

# MINUTES

McKenzie Watershed Council  
Eugene Water & Electric Board Training Room

June 9, 2005

5:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Ralph Perkins, Facilitator; Diane Albino (Mohawk Watershed Partnership), Mary Allison (United States Forest Service), Bob Bumstead (McKenzie Flyfishers), Kurt Cox (McKenzie School District), Pat Gripp (McKenzie Residents Association), Michael Kerrick (At-Large Stakeholder), Mike McDowell (Weyerhaeuser), Joe Moll, (McKenzie River Trust); Alan Olander (Hynix Semiconductor), John Simpson (Eugene Water & Electric Board), Erik Petersen (Army Corps of Engineers), Chris Pryor (City of Springfield), Emily Rice (Bureau of Land Management), Council Partners

Megan Finnessy, Juan Welsh, Kate Ferschweiler, Council contracted staff;

Jared Weybright, Mohawk Watershed Partnership; Philip Farrington, PeaceHealth; Chuck Davis, Springfield Utility Board; Chuck Gottfried, City of Springfield; Eric Gossler, Roger Gossler, Marge Gossler, Emily Gregory, Ron Gregory, David Hill and various members of the Finnessy family visiting from Wisconsin; Andy Reasoner McKenzie River Trust; John & Shirley Lewis; guests.

**ABSENT:** Gene Highfill (McKenzie River Guides Association), John Lilly (Division of State Lands), Douglas Moser (At-Large Stakeholder), Charlene Phipps (McKenzie Residents Association), Jeff Ziller (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife), Council Partners.

## 1. REVIEW AGENDA & INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Perkins opened the June meeting of the McKenzie Watershed Council (MWC). He reviewed the agenda, and proposed that the printed agenda be revised to move item 4, the MWC Landowner Presentations, up in order to become item 3.

At Mr. Perkins' request, those present introduced themselves.

## 2. DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF MARCH MEETING MINUTES

Council Partners considered the minutes of May 12, 2005. No changes were offered to the minutes.

**Council Partners indicated acceptance of the minutes showing Consensus Level 3.**

## 3. MWC LANDOWNER AWARD PRESENTATION

Mr. Welsh reminded the Council that it agreed to begin presenting annual awards for land stewardship in the McKenzie Watershed. He stated that the first honoree was the Gossler Farm. The Gossler Farm worked extensively and collaboratively with the MWC. Mr. Welsh shared an aerial photograph showing the extent of MWC projects on the Gossler farm as well as several photographs showing specific projects.

He commended the family for its flexibility and openness to the Council staff and Council projects. Mr. Welsh noted that the Gossler Farm had allowed the Council to grow plants on its land for other projects and helped the Council make funding go farther.

Ms. Finnessy noted the family's involvement in the Cedar Creek project.

Mr. Welsh recognized Eric, Roger, and Marge Gossler as recipients of the 2005 Landowner Award for Outstanding Collaboration in Watershed Activities. On behalf of the Gossler Family, Eric Gossler accepted the award and thanked the Council. He noted the progress that had been made on several projects on his family's property.

Ms. Gripp recognized Emily Gregory as the Council's 2005 scholarship winner. She noted Ms. Gregory's work for the Bureau of Land Management and said she was now working toward a degree in forest management at Oregon State University. Ms. Gregory accepted her award with thanks to the Council.

#### **4. SHORT ANNOUNCEMENTS/PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Perkins called for short announcements from Council Partners and comment from the public.

Ms. Allison said the Simmonds Creek project was moving along after many bureaucratic snafus. However, she believed the project could be done by the end of September.

Ms. Allison said that a field trip to examine management concepts in the McKenzie District would be conducted by the district at the H. J. Andrews Experimental Forest that weekend. She anticipated seeing many of the Partners on the field trip.

Ms. Allison spoke of the resolution recently passed by the Eugene City Council about timber harvesting activities in the McKenzie River corridor. She had seen a copy of the draft resolution but had not seen a copy of the final resolution, which was described by *The Register-Guard* as a symbolic resolution.

