

Draft Minutes
McKenzie Watershed Council
May 10th, 2018
Weyerhaeuser,
Springfield, OR

PRESENT:

Council Partners: Diane Albino (Mohawk Watershed Partnership), Brian Brazil (International Paper), Bob Bumstead (McKenzie Flyfishers), Lara Colley (Resident Partner), Nate Day (McKenzie Schools), Daniel Dietz (McKenzie River Trust), Rod Fosback (NW Steelheaders), Chad Helms (USACE), David Kreitzig (Resident Partner), Todd Miller (City of Springfield), Karl Morgenstern (EWEB), Ralph Perkins (UWSWCD), Ray Rivera (McKenzie River Ranger District), Wade Stampe (Resident Partner), Emily Semple (Eugene City Council), Kelly Wood (Wildish), Sue Zeni (Resident Partner), Jeff Ziller (ODFW)
Staff: Chase Antonovich, Justin Demeter, Jennifer Weber, Jared Weybright

ABSENT: Darren Cross (McKenzie River Ranger District), Arlene Dietz (Rice Family Farms), Andy McWilliams (Resident Partner), Steve Mealy (McKenzie River Guides), Maryanne Reiter (Weyerhaeuser), Mark Schulze (HJ Andrews Experimental Forest)

PROXIES: Ralph Perkins for Arlene Dietz, Sue Zeni for Maryanne Reiter, Jeff Ziller for Ralph Perkins

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. April 2018 Meeting Minutes

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

4. Partner Announcements

Ray Rivera announced that Darren Cross is currently in a public meeting with representatives from the Willamette and Deschutes National Forests regarding proposed changes to the Three Sisters Wilderness. The proposal includes changes to alleviate overcrowding currently seen in parking areas and wilderness trailheads. They are currently looking to limit entry through a permit program, and hope this would decrease the trash left behind while also improving the wilderness experience for many visitors.

Ralph Perkins reported that May 17th, at 7pm, the Willamette Clear Water Alliance is hosting a presentation on attracting native birds. Mr. Perkins continued that they will have a BLM presenter discussing ways to attract native birds to backyard habitats. The presentation will take place at 2580 Hilyard St.

Emily Semple commented that the city of Eugene is currently looking at strategies to increase the housing options in response to local shortage of available housing.

Daniel Dietz reported that June 9th is “Get Outdoors Day,” and that the McKenzie River Trust will be opening up Green Island to visitors. This event is an attempt to rebrand “Walk the Land Day,” and he encourages any interested parties to attend. Mr. Dietz also mentioned that there are volunteer opportunities at Finn Rock Reach in the coming months as a part of their “First Fridays” program, in addition to their “Paddle and Pull” event June 3rd. Additional information about these events can be found online through the MRT website.

Nate Day detailed several upcoming events involving the earth science class from McKenzie Schools, beginning June 1 with a presentation on local geology. Students have been researching landforms and designing museum exhibits with help from Dave Kreitzig, and will be pitching them to the Friends of Old McKenzie Fish Hatchery at the Leaburg Fire Station June 1, beginning at 5:30 pm. The environmental science group has been studying soil health around Finn Rock Reach and will be presenting their findings June 4, at 5:30 at the Leaburg Fire and Rescue Training Center.

Diane Albino reported that she had found some bobcat activity around her home in recent weeks.

Chad Helms reported that the fish facility at Cougar Reservoir had been rebuilding pumps and hope to become operational in the upcoming week. He continued that road 19 is still blocked, and will continue to be closed until roughly late June. Mr. Helms noted that they are still waiting on water quality certificates from DEQ. Once secured, it should take around 30 days to clear the road. Finally, Mr. Helms reported that Willamette Project reservoirs are roughly 90% full, and that the USACE just wrapped up construction at the Fall Creek facility.

