is the document reading the way it should be?

Several members said that the document was reading smoother now and several of the difficult technical concepts had been better described. The document is less confusing and had moved in the right direction. Phil noted that Ted is a perfect test case for the document. Being unfamiliar to the project until recently, was he able to read the document and understand the Lake and its general problems? Ted noted that yes, he thought the document was a good overview and that he could follow along.

Phil said that they have established a technical foundation for the Partnership through this document. Now it is time to clarify the studies outlined in Chapter 5. The Technical Group has done an excellent job bringing the information in this document from abstract to more concrete. However it is time to bring the studies into better resolution by adding more detail and being strategic about an approach.

Phil noted that there are several ways to do this. One way is to hire someone with specific expertise to spell out what a particular study, for example a nutrient budget or fish survey, would look like. This person/team could also help guide a Request for Proposals (RFP) process when soliciting potential contractors to perform the study. Another way to get expertise could be to conduct an RFP and request consultants to respond with how they would conduct a study, what their qualifications are, and how much it would cost. Phil asked the group for responses to these ideas.

One Technical Group member commented that it is unlikely Technical Group members can work full time on Vancouver Lake and devote the expertise that is needed. Bringing in a lake management expert to focus on this next step is a good idea. It was also noted that several experts might be needed because the study areas are diverse and it might be difficult to find someone well versed in all of these areas. The US Geological Survey (USGS) was mentioned as a good research entity that could possibly help frame technical studies. It was agreed they had excellent expertise and that their science is well respected.

Another member asked at what level do we bring a lake consultant in? And do we spread out resources and move forward in the six main study areas, or do we focus on two or three areas? Maybe there is a need to prioritize.

A good discussion among Technical Group members resulted about technical priorities. Thom said that the top four from Table 5-8 would be most important; water balance, nutrients, sediment, and food web. Tonnie thought a water balance is important because it will also relate to nutrients. Dorie agreed and commented that water, nutrients and sediment are all related. The planktonic food web is already under investigation by WSU. Fish, wildlife and habitat could be next. Toxics are distinct and could be added on separately later on. Jessi also saw the top four as being important.

Jeff noted from his perspective, fish are an important area to study. He told the group that we don't know anything about them and they could end up being a main driver for what we want to protect and what's possible from a management perspective. Will Vancouver Lake provide habitat for warmwater or coldwater fisheries? It could also affect potential funding sources. From his perspective, nutrients are less of a priority because from what he has seen of existing data, nutrient levels spike during the summer when water inputs are low, and during the same periods as algae. This points to lake sediment as a likely nutrient source at this time of the year. It was noted by another member that this might be true, but this is a hypothesis that needs to be proved and supported by research. Another member noted that fish might be a separate issue altogether. How will they deal with non-local contaminated fish?

Phil told the group that different technical studies will be funded through different sources of money. The important part will be to manage those angles and sell the appropriate study to the correct source. Thom asked about the Department of Fish and Wildlife; he noted that they have equipment to conduct fish sampling that could provide useful information. It was noted that it will be a difficult budget environment over the next couple of years and extra staff time will be difficult to come by.

Phil provided some background to the group on some funding strategy elements. He said this year the Partnership will be submitting to the Centennial Clean Water Grant Program, the Freshwater Algae Grant Program as well as working with the legislature directly. It was discussed by the group that perhaps the technical strategy is different than a funding strategy. Prioritizing the technical studies might not be worthwhile when specific projects will sell better to different funding sources. It was agreed by all that the six study headings outlined in Chapter 5 and summarized in Table 5-8 are important, that's why they are there in the first place. Choosing which one to move forward with next will depend on the funding source or if one study area is dependent on results from another.

Discussion returned to the studies and if they needed to be broken down further before being handed to an expert. Should a consultant be brought in now or later? Phil said they would return to this discussion at a later point but that it was good to start thinking about it. It was also noted that hiring a consultant with certain specialties will not deliver a silver bullet to complex Vancouver Lake issues.

Dorie mentioned that this level of detail for the technical studies might not need to be further described in the Technical Foundation document. It might be a good idea to just polish it up with some concluding remarks that encompass some of the discussion today and then work on a separate document that incorporates study details and a funding strategy. Phil agreed this was a good idea.

Sabrina said that any final comments or edits to the document should be submitted by Friday August 15th. The document will then accommodate these last revisions and be sent to the Steering Group for review. Phil thanked everyone for coming and for the good discussion today.