

Building Cities in the Rain  
Working Group  
November 13, 2014  
Meeting Summary

Participants: Larry Schaffner, Thurston County (by phone); Erika Harris, Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC); Bruce Wulkan, Puget Sound Partnership; Bob Vadas, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (by phone); Andy Rheame, City of Redmond; Phyllis Varner, City of Bellevue; De'Sean Quinn, South Central LIO; Doug Navetski, King County; Lorna Mauren, City of Tacoma (by phone); Dan Gariepy, Department of Ecology (Ecology); Heather Trim, Futurewise; John Palmer, EPA; and Heather Ballash and Anthony Boscolo, Department of Commerce.

Presentation and discussion

The draft agenda was revised at the meeting to include a presentation by Dan Gariepy from the Department of Ecology. Dan covered the part of the presentation given by Ed O'Brien at the recent Municipal Stormwater Conference in Puyallup. See slides 10 – 18 in [Using an Ecological Recovery Approach to Stormwater Permit Regulations](#).

At the beginning of the presentation, there was a request for information regarding the permit authority for a stormwater control transfer program. The permit authority for a stormwater control transfer program is in the permit in Appendix 1, Section 7 pertaining to Basin/Watershed Planning. It must include an environmental lift to be approved. There was a question about the public process for adoption of a watershed plan. The response was that it is at the local level, including the SEPA process. But Ecology must approve it. There was a question about Ecology's approval process. Redmond's watershed plan was not a permit modification. Ecology does alternative flow control measures without a permit modification. The Minimum Requirements are not modified by this approach, only the geographic implementation to higher priority watersheds. However, the WSDOT program was included in WSDOT's stormwater permit and its Ecology-approved *Highway Runoff Manual*. Heather Trim noted for the group that Jan Hasselman with EarthJustice is concerned about the work the group is doing. He has sent her some detailed concerns that she will be sharing with Ecology. John Palmer with EPA is also meeting with Jan to talk about the project.

Under a stormwater control transfer program, some stormwater treatment obligations from replaced surfaces in lower priority watersheds can be transferred to higher priority watersheds. This transfer program could be aligned with the Building Cities in the Rain goal of supporting growth in an urban core when an urban area is located in a lower environmental priority watershed. The Ecology guidance will identify which elements of stormwater control are appropriate to transfer. The development community has expressed more concerns with meeting onsite flow control than water quality requirements. The group suggested that the Ecology prioritization guidance may just want to focus on transfers of flow control. There will be a public process for review of the prioritization guidance developed by this group. There was a request that Ecology use this group to review their guidance.

If the proposed development increases the surfaces that need to be mitigated, controls to existing conditions (i.e., pre-project conditions) must be dealt with on site. Controls for the difference between existing conditions and the pre-development conditions required by the permit may be transferred to another site. This effort does not change the requirements, it simply allows the obligation to be transferred to a different location. Having a control transfer program does not provide an exemption from new stormwater requirements in the future. Stormwater Facilities designed to receive the

obligations transferred from the proposed development project must be constructed prior to that project being constructed. Runoff Treatment transfers must be addressed with care, since there are several different levels of obligations. For instance, a *Basic* treatment (i.e., TSS) receiving facility cannot be used to accept a transfer from a project that requires *enhanced* treatment (i.e., dissolved metals). Some treatments cannot be transferred, such as oil treatment.

The goal of this effort is to transfer the environmental lift required of replaced surfaces in development from one watershed to another high environmental priority watershed. Also, this will accelerate the environmental lift because it will be focused on the high environmental priority watersheds. Under the current system of treating/controlling runoff from new development and/or redevelopment at each individual site, the lift is provided over a larger area and it will take longer to see an environmental benefit.

#### Scope of Guidance

The group continued its discussion of the scope of the guidance. The group agreed to reorganize the elements on the wall (from the last meeting – see [meeting summary for October 27, 2014](#)) into the following five buckets (see Heather Ballash's attached attempt to organize all of the topics into these buckets):

1. Overview – why are we doing this – why prioritizing watersheds, multiple regulatory benefits, and restoration/protection/community objectives.
2. Public Process
3. Sending Areas
4. Receiving Waters
5. Implementation Issues (May include monitoring, and may be beyond the scope of work for this group)

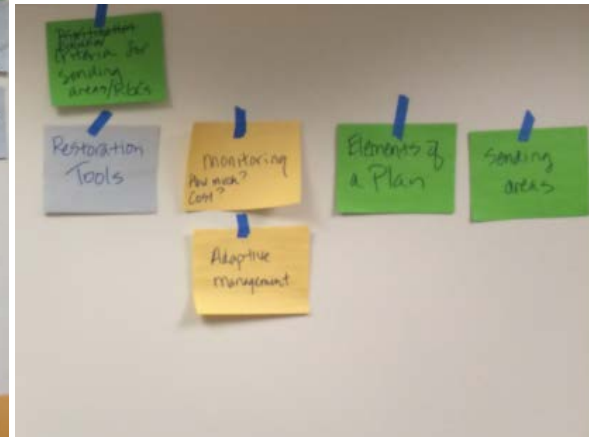
Heather Ballash will take a stab at drafting the Overview chapter for the group's review. The group wants to work on prioritization of the Receiving Waters in the next meeting.

#### Next meeting:

- Thursday, December 11, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., City of Tacoma Central Wastewater Treatment Facility Visitor Center, Tacoma

**SEE NEXT PAGE FOR PHOTOGRAPH OF GROUP'S WORK ON THE WALL**

The group made a few additions per the photographs below.



These are tough to see at normal size. But if you select View and then Zoom it to 250%, it will make it big enough for you to read.