

AGENDA
McKenzie Watershed Council
Thursday, May 9th, 2024
McKenzie Fire & Rescue
42870 McKenzie Hwy, Leaburg,
5:15 – 7:05 p.m.

1. Introductions and Approval of Agenda **5:15 – 5:20**
Facilitator Jared Weybright

Please sign in as you enter the meeting so we can identify anyone who would like to opt out of having their responses included in the research study information (see the attached *Research Study Information - Collaborative Futures* Handout)

Attachment: Research Study Information - Collaborative Futures

Action Requested – Approve May Meeting Agenda.

2. Approval of April 11th Meeting Minutes **5:20 – 5:25**

Attachment: April Meeting Minutes

Action Requested – Approve April meeting minutes.

3. Partner Updates **5:25 – 6:00**

For the benefit of our OSU STEM Research Center guests, please include the following in your updates.

- What is your organization and what is your role in that organization?
- Who do you represent (who are your stakeholders?)

Information Only

**4. Presentation and Work Session: Collaborative Futures:
Community-Engaged Ecology to Bridge Research and Local Interest** **6:00 – 6:50**

In response to the 2023 [Lookout Fire](#), the HJ Andrews scientific community, in partnership with the OSU [STEM Research Center](#) and the McKenzie Watershed Council, is launching a cooperative project to engage the local community and interested stakeholders. The intent is to better involve local communities and develop pathways to take their perspectives and values into account during research planning and development. (See attached *Collaborative Futures - Community Engaged Ecology*)

The session will include several short presentations describing the project, HJ Andrews mission and fire-impacts, and partner roles. Following the presentations we will separate into small work groups to brainstorm and respond to prompts provided by the project team.

5. Director's Report **6:50 – 7:05**

Information only

Attachment: Director's Report

Next Meeting

- June 13th, 2024.
- Time: 5:05 – 6:45
- Location: International Paper
- Topic: TBD

Contact: Jared Weybright, 458-201-8150, jared@mckenziawc.org , www.mckenziawc.org

Minutes
McKenzie Watershed Council
Thursday, April 11th, 2024
International Paper

Present: Commissioner John Barofsky (EWEB), Brian Brazil (International Paper), Nate Day (McKenzie Schools), Arlene Dietz (Rice Farms), Susan Fricke (EWEB), Chad Helms (USACE), David Kretzing (Resident Partner), Steve Mealey (McKenzie Guides), Todd Miller (City of Springfield), Ralph Perkins (UWSWCD), Mark Schulze (HJ Andrews), Emily Semple (City of Eugene), Kelly Wood (Wildish), Sue Zeni (Resident Partner)

Staff: Chase Antonovich, Lara Colley, Vanessa Taylor, Jared Weybright

Proxy: Chad Helms for Wade Stampe

Guests: Emily Huckstead (U of O)

1. Introductions and Approval of Agenda

Arlene Dietz motioned to approve the April 11th meeting agenda. Agenda approved as written all Partners showing consensus level 3.

2. Approval of March 14th Meeting Minutes

Arlene Dietz motioned to approve the March 14th meeting minutes. Meeting minutes approved as written, all Partners showing consensus level 3.

3. Partner Updates

Todd Miller reported that the TMDL in the works for the mainstem McKenzie River has been drafted, although it will still need to go through the adoption committee and the EPA prior to approval. He continued that the shade program will likely be leveraged to meet TMDL requirements. Mr. Miller then provided Partners with a paper on covering the warming of the Willamette River from 1850 to present, noting that Willamette River has warmed 1.1 degrees Celsius over the past century due to climate change and other factors such as oversimplification. He commented that this paper suggests that river restoration is more effective in combatting temperature increases than point source cooling. Jared Weybright responded that the MWC shade credit program has 40-50 projects in mind over the next 10 years, with 5 currently up and running.

Darren Cross reported that this Saturday at 1pm, the USFS will be hosting a presentation on their prescribed fire program at the Leaburg Fire Station. He continued that this conversation is put on by the McKenzie valley long Term Recovery Group and Locals Helping Locals.

Commissioner John Barofsky reported that the elected officials float trip is planned for the lower McKenzie this year near where intake is located.

Jeremy Romer reported that ODFW is working with EWEB to do a fish salvage on the Leaburg/Waltermville canal that is currently down. He noted that there is nowhere to put those fish with the dewatering of the hatchery, and because these fish are specific to their drainages, they were able to submit a FERC request to review that plan which resulted in EWEB putting 50-110 cfc of water down the canal so the fish can survive with being transported.