Mr. Pryor, a member of the Eugene Council, noted that the resolution in question was drafted and being shared with different elected officials by the Oregon Natural Resources Council (ONRC). The resolution called for protection of old growth and ancient forests. The resolution was placed on the Council's agenda by the Council Committee on Intergovernmental Relations with a "do support" recommendation. Mr. Pryor believed the resolution passed in part because of the amount of information provided by the ONRC. No contradictory information had been provided by the Forest Service.

Mr. Pryor said he had clarified, when casting his vote, that the resolution was non-binding and he had acknowledged having received only one side of the story. Subsequently, the resolution passed by a healthy margin of 7:1. He suggested that the resolution was the beginning of a process rather than the end of a process, and suggested that a healthy collaboration between all parties could be formed to provide information and education about the situation to the public.

Ms. Allison said that the values of the resolution were generally supported by the Forest Service. For example, she pointed out the Forest Service built few roads in the district, which the resolution opposed. She termed the resolution a "feel good" resolution. Ms. Allison noted that a tour of the district with Mr. Pryor, Karl Morgenstern of the Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB), and Ms. Finnessy was planned for July 7 at 10:30 a.m., and invited other Council Partners to attend. The tour would focus on existing timber contracts.

Mr. Moll introduced Andrew Reasoner, the new Conservation Director of the McKenzie River Trust (MRT). Mr. Reasoner said he was happy to be with the Trust and thought it amazing what the organization had accomplished. He looked forward to continuing that work and to working with the Council to improve habitat in the McKenzie Watershed.

Mr. Moll announced that the MRT had conducted interviews for its Director of Resources and he hoped the organization would be fully staffed soon.

Mr. Cox noted the recent McKenzie High School graduation ceremony. He reported that a new principal would soon be hired for the high school. He said that the summer tourist season had already begun, as evidenced by travel-trailers coming through the corridor.

Mr. Simpson reported that the Leaburg Lake raise that occurred on May 16 was without incident. EWEB had discovered a barrier in the canal that, once removed, allowed EWEB to get its water rights at a lower elevation. The lake was raised six inches before being returned to the original level. Mr. Simpson noted that because the license stated that EWEB would raise the lake 18 inches, the license must be modified to mention the six-inch raise, which was about a year-long process. He thanked the ACOE for its cooperation in the lake raise.

Mr. Pishioneri said he recently met with representatives of the business community and Convention and Visitors Association of Lane County (CVALCO), who discussed placing travel plazas in Lane County. One likely site for such a plaza was the Oak Grove rest area on I-5 southbound, just outside Lane County. He said the site would be staffed seven days weekly with CVALCO staff and volunteers. He anticipated a quick start-up, and suggested such a facility would be a plus for the watershed area. He said that CVALCO was looking for Partners in the effort.

Mr. McDowell reported that Weyerhaeuser supported an event known as Forest Field Day, which conducted school children from various communities in Lane County other than Eugene on a series of Forest Field Days to expose and educate middle-school children to activities involved with a healthy forest. He said the effort was very rewarding, and reported that another series of the field days were scheduled for the fall. Mr. McDowell said that similar tours conducted by the same organization were available for adults.

Mr. Petersen reported that the recent spring rains had filled the ACOE reservoir system. He noted that a contractor had been hired for the Fern Ridge Dam project. The ACOE was managing the Cougar Dam temperature project and making temperature operations. He had been present the day the agency set the gate limits. He was optimistic about the future of the project, which he believed would make a big difference. Mr. Petersen anticipated a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of the project would occur soon, and he would provide the Council with that date when it was known.

Mr. Bumstead said the McKenzie Flyfishers looked forward to the Annual River Clean-up on June 25. Ms. Finnessy observed that the event was approximately 30 years old. She asked that members intending to participate in the Clean-up should indicate their intent to do so by June 17.

