

MINUTES

McKenzie Watershed Council
Eugene Water & Electric Board Training Room

February 10, 2005
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Emily Rice (Bureau of Land Management), Facilitator; Chris Pryor (City of Eugene), Mike McDowell (Weyerhaeuser), John Simpson, (Eugene Water & Electric Board), Faye Stewart (Lane County), Douglas Brooke (Hynix Semiconductor), Bob Bumstead (McKenzie Flyfishers), Kurt Cox (McKenzie Schools), Mary Allison (McKenzie River Ranger District), Pat Gripp (McKenzie Residents Association); Diane Albino (Mohawk Watershed Partnership), Gene Highfill (McKenzie River Guides Association), Joe Moll (McKenzie River Trust), Douglass Moser (At-large Stakeholder), Will Bondioli (for Ralph Perkins; East Lane Soil & Water Conservation District), Erik Petersen (Army Corps of Engineers), Charlene Phipps (McKenzie Residents Association), Michael Kerrick (At-Large Stakeholder), John Woodrow (Springfield City Council), Jeff Ziller (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife), Council partners.

Megan Finnessy, Juan Welsh, Kate Ferschweiler, Council Coordinators

Chuck Davis, Springfield Utility Board; Chuck Gottfried, City of Springfield; Karl Morgenstern, Mike McCann, Eugene Water & Electric Board; Jared Waybright, Mohawk Watershed Partnership; Glen Miller, Department of Agriculture; Jodi Lemmer, East Lane Soil and Water Conservation District; Galen Phipps, McKenzie River Trust; Ramon Rivera, MRRD, David Rodriguez, CMZ Project; Carol Ach, Nancy Holzhauser, Phyllis Highfill, guests.

1. REVIEW AGENDA AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ms. Rice welcomed Council Partners to the meeting of the McKenzie Watershed Council (MWC) to order, and invited introductions. Partners and guests introduced themselves.

2. FURTHER DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF DECISIONS MADE AT LAST MEETING

Ms. Rice noted that the Council had approved the minutes of the last meeting as a decision item, and determined there was no objection to the decision by Council Partners.

Ms. Finnessy noted that Mr. Moll's name was misspelled on page 3 of the January 13, 2005, minutes.

Jeff Ziller noted a correction for the upcoming American Fisheries Society meeting (next "month" not "week", page 2).

There were no other corrections to the minutes.

Members indicated acceptance of the amended January minutes showing consensus level 3.

3. SHORT ANNOUNCEMENTS/PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Pryor said that he was happy to be a new member of the Council representing the City of Eugene. He noted that he was employed by Willamalane Parks and Recreation District, which owned two properties bordering on Cedar Creek.

Mr. Moll, the new representative of the McKenzie River Trust, said he came to Eugene from Helena, Montana, where he worked as a fund raiser for The Nature Conservancy and had also worked with the State on its grizzly bear management program.

Mr. Phipps, the former trust representative, reported on the recent tree planting involving the Council and McKenzie River Trust the previous weekend, saying that staff had done a great job and all participants had a good time.

Mr. Petersen reported that the Army Corps of Engineers had made a commitment to reprioritize internally and fund the Fern Ridge Dam repairs using \$40 million from other projects around the United States. He hoped to see the project completed in 2005 with the reservoir being refilled in 2006. He acknowledged that schedule was optimistic.

Mr. Stewart reported that the Board of County Commissioners would discuss the Simmonds Creek culvert replacement project again on February 16.

Mr. McDowell said he was a member of Weyerhaeuser's Lane County Community Council, reaffirmed at its last meeting that its Partnerships with the McKenzie Watershed Council and Mohawk Watershed Partnerships were two of its strategic relationships.

Mr. Cox said that Seneca Lumber had donated a track system to McKenzie High School. Volunteers were needed to plant trees and perform other tasks at the site on February 12th at 10 a.m. Ms. Finnessy asked Mr. Cox to check into the status of the National Forest Foundation Grant intended to support restoration and planting around the track.

Mr. Ziller reported that a flow issue was beginning to emerge in the basin, and a flow coordination meeting of different agencies was scheduled for the following week to look at the water year now and in the future, and to project reservoir conditions for the spring.

Mr. Bondioli said that the East Lane Soil and Water Conservation District was providing soil sampling services in affiliation with Sure Crop at a cost of \$35 per sample.

Ms. Rice reported that Mary and Mark D'Aversa of the Bureau of Land Management were moving to Cody, Wyoming.

Mr. Simpson reported that the Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB) commissioners had recently approved a \$5,500 grant to update the electrical system at the Leaburg Library in Partnership with the Lions Club.

Ms. Rice called for public comment.

David Rodriguez updated the Council on a pilot project he proposed to conduct, which was a channel migration zone (CMZ) analysis of the Thurston meander, which he lived near. He recalled the erosion that occurred near the meander the previous year and said he believed that the proposed PeaceHealth hospital location was on a similar meander. He hoped to convince Lane County to be at the forefront of the CMZ effort.

