

Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership
Work Plan
July 1, 2007- December 31, 2009

Introduction

This plan sets forth the key work plan elements for the Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership and Project Manager during the remainder of 2007 and for the following two years. It is divided into two parts: the first spanning July 1, 2007-December 31, 2007 - the remaining extent of the Project Manager's current contract, and the second from January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2009 - a potential work plan time period for the Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership (Partnership). Major plan elements include refining the Partnership vision, establishing goals and objectives, identifying data gaps in the available research, developing solutions to address key data gaps, building and maintaining relationships, and growing available project funding. These tasks could be addressed in a comprehensive Vancouver Lake Watershed Management Plan.

Background

The Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership formed in 2004 to bring local, state and federal agencies with jurisdiction over and interest in Vancouver Lake together with citizens to explore issues and a vision for the future of Vancouver Lake. It is a vital regional resource that fulfills a variety of purposes including recreational activities (boating, bird watching, hiking, hunting) and environmental functions (wildlife habitat, wetlands, flood control). Some identified issues affecting Vancouver lake include but are not limited to: blue-green algal blooms, water quality, hydrology and siltation. In May 2007 a Project Manager was hired to assist in the facilitation, planning, and management of Partnership efforts to address these issues.

Work Plan Elements

July 1, 2007 – December 31, 2007

The following Work Plan elements encompass the current contract period for the Project Manager and give an overview of the tasks being worked on for the duration of the contract period. The numbering of elements below does not indicate prioritization.

1. **USACE Coordination** – As the USACE proceeds with the Feasibility Study the project manager will work collaboratively with the Corps to ensure that communication continues between the Corps and the Partnership. The scope of the Feasibility Study will be interpreted so that redundancies are avoided between research efforts.
2. **Partnership Decision Making and Housekeeping** – The Partnership is guided by a Charge and Protocols document created in January of 2005 as well as an intergovernmental agreement between the Port of Vancouver, City of Vancouver, Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation, and Clark County signed in late 2006. This work item will involve building upon these documents and identifying areas that may need additional structure (e.g. Steering Group decision making process). Other housekeeping items will be addressed such as membership and meeting frequency.
3. **Interact with Capitol and Moses Lake Projects** – Capitol and Moses Lake are both regional shallow lakes that share similar traits to Vancouver Lake. Research, planning and restoration activities with these two lakes are at different points in their development. This work item would involve becoming familiar with their efforts and reporting back to the Partnership about their progress, approach and solutions.

At Capitol lake, water quality and sedimentation are key management issues. It is on the Department of Ecology's list of impaired water bodies for fecal coliform bacteria and phosphorus and is currently closed to swimming. In 1995 an initial lake management plan was developed and in 1997 an interagency taskforce was created to develop a long-term lake management

plan. A 10-year plan was created in 2003 to address recreational, habitat, and water quality objectives.

Moses Lake is a warm, shallow water lake surrounded by predominantly urban land use. The Department of Ecology has conducted multiple studies including a shoreline characterization within the City of Moses Lake, and a TMDL groundwater study. This work has helped the City describe existing conditions and explore opportunities for conservation and restoration of ecological functions.

4. **2007-09 Legislative Supplemental Budget Process** – The state of Washington budgets on a biennial basis with the most recent legislative budget approved this past June. Second year or supplemental spending and adjustments to the budget will be made when the legislature convenes in January of 2008. This work plan element explores how the Partnership might secure funding through the supplemental budget process to help finance its local match with the Corps or to support additional research and planning.
5. **Refine and Prioritize Questions** – At past Partnership meetings, members have identified a wide range of questions and issues regarding Vancouver Lake. This list of questions will be continuously tracked, organized, refined and prioritized to help guide the refinement of the vision, and development of goals and objective. The Partnership will use this list to make sure all issues are tracked, help identify data gaps in current and past research efforts, and to help guide management decisions as to where restoration efforts are most needed.
6. **Work Plan Development** – This document will guide Partnership efforts for the next two years by identifying Partnership priorities and setting a course for their implementation. Elements listed below represent a first draft of the workplan.

