

MINUTES

McKenzie Watershed Council
McKenzie River Conference Center

January 31, 2004
9:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Dorothy Anderson, Eugene Water and Electric Board; Bob Bumstead, McKenzie Flyfishers; Kurt Cox, McKenzie Schools; Cheryl Friesen, Willamette National Forest; Pat Gripp, McKenzie Residents Association; Linda Mooney, Mohawk Watershed Partnership; Ralph Perkins, East Lane Soil & Water Conservation District; Charlene Phipps, McKenzie Residents Association; Emily Rice, Bureau of Land Management; Mike Running, McKenzie River Trust; Wade Stampe, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Betty Taylor, Eugene City Council; Jeff Ziller, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife; Council Partners.

Megan Finnessy, Kate Ferschweiler, Juan Welsh, Staff

Carol Ach, Anita Burmonte, Jim Thrailkill, Steve Carter, Craig Patterson, Douglas Moser, Jeff Daney, Residents

I. INTRODUCTIONS/ WARM UP

Ms. Finnessy convened the meeting at 9:30 am. Members introduced themselves and talked about their favorite recreation spots on the McKenzie River.

Ms. Anderson reported on the Leaburg Lake issue of representation on the EWEB Board. She said the process of adding a McKenzie River member to the EWEB's Board of Directors would require a City Charter amendment and would be complicated. The Board is continuing discussions of forming an advisory committee from the area, as well as having an EWEB staff contact for people from the area to communicate with.

Ms. Finnessy said she was committed to working with both EWEB and Leaburg Lake residents to improve communication strategies.

Ms. Friesen said the McKenzie River Ranger District was discussing the possibility of an open house, at the Walterville Grange Hall, to showcase watershed projects and activities. She suggested that the MWC be involved with the process, and asked for interested Partners to get in touch with her in the next week.

Mr. Stampe said the Army Corps of Engineers has received enough funding to finish its temperature control project for Cougar Reservoir.

Ms. Mooney said the Mohawk Watershed Council would be holding an educational forum at its February 3rd meeting.

Ms. Finnessy said the MWC would be participating in a native planting at Delta Sand and Gravel on February 7, 2004 and encouraged Partners to attend.

Ms. Finnessy noted the upcoming Landowner Workshop will focus on exotic plants in riparian areas and will take place on March 13 at the Vida Community Center from 9:00 – 1:00.

II. MWC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Jim Thrailkill provided a presentation on previous MWC accomplishments. He cited Oxbow Park and a section of the lower river as examples of areas where MWC projects had an influence in restoring the river. The Council also helped change the County's vegetation policy so that vegetation is now left in roadside ditches to reduce the amount of sediment deposited in the McKenzie River. He added that the MWC had also been active in the Adopt-a-Highway Program.

Showing an overhead projection of the watershed, Mr. Thrailkill outlined its predominant land uses pointing out that the MWC had done a lot of work restoring sub-watersheds of the McKenzie. Mr. Thrailkill also explained the chronology of the Council from its 1993 inception.

Mr. Thrailkill noted that the Council spent a lot of resources protecting endangered species in the watershed, such as the Oregon Chubb, the Western Pond Turtle, and the Bull Trout.

Mr. Thrailkill stressed the importance of not working in isolation and outlined where some of the MWC's cooperative projects partnered with other agencies.

III. MWC CHARTER

Ms. Finnessy provided a reminder of Council Partner responsibilities and called for comments and questions about the Charter.

In response to a question from Ms. Mooney regarding who is responsible for reporting annually to elected officials, Ms. Finnessy said it was her responsibility. Ms. Anderson noted that reporting to officials needs to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, expressing her preference for Executive Committee members to communicate with elected representatives.

Ms. Anderson said terms for At-Large representatives needed to be incorporated into the Charter.

In response to a question from Ms. Mooney regarding the language around chair and co-chair positions, Ms. Rice noted that the Council had not had a chair or co-chair position for several years, stating that the Executive Committee now performs these duties.