Karl Morgenstern of EWEB reported that EWEB had received a grant to conduct a non-point source pollutant study in the watershed. He indicated that he would be contacting Council Partners about potential sources of such pollutants. The examination would start at the EWEB intake and go up the river. Ms. Rice asked about the time frame for the project. Mr. Morgenstern indicated the project was a multi-year project. It would commence in March or early April with some stakeholder meetings to introduce the project, and then staff would be in the field to begin sampling in May or June.

Ramon Rivera (US Forest Service – McKenzie River Ranger District) reported that a decision notice had been issued for two projects that would be done in Partnership with EWEB. They included gravel supplementation in the Carmen spawning channel, and the placement of brush bundles in Trailhead Reservoir. He anticipated the projects would be implemented in July.

John Simpson, responding to a question from Ms. Gripp, said he did not know the exact date of the Leaburg Lake raise but thought it would occur before the end of March. EWEB was keeping residents informed. The raise would occur within an eight-hour period so that EWEB could determine the “sweet spot” for the correct flow.

Ms. Rice called for a brief meeting break.

4. WEED CONTROL ISSUES IN THE MCKENZIE WATERSHED

Glen Miller of the Oregon Department of Agriculture and Jodi Lemmer of the East Lane Soil and Water Conservation District joined the Council for the item. Mr. Miller provided an overview of invasive plants of the McKenzie Watershed. He discussed false brome, which was an increasing problem; Japanese knotweed, a long-time invasive weed in Oregon; the broom family, which was also a long-term invasive weed that was unlikely to be eradicated, English ivy, and the knapweed family. He discussed eradication methods, noting that an integrated approach that incorporated the use herbicides, hand removal, and biocontrols was the most effective. Members asked questions clarifying the details of the presentation.

Mr. Miller emphasized that invasive weeds were an increasing problem in Oregon and public education was a key element to overcoming it. He said one problem was that property owners had little time to deal with such weeds on their properties and those individuals had not been targeted due to the smaller return on the investment. He said he had thought about something like a Weed Field Day, but was still working to organize the event.

Ms. Lemmer provided the Council with copies of a brochure entitled *Knotweeds in Oregon: A Growing Problem*. She discussed the Lost Creek Watershed Knotweed Control Project, which had as its objective the elimination of knotweed in that watershed using herbicides. It was envisioned to be a multi-year effort emphasizing outreach to property owners. She shared slides illustrating the project area, showing affected sites and the method used to inject knotweed with herbicides. Members asked questions clarifying the details of the presentation.

Ms. Lemmer emphasized the importance of timing the treatment correctly or the treatment would not be effective. In this case, treatment for knotweed occurred on September 9-17. She said that following treatment, native vegetation was being established in the treated areas. Ms. Lemmer reported that 28 property owners had participated in the project and a total of 8.1 acres along Lost Creek were inventoried and treated. She emphasized the importance of monitoring sites following treatment.

Mr. Bumstead asked if knotweed was becoming more resistant to herbicides. Ms. Lemmer said not yet, but she would know more after the treated area was re-inventoried.

Council Partners briefly discussed the use of herbicides and the potential such herbicides could reach the river. Ms. Lemmer indicated that injection method allowed for more targeted application of such chemicals. The district employed Aqua Master and Rodeo in its treatment methods. Mr. Miller acknowledged there was some evidence that herbicides could move out of the root system but he had not seen such movement past one foot. He hoped the inventors would consider that and work to modify the product.

Ms. Rice called for a brief break. Following the break, Ms. Rice called the Council's attention to its common values, mission, and vision, which were posted on an easel in the meeting room.

5. WEED CONTROL ISSUES

Ms. Ferschweiler informed Council Partners that the Council had received a small grant from the Ferguson Foundation for basic weed control and education, and Council Coordinators were seeking direction from the Council on how to spend that money. Council Partners discussed possible next steps, including establishing a project similar to the Lost Creek project.

Mr. Miller emphasized the importance of resident education about such things as inappropriate nursery plants and recommended the Council take "baby" steps and commit to any weed control project for the long-term to avoid upsetting people. He also recommended that the Council focus on areas of importance to it in the watershed and forget about trying to control such species as broom. He suggested the Council focus its efforts on knotweed and consider inventorying knotweed in the watershed to become aware of the extent of the problem and then decide how to proceed. He indicated that the coordinator of the Upper Willamette Cooperative Weed Management Area had some funding to underwrite the cost of weed surveys.

Ms. Ferschweiler suggested the potential of the Council going to Cascade RC&D for money to fund the inventory and reserving the Ferguson Foundation money for another purpose.