Work Plan Elements

January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2009

The following Work Plan elements encompass a two-year period for the Partnership and outline the responsibilities and tasks to be accomplished for this time period. The numbering of elements below does not indicate prioritization.

1. **Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Strategies** – These activities will consist of multiple steps to help move the Partnership forward in a planning process that will explain: 1) Where do we want to go? and 2) How do we get there?

Vision: Currently the Partnership has an unrestrained vision for the future of Vancouver Lake. It describes the desired future condition for Vancouver Lake in terms of common ideals for the lake. The vision is abstract and will help steer Partnership efforts and provide guidance for developing goals and objectives for future actions. Some refining of the vision is needed as the Partnership sets their priorities.

Goals and Objectives: To move forward in attaining their vision, the Partnership will need to set goals and objectives, and prioritize actions for Vancouver Lake. The goals and objectives will be informed by the current technical studies, priorities, feasibility and cost.

Strategy: Strategies will be developed to accomplish objectives. Economic, social, political and technical feasibility will be taken into account when evaluating strategies.

2. **Technical Study Gap Analysis** – Assess existing data at Vancouver Lake relative to prioritized Partnership questions to identify data gaps. This would involve tracking progress and findings of current research projects throughout 2008-09, and working closely with the Partnership, Technical Group, Steering Group or other Ad-hoc committees to prioritize questions and identify gaps.

3. **Unresolved Topic Resolution** – Unresolved topics and questions will continue to emerge from the Partnership and include concerns such as the impacts of illegal dumping to the status of city and county septic tank elimination. This inventory of questions and topics will be continuously tracked, organized, refined and prioritized by the Partnership to best determine if they should be part of the plan. This might include directing topics not related to the Partnership vision to other forums or responsible entities.
4. **Coordinate Additional Studies (If Required)** – By conducting a technical study gap analysis and tracking unresolved topics raised by the Partnership, additional studies may be required and need management.
5. **Vancouver Lake Watershed Plan** – As the Steering Group and Partnership move through the work plan elements described above, a detailed Vancouver Lake Watershed Plan could be developed to guide restoration efforts at Vancouver Lake. This would build upon current technical work as well as previous studies conducted on the lake and take on a 10-20 year planning horizon.

Development of the Vancouver Lake Watershed Plan could include the following tasks:

- a. Develop a technical basis for the plan.
 - b. Develop goals and objectives guided by the vision to quantify and describe the degree to which conditions will be improved.
 - c. Outline strategies, funding approaches, timelines and milestones for achieving the various recommendations and actions listed in the watershed plan, including water quality, recreation, and habitat elements.
 - d. Develop a cost estimate for action implementation.
 - e. Develop a monitoring and project evaluation program that will address action effectiveness, status, critical uncertainties and provide a foundation for an adaptive management process.
 - f. Develop a long-term maintenance and operations plan to protect the investment.
6. **Relationship with USACE** – Funding for the Corps Feasibility Study is from the Section 536 water resource program and has a limited scope (focused on fish habitat) and limited budget. While the Feasibility Study is an important step forward, a larger more comprehensive General Investigation study may be needed to more fully address lake water quality issues. The Partnership will need to coordinate with the Corps, Congressional members, and others to ensure progress toward implementation of a General Investigation study.
 7. **Develop Additional Funding Opportunities** – Although the majority of funds are provided through Steering Group Members, this is only seed money and implementation success of future restoration efforts will be tied to the Partnership's ability to secure additional funding sources. Additional funding sources could include grant opportunities and legislative appropriations.
 8. **Communicate with Public and Agencies** – This work plan element will be on-going throughout the planning period. Increased visibility and public engagement will be key to cultivating new funding sources. Keeping citizens, agencies, and interest groups engaged in the planning process will help maintain momentum through implementation of the project.
 9. **Administration**
 - Partnership
 - Steering Group
 - Technical Group
 - Ad-hoc Committees