In response to a question from Ms. Mooney regarding new partner orientation, Ms. Finnessy said she performed that service.

There was general consensus to approve the MWC Charter document with minor revisions.

IV. 2004 WORK PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Finnessy said the work plan set out Council and Staff planning for the next year and is based primarily on the BPA Scope of Work.

The work plan was divided into seven categories and discussed.

Organizational Objectives

Ms. Finnessy said the Executive Committee was added in the Lead column under the 'Increased Funding for Restoration and other Project Implementation' objective.

Ms. Rice's move to approve the Organizational Objectives portion of the Work Plan was seconded. There was general consensus.

Fish and Wildlife Objectives

Ms. Finnessy said she had changed the completion date of 'Restoration Project Data Easily Retrieved, Reported, and Archived' objective to June, 2004.

Partners made various wordsmithing suggestions.

In response to a question from Ms. Phipps regarding the Council's role in finding funding for restoration projects, Mr. Welsh said he had been making those decisions, but suggested that a Projects Subcommittee be formed to include more Council Partners in the decision-making process.

There was general consensus to add a new task for improving the confluence area in the 'Portions of watershed improved toward properly functioning condition' objective and to put the Green Island project within this objective too.

Mr. Ziller stressed that the main thing was that the item was down on paper and not how the task was classified.

Mr. Stampe, seconded by Ms. Rice moved to approve the Fish and Wildlife Objectives portion of the work plan. There was general consensus.

Water Quality Objectives

Ms. Finnessy said the second objective should read 'Water quality data shared and exchanged with agencies and landowners'.

Regarding the heading of Develop Water Quality Management Plan for the McKenzie, Ms. Finnessy said the process was on hold until the State had completed the Willamette Basin TMDL.

Ms. Rice commented that the 'Continued restoration project management' objective seemed redundant, but it was pointed out that within each category of objectives it implied different meaning.

Ms. Gripp, seconded by Ms. Mooney, moved to approve the Water Quality Objectives portion of the work plan. There was general consensus.

Recreation Objectives

Ms. Taylor, seconded by Ms. Anderson, moved to approve the Recreation Objectives. There was general consensus.

Human Habitat Objectives

Ms. Phipps stressed the importance of getting more citizen input. Noting that staying in touch with people while planning was better than informing people after planning was completed.

There was general consensus to approve the Human Habitat Objectives portion

of the work plan.

Education Objectives

Ms. Ferschweiler suggested utilizing students to help meet education objectives.

There was general consensus to approve the Education Objectives portion of the work plan.

Public Outreach Objectives

Regarding the 'Review action plans and evaluate progress' objective, Ms. Finnessy noted that Mr. Thraikill had expressed a desire to work under contract to complete the work.

Mr. Running suggested putting the item under Organizational Objectives.

Ms. Mooney stated that the Mohawk Watershed Newsletter released four times a year should be under the 'Citizen awareness of MWC activities' objective.

Ms. Friesen suggested adding an item about the watershed open house event.

There was general consensus to approve the Public Outreach Objectives portion of the work plan.

Ms. Phipps suggested a review of the Action Plan.

Ms. Rice said it felt too early to review a plan since the Council had just hired a project manager.

Ms. Friesen suggested that during the year, a process be developed for reviewing action plans of the Council.

There was consensus on the intent to develop a process and have staff work out the particulars.

V. MWC PARTNER COMMUNICATION

There was general consensus to approve the entire work plan.

VI. AT-LARGE STAKEHOLDER REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. Phipps suggested people that had applied for stakeholder positions give the Council an opportunity to speak privately on the matter.

Ms. Finnessy suggested using a consensus vote to determine the 2 At-Large Stakeholders, adding that there needed to be a discussion on term limits.

Mr. Running said At-Large members were representing themselves rather than representing specific partner agencies.

