

Bob Wheeler has more than 35 years of experience in project management, meeting facilitation, and public outreach. He has developed creative and innovative approaches to meet the needs of clients and communities throughout Washington State and elsewhere, and has an excellent track record of facilitating the resolution of difficult issues and building consensus with durable solutions.

An engineer by training, Bob combines a broad understanding of the policy and technical aspects of complex problems with extraordinary people skills and an unusual ability to communicate effectively with policy-makers and the public.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

US Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution
Water Environment Federation Member
American Water Works Association
American Water Resources Association
Association for Conflict Resolution

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

M.S., Civil Engineering, 1977, University of New Hampshire

B.S., Civil Engineering, 1974, University of New Hampshire

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

“Multi-Party Online Dispute Resolution”, International UN Forum on Online Dispute Resolution, Victoria, B.C., Canada, June 18, 2008

“Observations on the State of WA Watershed Management Planning Process”, AWRA National Convention, Seattle, WA, November 10, 2005.

“Unique Triple-Waste Composting Facility Saves Money”, Public Works Journal, February 1995.

Selected Project Experience

National Park Overflight Advisory Group Facilitation, 2008 –

Ongoing: Initially selected to design and facilitate a strategic planning session for the National Park Overflight Advisory Committee (NPOAG), Bob’s work was extended to facilitate all NPOAG live and conference call meetings. The Advisory Group was established through the Air Tour Management Act of 2000 and is co-chaired by the National Park Service and the Federal Aviation Administration. Its purpose is to advise the agencies on air tour management plans over National Parks. Members represent air, environmental, and Tribal interests. Bob’s facilitation has enabled the Advisory Committee to agree on goals and objectives and to develop a work plan – all of which are “firsts” for the Advisory Group in its eight years of existence. Bob now facilitates the group as they provide advice and input to the NPS and FAA on park air tour overflights.

Facilitation of the Federal Advisory Committee on Detection and Quantitation Approaches and Uses in Clean Water Act Programs,

2005 – 2008: Bob served as lead facilitator for this consensus-based stakeholder process involving states, industry, public utilities, environmental laboratories, the environmental community and EPA. The Committee was tasked with making recommendations to EPA on the determination of a procedure for detection and quantitation in analytical environmental laboratory testing and the uses of such a procedure. Bob was responsible for coordinating these multi-stakeholder interest group meetings using in-person, teleconference, and real time online review techniques. Bob facilitated ten multi-day Committee meetings in Washington, DC as well as three full Committee teleconference meetings. Additionally, Bob facilitated over 120 teleconference meetings of technical and policy work groups. Bob facilitated preparation of the Committee’s final report, which was submitted to the EPA Administrator in December 2007.

Bob presented a final process report to senior EPA policy staff. EPA is presently moving forward into a rulemaking process using the FACA Committee’s report and recommendations for what is included in the new rule. At the end of the process, an EPA staffer who had been heavily involved throughout the process thanked Triangle “for making our 30 months of deliberations a pleasant, productive, propitious and educational process not only on the topic of Detection & Quantitation Approaches and Uses, but also an upper level course in conflict resolution best practices.”

Facilitation of the Lake Ozette Sockeye Salmon Recovery Plan, 2006 –

Ongoing: Bob provides strategic advice to NOAA Fisheries on stakeholder involvement and facilitates Lake Ozette Steering Committee and public meetings to get input on the Plan and its implementation. He was responsible for the design and production of a highly visual executive summary of the Draft Plan for the lay reader that is seen as a model for the future.

Selected Project Experience, continued

Facilitation of Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary Management Plan Review, 2007 – 2009: Bob provided strategic advice and facilitation services for the beginning efforts of the Sanctuary's first Management Plan Review (MPR) process. Initial tasks included the design and facilitation of meetings of the Intergovernmental Policy Council to enable the four treaty tribes on the Olympic Coast and the State of Washington to identify their priority topics for MPR. Bob helped design and completed the facilitation of a highly-successful two-day prioritization process involving the Sanctuary's Advisory Council. The effort has been able to move forward without additional assistance based on the solid start.

Facilitation of EPA Tribal Water Quality Standards Project, 2007 – 2008: Bob co-facilitated a pilot process for EPA involving the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes to build a working relationship for water quality standards development as the Tribes proceeded through the application process for "Treatment in the Same Manner as a State" under the Clean Water Act. Through this process, the Tribes, State, and EPA were able to reach agreement on the basic water quality standards proposed by the Tribes and developed cooperation and communication protocols for future interactions.

