

Meeting Minutes
McKenzie Watershed Council
April 12, 2018
Springfield Utility Board, Springfield.
Springfield

PRESENT:

Council Partners: Diane Albino (Mohawk Watershed Partnership), Brain Brazil (International Paper), Lara Colley (Resident Partner), Arlene Dietz (Rice Family Farms), Daniel Dietz (McKenzie River Trust), Rod Fosback (NW Steelheaders), Chad Helms (USACE), David Kretzing (Resident Partner), Mike McDowell (Resident Partner), Steve Mealey (McKenzie River Guides Association) Todd Miller (City of Springfield), Libby Morrison (Wildish), Ralph Perkins (UWSCD), Steve Raymen (Resident Partner), Maryanne Reiter (Weyerhaeuser), Ray Rivera (McKenzie River Ranger District), Emily Semple (Eugene City Council), Wade Stampe (Resident Partner), Nancy Toth (EWEB), Kelly Woods (Wildish) Sue Zeni (Resident Partner), Jeff Ziller (ODFW)

Staff: Chase Antonovich, Justin Demeter, Jennifer Weber, Jared Weybright

Guests: Dana Warren, Allison Swartz, Kurt Cox,

ABSENT: Carol Ach (Resident Partner), Bob Bumstead (McKenzie Flyfishers), Nate Day (McKenzie Schools), Andy McWilliams (Resident Partner), Mark Schulze (HJ Andrews Experimental Forest)

PROXIES: Jeff Ziller for Bob Bumstead

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. March 2018 Meeting Minutes

Mike McDowell noted that he was present at the March meeting. Consensus approval of March meeting minutes as amended. All partners showing consensus level 3.

4. Partner Announcements

Rod Fosback reported that the Northwest Steelheaders had recently released 14,750 smolts into the Siuslaw River.

Libby Morrison reported that she would be leaving her position at Wildish, with Friday, April 20th is her final day. Libby added that she would be moving to Washington DC, and is enthusiastic about Kelly Woods, her replacement. Kelly Woods introduced herself as Wildish's new Council representative. She then provided background on herself, stating that she graduated from the University of Oregon in 2007 with a bachelor of science in geology.

She had recently worked for ODOT in Bend, as well as for the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries in Albany prior to starting work for Wildish here in Eugene. Jared Weybright commented that we wish Libby the best in her future pursuits, and greatly appreciate all that she has contributed.

Daniel Dietz reported that the recently installed vault toilets at Finn Rock are not currently operational, but should be open soon thanks to funding assistance from ODFW and EWEB.

Chad Helms reported that the USACE had to shut the trap and haul facilities below Cougar reservoir down and that the Corps hopes to have it back open in roughly a week. Mr. Helms also added that the reservoir is currently 71 percent full, and that water levels are looking better.

Arlene Dietz reported on the newly completed Oregon Water Resource Strategy that was recently published. She added that the document is available to view online, and will give us an idea as to what changes have occurred in the last 5 years.

Nancy Toth reported that EWEB stopped diverting water at Carmen-Smith Dam in preparation for construction at the Carmen Plant. This construction is scheduled to run through October. She also noted that the repairs along the Leaburg canal were completed. Additionally, there will be fish passage facility maintenance and repair work in the Walterville canal June 4th through the 15th. She added that gravel relocation work is scheduled to begin in the next several months. Ms. Toth also discussed how they are excited to be rolling out the Pure Waters Program, with an informational meeting held Monday; April 23rd. Interested parties should contact her directly.

Darren Cross reported that the road closure on US Forest Service Road 19 has warranted a high level of phone calls. He added that they plan to begin removing rock soon. The USFS has already requested and received a number of bids to remove the rock. He estimates the road will be open in mid-June of this year.

Mike McDowell provided details on an informational meeting regarding emergency responses for upriver residents. The meeting will be held May, 31st at 6 pm at the McKenzie Fire & Rescue Station in Leaburg.

Brian Brazil spoke on behalf of International Paper regarding the oil release that occurred on the 13th of March. Mr. Brazil began by stating that their Springfield Mill released oil into a wastewater pipe which then released oil into the McKenzie. They were able to stop further discharge and began working diligently with state and local authorities to remedy the spill. International Paper set up an incident response team that worked from the 17th through the 22nd. Contractors reinstalled the booms, only to find that the spill was not entirely contained which resulted in the cleaning of the full 2-mile pipeline. All flow from the pipeline was cut off on the 22nd, and cleaning occurring from the 23rd to the 29th. Mr. Brazil continued that

following testing on the 29th, there was no oil sheen left and they were able to continue with standard operations.

Ralph Perkins inquired as to the size of the pipeline. Mr. Brazil responded that the pipe is roughly 54 inches in external diameter and passes underneath properties at varying distances from 5 to 35 feet underground.

Steve Mealy reported on the current fishing conditions on the Upper McKenzie. He began by stating that last week he floated from Bruckart to Finn-Rock, landing 15-20 fish throughout the day. Mr. Mealy continued that he feels the McKenzie is fishing as good or better than it ever has. Additionally, on the 23rd of March, the NOAA released an EIS on hatchery genetic management plans for hatcheries in the Columbia Basin. Mr. Mealy continued that the implications are vast when looking at the relationship between wild salmon and steelhead vs hatchery salmon and steelhead. The EIS will deal with the minimum number of wild and hatchery fish that can interact with one another upstream of Leaburg Dam.

Emily Semple reported that the city of Eugene is still having wildlife management issues, specifically with turkeys.