Ms. Taylor suggested that the terms should not expire at the same time.

Ms. Friesen suggested a two year minimum with one of the terms set at three years so the reappointment times could be staggered.

Ms. Phipps raised concern that a two year term was too short a time to be effective. Ms. Taylor suggested that a person could be reappointed at the end of two years.

There was general consensus to approve two year term limits for At-Large Stakeholders, with one of the two initial terms set at three years.

Council Partners discussed the four At-Large Stakeholder applications.

There was general consensus, pending final approval, to approve Mr. Moser and Mr. Kerrick as At-Large Stakeholder Partners.

VII. MWC MARKETING PLAN

The item was postponed.

VIII. CEDAR CREEK UPDATE

Ms. Finnessy noted the memo distributed on the subject and called on Mr. Ziller to provide an update.

Mr. Ziller showed a PowerPoint presentation with overhead views of the McKenzie River and Cedar Creek. He showed the path of the Cedar Creek channel and pointed out where a point of diversion (POD) had been developed on the McKenzie River to help irrigate during the summer. The problem is that only 1.2 cubic feet per second (cfs) can legally be diverted at this location, while up to 20 cfs are currently being diverted.

Mr. Running said that there may be an historic water right for the Cedar Creek Irrigation district, one of the oldest water rights in the McKenzie River system, allocating up to 30 cfs at the POD. He said there was a 70 + year history of using Cedar Creek.

Ms. Ferschweiler noted that water seeping through the creek bed was ground water seepage and did not come from the McKenzie River.

Mr. Ziller noted that there had been a citizen complaint about water backing up on an adjacent property and the matter now had to be addressed by the State Water Master. The consequences of lowering the amount of water would mean a loss of fish, side channel habitat, and water for the Springfield water supply. Mr. Running added that a loss of flow in Cedar Creek would mean less dilution of storm water coming from the City of Springfield.

Regarding alternatives, Mr. Ziller suggested applying for instream water rights at the POD and applying for a new POD near Hendricks Bridge. He noted that new water rights would require a good bypass system for fish and a maintenance sponsor.

Mr. Running said Cedar Creek was a key waterway to the City of Springfield and suggested talking to the City of Springfield and Springfield Utility Board about the matter, nothing there could be other alternatives.

Mr. Bumstead stressed that issues such as this are the reason for the Council, stating that the Council should absolutely be involved in solving the problem.

In response to a question from Mr. Running regarding whether the issue would be an agenda item at a Council meeting, Ms. Finnessy said it would be better to hold a meeting of all the interested parties before putting the matter before the Council.

Ms. Finnessy asked for and received Council approval to facilitate a meeting to address the issue with key stakeholders.

IX. MWC STAFF BRIEFINGS

Ms. Finnessy said contract evaluations were coming up for both herself and John Runyon, commenting that evaluation forms would be mailed Council Partners.

Mr. Welsh distributed notes on MWC's 19 restoration projects pointing out that riparian enhancement is becoming the basis of the restoration program with the current emphasis of projects lower in the watershed. He stressed that the work was difficult, expectations were high and funding was limited. He stressed the importance of continued maintenance noting funding was not available for continued maintenance of some projects.

Mr. Welsh stressed the importance of focusing on the quality of projects and stated that he was resistant to the idea of adding any more projects at present due to work load constraints. He urged the Council to be take note that landowners throughout the watershed are becoming increasingly aware of the Council's restoration program.

Regarding culvert design work, Mr. Welsh said that completion of four of the seven projects was the goal this year, noting that the project will not be completed until 2005.

Ms. Ferschweiler said the Council's request for an education program review was conducted this fall, with the summary materials included in the retreat mailing packet. She stressed the need for feedback from the Council on the direction of the education program, noting she had received very little. She noted that her expertise was in K-12 education and commented that she wanted direction on what other areas the Council would like her to cover.

X. WRAP UP AND ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 4 pm.

(Recorded by Joe Sams)