

## Scatter Creek Aquifer – Septic System Management Project

Purpose: To make sure water in the Scatter Creek Aquifer is safe to drink now and in the future.

**Citizen's Committee notes:** May 7, 2014, 6:15-8:15 pm *approved 6/4/14*  
Rochester School District Board Room; 10140 Highway 12 SW, Rochester, WA 98579

**Attending:** Sandra Adix, Gene Weaver, Tom Budsberg, Maureen Pretell, Roger Max, Lowell Deguise, Bruce Morgan, Art Starry (staff). **Facilitator:** Jane Mountjoy-Venning (staff). **Note taker:** Kateri Wimsett (staff). **Absent:** Chanele Holbrook, Marlene Hampton, Scott Schimelfenig, Dave Defoe.

### Introductions

**Agenda review and approval:** approved

### Approve April notes:

Two changes noted. Change “??” Deguise to Kathy Deguise. Change in section on Tenino Wastewater Treatment/Reclaimed Water Plant: bullet #4 to read:

“The Tenino facility is not currently designed to accept septage, which is the waste from pumping septic tanks. To do so, it would be a tough challenge. The engineering plan would need to include changes and construction would be needed to receive and process septage.”

Additionally a question was raised about bullet #4 under Model Scenario Results, Points raised in discussion. This bullet states, “Nadine -The model is predicting very accurately. The real world data has higher nitrate levels than the model, as older sources of nitrate contamination flushes through the system. She predicts in several years the nitrate levels are more likely to closely match scenario 3/5.” Is this true? What does “several years” mean? TCPHSS staff will check in with Nadine about this statement.

**Other housekeeping: None**

**Report on any community input, questions, etc.**

### April community workshop debrief:

**Summary of feedback from green forms:** Please see next draft of notes in June.

### Comment, feedback heard at the tables

- Concern raised that the numbers given at the meeting were not the newest (March) numbers that show the numbers going down.
- Concern that there is a hidden agenda by the county and the Thurston County Board of Health (BOH) already has a pre-determined course for this project.
- Concern about the possibility of sewers or another water system and that all will be forced to hook up.
- Concern about the expense of any possible solution.

- Concern about the impact of any solutions on the people and the community.
- Importance of getting communication out accurately and in a timely manner about this project.
- Does this grant mean you have to create new regulations? Importance of understanding the citizen advisory role in the process vs. BOH role

#### **What worked, what needs improvement?**

- Some unhappy with the format. Did not like having to wait until the end to ask questions. Also did not like having to write the questions down.
- Problems with being able to hear. Next time use two cordless mikes that RMS has.
- Folks did not like the timed stations. Felt forced.
- Many folks left after presentations, did not want to participate in round table exercise or maybe they just came to be updated on the information?
- Possibly focus next time on what is not going to happen: you won't be forced onto sewer, etc.

Committee had questions about their role in crafting forthcoming recommendations. Art Starry explained that the BOH does value the community process taking place. The ultimate decision lies with the BOH and Dr. Wood the Thurston County Health Officer. The BOH's broad mission is to protect the public health. Committee member responded that this committee is made up of a broad range of people, experiences, and opinion. The committee does not have a pre-determined outcome. It has been working well together to look at the whole spectrum of the issue.

#### **Decision: Agree upon water quality issues, concerns and opportunities that they committee recommendations will address:**

- Have the County consider speed/ direction of aquifer when siting wells and septic systems
- Offer a reasonable way to upgrade septic systems or wells when that is needed.  
Incentives not subsidies
- Consider the fees involved in permitting and the geology of aquifer along with the zones where the problems seems more significant
- Re-evaluate clustering
- Increased and ongoing well monitoring
- Run-off
- Look at zoning set asides because of the geology of the area
- Consider different types of septic systems that could be required in in certain areas if additional treatment is needed
- Look at what is already in regulation for these issues
- Look at private information already being gathered; and other water data that is accessible
- Well monitoring of all wells willing to do so
- Do Outreach/Education to Real Estate, Developers, Builders about current standards
- More education to public on upkeep and responsibilities that come with septic systems and wells along with alternative options for septic systems.

**Decision: Agree upon decision-making process for timeline for developing draft recommendations.**

- Committee approved the above list as a place to start working with.

Timeline for process is as follows:

Grant ends - December 2014

Recommendations done - September 2014

Community Workshop to review recommendations - September 2014

Review feedback from Community workshop- October 2014

Board of Health presentation – November-December 2014

Committee may decide to meet twice per month for the next few months or do a longer retreat format. We will discuss as we approach those dates.

**Public Comment:** none

**Wrap up:** Next meeting – June 4, 2014-6:15 PM, Rochester School District Board Room