Chad Helms reported that the USACE opened the Fall Creek facility and had 51 winter steelhead.

Ralph Perkins reported that the UWSWCD received a \$1.75 million grant from the Lane Community Health Council to improve small farm production. He noted that there is potential for an additional \$500,000 as part of an effort to support food security locally.

Steve Mealey reported that the USACE recently announced cutbacks in mitigation funding for hatchery salmonids due to budget cutbacks and lack of money to compensate for inflation. He continued that this has significant effects on guides, as there would be no steelhead present in the McKenzie and significantly fewer salmon. Mr. Mealey continued that the Guides Association and other Partners have encouraged congressional support for additional USACE funding so they will wait and see if anything comes from it. He continued that the McKenzie River Discovery Center is planning to repurpose the old buildings at the McKenzie hatchery site, as the initial building design was overly ambitious. He noted that the Center will include 3 areas of focus: the McKenzie River and its watershed, the guides and boats, and the flora and fauna in the watershed. Mr. Mealey noted that they are excited to showcase the restoration work occurring in the watershed and see the Discovery Center as a hub for all the work and history of the area.

Susan Fricke reported that there is an upriver open house, May 23rd at the Waltermville Community Center. She noted that there will be a seated dinner and discussion at each table covering topics such as the Leaburg Dam decommission, the February ice storm, and the septic program.

Public Comment:

Emily Huckstead reported that she has been working with the UO Environmental Leadership Program to conduct in house lab analysis on soil samples from areas throughout the McKenzie Sub basin. She continued that these locations include a site off Highbanks Rd., as well as some baseline sampling from Quartz Creek.

4. Presentation: Quartz Creek Ecosystem Resilience Project Overview

Jared Weybright provided an overview of the Quartz Creek Resilience Project, noting the location of the project and why this site was chosen for stage zero restoration. Mr. Weybright then covered the project's scope of work, and the unique roles that partner organizations have played in the development of this project. Lastly, Mr. Weybright discussed the project budget, noting secured funding sources as well as potential funding sources.

Commissioner John Barofsky asked if there are private partners involved, such as Campbell Global. Mr. Weybright responded that Campbell Global was only approached when negotiating the land deal but was otherwise not involved. He noted that additionally there were over 100 hundred trees that were sourced through private properties involved in the PWP.

Arlene Dietz asked what the elevation change is like in that area. Mr. Weybright noted that it is very low, and that we may see some areas connected to the water table following project implementation.

Steve Mealey asked what the major influence was that caused the incising of the stream. Mr. Weybright responded that it is due to things such as building road systems, forest management not allowing for channel migration, stream cleaning, and beaver removal. He noted that there is some evidence of active channel incision to allow for timber harvest as well.

5. Charter Revision Update

Jared Weybright provided an overview of what changes had been made to the Council charter following last month's presentation to the Council. He noted that the potential Partner range was changed to allow for more flexibility to add or remove Partners as needed. Mr. Weybright also noted that the list of potential Partners in the existing charter was too confusing and thus was replaced with a list of stakeholders or interests.

Mr. Weybright continued that the Partner nomination process was clarified, while also adding that Partners serve 3-year terms and shall affirm their appointments to the Council in a broad way that removes any need for formal acceptance.

Lastly, Mr. Weybright clarified the Steering Committee appointment process and noted that the Steering Committee does not have the authority to make binding decisions on behalf of the Council.

Mr. Weybright called for consensus on approving the revised Council Charter. Council Charter approved as modified, all Partners showing consensus level 3.

6. Director's Report

Jared Weybright announced that the Council is tentatively planning to schedule a tour of the Quartz Creek and Finn Rock Reach restoration sites. Mr. Weybright noted that the proposed date is Friday, May 10th, and that the Council will reach out via email to see who can attend. Lastly, Mr. Weybright noted that the Council is working on planning to hire a PWP Coordinator and Project manager in the coming weeks, with the initial round of applicants being contacted for interviews on April 12th.

Meeting adjourned, 7:00pm.

**McKenzie Watershed Council
Directors Report
May 2024**

1. Operations

Staffing

The McKenzie Watershed Alliance is nearing completion of initial interviews for the PWP Coordinator position. Second-round interviews with the top 3-4 candidates will take place over the next several weeks. Additionally, we have also posted a Project Manager position and received around 70 applications. We will start initial interviews for this position soon. There were many good candidates for the Project Manager position, and I plan to expand the interview pool slightly to accommodate the number of high-quality applicants. We are hoping to get both positions filled as soon as possible.