Jeff Ziller followed up on the information provided by Mr. Mealy. He began by stating that when looking at the EIS there are several things taken into account including maintaining status quo production and options for reducing production. A reduction would be for reintroduction rather than fisheries. Mr. Ziller continued that one aspect of this would include the summer steelhead program being absorbed into the wild steelhead program. He said that they could use the money for winter fish in the summer, or eliminate the hatchery program altogether. On the other hand, hatchery production could be increased as well. He continued that next Wednesday is the first scheduled stocking of the season. Mr. Ziller also noted that work on the downstream passage at Cougar Dam is ongoing and that ODFW has been active in the review process.

Ray Rivera brought up the American Fishery Society's prestigious Riparian Challenge Award. Mr. Rivera announced that the Willamette National Forest received this award for the second time in a row. AFS recently awarded the Staley Creek Floodplain Restoration Project, located just above Hills Creek Reservoir, the 2017 prize. The Deer Creek Floodplain Restoration Project received the same award in 216.

5. Staff Reports:

Education Program:

Justin Demeter reported on recent Education Program activities and summarized the staff report included in the meeting packet. Middle school students from Springfield schools have started work at the Landers property located on the Springfield Oxbow priority area upstream of Hayden Bridge. Their initial focus on this site will be ivy removal. Students from Coburg and McKenzie continue to work at their respective sites (Green Island & Finn Rock Reach). This month's

lessons for most middle school teams will be leaf identification. High school teams have been preparing for the upcoming WATERS Conference and will participate in snorkeling activities this month. McKenzie and Mohawk Water Quality Teams completed training in bacteria testing this past month. Special thanks to all of those involved in getting this aspect of their program up and going. The MWC recently submitted a Letter of Interest (LOI) to the Spirit Mountain Community Fund seeking funding for Salmon Watch in 2018. The LOI is seeking \$17,600 for a combination of staff time, school transportation, and substitute teachers' expenses.

Restoration Program

Jennifer Weber provided a summary of recent restoration project planning activities. The 30-day public comment period associated with the South Fork Floodplain Enhancement Project closed in early March. The USFS received multiple comments, most of which were in support of the Project. The MWC developed and released a Referral for Proposals (RFP) pertaining to the South Fork Project. We have completed site visits with several potential bidders and anticipate receiving only a handful of proposals. Final planning with BLM is in underway for the Lower Deer Creek Enhancement Project. Jared and Jen met with BLM Hydrologist Brian Barr to begin planning the implementation and contracting for this project. We are currently working with the BLM to develop an MOU for the implementation of the project.

Contractors wrapped up bare root planting last week, with over 6,375 bare root plants planted at six sites. UO ELP students came to Whitewater Ranch, both to plant and learn about riparian restoration. We have begun spring maintenance at BWCA and will begin at Cedar Creek sites in the next week or so. Staff completed additional Deer Creek photo point monitoring and the accompanying project completion reports for the Deer Creek Phase II project. We are working on an OWEB small grant application for a portion of Vickery Park, immediately adjacent to the BWCA property. A Pure Waters Partners Outreach Open House will take place April 23, at the McKenzie Fire and Rescue as previously mentioned.

Directors/Operations Report

Jared Weybright attended a daylong planning meeting with directors from other Upper Willamette watershed councils, the McKenzie River Trust and Friends of Buford Park. The intent is to develop a network of local organizations engaged in similar work. Jared and Amanda Gilbert participated in a conference call with OWEB regarding a second Focus Investment Partnership (FIP) application for the McKenzie River Sub-basin. The MWC and partners unsuccessfully applied in 2015 and based on current information it is unlikely that the Council will reapply in 2018. Jared will give a short presentation to the McKenzie Clearwater Coalition at their annual meeting on April 8th.

6. Presentation: Riparian Forest Structure, Stream Light, and Bottom-up Drivers of Fish Production in Forested Headwaters

This month's presentation examines the relationship between light dynamics and watershed health in headwaters ecosystems. The presentation looks at the effects light and stream biota in the McKenzie River Sub-basin. Dana Warren, assistant professor at Oregon State, alongside graduate student Allison Swartz, provided an overview of recent shading experiments at the HJ Andrews Experimental Forest, and a gap study in the Gate Creek sub-watershed. The presentation investigated the relationship between forest structure, stream light, and bottom-up drivers of fish production in forested headwaters. Although the study focuses on fish, the primary emphasis was on food structures. Staff will work with the presenters to provide a copy of the presentation on the MWC website.

Steve Mealy inquired as to how cold-water fish such as bull trout factor into this study. Mr. Mealy noted that bull trout are more affected by temperature than light. Mr. Warren responded that adding small gaps might not be appropriate in all locations, particularly for bull trout.

Steve Raymen inquired as to why they chose to study salamanders in this particular study when there are so many other species not taken into account. Mr. Raymen also noted that when using the word gap it often is a term used to justify clear cuts, and why create artificial gaps when we potentially have too many as it is. He continued that he understands the need for a mix of light but too much light can be harmful, and he worries that going in and making limited judgments without total understanding can have long-term impacts.

Ray Rivera responded to Mr. Raymen that this study is not going to allow clearcutting in streams. He continued that the Endangered Species Act requires us to do everything possible to study these areas before we make a decision on how to manage them. Salamanders, he added, are a top predator from an ecosystem standpoint in these headwater streams and that is why we choose to study them. Dana Warren continued that he is here to study stand development and its effects on ecosystems, and currently, the salamanders are feeding at a level similar to the trout in these ecosystems. Mr. Warren added that the study seeks to investigate how degraded are our systems relative to the historic norms. He noted that most work in our forests occurs in areas that are roughly 50 years old, resulting in work that is biased in the context of stand developments. Mr. Warren hopes to change this while investigating how fish, salamanders, and other stream biota respond to forest management that creates a localized area of open canopy adjacent to, and over, the stream.

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm.

Next meeting: Weyerhaeuser, 785 N 42nd St, Springfield, OR 97478

Presentation Topic: TBD