

MINUTES

McKenzie Watershed Council
Eugene Water & Electric Board Training Room
500 East 4th Avenue—Eugene, Oregon

February 8, 2007
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: John Simpson (Eugene Water & Electric Board), Facilitator; Mary Allison (United States Forest Service) Mike McDowell (Weyerhaeuser), Diana Albino (Mohawk Watershed Partnership), Bob Bumstead, McKenzie Flyfishers, Gene Highfill (McKenzie River Guides), Nancy Holzhauser (at-large stakeholder), Joe Moll (McKenzie River Trust), Douglas Moser (at-large stakeholder), Alan Olander (Hynix Semiconductor), Joe Pishioneri (City of Springfield), Jerry Richeson (Bureau of Land Management), Jeff Ziller (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife), Council Partners; Megan Finnessy, Jared Weybright, Council staff; Ray Rivera, United States Forest Service; Chuck Gottfried, Springfield Utility Board; Gale Banry, Debbie Spresser, Eugene Water & Electric Board; Bill Sullivan, Bureau of Land Management Upper Willamette Resource Area; David Rodriguez, Josh Micheli, guest.

ABSENT: Kurt Cox (McKenzie Schools), Michael Morales (Division of State Lands), Ralph Perkins (East Lane Soil and Water Conservation District), Erik Peterson (Army Corps of Engineers), Faye Stewart (Lane County), Alan Zelenka (City of Eugene), Council Partners.

1. REVIEW AGENDA AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Simpson served as facilitator. He called the meeting of the McKenzie Watershed Council (MWC) to order and reviewed the meeting agenda.

Ms. Finnessy added a letter of support regarding the Cougar trap and haul facility to the agenda.

Because the meeting packet had not been received by many members prior to the meeting, the action items on the agenda were deferred.

Those present introduced themselves. Mr. Richeson introduced Bill O'Sullivan, the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) new field manager for the upper management resource area.

2. DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Action on the December 2006 minutes was deferred to the March meeting.

3. SHORT ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Finnessy reported that John Brown was the new Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB) alternate to the Council, and Alan Zelenka would serve as the City of Eugene's representative at future meetings.

Ms. Finnessy said she attended a recent Springfield Utility Board (SUB) Groundwater Guardians meeting and would schedule a presentation from the group to the Council in the spring about the group's efforts to protect water quality in Springfield, which was dependent on wells for drinking water.

Ms. Finnessy said the At-large stakeholder position had been reopened until February 16, and applications were available at the meeting and due on February 16.

Ms. Finnessy noted the Council had changed its address and that information had been e-mailed to Partners. The new address is PO Box 70166, Eugene OR 97401.

Ms. Finnessy distributed an e-mail from John Moriarty of the Network of Watershed Councils encouraging Partners to contact legislators about the importance of Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) funding. She reminded the Partners that the Council was more dependent on OWEB funding than in the past.

Ms. Finnessy confirmed EWEB and SUB's annual funding contributions to the MWC and thanked both agencies for their continued support.

Ms. Finnessy said the Council received a request from the coordinator of "Forests Today and Forever" requesting volunteers for the Oregon Logging Conference. She said interested Partners could contact her if they wished to volunteer.

Ms. Finnessy circulated a copy of an article from that day's edition of *The Register-Guard* entitled "Claims Spur Watershed Warning" regarding the potential impact of Ballot Measure 37 claims on the McKenzie watershed.

Ms. Finnessy noted that she was a member of the Spring Chinook Recovery Planning Team and said the meetings were open to the public. She would notify Partners of future meeting dates so they could become involved with the Recovery Plan if they wished.

Ms. Finnessy said that OWEB had released its 2005-2007 Biennial Report and copies were available. She reported that the next OWEB meeting would occur in Eugene on March 14-15 and representatives of the agencies and groups working in the upper Willamette basin would make a collaborative presentation on those efforts to the board on March 14 at 3:30 p.m. at a location to be announced. A reception would follow.

