

For those of you who were unable to attend our informal meeting on [Sept 11th](#), and to refresh the minds of those in attendance, I've put together my recollections of the meeting:

- Donna W., Bill, Ken, Anne, Donna R. and Tracy attended
- There was general agreement that the work of the CLSS has been successful to date and should be continued
- Bill updated us on his plans for lake level monitoring
- Tracy updated on work accomplished to date (see interim report for the CVLCF attached)
- Ken suggested working towards sustainability - eventually having full time coordinator like LWA does. Discussed feasibility. Also discussed hiring a full time student for next summer.
- Anne and Donna W volunteered to help research and apply for grants associated with above.

Since then I have talked to Kirsten and her replacement with LWA - Megan, about the feasibility of having a full-time coordinator for CLSS. Kirsten warned away from such an approach, as the LWA's are constantly challenged with finding grants to fund their coordinator. Kirsten indicated grants are more readily available for "projects" and equipment but less so for administrative/salary type needs. She said it was unlikely that the Ambassadors would be successful in obtaining enough grants to pay Megan for full time work for a full year. Kirsten indicated Megan might be available on a contract basis to CLSS and saw no potential conflict with LWA's needs. Kirsten also reminded me of the Columbia Headwaters Watershed Group model and its potential for collaboration between groups like LWA and CLSS.

With the above logistical problems in mind, perhaps we would be best served to consider a watershed model with one full-time coordinator serving the needs of several individual organizations - LWA, CLSS and CWSP (Columbia Wetlands Stewardship Partners). LWA, CLSS and CWSP will still represent their own needs and have their own Board while participating in the "watershed group". This will improve some efficiencies, but not take away from the autonomy of the smaller groups that will still look to their own sub-region needs. The benefits of this approach as I see them are:

- avoid duplication of work on water related tasks
- apply for funding through one source avoiding conflicting funding applications for limited funds
- less of a drain on volunteer time and effort
- region specific concerns could and should still be dealt with via subcommittees within the Columbia Headwaters Watershed Group
- autonomy of specific groups like CLSS would not have to be surrendered
- sharing of office space and costs associated - utilities, computer equipment

For an example of how the capacity could be built for a watershed group to begin with (one person - Megan, understanding the big picture and working on behalf of projects at a bigger regional scale):

Megan, working for the Columbia Headwaters Watershed group, consults with individual groups to determine upcoming planned summer projects within the Columbia Basin. She determines the number of hours required for such projects, and puts together a work plan for summer student/s. She then applies for funding based on the determined need and hires/supervises such students for the 2015 summer, with consultation and input from specific groups like CLSS on their specific projects.

I am meeting with Kirsten and Megan this week to further discuss these ideas. Megan has also invited us to share our thoughts with the LWA's at their next board meeting

on [October 22nd](#). Perhaps we - the CLSS- should attempt to get together before [Oct 22nd](#) to discuss this in further detail as a group?

I welcome your thoughts and suggestions.

Post meeting Comments: LWA met Oct 15th and TF pitched the idea of collaboration. LWA board is interested but requires more info. Meeting set with Terri and Ron Nov4th. CVLCF applications submitted separately but with language of cooperation between LWA and CLSS throughout.