EPA Aquifer Storage and Recovery – "Experts Meeting", 2009: Bob was hired to facilitate a group of 45 experts from EPA, both from headquarters and the regions, other federal agencies, states, local governments, and other stakeholders in plenary discussions and breakout groups providing information and input to EPA on ASR projects and programs. The meeting represented both how projects are developed and regulated as well as what role EPA should play in ASR efforts. The results of this successful meeting are being used by EPA as they develop a program for more active EPA involvement in ASR efforts.

Watershed Plan Development, 2001 – 2008: Bob has designed the planning and decision making processes, and facilitated four watershed planning processes in Western Washington. He recently completed work with an Instream Flow Work Group on an Eastern Washington Watershed Plan in developing technical studies and an in-stream flow approach and recommendations for the watershed. Bob was responsible for organizing, facilitating, and developing strategies for reaching agreement on watershed approaches to water quantity, quality, habitat and in-stream flow. Stakeholders included tribes, city, county, state and federal governments, businesses, environmental perspectives, timber companies and private property interests.

Facilitation of a Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan for the State of Oregon, 2004-2005: Bob designed and facilitated a Stakeholder Advisory Committee that included a variety of business, resource user, local government, environmental, and other interests charged with providing policy direction on the creation of a state-wide wildlife conservation strategy. Bob's facilitation of monthly meetings and frequent communication with individual stakeholders was instrumental in helping the Committee reach agreement on key recommendations to ODFW. The strategy was approved by the ODFW Commission and by the US Fish and Wildlife Service which complimented the strategy as one of the top two strategies among all 50 states.

Port Hadlock, 2005 – Ongoing: As part of the requirements for establishing an Urban Growth Area (UGA), Jefferson County is developing a Sewer Facility Plan that will define a preferred sewer system alternative, cost estimate, and financing strategies. Bob and Triangle staff developed a public involvement plan and implemented that plan to help the County engage the public in the controversial sewer planning process. Bob developed the approach for and facilitated a stakeholders group that provided recommendations on treatment and disposal preferences, including the use of an infiltration system for treated effluent to augment low stream flows for a creek system that is used by endangered chum salmon.

Selected Project Experience, continued

Facilitation of King County's Regional Infiltration/Inflow Control Program, 2000 – 2004: Bob designed and facilitated a collaborative process involving King County and 34 Local Agencies that discharge to the County's treatment system to assess the extent of I/I in the system and to reach agreement on a cost-effective program to remove it. He also managed production of the Alternatives/Options paper that served as the basis for the I/I Control Program the County approved in 2005.

Thornton Creek Summit, 2008: Seattle Public Utilities selected Bob to design the agenda and facilitate a day-long meeting involving residents along Thornton Creek which had flooded in December 2007, causing property damage. In advance of the event, Bob provided strategic advice to the project team, developed ground rules for the event, and advised presenters on how to respond if they received hostile questions and comments. Bob facilitated the meeting, moving smoothly between the major segments of the meeting and capturing public comments on flip charts. After the meeting, Bob also offered additional advice to the City on steps to consider as follow-up actions. Both participants and the City considered the meeting a successful event.

Previous Work Experience

Public Works Director, City of Port Townsend, WA, 1990 – 2000:

- Administered and managed Public Works Department for Port Townsend, including supervision of a department of 40 employees.
- Responsible for watershed protection, water, wastewater, stormwater, transportation, parks, recreation, equipment rental, solid waste, facilities, budget, financial studies and rate setting.
- Successfully facilitated, mediated, and negotiated planning, design and construction of watershed, wastewater, water, storm water, parks, and transportation facilities.
- Responsible for public involvement of an active community on a wide range of capital projects that resulted in well-received projects with public support.
- Led negotiations with regulatory agencies, including Washington Departments of Ecology, Health, DNR, and Transportation as well as with the National Forest Service and Tribal governments.
- Obtained substantial grants and loans from numerous agencies for several planning, design, and construction projects, resulting in substantial cost savings for the community.

Assistant Director Public Works/Utilities, Boulder, CO, 1981 – 1990:

- Administered and managed Boulder's watershed, water, wastewater, stormwater, and hydroelectric utilities, and supervised 120 employees.
- Directed long-term planning for utilities and acted as prime interface with policy makers in determining policy direction.
- Provided oversight on utility maintenance, capital improvements, and utility finance administration, including rate and fee setting.
- Managed budget of over \$8,000,000 and a capital program of up to \$23,000,000.
- Led or was part of team that negotiated wastewater discharge permits, electric franchise agreement, cogeneration power sale to electric utility, Superfund site settlement and water rights issues.
- Worked with an active community in reaching consensus on many utility projects and programs, including facility location, design, and construction. Delivered presentations to City Council, numerous boards,