

MINUTES

McKenzie Watershed Council
Eugene Water and Electric Board - Training Room, North Building
400 East 4th Avenue, Eugene
November 13, 2003
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Linda Mooney, Facilitator; Ryland Moore, McKenzie River Trust; Don Hampton, Lane County Board of Commissioners; Glen Love, McKenzie Flyfishers; Cheryl Friesen, Willamette National Forest; Mike McDowell, Weyerhaeuser Company; Emily Rice, Bureau of Land Management; Betty Taylor, Eugene City Council; John Woodrow, City of Springfield; Jeff Ziller, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife; Wade Stampe, Army Corps of Engineers; Kurt Cox, McKenzie Schools; Dorothy Anderson, Commissioner on the Eugene Water and Electric Board; **Council Partners**

Juan Welsh, Projects Coordinator; Megan Finnessy, Council Coordinator; Kate Ferschweiler, Education Coordinator; and John Runyon, Council Contractor

Marty Douglass, Kathryn Von Dunkeler, EWEB staff; Phil Raab, McKenzie River Ranger District; Jack Harris, City of Coburg; Jason Seals and Kelly Reis, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, George Letchworth, Daniel Orlek, Carol Ach, Sally Nunn, and Douglass Moser, **Guests**.

1. Review Agenda and Introductions

All those present introduced themselves.
There were no changes to the agenda.

2. Opening Remarks

Ms. Finnessy explained that any missed phone calls were due to the recent installation of a computer in her office and that the phone situation was now remedied.

Ms. Finnessy thanked the new Board of Directors and noted them, as follows:

President: Betty Taylor
Vice President: Linda Mooney
Secretary: John Woodrow
Treasurer: Mike McDowell

Ms. Finnessy stated the Friends of the McKenzie Watershed By-Laws had been adopted and that she would serve as Executive Director. Organizational meetings are being planned.

Ms. Finnessy reported that a Water Quality Committee meeting had been held earlier in the week. She said Jared Ruben of the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) gave a presentation on the total maximum daily load (TMDL) process. She related that DEQ provided a timeline with a January deadline and a 60 –day period for public comment. After the comment period, Mr. Ruben was tentatively scheduled to provide a presentation to the McKenzie Watershed Council (MWC).

Ms. Finnessy discussed a meeting she had in the upper McKenzie area earlier in the day with Elaine

Bryson, McKenzie School district, to discuss opportunities for partnership.

Ms. Ferschweiler reported she had been soliciting evaluations of the education program. She pulled together a focus group consisting of people she had worked with to provide her with evaluations. She also wants the MWC to evaluate the educational programs and to provide input as to what direction the programs should take.

Mr. Welsh reported that he was in the process of planning projects that would be implemented over the winter season. Bids are being solicited from prospective contractors for fencing and planting projects, with an emphasis on stretching the available money. Plans for winter restoration have yet to be finalized.

3. Further Discussion and Approval of Decision Made at Last Meeting

October 9, 2003, meeting minutes

There was no further discussion and approval of decisions made at the last meeting.

Ms. Rice pointed out inaccuracies in the roster of who had been present and who had been absent from the meeting, according to the minutes.

Ms. Rice provided the following corrections to the minutes:

Page 5, paragraph 2: She clarified that she had not indicated she would chair the subcommittee, but rather that she would be willing to serve on it.

Page 5, paragraph 5: “~~Miss.~~ **Ms.** Finnessy said she had distributed the six-year statewide ~~voting~~ **boating** facilities plan...”

It was decided to table the minutes from the meeting held on October 9 for needed revisions. Ms. Finnessy suggested that other corrections be submitted via e-mail.

4. Short Announcements/Public Comment

Ms. Mooney welcomed Mr. Hampton to the Council.

Mr. Hampton thanked the Council for having him as a member, noting he would have to depart as his attendance was required at another meeting. He declared his intention to attend the MWC as often as he was able to. He noted that, while mayor of Oakridge, he had been involved in the Midfork Watershed Council.

Ms. Anderson reported that there were two items coming before the Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB) commissioners affecting the McKenzie Watershed Council, which of having ombudsmen from the McKenzie Valley area and involvement in the boat ramp decision.

Ms. Friesen related that John Allen had accepted a forestry job in Montana and that she would continue as the active district manager until a replacement was hired.

Mr. Cox asked if a date had been planned for the MWC retreat for 2004. Ms. Finnessy replied that it was scheduled to be held at the McKenzie River Conference Center on Saturday, January 31, 2004.

Mr. Stampe reported that the Town of Blue River was running out of water and needed the rains to begin.

Additionally, Mr. Stampe noted that Wildish Company was back on schedule at Cougar Dam.

Mr. McDowell shared that Weyerhaeuser Company contributed partial funding to the Mohawk Gauging Station.

