

MINUTES

McKenzie Watershed Council
Camp Harlow—3850 Country Farm Road—Eugene

Saturday, October 16th
9:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Dorothy Anderson (Eugene Water & Electric Board), Douglas Brooke (Hynix Semiconductor), Bob Bumstead (McKenzie Flyfishers), Kurt Cox (McKenzie Schools), Cheryl Friesen (McKenzie River Ranger District), Pat Gripp (McKenzie Residents Association); Gene Highfill (McKenzie River Guides Association), Linda Mooney (Mohawk Watershed Partnership), Douglass Moser (At-large Stakeholder), Ralph Perkins (East Lane Soil & Water Conservation District), Erik Petersen (Army Corps of Engineers), Charlene Phipps (McKenzie Residents Association), Emily Rice (Bureau of Land Management), Mike Running (McKenzie River Trust), Betty Taylor (Eugene City Council), John Woodrow (Springfield City Council), Jeff Ziller (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife), Council partners.

ABSENT: John Lilly (Division of State Lands), Don Hampton (Lane Board of County Commissioners), Michael Kerrick (At-Large Stakeholder), Mike McDowell (Weyerhaeuser Company).

Megan Finnessy, Juan Welsh, Kate Ferschweiler, staff

Guests: Diane Albino, Mohawk Watershed Partnership, Morgan Ellis, University of Oregon, John Simpson, Eugene Water & Electric Board commissioner-elect; Jim Thrailkill.

1. REVIEW AGENDA AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ms. Finnessy welcomed Council Partners to the annual retreat of the McKenzie Watershed Council (MWC), called the meeting to order, and thanked everyone for coming.

Ms. Finnessy announced the MWC's receipt of grant funds from the Bonneville Power Administration, an education program grant from the Ferguson Foundation, and grant funds from the Bella Vista Foundation for the Confluence Steering Committee.

Ms. Finnessy reviewed the agenda. She asked Partners to suggest future agenda items of interest to them on a list available in the meeting room.

Those present introduced themselves and described their organizations, and their organization's connection to the MWC.

Ms. Mooney noted her pending departure from the Council and introduced her replacement, Diane Albino, as the Council's representative from the Mohawk Watershed Partnership.

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

Ms. Finnessy determined that Partners had no changes to offer to the September 2004 minutes.

Members indicated acceptance of the minutes showing consensus level 3.

There were no objections or further discussion of decisions made at the last meeting.

3. MWC EVALUATIONS

Ms. Phipps facilitated this portion of the meeting, during which Partners broke into small groups for the self-evaluation process. Ms. Finnessy noted that the exercise was being performed as part of the Council's Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) Council Support grant application. The areas for self-evaluation were:

1. Membership, participation, and accountability;
2. Decision-making, meetings, and staff management;
3. Fiscal and project management;
4. Watershed planning and projects; and
5. Citizen information and support.

Members briefly discussed whether they wished to proceed with the exercise, and finally agreed to go forward, acknowledging the role the evaluation process played in securing funding from OWEB.

Following the small group exercise, Partners reviewed the results from each group and placed dots next to those five items that were of the highest priority for them. At the request of Mr. Running, staff participated in the small-group exercise as well as Council Partners. Ms. Phipps noted the priorities receiving the most votes in the five category areas. The results were as follows:

Membership Participation and Accountability

- Increase community involvement through more participation (events, meetings, etc.) (received four priority votes)
- Where's the County commissioner? Lane County Board communication/participation must improve (four votes)
- Increase member participation in projects and activities—more reminders, shared calendar in advance (four votes)
- Continue to bring in diversity to watershed Council (one vote)
- Ensure new member orientation occurs
- Improve member role responsibility (clarify) (six votes)

Decision-Making, Meetings, Staff Management

- What is process of bringing decisions to the Council? Need for creative tension (four votes)
- Clarify supervision by Executive Committee (one vote)
- Bi-annual discussion clarifying membership requirements (five votes)
- Revise contract evaluation process. Entire Council? Cascade Pacific R&D? (one vote)
- Post mission and vision at meetings
- Clarify role of Executive Committee

Fiscal and Project Management

- Volunteers/money needed for project success monitoring (six votes)
- Ensure fair competition for positions, goods, and services
- Greater visibility/knowledge of contractual obligations
- Improve upon the current MWC tracking database (explore alternatives) (five votes)

Watershed Planning and Projects

- Send Partner packets electronically (two votes)
- Include Council news briefs in other organization's newsletters (four votes)
- Need project committee/reports, including a list of past, current, future projects (ten votes)
- Increase staffing capacity—workforce is stretched too thin (one vote)
- Are we working toward our benchmarks?