Ms. Finnessy said Celia Roberts, a resident of the upper McKenzie, recently passed away and the family had asked that all remembrances in her memory be made to the MWC.

Mr. Simpson read the annual State of the Utility address delivered the previous day by Board President Mel Menegat.

Responding to a question from Mr. Bumstead, Ms. Finnessy said that she would schedule a discussion of EWEB's response to Ballot Measure 37 claims in the watershed on a future agenda.

Mr. McDowell reported that Weyerhaeuser continued to fund the water temperature loggers on the Mohawk River.

Ms. Holzhauser reported that she had been in contact with three other residents of the Horse Creek area who were interested in doing some projects along that waterway.

Mr. Ziller noted the many projects in the upper Willamette Basin reflected in the OWEB report.

Mr. Ziller said the Oregon Chapter of the American Fisheries Society would hold its annual conference in Eugene on March 1-2, 2007. The theme of this year's conference was "Big Fish over Big Dams." He encouraged Partners to go to the website orafs.org for more information. The event was open to the public; however, there was a registration fee.

Mr. Ziller reported on a cooperative project conducted by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and Weyerhaeuser on Mosby Creek, which involved the release of adult salmon into very low water as an experiment to see how little water the salmon needed to spawn. The water flow where the salmon were released was six to seven cfs. Mr. Ziller reported that the 100 salmon released produced 25 redds. Migrant traps had been placed, and trapping indicated that juvenile salmon were now in Mosby Creek. He said that the project was an opportunity to see how much such undammed, unaltered, low-flow streams contributed to the size of the population in the basin, and he found the results encouraging. He said that the project provided information about the potential reintroduction of fish above Dorena.

Mr. Ziller said that the ODFW had recently received the details of the proposed trap and haul facility at Cougar Dam but he had not yet had an opportunity to review them. He said that the ODFW had much input into the design. It would be a large, expensive facility, and he looked forward to seeing how it worked and if the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) incorporated downstream migration into the project.

Mr. Moll said the McKenzie River Trust (MRT) had a tremendous tree planting on Green Island on February 3. More than 38 acres of the northeast island were planted by more than 220 volunteers. He attributed the volunteer turnout to the efforts of the Learning Education Adventure Direction (LEAD) youth program, REI, and the Council. He expected a similar planting would occur next year.

Mr. Moll said the MRT received a Pacific Salmon Commission award grant to fund its project to recreate hydrological connections with the side channels on the northwest side of Green Island closest to the mainstem, and would soon issue a Request for Proposals for hydrologic modeling in association with that project.

Mr. Moll said that MRT lost its director of resources because of a family relocation and was seeking a successor.

Mr. Moll reported that the Trust received a donation of about 40 acres of land in the upper McKenzie along Horse Creek from Jim Drury, who had previously donated an adjacent parcel to the trust.

Mr. Moll noted the upcoming Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, and encouraged Partners to check into the workshops that would be offered on March 2. He noted that Robert Kennedy Jr. would speak at the conference.

Mr. Bumstead said the McKenzie Flyfishers were following the Trailbridge fish ladder situation and was quite pleased with how things appeared to be going.

Mr. Pishioneri noted the potential impact that Ballot Measure 37 claims could have on the watershed. He said that the measure allowed for consideration of health and safety and suggested the Council consider taking a position on the measure before it was too late. He thought it imperative to find out when hearings were held so the Council could offer testimony.

Mr. Pishioneri noted the upcoming Olympic Trails to be held in Eugene at Hayward Field in 2008 and suggested that many of those visiting would be interested in the McKenzie River and watershed, and

recommended some outreach and education be done by the Council to those visitors. Ms. Finnessy concurred.

Mr. Pishioneri reported that the Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission was being sued in federal court for illegal discharges by an organization based in California known as the “Friends of the Rivers,” which had a history of taking such agencies to court and settling out-of-court for large sums. He suggested that the suit could have major repercussions reaching down to the Council and Coburg’s efforts in managing its wastewater.

Ms. Albino suggested that Council should have standing in any Ballot Measure 37 claims.