Mr. Moore called 2003 a “record year” for acres protected, stating that conservation easements would be attained before the end of the year. He relayed that EWEB had been generous in helping the McKenzie River Trust (MRT) with this and that the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Bureau (OWEB) had provided \$950,000 in funding. He reported that MRT has applied for grant from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA).

5. EWEB Carmen-Smith Hydroelectric Relicensing Presentation

Marty Douglass, staff member of EWEB, explained that EWEB was about to embark on the process of relicensing the Carmen-Smith Hydroelectric facility. He explained that the utility was in the initial phase and that, if all went well, the facility would have a new license by 2008. He commented that “wisdom tells us” that the utility will not receive the license by 2008.

Mr. Douglass said the utility had held meetings with people who resided in the upper McKenzie Valley area. He commented that the first meeting was attended by eight to ten people who were mostly “agency” people and the second meeting had similar attendance numbers but was comprised of citizens. He felt attendance could be better, noting that EWEB provided adequate noticing to the area. He stated that another meeting was scheduled for November 20 at 7 p.m. at the McKenzie Community Center in order to provide more opportunity for public input and feedback.

Mr. Douglass related that the utility had been in the process of relicensing the lower river facilities for 15 years. He noted that many entities were involved. He speculated the upper river would likely involve resource agencies, citizens, recreation-oriented people and businesses, and special interests.

Mr. Douglass said the presentation would take approximately 15 minutes and expressed hope that the MWC would ask all questions that arose for them. Any he could not answer he would refer to EWEB staff for written answers to include in the next MWC agenda packet. He introduced Kathryn Van Dunkeler, staff engineer and relicensing coordinator, who would provide part of the presentation.

He shared the mission statement from the Initial Consultation Package (ICP) for the relicensing project, commenting that the utility sought to keep the three elements in balance:

“To obtain a new federal license for the project so it can continue to operate in an environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable manner.”

Ms. Van Dunkeler explained that the Carmen-Smith project was only engaged to produce electricity at the peak hours in the morning and in the evening. The generation at the Trailbridge facility, below the Carmen-Smith facility, was constant, and the reservoir there absorbed the fluctuations of the Carmen-Smith Reservoir. She stated that the water level of the reservoir at the facility was only allowed to fluctuate by seven feet in the summer and ten feet in the winter during the peak hours.

In response to a question from Ms. Rice, Ms. Van Dunkeler stated that, without the Diversion Tunnel, the McKenzie River would follow an old river channel over porous lava beds and would disappear and then

reappear further down the streambed.

Ms. Van Dunkeler pointed out the salmon spawning channel on the map, noting that it had been state-of-the-art when built. She commented that it had been functioning well over the years. She said the spawning channel was visited by school children, biologists, and others throughout the year.

Mr. Douglass stated that the facility had been licensed in 1958 and built in 1963 and an application for relicensing was required to be submitted in 2006. He related that the utility was subject to many regulations, procedures, and requirements in the licensing application.

Mr. Douglass commented that the central office of FERC is in Portland, adding that the utility was interacting frequently with the office at this time. Mr. Douglass also noted that should the utility not meet its deadline, it would be required to apply for license extensions annually.

Ms. Van Dunkeler called attention to the Fish Passage Culvert, a voluntary joint effort made by the United States Department of Fish and Wildlife (USDFW), the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), and EWEB.

Ms. Van Dunkeler explained the process the utility was undergoing, noting that the scoping of the project was slated to be completed and implementation of the project begun within a year.

Mr. Douglass said that through the subgroups of studies related to the environment, economy, and social impacts of the project, the utility hoped that interested parties would participate. He invited the MWC to play a role in this, noting that one did not need to be a scientist to participate in the project.

Ms. Van Dunkeler stated that a meeting would be held on December 16 to discuss water quality, habitat, and on December 17, half of the day would be devoted to the social sciences.

Ms. Van Dunkeler noted that information on the relicensing project would be posted and regularly updated on the EWEB Web site. Ms. Van Dunkeler said she was unsure of the TMDLs at this point, but that the numbers she had seen were good.

Ms. Finnessy suggested two ways of participating, either providing MWC comments on the ICP or participating in the December meetings.

Ms. Friesen felt the group should weigh in on the ICP. She said the Forest Service had staff working on it. Ms. Finnessy offered to attend meetings and report back to the MWC and also suggested the Forest Service provide updates to the MWC.

Ms. Friesen opined that the MPC should play a “watchdog” role for the public to assure the process solicited adequate public involvement “at every step.” She remarked that EWEB generally did a good job of engaging the public.

Mr. McDowell suggested that talking to the neighbors would be more effective than providing notices via mail and posters. Ms. Friesen recommended installing a regular section in the newsletter regarding the relicensing process. Ms. Finnessy suggested creating an e-mail list of interested parties.