Citizen Involvement and Support

- Do more to engage community in projects and activities through increased marketing efforts (twelve votes)
- Attempt to fund a volunteer coordinator (four votes)
- Improve communication to citizens/residents that their participation with the MWC is welcome (five votes)
- Continue to offer a diversity of projects to the public

Ms. Phipps said that Ms. Finnessy would create a report based on the Council's evaluations (turned in by Council Partners prior to the meeting) and the results of the small group work.

4. BUSINESS PLAN

Ms. Finnessy reminded the Council that it had gone through a small-group exercise in September to provide her and members of the Executive Committee with feedback on the draft Business Plan. She reported that she had taken the results of the previous month's work and the comments offered by members following that process and incorporated them into the Business Plan. She anticipated the Council would adopt the Business Plan in December 2004 or January 2005.

Ms. Finnessy noted three themes that were common to all three groups participating in the small-group exercise. Ms. Finnessy first asked the Council to determine the role of MWC Action Plans; and to consider whether the Conservation Strategy superceded these Plans? Next Partners were asked whether the benchmark system and associated indicators should be reevaluated and a new tracking system developed, and if so, by whom? She also asked the Council to clarify Partner involvement with ad hoc and standing committees and whether new committees should be formed.

Partners discussed the questions posed by Ms. Finnessy. There was agreement that the Conservation Strategy had superceded the Action Plans to some degree but the Council should not lose the work that had gone into the Action Plans and that many elements were still relevant to the Council's work. Partners acknowledged that many elements of the Fish and Wildlife and Water Quality Action Plans had been realized, but that most of the Human Habitat and Recreation Action Plan recommendations had yet to be implemented. Partners also acknowledged the public input that had gone into the development of the Action Plans. There was general agreement to evaluate the results of the Action Plans to determine whether the work tasks that remained were still relevant. Partners did not want to walk away from those efforts without further check-in with the Plans.

In regard to the second question, Ms. Finnessy reported that Weyerhaeuser had offered its assistance in establishing a new database after the Council had confirmed its benchmarks. Mr. Running recommended that the new committees under consideration could be charged with the task of determining what benchmarks were appropriate for their areas. Mr. Ziller advocated for involving non-Partners in the review of the benchmarks. Ms. Finnessy concurred.

Partners discussed the issue of forming new three committees, an education committee, projects committee, and finance committee. Ms. Finnessy proposed a new meeting format, under which the

Council would meet bi-monthly as three committees following information sharing.

Mr. Running was unsure about the proposed format. He said he liked the monthly educational presentations and thought they were needed to engage the community. He did not think the committees, if formed, needed to meet monthly. He was also concerned about attendance at the committee meetings as the purpose was to get greater Partner involvement. He pointed out the committees would require an additional commitment on the part of Council Partners.

Ms. Phipps suggested the committees could also be an opportunity to engage the community as participants. That would assist in outreach to McKenzie corridor residents. She liked the idea of committees.

Mr. Bumstead noted his agreement with Mr. Running. He liked the educational presentations and felt they were valuable for the Council. Ms. Mooney and Ms. Gripp concurred.

Partners discussed the current meeting format and agreed that they did not want to extend the meeting time. Ms. Finnessy suggested the Council keep its meetings as currently formatted, and suggested the committees formed meet quarterly. She asked if the proposed committees were the committees that were needed.

Partners briefly discussed the role of the Finance Committee, which would meet on quarterly basis in conjunction with the Executive Committee. The Finance Committee would help with the transition to the nonprofit Watershed Alliance, as well as help in identifying funding sources, writing grants, and working to diversify funding. Ms. Woodrow anticipated other Partners would be involved in that committee as well.

Partners agreed with a suggestion from Ms. Friesen that Ms. Finnessy be asked to create some clear expectations for committee members when the different committees were established.

Ms. Rice suggested that the committees could be focused to match the objectives in the Work Plan.

Mr. Bumstead expressed concern about the number of committees and suggested the Council consider smaller, more “nimble” committees.

Ms. Finnessy said that she would create a committee structure that included all the Council’s committees, and return to the Council with that information after a review by the Executive Committee. At that time, the Council could make a decision about which committees to adopt. There was no objection. Ms. Anderson asked Ms. Finnessy to encourage recreation in the committee structure given the impact of recreation activities on the river. Ms. Rice suggested that Council Partners consider involving other people with expertise on Council-related topics.

Financial Recommendations

Mr. Woodward reviewed the proposed budget using a spreadsheet provided to members, which he had prepared to give the Council a better understanding of the complete financial picture. Members asked questions clarifying the details of the spreadsheet, and commended the spreadsheet.