Mr. Bumstead said at a recent Confluence Committee meeting at the Wildish Company, Council Partners and staff heard from the firm that the company hired to gauge how tall its dikes must be to avoid a hundred-year flood in the gravel pits. He said the meeting was very informative and the Committee continued to seek ways to enhance the confluence.

Ms. Finnessy noted that the agenda erroneously listed a Mohawk Watershed Partnership meeting in July;

there was no July meeting.

Ms. Finnessy called the Council's attention to a copy of the draft Willamette Basin Restoration Habitat Plan and associated comment forms. She encouraged Partners to comment on the plan, recalling that the Council recently heard an update on the effort from John Runyon.

Ms. Ferschweiler announced that June 11 was Free Fishing Day in Oregon. She noted that she would have a booth at the Leaburg Fish Hatchery that day. She encouraged the Council Partners to attend the event, which was focused at children. She reported that more than 700 children attended last year's event.

Ms. Ferschweiler called the Council's attention to an upcoming teachers' workshop occurring during a two-day period at the H. J. Andrews Experimental Forest and the B & B Fire. The workshop was limited to 30 participants and was drawing people from around the state.

Mr. Welsh reminded the Council of the projects tour occurring the next morning at 9 a.m.

Mr. Welsh said the Council was going forward with the installation of fish passage culverts on Tom's Creek and Parsons Creek. The Simmonds Creek culvert project would also be completed this year.

There was no public comment.

## **5. POTENTIAL RIVER BEND RESTORATION COLLABORATION**

The Council was joined by PeaceHealth's Director of Land Use Planning, Philip Farrington. He said the RiverBend hospital project had recently been approved by the Springfield City Council and construction along the McKenzie River at the RiverBend site would commence soon. He briefly noted the hospital's proposed restoration plans, which had been enhanced by its agreement with the Jacquas. Mr. Farrington asked the Council for permission to call upon the expertise of Council staff throughout the restoration process for such things as information about available grants and restoration projects.

Mr. Farrington also anticipated that PeaceHealth might want to call upon the MRT for assistance.

Mr. Welsh noted the Council's identification of the need for restoration in the lower McKenzie River. He believed the site could benefit from a collaborative effort between PeaceHealth and the MWC and the opportunity to enhance the riparian area was a good one.

Mr. Bumstead determined from Mr. Farrington that the proposed trail initially proposed had been rerouted somewhat to ensure trees could be retained. The trail meandered from 50 to 150 feet from the river.

Responding to a question from Ms. Rice, Mr. Farrington indicated that at this point, he anticipated calling upon Ms. Finnessy and staff for information; it was possible that the hospital would seek grant funding in collaboration with the Council. Responding to a follow-up question from Ms. Rice, Mr. Farrington indicated the first phase was expected to cost about \$150,000. He assured the Council that any grant requests would be reviewed by the Council.

Mr. Perkins supported the concept being put forth by Mr. Farrington but observed that Council staff was pretty busy already. Mr. Farrington did not anticipate he would have to call on staff for much of its time. He emphasized the importance of this stretch of river to the Council's activities.

Mr. Moll emphasized the importance of matching Partners to the various agencies who provided grant

funding for such activities.

Mr. Pishioneri pointed out that the collaboration would be between two 501(c)(3) agencies.

Mr. Pryor left the meeting.

Ms. Gripp requested comment from Council staff. Mr. Welsh emphasized the ecological benefit from restoration at the location in question. He pointed out that Council staff frequently received calls for assistance from property owners, and he was happy to prioritize the project in his work schedule due to the ecological benefit he anticipated. Ms. Finnessy noted that her contract called on her to work with interested landowners.

Springfield staff referred to the Council's mission statement and suggested the request fell within the scope of the mission statement.