Mr. Gottfried observed that the City of Springfield was finishing work on "wanted posters" showing the ten most critical invasive species and suggested that could be part of a Council outreach and education program to schools and land managers.

Ms. Lemmer said there was some danger in getting landowners excited about invasive species to the degree that they overreacted and removed noninvasive species, applied herbicides inappropriately, or inadvertently spread an invasive species through improper removal. It was almost as important to tell people what not to do as it was to tell them what to do.

Mr. Ziller asked if the Department of Agriculture maintained a database of knotweed locations. Mr. Miller said yes. Mr. Ziller suggested that the Council could identify the location of knotweed in the watershed and add to the department's database to get a better sense of its spread. Mr. Miller indicated that GPS points could be downloaded into the program database, and said the information gathered by the Council could be valuable.

Responding to a question from Mr. Moll, Mr. Miller said the State did not require funding from landowners for invasive species removal. Mr. Moll suggested that requesting a matching amount from the landowner would assure a long-term buy in from the individual in question. Mr. Miller said the State was not having a problem with property owner buy-in, and funds were not a problem given the widespread availability of grants. He recommended the Council take an approach that was persistent, small, and doable.

Ms. Allison reported that the chief of the Forest Service had recognized invasive species as one of four major threats to the nation's forests. The Pacific Northwest region of the Forest Service had drafted an Environmental Impact Statement to provide the service with clear direction on how to treat and prevent invasive species.

Due to the time, Ms. Rice moved the meeting on to the next agenda item.

6. PROGRAM UPDATES

Ms. Ferschweiler reported that the first meeting of the Education Committee was scheduled for March 16 at a location to be announced from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Mr. Welsh provided the update on the Projects Committee, noting it had recently held a productive meeting. Members had examined Council Benchmarks. He thanked members of the Project Committee for their work.

Mr. Welsh reported that riparian plantings had been occurring since November and contractors had been able to plant on 30 different days because of the good weather. He noted the Council's recent collaborative project with the McKenzie River Trust planting cottonwood poles on Green Island. He said there was a good turnout for the planting, and thanked participants. Mr. Welsh said he hoped to get three culvert projects done over the summer, including the Simmonds Creek project, which the Lane Board of County Commissioners had declined to approve on January 16 pending further discussion because of concerns about the County's cost of the project.

Mr. Simpson thanked Mr. Welsh for his recent presentation to the EWEB commissioners.

Ms. Rice reported that the Executive Committee was meeting with the Finance Committee on February 22. She said the Executive Committee had approved using a remit letter as a new fund raising approach. The remit letter would be included in the next Council newsletter.

Ms. Rice anticipated that at its next meeting the Executive Committee would work on the Council's two community recognition awards and forward its nominations to the full Council for consideration at the next meeting.

Ms. Rice reminded the Council that it had agreed it was not going to hold an open house in Leaburg this year, but had agreed that if the Forest Service held such an open house the Council would participate to demonstrate its Partnership with the agency.

Ms. Rice reported that Ms. Finnessy was engaged to be married in fall 2005. Council Partners offered Ms. Finnessy their congratulations.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

Ms. Finnessy provided the administrative update, reporting that the Business Plan was moving along, and she had received some very beneficial input from EWEB Commissioner Ron Farmer. She also thanked Mr. Woodrow and Mr. Phipps for their work with the plan.

Ms. Finnessy called the Council's attention to the timeline included in the packet for the Willamette Restoration Priorities Project, and reported that the effort was intended to build upon on the Willamette Subbasin Plan. The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board would use the information to prioritize its restoration funding.

Ms. Finnessy said she attended a meeting the previous day regarding a community wildfire protection plan. Several agencies were represented, including EWEB, Forest Service and the McKenzie and Mohawk Fire Districts. A grant proposal was being developed to underwrite the costs of the plan, and the participating agencies had requested a letter of support from the McKenzie Watershed Council. She asked the Council for a show of support, adding she would work with the Executive Committee to draft the letter on behalf of the Council.

Responding to a question from Mr. Cox, Ms. Finnessy said the focus of the plan was on wildfires.

Council Partners showed consensus level 3 for the letter of support for the grant proposal.

Ms. Finnessy called the Council's attention to the first quarterly report for fiscal year 2005, reflected in a budget spreadsheet included in the meeting packet.

Ms. Finnessy called the Council's attention to several upcoming events, including the Crilly Trail vegetation removal project on April 23 at 9 a.m.; "Down by the Riverside," a trail head installation and trail maintenance project at Leaburg Hatchery scheduled for May 21; the annual river clean up, taking place on June 25; and the Adopt-a-Highway clean-up, scheduled for May 7. Kate Ferschweiler also noted that the annual Free Fishing Day was scheduled for June 11.

Ms. Finnessy determined that Council Partners would be satisfied with a presentation on the Cougar Reservoir temperature control project, as opposed to a field trip.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

(Recorded by Kimberly Young)