

**McKenzie Watershed Council**  
**May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019**  
**Springfield Utility Board, 223 A St. Suite F, Springfield**

**Present:** Diane Albino (Resident Partner), Brian Brazil (International Paper), Bob Bumstead (McKenzie Flyfishers), Dana Burwell (McKenzie Guides), Lara Colley (Resident Partner), Darren Cross (McKenzie River Ranger District), Nate Day (McKenzie Schools), Arlene Dietz (Rice Family Farms), Sharmila Jepsen (BLM), David Kretzing (Resident Partner), Andy McWilliams (Resident Partner), Todd Miller (City of Springfield), Steve Moe (City of Springfield), Ralph Perkins (UWSWCD), Steve Raymen (Resident Partner), Maryanne Reiter (Weyerhaeuser), Aaron Staniak (Lane County), Nancy Toth (EWEB), Kelly Woods (Wildish), Jeff Ziller (ODFW)

**Guest:** Chuck Tanenbaum (Guest), Backcountry Horseman Emerald Chapter, Chris Pearl, USGS

**Absent:** Sue Zeni (Resident Partner), Chad Helms (USACE), Mark Schulze (HJ Andrews),

**Proxy:** Maryanne Reiter for Sue Zeni

### **1. Review and Approve Agenda**

Arlene Dietz motioned to approve the May 2019 agenda. Agenda approved, all partners reaching consensus level 3.

### **3. Approval of April 11<sup>th</sup> Minutes**

Bob Bumstead motioned to approve the April 2019 meeting minutes. April 2019 meeting minutes approved, all partners reaching consensus level 3.

### **4. Oregon Spotted Frog Monitoring**

Chris Pearl, Wildlife Biologist with the US Geological Survey, Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Science Center reported on the recent work examining the status of Oregon spotted frog populations and their responses to recent beaver activities in the Mink Lake Basin within the upper South Fork McKenzie River Watershed. Mr. Pearl began by providing an introduction to the Oregon spotted frog, and how it fits into the nationwide Amphibian Research and Monitoring Initiative. He discussed the declines in population density throughout the state, specifically the Willamette River Basin, and the ways in which the USGS and other responsible agencies track these populations. Mr. Pearl discussed the recent changes to Oregon spotted frog habitat in the Mink Lake Basin as a result of beavers repopulating the area beginning in 2011.

Maryanne Reiter asked how they capture the frogs. Mr. Pearl responded that it is all hand and net capture, so knowing where and when to find the frogs is the most important part. Ms. Reiter then asked if environmental DNA (eDNA) monitoring is effective. Mr. Pearl responded that it is, but is still being refined and not rock solid. He continued that they are going to utilize it for yellow-legged frog monitoring in different parts of Oregon.

Dana Burwell asked if the Mink Lake Basin suffered any damage from the 2017 fires. Mr. Pearl responded that there was no fire damage seen in the basin during the 2017 fires in the region.

Ralph Perkins asked what resulted in the species leaving the area in the late 90s. Mr. Pearl responded that they are still unsure.

Steve Raymen asked if there is any similar work being done with other frog species. Mr. Pearl responded that California is very active in their research of the federally listed California red-legged frog. He continued that colleagues in Boise and Washington are doing similar work. Mr. Raymen then asked if

there are any efforts to create more of the species via captive rearing. Mr. Pearl responded that they had experimented with it in Washington, but that was prior to the discovery of additional populations in the North Cascades that nearly doubled the overall known population in the state. He continued that captive rearing is expensive and comes with many questions regarding how and when to introduce them into the wild. Mr. Raymen then inquired as to whether there are any connections to declining amphibian populations to fungus as seen in the tropics. Mr. Pearl responded that they are finding traces of various fungi in the skin of many frogs but there is currently no evidence of it having negative effects on our native amphibians.

Bob Bumstead asked if brook trout or cutthroat are more efficient predators of Oregon spotted frog. Mr. Pearl responded that they are unsure at this time, although they are studying it. He continued that there may be an issue with fish and spotted frogs that use springs during the winter.

Arlene Dietz asked if Mr. Pearl could provide more information on the Deschutes populations. Mr. Pearl responded that it is the core of the population in Oregon, with 50-60% of the abundance being in the Deschutes region.

Jeff Ziller asked if there were any frogs discovered in Beaver Marsh, a part of the Mink Lake Basin study area. Mr. Pearl responded that there were several single individuals found in this area. Mr. Ziller asked if any of the discovered frogs had been tagged. Mr. Pearl noted that one of the frogs was tagged and had come from Penn Lake.

## **5. Partner Announcements**

Nancy Toth reported that the Walterville Canal drawdown is still scheduled for the first two weeks of June. She continued that due to the Carmen-Smith outage that Tamolitch Falls is currently flowing. Additionally, Ms. Toth reported that a recent PWP naturescaping workshop was attended by about 20 landowners, all of whom showed interest in the program.

Darren Cross Reported that fire season is on its way, with crews beginning to prepare for a busy season.