Jeff Ziller reported that he had just completed a spawning survey on Deer Creek. He said that they saw a great deal of reds, with 77 found in the project area, illustrating how successful the project had been. Mr. Ziller also reported on a spawning survey recently completed on the South Fork of Gate Creek as a follow up to the “Bring Back the Natives,” program from several years back. According to Mr. Ziller the trout seem to be doing well, as they counted nearly 100 reds in Gate Creek with approximately 60 of them being found in the South Fork. In addition to these surveys, Mr. Ziller has been working to transition towards a pipe bypass system rather than a trap and haul structure as proposed at Cougar Dam. He feels that by eliminating the time fish are being handled and sorted will greatly decrease mortality rates, and plans to give a presentation on this topic during a June presentation to partner organizations. Finally, Mr. Ziller reported that McKenzie River hatchery fish planting had been sorted out between the Guides and the USACE, with fish going in on Thursdays rather than Wednesdays.

Bob Bumstead reported that the vault toilets at Finn Rock boat landing look great, as well as the newly implemented kiosk.

Karl Morgenstern reported that EWEB had several kickoff meetings this month. He detailed a wetland project kickoff party for the 48th street wetlands, as well as a PWP public information meeting to invite landowners to learn more about the program and sign up for riparian assessments. Mr. Morgenstern continued that they had approximately twenty participants at the PWP meeting, and he hopes to have a similar turn out for their Naturescaping Landowner's Workshop May 15th in Leaburg. Lastly, Mr. Morgenstern reported that Willamalane and the City of Springfield have been surveying the Springfield Oxbow and have seen homeless camps effectively decreased just by having a consistent presence.

Ray Rivera reported that USFS and the Xerces Society found a small number of Western Pearl Shell mussels in South Fork McKenzie River during a survey of the Phase I project area.

Karl Morgenstern and Nancy Toth provided a brief rundown on the Willamette Basin Watershed Protection Plan that is currently in the works. With funding from the Meyer Memorial Trust, they are aiming to reduce pesticide use in the Willamette Valley. Mr. Morgenstern added that one aspect of this they are pursuing involves filberts, and the way they control moths in filbert orchards.

5. Staff Reports

Justin Demeter reported that Springfield students continued work at both BWCA and the Landers property near Hayden Bridge, with McKenzie students preparing to begin work on downriver sights. Students from Coburg are preparing a poster summarizing their work at Green Island, with this month's lessons being on both macroinvertebrate and fish ID. Additionally, the 2018 Riparian Olympics is June 6, from 9:30-1:30 at BWCA, with roughly 16 volunteers needed total.

Mr. Demeter continued that the THS and SHS Stream Habitat Survey Teams will continue preparation for the upcoming WATERS Conference. Both teams will survey Deer Creek with the BLM in May, and their work will help document pre- project conditions ahead of Lower Deer Creek Enhancement Project implementation in June-July 2018. Mr. Demeter added that he, alongside the WELL Project Coordinator, are busy with final planning for the WATERS Conference on May 31st. The conference will feature presentations and art projects from both high school and middle school WATERS teams, and all partners are encouraged to attend.

Mr. Demeter reported that the McKenzie Water Quality team took water quality samples at a pond at the Holiday RV Park. The pond has seen an explosion in algae growth this spring and the landowners are seeking options. Coliform results were high, above EPA standards, but below DEQ standards. The pond is fed by a small stream from the other side of the highway.

Ray Rivera reported that there was a large quantity of Western Pearl Shell mussels discovered in Mill Creek. ODFW employees found the mussels above the private property surrounding Rainbow Quarry, and Mr. Rivera believes it is the nutrients from the wetland area above the stream that are resulting in such large quantities of these mussels.

Todd Miller commented that he had recently seen a piece covering the decline of Western Pearl Shell Mussels, on OPB's Oregon Field Guide. Justin stated that he would share results from any future testing with the ODFW and the USFS.

Jennifer Weber reported that the MWC selected BCI Contracting out of Portland to implement the South Fork Project. She continued that BCI has previously worked on the Willamette Confluence Project with the Nature Conservancy, and contracting is underway with final planning and partner coordination. Additionally, Ms. Weber noted that the council will begin contracting for work on Lower Deer Creek in May, while spring maintenance at BWCA and Cedar Creek riparian sites are underway.

Ms. Weber noted that the council is nearing completion on a small grant application for Vickery Park, adjacent the BWCA property, while restoration work at Dehne has been postponed.