Mr. Woodrow noted the Executive Committee’s recommendations for using Cascade Pacific Resource and Conservation Development Area, Inc. (CPRCD) as the MWC’s financial managers and requesting the Councilor Coordinator to manage a separate nonprofit fund, and for the formation of a standing Finance Committee.

Council Partners, with the exception of Mr. Woodrow, who indicated consensus level 1, indicated support at consensus level 3 for the proposed budget and committee recommendations.

Council Partners thanked Mr. Woodrow for his work in creating the budget.

The Partners took a brief break for lunch. Mr. Woodrow left during the lunch break. Ms. Taylor arrived during the break.

5. ACTION PLAN EVALUATIONS

Mr. Thraikill, former Council Coordinator, used a slide presentation to review the status of the implementation of the Council's Action Plans: Recreation, Human Habitat, Fish and Wildlife, and Water Quality. He provided background on the development of the four plans and noted the Conservation Strategy, adopted in 2002, tiered to but did not supercede the Action Plans. The Conservation Strategy was a means to prioritizing restoration activities in the watershed.

Mr. Thraikill noted that of 94 work tasks contained in the four plans, 27 had been implemented in full, 36 had been partially implemented, and 37 were not implemented at all. He noted the relative success of the Fish and Wildlife and Water Quality Action Plans in terms of implementation. Less had been done to implement the other two Action Plans.

Mr. Thraikill recommended that the Council continue to play on the strengths of its past successes with the Fish and Wildlife and Water Quality Action Plans, that it increase its focus on recreation actions, prioritize the actions in the Human Habitat Action Plan, continue to include work tasks from the plans in the annual Work Plan, and to reaffirm the Council's goals, which Mr. Thraikill believed continued to make sense.

Partners commended the presentation.

Responding to a question from Mr. Brooke about the BPA's role as the major source of Council funding, Mr. Thraikill indicated that the Council had applied for funding under the agency's Model Watershed Program. The watershed was a reference watershed for the State because of its high water quality, the strong local commitment to the resource, and its relatively non-impacted habitat. He noted that the Northwest Power and Conservation Planning Council continued to support the model watershed approach. Mr. Thraikill observed that the Council could leverage \$5 to \$7 dollars in other funding for every dollar of BPA funding.

Mr. Running asked Mr. Thraikill to comment on the question of whether the Action Plans were historic documents. Mr. Thraikill suggested the documents were living and historic documents as well as adaptive management strategies to some degree. He termed the evaluation an "adaptive management feedback loop" and suggested the Action Plans could be considered a sort of constitution. Mr. Thraikill recommended another evaluation of the Action Plans in a few years.

Ms. Anderson suggested that the Human Habitat Action Plan needed more review so the Council could decide what was appropriate and what issues it should become more involved in. Mr. Bumstead mentioned boat landings as a human habitat issue. Ms. Taylor cited the pending designation of Highway 126 as a freight route by the Oregon Department of Transportation and development along the riverfront as other examples of human habitat issues.

Ms. Finnessy provided a brief update on the Highway 126 designation issue, noting that the final decision

had yet to be made. Mr. Thrailkill suggested that issue was a good example of an issue the Council might wish to take a position on using the positions established in the Human Habitat Action Plan.

Partners discussed how to proceed, as a priority-setting exercise had been planned at this point. Ms. Rice indicated a preference for not proceeding with that exercise pending further discussion of the Action Plans to ensure the Council Partners were working from common ground. There was general concurrence.

Responding to a suggestion from Ms. Rice, Ms. Finnessy indicated she would add a review of the Action Plans to the Work Plan to ensure all Council Partners were on the same page.

6. 2004-2005 WORK PLAN

Ms. Finnessy reviewed the objectives in the 2004-2005 Work Plan. She solicited additional comments on the plan, which she recorded. A revised Work Plan will be sent out in the next mailing packet and adopted at the November 11th MWC meeting.

Mr. Running asked Ms. Finnessy to identify how the objectives in the Work Plan tied to the Action Plans.

Ms. Taylor left the meeting at 3:15 p.m. Mr. Ziller left the meeting at 3:28 p.m.

7. RESTORATION PLAN UPDATE

Mr. Welch provided an update on restoration projects in the watershed. The MWC Restoration Projects Program objectives and goals for FY05 include:

- Culvert replacement
- Lower McKenzie Watershed Enhancement Projects
- Mohawk/McGowan Confluence Projects
- McKenzie River Trust collaboration (Green Island and Big Island)
- Exploring potential side channel reopening opportunities
- Funding searches and grant writing

Members briefly shared things about the Council that they were excited about for the coming year.

The meeting adjourned at 4 p.m.

(Recorded by Kimberly Young)