Mr. Cox asked if any changes in the fish population were anticipated. Ms. Van Dunkeler replied that the system was functioning well at this time but she could not predict how the population would be affected.

6. EDT - Eco-System Diagnosis and Treatment

Mr. Runyon presented on the Willamette Sub-Basin Planning project focusing on how the McKenzie River fits into the planning process. The Northwest Power and Conservation Planning Council (NPCPC) had divided the Columbia River basin into sub-basins for planning purposes with the Willamette Restoration Initiative having received funding to coordinate the development of this sub-basin plan in the Willamette. The idea behind this was to develop a plan that pulled together what was known about fish and wildlife populations, habitat, and what is currently being done in order to talk about future priorities for protection and restoration of habitats. He commented that future funding would be based on the results.

Mr. Runyon stated that the Willamette Sub-Basin had received \$300,000 to complete this study, and was required to complete the work by the end of May, 2004.

Mr. Runyon reported that the Willamette Restoration Initiative had chosen two focal sub-basins of the Willamette Sub-Basin for more intensive treatment, the Clackamas and the McKenzie, as they were key areas for the Coho and Chinook salmon and frogs. He related that there would be more emphasis on the two focal sub-basins when allocating funding for eco-system diagnosis and treatment, an approach developed by a consulting firm called Mobran. He conveyed his skepticism about the model but said it was mandated that it be utilized.

Mr. Runyon said he could use help to set up technical meetings of people who know the McKenzie River well. He related that the Initiative was looking for components of the Conservation Plan. He conveyed the desire of the NPCPC for McKenzie strategies to be developed by the end of January, 2004.

Mr. Runyon affirmed the initiative had “a lot of political clout behind it” and also noted that it was a “real opportunity.” He felt it affirmed the importance of the McKenzie watershed, adding that the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) supported the work.

Mr. Runyon said there was data from stream surveys to put into the model, noting there is also a professional override in the model which compares present and historic conditions.

Ms. Taylor arrived.

Mr. Runyon explained that he was seeking to inform the MWC about the process and attain the council’s “buy-in” with a technical subcommittee.

Mr. Runyon hopes Mr. Ziller will serve on the subcommittee, along with other biologists, as it was fish specific. He noted there would be a wildlife component of the plan, but it would not be his charge to address it but that the wildlife component would be provided to the Council.

Mr. Runyon predicted the time commitment would be approximately 40 hours.

Ms. Rice moved to empower the committee to prioritize projects. Ms. Friesen provided the second. The motion passed by consensus, with a majority indicating a consensus level of three.

Mr. Welsh commented that it appeared there could be potential to “bleed off” some funding for the MWC. Mr. Runyon responded that there was a greater potential that the information would show how important the McKenzie River was to the rest of the Willamette Sub-Basin and the McKenzie River would attain more funding in the future.

7. New Council Partner Nomination: Jack Harris, City of Coburg

Ms. Finnessy said she had looked at the charter after Mr. Harris had requested to be a part of the MWC and followed up by meeting with Mr. Harris to discuss his interest in participating. She conveyed the Executive Committee recommendation to approve his nomination.

Ms. Anderson asked what stake the City of Coburg had in the McKenzie River. Ms. Friesen responded that the town lay in a branch of the watershed.

The motion, seconded by Mr. McDowell, moved to approve the nomination of Jack Harris, representative of the City of Coburg, to the McKenzie Watershed Council. The motion was approved by unanimous consensus at level three.

8. Update on MWC Administration

- **Annual Retreat - January 31, 2004 - McKenzie River Conference Center**
Ms. Finnessy said she was working on compiling an agenda for the retreat.
- **At-Large Stakeholder Representatives**
Ms. Finnessy thanked Charlene Phipps for her help to get the applications out for the stakeholder representatives. She expressed hope that this would bring in the largest stakeholder group possible. Ms. Friesen asked if any fliers had been posted in the City of Coburg. Ms. Finnessy replied that she had not yet done so.
- **Friends of Leaburg Lake Update**
Ms. Finnessy said two letters had been drafted and sent. She noted that a reply had been received from Mr. Douglass of EWEB. She said Ms. Anderson would bring the issue of appointing a liaison/ombudsman for the McKenzie Valley to the board to one of the next meetings of EWEB commissioners. Continuing, Ms. Finnessy noted that it had not been felt that EWEB had a role in the boat ramp on Leaburg Lake.
- **Community Outreach Subcommittee**
Ms. Finnessy stated that this item would be tabled until the December meeting or until the retreat. She stressed the importance of starting a movement to get outreach to the community.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

(Recorded by Ruth Atcherson)

M:\2003\Springfield Utility Board\McKenzie Watershed Council\mwc031113.wpd