**Council Partners showed approval of the request from PeaceHealth showing Consensus Level 3; Mr. Moll and Mr. Pishioneri showed Consensus Level 2.**

## **6. MOHAWK WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP**

The Council heard a presentation from Coordinator Jared Weybright about the Mohawk Watershed Partnership. Mr. Weybright showed the Council a map illustrating the scope of the Mohawk Watershed and shared photographs of the Mohawk River to illustrate the existing conditions on the river. He discussed the origins of the Partnership, which was driven by former Council Partner Pat Thompson. He said the Partnership was comprised of local residents who worked together to encourage voluntary actions that improved environmental conditions in the watershed.

Mr. Weybright called the Council's attention to the Partnership mission statement.

Mr. Weybright reported the Partnership's activities were driven by its action plan, which was reviewed annually, and a watershed assessment.

Mr. Weybright reviewed the structure of the Partnership, noting the fact of the board, whose members served four-year staggered terms. He said the Partnership viewed membership as a statement of support. Currently, there were about 75 members. The Partnership maintained an active committee structure. He noted that the Partnership had two paid staff members.

Mr. Weybright noted the funding the Partnership received from the Bonneville Power Administration, memberships, and various fund-raising activities. He indicated that Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Weyerhaeuser helped underwrite the costs of the newsletter, and restoration projects were funded through a variety of sources, including OWEB and the BLM.

Mr. Weybright reported that Partnership meetings were held monthly, and an annual meeting occurred each summer at Shotgun Creek Park. He said that the Partnership worked hard to arrange for educational speakers at its meetings to encourage residents to attend meetings.

Mr. Weybright noted the Partnership's extensive monitoring program, noting funding came from a variety of sources. Two local high schools were involved in the monitoring program. He also noted the workshops and tours conducted by the Partnership and its involvement in community and collaborative events with other organizations.

Mr. Weybright provided an overview of the Partnership's Focus Sub-basin Project, emphasizing the importance of up-front outreach to property owners.

Mr. Welsh provided an extensive overview of projects being conducted collaboratively by the Partnership and MWC.

Mr. Perkins called for a brief meeting break.

## **7. COMMITTEE UPDATES**

### *Education*

Ms. Ferschweiler provided the update, reporting that the Committee recently met and begun revisions of the Education and Outreach Benchmarks. The Committee was also in the process of revising its indicators, which would be ready soon.

Ms. Finnessy said she was heading a Benchmarks revision process for the Conservation Strategies five goals. She said the Water Quality Committee had recently met again to review the Water Quality Benchmark. She said the annual Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) report on the McKenzie River would be supplemented by an annual discussion paper identifying trends and gaps at the local level developed by the Water Quality Committee. That information would be used as an outreach tool to the community. She anticipated the committee would review the first draft of the discussion paper in August. Ms. Finnessy noted a suggestion from Nancy Marino of the committee to select individual water quality parameters as the subject for newsletter articles.

Ms. Finnessy said she worked with Eric Gossler to pull together a Cedar Creek community meeting regarding the two head gates and potential impact of their shut-down. About 15-20 citizens and agency representatives attended the meeting, and agreed to attempt to engage more people through another meeting in about one month's time. She noted that Mr. Gossler was attempting to revitalize the Cedar Creek Irrigation District, which owned and maintained the headgates. Mr. McDowell asked the purpose of the community meetings. Ms. Finnessy said the State Water Master had contacted her to let her know he was shutting down the first head gate because of an over-allocation of water. Lower water flows could have impacts on Springfield's use of Cedar Creek for stormwater discharge, riparian projects being conducted by the MWC, and fish and wildlife habitat. Ms. Finnessy also noted that the ACOE Metro Waterways Study was playing a role in the process..

### *Green Island Technical Team*

Mr. Moll provided an update on the work of the technical team, which met most recently in May. He prefaced his remarks by sharing a vision of a restored Green River from the technical management plan. He emphasized the importance of a collaborative Partnership to realizing the vision. Mr. Moll said the team was working on the plan to lay out a road map to reach that goal. The team was currently examining the elevation of the river at the location of the confluence and was discussing the implications of those elevations for the water table and subsequently, on native and non-native vegetation. He said the team continued to look at issues such as areas where a meander could be located in the future. He said the effort would take considerable time and money; he estimated the cost to restore the island could equal the cost of its purchase. The team would discuss feedback about the draft at its next meeting.

