

Draft Minutes
McKenzie Watershed Council
February 8, 2018
Weyerhaeuser Co.
Springfield

PRESENT

Council Partners: Brian Brazil (International Paper), Bob Bumstead (McKenzie Flyfishers), Darren Cross (USFS), Nate Day (McKenzie School District), Daniel Dietz (McKenzie River Trust), Chad Helms (USACE), Andy McWilliams (Resident Partner) Mike McDowell (Resident Partner), Todd Miller (City of Springfield), Keir Miller (Lane County), Maryanne Reiter (Weyerhaeuser), Wade Stampe (Resident Partner), Nancy Toth (EWEB), Sue Zeni (Resident Partner), Jeff Ziller (ODFW)
Staff: Justin Demeter, Jennifer Weber, Amanda Gilbert, Jared Weybright, Chase Antonovich
Guest: Steve Mealy (McKenzie River Guides Association)

ABSENT

Diane Albino (Mohawk Watershed Partnership), Carol Ach (Resident Partner), Arlene Dietz (Rice Family Farms), Lara Colley (Resident Partner), David Kretzing (Resident Partner), Rod Fosback (Northwest Steelheaders), Karl Morgenstern (EWEB), Ralph Perkins (Upper Willamette SWCD), Emily Semple (Eugene City Council)

PROXIES

Wade Stampe for Arlene Dietz (Rice Family Farms), Nate Day for Lara Colley (Resident Partner), Nancy Toth for David Kretzing (Resident Partner), Jared Weybright for Emily Semple (Eugene City Council)

1. Introduction and Approval of Agenda

The proposed agenda approved as written, all partners showing consensus level 3.

2. General Public Comment Session

There was no public comment at this time.

3. January 2018 Meeting Minutes

Consensus approval as presented, all partners showing consensus level 3.

4. Partner Announcements

Chad Helms reported that the USACE has just finished wrapping up the three-day Willamette Fisheries Science Review in Corvallis. Mr. Helms added, that it was a successful event, with an abundance of valuable information being shared.

Darren Cross provided information on the landslide that recently occurred on Forest Service Road 19. He noted that the location of the slide was near Cougar Reservoir's water temperature control tower, and that they plan to have debris cleared, and the road reopened,

by Memorial Day. Mr. Cross added that at this time, the plan is to push the debris into the reservoir pending the appropriate permits.

Bob Bumstead reported on the Salmon Watch volunteer appreciation event that was held at his home on January 19th. Mr. Bumstead was pleased to see members of the Cascade Family of Fly Fishers in attendance, and hopes to further the club's involvement in Salmon Watch. Mr. Bumstead also discussed the annual McKenzie River Guides meeting that occurred in January, stating that representatives from Desert Springs Fish Hatchery were in attendance outlining their plans for the hatchery on the McKenzie. Jared Weybright was also present at the meeting, going over the South Fork project, and addressing questions and concerns. Mr. Bumstead noted that the South Fork project was met with overall approval from the Guides.

Jeff Ziller reported on the stocking schedule for the McKenzie, stating that ODFW hopes to finalize a plan sometime in February or March. He added that it looks like they will be having releases all the way through September, and that the Corps offices in Portland are working tirelessly to get the release schedule finalized.

Keir Miller commented on the recent development boom seen in Springfield and the surrounding areas. Mr. Miller noted that this rise in development is reminiscent of a similar increase seen in 2005/2006, and he would not be surprised if development along the river increases as well.

Nancy Toth reported that, between mid-March and mid-April, EWEB is planning maintenance work at multiple locations. There will be a power plant outage at the Carmen power plant from mid-April through roughly the end of October. Ms. Toth also noted that two additional landowners have signed on to become Pure Waters Partners, with more waiting.

Wade Stampe brought up the McKenzie River Watershed Council's 25 year anniversary, and passed around a publication from the Watershed Council's inception.

Andy McWilliams reported that the Four Seasons of the McKenzie Concert has broken an all-time sales record for that particular symphony, and he anticipates a very successful event.

Daniel Dietz noted that there are a few tickets remaining for the Four Seasons of the McKenzie event, and he anticipates they will sell out. Mr. Dietz would also like to thank ODFW for donating a vault toilet to be installed at the Finn Rock Boat Ramp.