Mr. O’Sullivan reported that BLM’s Western Oregon Plan Revision was on track and the agency was still accepting public input into the scoping process. He anticipated a draft Environmental Impact Statement and draft plan would be out for a 90-day public review period sometime during summer 2007. He offered to make a presentation to the Council about the plan when the draft was available.

Ms. Allison said she recently signed a decision to move forward with a river enhancement project on the south fork of the McKenzie above Cougar Reservoir. The project would include tipping over trees at the edge of the river and placement of large woody debris in the river using helicopters. She said that funding for the project was in place. She did not think the project would be implemented until 2008 and would be completed over a two-year period.

Ms. Allison reported the McKenzie Ranger District was looking at taking a stewardship approach to project planning in watersheds, which included the formation of a collaborative working group. She had received approval and financial support both from the district and EWEB to hire a facilitator, Marcus Kaufman, for that collaborative process. Ms. Allison hoped to use the McKenzie Watershed Alliance, the nonprofit arm of the Council, to funnel Forest Service and EWEB dollars through to reduce the amount of process required for the hiring process. She believed the Alliance would be very useful in the stewardship planning process. Ms. Allison indicated that part of the funding for the planning process would be revenue from tree sales that remained in the district. She anticipated many Council Partners would be involved and anyone could be involved at anytime. She said that participation in projects would change over time, depending on the project involved.

Mr. Gottfried said that the City of Springfield received its National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System discharge permit on January 26.

Mr. Weybright noted a tree planting on the Mohawk River scheduled for February 10 involving three property owners. He welcomed Council Partners’ assistance with the planting.

4. EUGENE WATER & ELECTRIC BOARD—CARMEN SMITH RELICENSING UPDATE

Gale Banry of EWEB provided a PowerPoint presentation updating the Council on the Carmen Smith Relicensing Project, shared information about the challenges facing EWEB in moving fish through the project area and the details of the solution presented to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in settlement negotiations, which included a fish ladder at Trail Bridge Reservoir. Council Partners asked questions clarifying the details of the project.

Mr. Ziller noted that the license application was on EWEB’s web page for those interested in reviewing all the details.

Mr. Simpson called for a brief meeting break. Mr. Moser left during the break.

Ms. Finnessy readjusted the agenda as Mr. McDowell had to leave early.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

- **Executive Director Hiring Process**

Mr. McDowell said the Hiring Committee reviewed many applications for the position of Executive Director and selected two candidates to interview. One candidate would be interviewed the following day. The other candidate was unable to be interviewed due to a back injury, and the Hiring Committee would decide how to proceed after the interview.

Mr. McDowell left the meeting.

- **Cougar Dam Trap and Haul Facility**

Ms. Finnessy distributed copies of a letter from the Council to the District Engineer of the ACOE regarding the post-authorization change report for Cougar Dam Fish Collection and Transportation Facility. The letter conveyed the Council's support for the post authorization change, which would fund the trap and haul facility. The deadline for comment was February 12, and at the direction of the Executive Committee she had drafted the letter, which was e-mailed to Partners the previous week. She briefly noted some of the input received to this point. Partners accepted the changes suggested.

Mr. Ziller provided some background on the Cougar and Blue River trap and haul facilities. He suggested that the letter include a sentence encouraging the agency to continue to work on solutions to fish passage upstream and downstream of dams within the watershed. There was general concurrence.

Ms. Finnessy observed that much of the wording in the letter was from the Council's *Conservation Strategy*.

COUNCIL PARTNERS SHOWED CONSENSUS LEVEL 3 TO SEND THE LETTER OF SUPPORT TO THE DISTRICT ENGINEER OF THE ACOE.

Ms. Finnessy indicated she would check in with absent Partners before sending the letter.

6. MWC PROGRAM UPDATES

- **Projects**

Mr. Weybright provided an update on projects in progress and projects planned for the spring, and noted maintenance and monitoring activities occurring in the watershed.

