

Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Council
General Council Meeting

17 Sept 2008
Springfield, OR
6:30 PM

Present: Eve Montanaro, Barbara Hazen, Sean Stewart, Don Hampton, Greg Taylor, Cary hart, Marty Wilder, Jim Noyes, Cristina Watson, Kelly Reis, Erik Petersen, Michael Mattick, Corey Lewellen, Russell Hilken

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Review and Approve Meeting Agenda - Ms Montanaro
The agenda was approved as posted.

III. Council Member's Announcements

- Mr Stewart said that they had done knotweed control in Elijah Bristow State Park, Restoration work is continuing on the Lost Creek Confluence site and the Upper Lost Creek area.
- Ms Reis said that there will be a tour tomorrow in the McKenzie basin to try to attract Federal dollars for projects. She also said that there will be a salmon watch in the Carmen Smith spawning channel. They are looking for volunteers to talk to children about salmon. They will also do the same thing later on on the coast. Anyone who is interested should call her at ODFW. The bull trout are spawning as we speak. Spring Chinook and bull trout spawn at the same time so they didn't put live salmon above the Hills Creek Dam this year. They will put some eggs in the gravel up there later.
- Mr Lewellen said that the Forest Service has been busy with stream restoration. They have put some 400 log pieces in place. The Buck Creek culvert replacement project started today. It should be done in a couple of months. If you're traveling on 21 Road, expect delays. The Forest Service is also working on their own action plan above the dams.
- Mr Hampton said that Oakridge had experienced a water shortage so they built a 1 million gallon water holding tank on top of the hill. They received enough grant funding to build a second tank so they do that nearer to the industrial park. The water source for Oakridge is from wells.
- Ms Watson said that she is getting started in her new education coordinator role and is getting to know the players. Please get in touch with her if you have information you think would be useful to her.
- Mr Petersen said that a blue-green algae bloom had been found in Dexter Lake this week. Samples have been sent to UC Davis. They haven't posted the Lake yet. The City of Lowell water intake is fairly close to the bloom; they will need to manage the risk. Dorena Lake was closed briefly due to bloom. The Army Corps is also busy replacing turbines and runners at the dams. The design engineers have been asked to tighten tolerances and see what they can do for fish passage,
- Ms Montanaro said that Aryana Ferguson will be running the water quality monitoring program. She needs volunteers who can take samples once a month. There are several locations available. The commitment is about an hour on the ground for 2 years. Contact Ms Montanaro or Ms Ferguson at mfwwc @efn.org.

IV. Board of Directors Update – Mr Hart

The Board has been working on the process of becoming a non-profit organization. The August meeting wrapped most of this up including the contract with Ms Montanaro. We have been successful in obtaining several grants including one to fund the False brome eradication project. The 3 positions we had open are filled. Aryana Ferguson is managing the Water Quality Monitoring program, Cristina Watson is the new Education Coordinator and a group, MIG, will be doing the action plan. Mr. Hart thanked Ms Montanaro for her work.

V. Executive Director's Update – Ms Montanaro

The Action Plan consultants have been meeting with Ms Montanaro and have drafted an approach which is open to public comment. (Send comments to Ms Montanaro.) The plan will cover from the headwaters to the confluence of the Middle Fork. It will not be split into public vs private lands. It will cover 10 years. The plan will prioritize work in each of the 13 Fifth field watersheds. There will be four workshops; the first three workshops will involve the specialists and the fourth workshop will present a draft plan to the public for comment/feedback/approval (2, 2009). They will develop a set of evaluation criteria to evaluate the subbasins and to select priority watersheds and projects. The first meeting is Oct 15. The project is to be finished in April or May 09.

VI. Focusing on the Middle Fork Willamette River and Species Recovery; USACE Biological Opinion for the Willamette River – Erik Petersen and Greg Taylor

The Army Corps of Engineers has 130 employees, 13 dams and reservoirs, hydro projects, 5 fish hatcheries, 42 miles of revetments and covers the area from Oakridge to Portland. They have to do what Congress tells them to do. Their primary mission is flood damage reduction. As an aside they deal with hydroelectric power, navigation, irrigation, fish and wildlife, recreation and water quality. The Willamette Valley projects are operated as a system. They generate approximately \$10 million of electricity annually. Their navigation authority is used primarily to support water quality downstream.

There are ESA listed fish in the Willamette River: the Oregon chub, the Columbia River bull trout, Upper Willamette River Spring Chinook and steelhead.. When the fish were listed, the 3 Federal agencies involved in the area had to go thru a process in which they wrote an opinion about how their work impacted the listed species. NOAA and /or USFWS decided if the agencies do impact the species and then what they should do about it. It took 8 years to get this opinion written.

Configurations Operations Plan (COP) is the study process for major structural or operation changes. The difficult part will be quantifying the fisheries benefit. In the area of flow management they will be implementing new things; there will be flow targets for the main stream and tributaries. How do they get the fish above the dam? The original system didn't plan to get live fish above the dams, just their eggs. They need better collection facilities to collect the fish and then truck them above the dams to improved drop-off sites. The dams are too high for fish ladders, dramatic fluctuation in pool size also negates the ladder option. Getting the fish downstream is very tricky. So far there isn't a system to get the fish downstream safely. The Corps has to have downstream passage by 2021. Water temperature is a concern and one of the reasons that some facilities have failed. The plan is to improve the collection site and equipment and gather the fish before they get to the reservoir and then ck them around the dam. Water quality is another factor that the Corps will be looking at, most likely in 2009. The downstream water temperatures need to improve. They will be trying to find a way to create the historic temperatures. The Corps will also be working on habitat restoration. They will make collected wood available for restoration activities. They need to have 2 habitat restoration projects going

by 2010. Then they have to complete additional habitat restoration projects each year from 2013 to 2023. The process for this is yet to be developed. They will most likely work with groups who already have projects going.

The Corps will be checking to minimize the impact of hatchery programs on the wild fish. In the Mid Fork they will have to use hatchery fish to jump start the natural production. In the Mid Fork the genetic material is mostly from hatchery fish. The current suggestion is that the Corps pick 1 site on the Mid Fork and see if they can make it work for the salmon. Mr Taylor's choice is the North Fork of the Mid Fork. While they are planning to do a lot of things to enhance both Oregon chub and the bull trout, they have to balance 1 species against another and try to anticipate and avoid conflict. There will have to be a lot of research and planning to make the right decisions. They will be monitoring the performance of ideas over time.

The Corps' water flow curves are set up on 50 year historical data. Climate change could change the way they do business. They will have to adapt.

A big part of this plan will be finding partners to cost share with.

X. Next Meeting

Topic: Floodplain Restoration in the Lower Watershed

November 19, 2008

Oakridge High School

Oakridge, OR

6:30 - 8:30 PM

Meeting adjourned 8:30PM.

Barbara Hazen

Recorder