5. Staff Reports

Justin Demeter reported that the WATERS program continued to move in a positive direction throughout the month of January. Middle school classes picked up after a relaxing winter break with Springfield students conducting their service work at the Dehne property on Deerhorn Road, Coburg students continuing at Green Island, and McKenzie Middle School making a difference at Finn Rock Reach. The lesson this month for a majority of these classes has been water quality, with students from SPS performing their testing at Thurston High School's WELL Project lab. The high school aquatic habitat survey teams continued their data analysis (lab time), and presentation preparation. Surveying will resume this month, as weather and flow conditions allow. Water quality teams at both McKenzie and Mohawk high schools resumed field work in January and will begin data analysis and presentation preparation this month. The Salmon Watch Volunteer Appreciation event was a success with approximately 20 people in attendance. Thanks to all that participated! Mr. Demeter also noted that he met with representatives from both WREN and Linn-Benton Salmon Watch in an effort to reinforce a collaborative regional approach to our respective programs.

Jennifer Weber reported that planning for the South Fork Project is ongoing. The USFS released an Environmental Assessment for public comment in early January. At the end of the 30-day public comment period, the MWC will release an RFP and begin work on contract solicitation and development. Final fundraising is also continuing. Site preparation and planning for riparian plantings at two sites, Whitewater Ranch and Filacres, is ongoing, and Ms. Weber is managing both projects. She also completed a post-implementation report for the BWCA Floodplain Enhancement Phase I project, and the report is available upon request.

Jared Weybright attended a two and a half day Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training hosted by the Center for Diversity & the Environment in Portland. The Meyer Memorial Trust (MMT) is funding watershed council participation as part of a basin-wide focus on improving DEI capacity among conservation organizations. Mr. Weybright will be working with directors from other watershed councils and the Friends of Buford Park on a collaborative approach to DEI with a separate grant from MMT. That group met in December and January to plan and discuss a variety of collaborative projects. He will provide more information on this effort at the next Board meeting.

Mr. Weybright attended a second meeting of the Willamette River Anchor Habitat Working group. Restoration projects developed and vetted through this group are eligible for funding through BPA and MMT. Certain projects that were included as priority projects in the group's successful FIP application to OWEB are eligible for that funding source as well. The MWC submitted an unsuccessful FIP application of its own and did not participate in the Willamette FIP process. Anchor Habitat in the McKenzie is limited to the lower river downstream of the Mohawk confluence.

6. Presentation: Cougar Downstream Passage

Kelly Jane, Environmental Resource Specialist, and Jeremy Britton, Technical Lead, for the US Army Corps of Engineers, presented on the Cougar Downstream Passage Project. Ms. Jane introduced the purpose of this project, and its goal of enhancing downstream passage for populations of Upper Willamette River spring Chinook salmon. Ms. Jane provided history on the project as well as an analysis on potential alternatives. She then introduced a schedule prior to identifying the resources that will be evaluated in the Environmental Assessment. The Draft EA is planned to be available for public review in the fall of 2018, with construction beginning in 2020. This presentation includes resources for those looking to provide input on the EA and how to remain updated on the project. It can be viewed on the MWC website.

Mike McDowell inquired as to why these fish are labeled as “Upper Willamette Spring Chinook,” when the fish in question are located on the McKenzie River. Ms. Jane explained that this term is used by the Endangered Species Protection Agency to identify all Chinook salmon that travel over Willamette Falls.

Mike McDowell also inquired about the amount of water stored in the Reservoir. Mr. Britton responded that 1532’ is the standard minimum water elevation to accommodate for flood storage, with levels rising to 1690’ in the summer for conservation purposes.

When Kier Miller asked if the water levels will be drawn down the entire winter season, Mr. Britton stated that instead of filling the reservoir in the Spring of 2021, they will instead begin drawing the water down so that there is no loss of flood storage, which is one of the constraints of the project.

Steve Mealey brought up the issue of an Environmental Assessment being performed, rather than an Environmental Impact Statement, and inquired as to why they are not anticipating negative effects. Ms. Jane responded that the USACE collaborated with ODFW and other organizations to look into significant impacts from this project. Of the ten thresholds, they determined that the greatest threat was to endangered species. During the drawdown, USACE will not have use of the temperature control tower, posing a threat to the downstream water quality. An amendment was made to the EA regarding sediment transport, which is how they were able to determine that if drawn down to 1450’ there is very little likelihood that you will see spikes in turbidity as seen in 2002. There will be no difference between inflow and outflow temperatures, and no impact to migrating adults.