Ms. Finnessy recalled that at the last meeting, Randy Hledik of Wildish Sand and Gravel had requested a

letter of support from the MWC for the company's habitat enhancement and flood control project at the confluence. She said due to some concerns expressed about the project by MWC Partners, the letter had not been drafted, and the Confluence Committee was being convened during the summer to discuss those concerns. She anticipated a future Council meeting would focus on the confluence to get all the Council Partners on the same page. Ms. Finnessy recommended that meeting occur in July.

Ms. Finnessy reported that the Army Corps of Engineers, DEQ, and Division of State Lands proposed to hold a joint public information meeting on the Wildish project on June 29, at a location to be announced later. She said she would e-mail the location to the Council.

Members briefly discussed Ms. Finnessy's recommendation and indicated acceptance of holding a July meeting about the Wildish project. Members discussed the potential of floating the area in question. Mr. Bumstead indicated that he had access to a jet boat that could be used to take Council Partners through the area. Ms. Finnessy said she would arrange for the Partners to tour the area throughout the summer.

### *Executive*

Mr. Perkins reviewed the minutes of the Executive Committee, reporting that the first two insurance payments had been received for the recent break-in. He said that Ms. Finnessy continued to research insurance coverage, including general liability coverage, officers' insurance, and fidelity bonding.

Mr. Perkins said a revised draft of the Request for Proposals process was distributed, reviewed, and approved by Executive Committee members.

Mr. Perkins said the Committee heard an update from Ms. Finnessy regarding Aquador Consulting's request for Partnership. Ms. Finnessy indicated she had been in contact with the group to let it know most of the work on the McKenzie River meanders was in place. She had suggested the study would be more useful and more fundable in another less studied watershed, such as the Calapooia.

Mr. Perkins reported that the Southern Willamette Valley Groundwater Management Area Committee had requested Ms. Finnessy's involvement in the committee. He said the Executive Committee declined to approve that participation.

Mr. Perkins said the Executive Committee reviewed the fourth-quarter budget prepared by Cascade RC&D. He said there was some recent staff turnover at Cascade RC&D, leading to some confusion over budget items. Ms. Finnessy had distributed three prospective budgets for fiscal year 2006. Members offered suggestions for incorporation into a single prospective budget.

Mr. Perkins noted that Ms. Finnessy would meet with the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) staff soon to discuss the Council's budget and the scope of work. He said that the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board met to focus on Council support grant decisions, and had requested that coordinators and Council members comment on the need for Council support funding.

Mr. Perkins said the Committee also briefly discussed the Wildish letter.

## **8. ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE**

Ms. Finnessy provided the administrative update. She said the Executive Committee meeting also included discussion of the McKenzie Watershed Alliance. She had opened a bank account in the name of the alliance, and through the newsletter, the Alliance had made its first request for donations. The Finance

Committee, Executive Committee, and Alliance Board of Directors would meet on June 13 with David Atkin to continue fleshing out the lines between the Council and Alliance. The group would also look at the Council's Business Plan. Ms. Finnessy said at the recommendation of former partner John Woodrow, she met with Dean Huber, a local accountant, who agreed to help the alliance set up its books and to review the Alliance's quarterly budget. She believed the Alliance would be a stronger part of the Council in the future. Ms. Finnessy noted that staff had met to recommend what grants would stay with the current fiscal manager and what grants would move to the Alliance. Those recommendations would be revisited at the June 13 meeting. She suggested that it was possible in the future that the Finance Committee would become an *ad hoc* committee of the Alliance.

Ms. Finnessy expressed excitement that the Alliance had finally come to fruition. Council Partners recognized the landmark with applause.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

(Recorded by Kimberly Young)