Mr. Weybright reported the Parsons Creek culvert would not get done to complications in design and permitting, and it was no longer on Lane County Public Works' schedule of activities for 2007. The funds intended for the project, about \$75,000, would most likely return the funds to BLM for reallocation

7. ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

- **Charter Revision Update**

Ms. Holzhauser said that the Charter Review Task Force, which included Ms. Holzhauser, Mr. McDowell, Mr. Mosher, Mr. Petersen, and Mr. Ziller had met twice to review the Charter and identify potential areas for improvement. She anticipated public input into the Charter revisions. She envisioned a process that included three community meetings in the watershed during which people would be asked what was working well now about the Council, what was important to them, what concerns they had, and how the public could be more involved. She asked the Council for permission for the task force to move forward with development of the community meetings, which would require a facilitator.

Ms. Finnessy outlined a process for scoping the community meeting phase of the public involvement process.

Mr. Moll questioned why the Charter needed so much public input and why a facilitator could not be hired to do outreach and get feedback as part of the Council's annual work plans. If that feedback indicated there was something wrong with the Charter, the Council could respond. He questioned going to the public and asking it what was wrong with the Charter. Ms. Finnessy thought the MWC needed a shakeup, starting with its Charter. She pointed out the MWC was different from other Councils as it had not grown out of a private landowner base as others had. She suggested the Council was lacking that connection to private landowners, and it was beginning to show in regard to funding and a lack of ready-to-go-projects outside the Mohawk. She agreed there was much in the charter that the Council would not want to lose. Mr. Moll recommended that the task force be careful in how it phrased its outreach as it related to the charter, suggesting that it avoid mentioning the Charter specifically.

Mr. Bumstead, a founding member of the Council, agreed that it was different than other Councils in regard to its grassroots connections, but that was in recognition of the complexity of the watershed and importance of the Partners involved. He did not think the Council's prime function was in managing projects but creating synergy between all the players in the basin. He was also concerned about the impact of revising the Charter on hiring of a new Executive Director.

Ms. Finnessy said the Council should be wary of allowing funding to decide its mission. She agreed about the importance of the synergy created by the Council, but pointed out the funding agencies were more interested in tangible things such as projects, which created an issue of long-term sustainability.

Mr. Pishioneri asked if the Council had considered a compensated part-time volunteer coordinator, such as a senior citizen with time to spare. Ms. Finnessy said the Council had considered that but found it was difficult to get funding for such a position.

Ms. Albino said one of the problems the Council faced was a lack of landowners wishing to do projects, and she thought that deserved more attention as it could also be a source of volunteers. She described how projects generated volunteers in the Mohawk Valley. Ms. Finnessy thought it a model to follow.

Mr. Ziller favored having community meetings for the purpose of information gathering.

Ms. Finnessy said she would reconvene the task force after the new Executive Director was hired and involved that individual in a review of the Council's discussion. Task force members concurred.

8. MWC PROGRAM UPDATES

- **McKenzie-Willamette Confluence Steering Committee—Project Evaluation**

Ms. Finnessy said the packet included the final evaluation.

Ms. Finnessy said the Projects Team, Education and Outreach Committee, and McKenzie River Maintenance Partnership met and she would provide minutes of the first two aforementioned meetings to the Council in March. She said the Partnership would meet again in the fall to discuss its future in light of the potential impact of Lane County budget cuts.

9. MWC WATERSHED ALLIANCE UPDATE

- **FY06 Audit and Annual Reporting**

Ms. Finnessy reported the Alliance got its review-level audit and it looked good. All annual reports (state and federal) were ready to be mailed.

- **Annual Bylaws Review**

Action on this item was postponed to a future agenda.

10. ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

- **First Quarter Financial Report**

Ms. Finnessy noted the inclusion of the report in the packet and invited members to call her with questions.

Ms. Finnessy said that her husband David had accepted a post doctoral position at the University of California in Berkeley.

Responding to a question from Mr. Highfill, Ms. Finnessy said she would contact the Lane Council of Governments for an update on Coburg's wastewater plans.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

(Recorded by Kimberly Young)