Mr. Mealey asked a follow up question, inquiring as to what major lessons were learned from the implementation of the previous floating device. Mr. Britton responded, saying that the original project was supposed to begin in January of 2002. The project began late, so the water drawdown occurred later, well into March and April. This as we know was a mistake, he continued, and due to a failed culvert at Rush Creek, we were seeing portions of the slope eroding away causing issues with sediment flow. Mr. Britton added that by bringing the river up to 1450’ as seen in the preliminary plans, there will be no turbidity issues. Mr. Britton

continued that it is difficult to comment on how successful this new floating structure will be in comparison to other systems, and that it is going to be determined purely by the fish's behaviors.

When asked what facility this will most resemble, Mr. Britton noted that it is similar to a structure seen on the Clackamas, although it is larger and combines aspects from collectors seen throughout the state.

Jeff Ziller, on behalf of ODFW staff, added that the temperature control tower design has changed significantly over the years in an effort to optimize fish passage and temperature control.

Wade Stamp inquired about how varying species of fish will respond to this structure, specifically Bull Trout and Salmon. Jeremy Britton responded that one of the trickier aspects of this project is figuring out a method for sorting these fish given the drastic size variations across species and life stages. He added that at this point, it appears the fish will be sorted into two groups, which will also mitigate issues with debris in the trap.

Bob Bumstead asked if this plan was finalized or if there was still time to make revisions. Kelly Jane responded that this is the only feasible plan at this time, with other plans being ruled out due to issues primarily surrounding temperature control. She added that this will be outlined in the EA. Mr. Bumstead then asked if adequate funding for this project had been secured, at which point Ms. Jane explained that the USACE had been working tirelessly to secure funding for this project for the last five years.

Jared Weybright asked if there is anything that the USACE would like to hear back from the council, and if there is a rough timeline in place for public comment. Ms. Jane responded that the formal public review will begin when the Draft Environmental Assessment is released towards the end of the year. Any individual or council comment is appreciated and would be best if received as soon as possible.

7. Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Outreach and Fundraising Campaign

Jared Weybright outlined the McKenzie Watershed Council's plans for a Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Outreach Campaign. The goals of this campaign are to enhance awareness of MWC's voluntary and collaborative approach to resource conservation and stewardship, while exploring opportunities to understand and engage new stakeholders. This would ultimately increase funder diversity and support for the MWC by expanding the number of contributing individuals, businesses and organizations. Mr. Weybright expanded on this, outlining potential strategies, audiences, and outreach actions. A rough timeline was introduced, with the campaign scheduled to begin in the fall of 2018 and run through fall 2019.

Daniel Dietz asked if the council had clear goals yet, specifically regarding funding and where the funding would be applied. Mr. Weybright responded with a goal of \$50,000-

\$100,000, noting that he hopes to form a committee to handle much of these tasks. Bob Bumstead supported the idea of forming a committee.

Mr. Dietz noted that there is potential for a member of the McKenzie River Trust to join the campaign.

Jeff Ziller inquired as to when the committee would start meeting. He also noted that it is difficult to ask for donations when there is no specified obligation. Mr. Weybright suggested that they lead with something marketable and highly visible such as the South Fork project. He also noted that although there is no date set for the committee to begin meeting, it is possible to structure the campaign to wrap up towards the end of 2019

Amanda Gilbert noted that she would be sending out a doodle poll soon to all members.

Keir Miller agreed that the council should tie the donations to a project on the ground, although he is unsure about it being education. Mr. Weybright noted that education is referring to work on the ground done by students.

Jeff Ziller suggested that for the next step, a time be set up to discuss the campaign and the formation of a committee, with invitations being sent to all interested parties. He also asked that this get done before the next meeting. Ms. Gilbert said that the council will look to accomplish this by the end of February.

Bob Bumstead proposed a motion to pick a date for the pre-committee meeting, and get it sent out to all board members. The motion was met with a consensus level 3.

Meeting is adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Next Meeting: McKenzie Fire & Rescue, Leaburg. Thursday, March 8, 2018

Presentation: *Western Cascade Fire Ecology*, Jane Kertis and Steve Acker USFS