Staff Trainings

Four staff PWP-affiliated and field-focused staff are taking a Wilderness Survival and First Aid Certification course in May. This is a two-and-a-half-day course done in coordination with other PWP organizations. Joe Ycaza is approximately halfway through a training course for drone pilot certification and expects to complete the course and associated test in June. The organization purchased a drone in January, which will be used to assist with planning, reporting, and outreach content development. Four staff members attended the [Connect Conference](#), in Sunriver, April 16-18. We are also developing plans for new staff to take a DEI course, Building the Foundation, from the Portland-based [Center for Diversity in the Environment](#) (CDE) in September. This is an excellent course that all longer-tenured staff have already taken. CDE is the organization that helped the MWC develop an Engagement Strategy in 2018.

Governing Document Review and Revision

The MWC approve an updated Charter at their April meeting. The Employee Handbook will be the next document to be reviewed internally and then set for legal review.

MWC Steering Committee

The MWC approved the revised Charter at its April meeting. The revised Charter creates a Steering Committee to help guide the Council. We will discuss the formation of the Steering Committee at the June Council meeting. If you are interested in serving on the Steering Committee, please contact Jared or Chase.

MWA Board

Wade Stampe has stepped down from his Board position. The Board is seeking interested volunteers to join the MWA Board of Directors. These are two-year terms. Please contact Jared or Chase if you would like more information or would like to volunteer.

The MWA Board approved the revised By-laws at its May meeting and will review the revised Financial Policy at its August meeting.

Council Meetings, Tours, and Outreach

The June MWC meeting will be back at IP. The original plan to have WATERS students present is not feasible and we are currently exploring alternative presentation options.

We are working on several tours for this spring and summer. The first is a tour of Quartz Creek and Finn Rock Reach on May 10th. The second will be a tour of HJ Andrews in June to continue the discussion with

the OSU STEM Research Center and HJ Andrews staff. The planned tour date for that event is June 10th pending interest and availability from Council Partners. We now also have plans for another McKenzie Geology Tour with Dave Kretzing planned for August 22nd. This will be an all-day tour focusing on geology around Hwy 242.

The PWP will have a table at the upcoming Blue River Block Party on Saturday, May 11th.

2. Restoration Program

Planning is ongoing for the Marten Creek Habitat Restoration Project Phase 2. The project will place approximately 500 pieces of large wood into the creek on BLM-managed lands. The work will occur during the in-water work period, July-August in 2024. We anticipate three days to complete the project.

The final large-scale Holiday Farm Fire riparian mitigation planting was completed in March with approximately 85,000 trees and shrubs planted on 80 acres. An MRT-led planting on Finn Rock Reach was completed in April. The FRR planting includes 185,000 trees, shrubs, and wetland plants across 87 acres.

Restoration design and permitting for the Quartz Creek Ecosystem Resilience Project continues. The MWC is primarily responsible for the large wood round-up contract at this stage of the project and hopes to resume large wood harvest and haul in late May from several sites impacted by the Lookout Fire. The USFS is leading design development and coordinating with NOAA on NEPA compliance, the MRT continues to work on acquisition opportunities, and EWEB supports a range of project elements, including permitting and cultural resource compliance.

3. Funding

The MWA recently signed a \$396k grant agreement with OWEB to replace an undersized culvert on Cash Creek in the Mohawk River Watershed. The funding is sourced from the BLM through Good Neighbor Authority which allows federal agencies to fund work through local partners. The project will include the redesign of the culvert and implementation in 2026 or 2027. The MWA is also working with OWEB and the BLM to reallocate funds originally earmarked for Marten Creek to maintenance and road repair work on Deer Creek and NF Gate Creek.

The MWA has submitted three applications for the developing South Fork McKenzie River Phase 3 project, *South Fork McKenzie River Valley Reconnection Phase 3*.

- NOAA - \$7.5 million (pending)
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation - \$1.5 million (pre-application pending)
- US Fish and Wildlife Service - \$500k (application approved at the regional level, but unsuccessful at the national level).

This project is the largest floodplain project developed to date (335 acres) and is estimated to cost \$10 million. Partners have secured approximately \$2 million to date for early project development and pre-project large wood sourcing. If funding development goes well partners could implement it as soon as 2027 if all goes well. The MWA will likely submit an OWEB application for this project in later 2024 or 2025 depending on the results of the NOAA and NFWF applications.