Jeff Ziller reported that the prolonged dewatering of the Leaburg Canal is limiting the amount of flow available to the McKenzie fish hatchery. Due to the limited water, they are not able to attract return adult salmon to the facility and have limited capacity to raise fish at the facility. Mr. Ziller continued that taking up operations at the Leaburg hatchery is a possible solution, although it is slated to close on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June. In reference to alterations at the Leaburg Dam fish ladder that would allow for sorting of wild and hatchery Chinook salmon discussed in the last meeting, the process is still ongoing, and Mr. Ziller predicts it will be difficult to get something in place by the time fish arrive due to the required approvals from various agencies. Bob Bumstead inquired about current fish counts over Willamette Falls. Mr. Ziller responded that there is 4,000 or more over the falls at this point, with 500-600 fish recently coming over in a single day. Mr. Bumstead then asked if smolts were released during the recent high-flows. Mr. Ziller responded that they were released as they took advantage of the moving water.

Arlene Dietz reported that Rice Farms is still recovering from the snowstorms in early March. Additionally, the American Water Resource Association is having their annual meeting in Salt Lake, November 3-7, with topics ranging from urban water conservation to water banking.

Sharmila Jepsen reported that the McKenzie River Trust will be receiving salvaged trees from the BLM sourced from the Goodpasture Road area. She continued that much of the wood placed in Deer Creek during recent restoration work appears to be functioning as designed. The installed log jams appear to have stood up well to the recent high flows and have led to an increase in floodplain connectivity. Ms.

Jepsen noted that the BLM and Weyerhaeuser are working together with the McKenzie Watershed Council to complete restoration designs on Gate Creek, with the BLM handling much of the project planning and design. Additionally, a number of timber sales through the BLM are ongoing.

Bob Bumstead reported that the annual Wooden Boat Festival had a great turnout with great weather as well. He continued that this event typically coincides with the opening day of trout season on the McKenzie and is overall a very enjoyable event. Mr. Bumstead also noted that he attended an MRT fundraiser featuring Barry Lopez that had a great turnout, with lots of money being raised as a result.

Dana Burwell reported that the McKenzie River Guides have partnered with the McKenzie Fire and Rescue to once again to carry out their life jacket donation program. Additionally, the guides association is working hard to secure funding for the Leaburg hatchery while also beginning fundraising efforts for the McKenzie River Discovery Center. Ralph Perkins asked if the guides typically get all the life jackets back at the end of the year. Mr. Burwell responded that they typically only lose 10-30 per year while restocking roughly 50-100. He added that they distribute 350 total lifejackets per year.

Nate Day reported that this is a busy time of year for McKenzie students. He continued that students will be presenting on earth science topics at Leaburg Fire and Rescue on May 30<sup>th</sup>, while environmental science presentations will occur on June 6<sup>th</sup> at the same location. Both presentations will occur at 5:30 pm and will include museum design pitches for the McKenzie Discovery Center.

Andy McWilliams reported that the McKenzie River Discovery Center board has a meeting this Saturday to discuss ways to incorporate new technology into the plans. Additionally, representatives will be going to meet with the state legislature to lobby for funding of the Discovery Center. Mr. McWilliams noted that it is important that they draw a distinction between this funding and the funding of the hatchery. Additionally, he reported that Blake Hastings, a local realtor, has been spearheading an effort to establish a local life jacket loan program at Clearwater boat landing on the Willamette. Mr. McWilliams added that if anyone is interested in helping with the program to contact Mr. McWilliams or Mr. Hastings.

Kelly Wood reported that the McKenzie River Trust is holding their annual Get Outdoors Day event at Green Island on June 1<sup>st</sup>. Jared Weybright added that the Council will be tabling at the event, and if any partners wish to help out they may contact him.

## **6. Outreach Committee**

Jared Weybright asked if anyone was interested in joining an outreach committee to help with the planning and logistics of the annual river cleanup and salmon celebration. He proposed the group meet 3-4 times per year, in an effort to help the Council engage with a wider audience. Kelly Wood, Dana Burwell, and Bob Bumstead volunteered to be on the committee.

## **7. Staff Reports**

Mr. Weybright provided updates on the Council's education program. WATERS classes are ongoing, with many of the classes making up lessons that were canceled due to the weather. He continued that the Restoration Olympics will be held in Creswell this year at My Brothers Farm in partnership with the Coast Fork Willamette Watershed Council, with planning for the event ongoing. Additionally, planning for the WATERS conference is ongoing, with the event taking place on May 30<sup>th</sup> at Lane Community College.

Jennifer Weber provided updates on the Council's restoration program, reporting that a recent PWP Naturescaping workshop was attended by over 20 people. Additionally, planning for Phase II of the South Fork Floodplain Enhancement project is ongoing, as staff currently works through bids following the six

pre-bid meetings that were recently conducted on the project site. Additionally, Ms. Weber added that the Council is working with the BLM, MRT, and ODFW to assess in-stream restoration opportunities on Gate Creek.

Mr. Weybright provided updates to general operations and funding, reporting that he will be conducting a South Fork Phase I site tour this weekend with members of the McKenzie Flyfishers. Additionally, the Council site tour of the South Fork will occur on May 24<sup>th</sup>. If Council members who cannot attend are interested in seeing the project, they are asked to contact Mr. Weybright or Chase Antonovich to arrange a separate tour and/or other opportunities. Mr. Weybright then noted that planning is underway for both the Annual River Cleanup and the Salmon Celebration. Mr. Weybright concluded that the June meeting will be a full meeting, featuring presentations from WATERS students as well as a presentation on the Lane County Parks Master Plan.

**Meeting adjourned: 6:30**