Additionally, Ms. Weber reported that the PWP Outreach open house was a success, with nearly thirty landowners in attendance. She added that the council would like to thank Andy McWilliams and other pilot landowners who spoke in support of the project.

Jared Weybright reported that he would attend a three-day Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training in May as part of the Willamette River Initiative process sponsored by the Meyer Memorial Trust (MMT). Ms. Gilbert, in her capacity as the CFWWC Director, will also be in attendance, along with many other surrounding watershed councils and land trusts. Additionally, Mr. Weybright added that he and several other local council directors continue to meet and explore collaborative opportunities. A recently submitted MMT application seeking support for educational programs was a result of this collaboration.

Mr. Weybright reported on the state of the McKenzie Watershed Council's public outreach. He noted that in the council's initial planning documents, the promotion of community understanding and stewardship through outreach and education is identified as one of the goals to achieve the council's vision of health. Although the WATERS program has benefited from well-coordinated outreach, the Council feels that its community outreach isn't as well defined and coordinated. Mr. Weybright continued that the council could benefit from improvement in this area, adding that this would include a well-coordinated approach to event planning, more active partnership development, and public engagement.

6. MWC Outreach

Mr. Weybright noted that when this topic was previously discussed, the Council felt that the idea needed more development, and perhaps a more integrated approach. He added that staff feel a well-coordinated and thoughtful outreach program is necessary to maintain programs such as WATERS in the near future. Additionally, it is the hope of staff that partners will consider developing a working committee to guide the process.

Karl Morgenstern commented that business partnerships and an annual celebration sound great but we need to try incorporate them into one specific event with music, breweries, and other interested community members.

Ralph Perkins commented that the Council has had some of these discussions regarding serving drinks in the past, and the challenges often stem from insurance costs and someone picking up the tab associated with that. Mr. Perkins also added that many residents of the urban areas don't make it out of town very often, and it would be smart to arrange for transportation when looking at events outside of town.

Justin Demeter responded that often times breweries will cover a portion of the insurance costs, if not the entire thing, as part of their outreach programs.

Emily Semple commented that she would like to see people from the metro areas involved as well, which is why it's important to get breweries on board as well.

Mr. Demeter commented on the idea of having activities at Finn Rock reach, adding that there is potential for salmon viewing as well as potential macro dipping at the sight, but due to the sensitive nature of the sight it might be worthwhile to have the primary events at McKenzie High school. He added that this would send the message that it's a fragile area.

Emily Semple suggested involving the rafting community, while Sue Zeni suggested Mt. Rose Herbs. Karl Morgenstern added that Glory Bee Foods is often in favor of events like these.

Nate Day mentioned that Horse Creek Lodge has shown support for upriver activities in the past, and there is potential for mountain bike or river shuttles.

Daniel Dietz was in favor of working with the rafting community, and suggest that a raffle be included.

Jared Weybright inquired as to whether any council members were interested in getting involved. Although he appreciates the event ideas, he noted that the most important step at this point is getting volunteers to work with staff as a coordinated effort, and turn these ideas into something tangible. Mr. Weybright added that although we have the McKenzie River Cleanup and Salmon Celebration, we need additional engagement in-between those events. He also added that it doesn't require a huge planning effort, but there needs to be a planning committee that would meet quarterly perhaps.

Andy McWilliams commented that he was on board with the committee. Daniel Dietz added that members of the MRT would be interested in getting involved.

Justin Demeter commented on the need for more events, describing how he is often questioned about volunteer activities and events following salmon watch trips, and he is only

able to suggest the cleanup in July. He added that there aren't enough events to sustain a consistent network of volunteers and interested community members, yet we have the time and council support to establish one.

Nate Day asked that his name be added to a list of interested parties.

Bob Bumstead proposed they try to draw more people upriver, he added that he is constantly reminded of how clear the water is when taking people down the upper river.

Jeff Ziller added that interested parties need to sit down and figure out what they are really trying to accomplish by forming an outreach committee.

Ralph Perkins commented that it seems like a primary objective would be to help the community feel engaged, as if they're interacting with the council.

Meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm.

Next Meeting: McKenzie Fire & Rescue, 42870 McKenzie Hwy, Leaburg, OR.

Presentation: McKenzie High School WATERS Team