

Elk Creek Watershed Council

January 19, 2016 Board Meeting Minutes

Board Attendance

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nick Botner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joe Coons	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Kittelman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bob Rundell
<input type="checkbox"/> Harold Burris	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kittie Coons	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Mast	<input type="checkbox"/> Gene Vroman
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brad Chapman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cindy Johnsrud	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rick Reinhart	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gene Zuiches

Others in Attendance

Jen Bailey, Walt Barton, Lee Russell

Meeting Minutes

Jamie Mast asked for clarification of expenses:

- Lee Russell will provide additional information to Jamie on the following expenses:
 - \$9,493.75 for project management, July – September 2015
 - \$1,371.37 for mileage/reimbursements, July – September 2015
- Jen Bailey will provide copies of past and future invoices to Jamie

The Board approved the minutes of the December 2015 board meeting (motion by Kittie Coons, seconded by Bob Rundell).

Jamie announced that Jen will be taking over Kittie's responsibilities in managing the office and doing the meeting minutes.

Treasurer's Report

The Board approved the Treasurer's Report dated January 19, 2016 with the following additions, and authorized payment of the bills (motion by Joe Coons, second by Brad Chapman):

- \$1,105.31 to Jen Bailey, reimbursement for Brooks Tree Nursery payment for trees/shrubs for Zuiches riparian restoration project.
- \$720.00 to Kittie Coons for office work, October – December 2015.

U.S. Bank: (1 December)	\$ 145,521.81
Deposits: \$ 0.00	
Checks: \$ (27,735.75)	
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U.S. Bank: (31 December)	\$ 117,786.06
Outstanding Checks:	\$ (4,556.79)
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Balance:	\$ 113,229.27
Accounts Receivable:	\$ 14,192.11
Accounts Payable:	\$ (22,735.00)
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Fund Balance:	\$ 104,686.38

Executive Committee and Council Business

Jen gave an update on the DNA Study. She has completed Phase 1 of the study, collecting E. coli samples at 25-28 sites throughout the watershed on a biweekly basis, plus additional follow-up testing. She collected 860 samples from November 5, 2014 to December 18, 2015. Based on this data, we are designing Phase 2 of the study, in which the DNA analysis will be done. Sandy Lyon, the monitoring coordinator for PUR, is our technical advisor. Lee and Jen met with Sandy (and her assistant Joe Carnes) twice in the last couple weeks. We are talking with IEH, the Seattle lab who did the DNA testing for the Smith River study.

Jamie deferred discussion of the Action Plan to Lee's report.

Bureau of Land Management

Jen read the report provided by Jeff McEnroe:

- Upcoming timber sales: None in the Elk Creek Watershed
- Coho run: This is likely to be the smallest population of spawning coho that BLM biologists have seen in 10 years (10% of the 10 year average). See data below on our spawning surveys in Little Wolf Creek.
- Headwaters Elk Creek Restoration project: BLM is looking at doing restoration in about 1.3 miles of the headwaters of Elk Creek. Joe Blanchard, soil scientist, with the BLM will be the project lead. Joe Blanchard, Dan Dammann (hydrologist), and Jeff McEnroe (fish biologist) did some design work on the project about two weeks ago and designed about half of the sites. A number of BLM riparian trees will be used in the restoration. There will likely be a Phase II with the project including some tributary restoration and a culvert replacement. Currently working with Jen Bailey to increase the size and scope of the project onto adjacent private lands.
- Little Wolf Creek spawning surveys:

With the really low numbers of redds and coho we are seeing this year, Jeff started wondering if this was going to be the lowest run on record in 10 years of surveys in Little Wolf Creek. 2007-2008 and 2012-2013 were our two previous low run years. Assuming the peak has already passed, here's what things look like right now:

<u>Reach</u>	<u>07-08</u>	<u>12-13</u>	<u>This year</u>	<u>10 yr Average</u>
LW 1	1	4	4	11
LW 2	11	16	4	62
LW 3	10	20	8	65
LW 5	9	8	8	62
Total redds:	31	48	24	200

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Jen read the report provided by Eric Himmelreich:

- Diamond Lake Update – ODFW has some stocking changes for Diamond Lake in the future due to the recent detection of tui chub in the lake. ODFW plans to add tiger trout to its standard Diamond Lake rainbow trout stocking this June. These brook and brown trout hybrids are reproductively sterile and know to prey on smaller fish – biologists are banking on them to help keep tui chub in check. ODFW and partners also have outlined a stepped-up monitoring plan for Diamond Lake, including hiring two seasonal technicians to conduct additional removal of tui chub and golden shiners via beach seines, fyke nets, electro-fishing, and trap nets. ODFW also plans to monitor the tiger trout population by continuing creel surveys and operating a smolt trap near the lake’s outlet.
- Annual Umpqua Fisheries Enhancement Derby – the annual steelhead derby and banquet and auction will be held on Friday January 29th.
- Monitoring of Fish Restoration Projects – due to the December storms and the long duration of high flows the habitat structures implemented over the last 3 to 4 years have been responding very well. I hope to go out with Jen and Lee or both soon to look at more of the Elk Creek projects.
- Fish Passage – Eric is now in charge of checking all the fishways in Douglas County and maintaining them. The Smith River Fall fish ladder was cleaned out by all fish staff last Monday.

Douglas Soil and Water Conservation District

Walt Barton reported that Congress has overturned the EPA’s ruling on the “waters of the United States”, which essentially made *all* water the property of the U.S. Government, thus giving the EPA and Army Corps of Engineers more power to regulate.

Executive Director

Lee Russell reviewed the Executive Director’s report (see attached). Highlights include:

John Runyon (Cascade Environmental) will have a first cut at the action plan by the end of the month. Lee and he will take it to the council’s technical advisory contacts. The intent is to answer the questions, ‘Where are the fish?’, ‘Why are they there?’, and ‘How can we improve these numbers?’ The goals are to

- design projects more specific than ‘stick logs and boulders in the creek’
- reach out to landowners in a specific, not abstract, way
- justify projects to funding agencies, showing a real planning effort

Lee traveled with Eric Riley (PUR) to attend OWEB meeting on the Focused Investment Partnership. The Umpqua Basin Partnership grant was approved. Bob Rundell asked about

the impact on future funding. A follow-up implementation grant could be \$5-6 million over six years. Lee hopes it will include gathering more specific habitat data than the current 6th-field level of information.

Bob Rundell asked if the I-5 renovations included any upgrades to culverts. Walt Barton explained that most have already been retrofitted with baffles to improve fish passage.

New Business

Jamie announced that the following board members' two-year term expires this year: Kittie Coons, Brad Chapman, Cindy Johnsrud, Nick Botner, Bob Rundell and Harold Burris. Elections will be held at the February 2016 board meeting, including for the officers

Announcements

Walt Barton announced that the annual Weed Day event will be held Wednesday, February 3rd, at the fairgrounds.

Executive Director Report

19 January 2016

Current Watershed Restoration Projects - In Progress:

- I.) **Upper Bills Creek Habitat Improvement: (2015 OWEB Small Grant)**
- Nothing new to report. This project will install simple LWD structures and a boulder weir in this tributary to Fitch Creek.
 - The project will be completed next summer.
- II.) **Zuiches Riparian Improvement: (2015 OWEB Small Grant)**
- Blackberries have been cleared. Trees have been ordered.

2013 OWEB Small Grants:

- III.) **Ellenburg Creek Habitat Improvement:**
- The 2-year monitoring report is due in January.
- IV.) **Curtis Creek Habitat Improvement:**
- The 2-year monitoring report has been completed.
- V.) **Baimbridge Livestock Crossing:**
- The 2-year monitoring report is due in February.
- VI.) **Applegate Livestock Water:**
- The 2-year monitoring report is due in July.
- VII.) **Elk Creek Channel Improvement:**
- The 2-year monitoring report is due in December 2016.

Current Watershed Council Monitoring Projects:

- VIII.) **Bacterial DNA Study (BLM):**
- Monitoring continues.
 - We're in the process of developing a strategy for source tracking.
- IX.) **Watershed Assessment/Bioassessment:**
- Pilot study has been completed.
 - John Runyon is working on the drafts of the action plans.
 - Grants for next season have been submitted.

Current Watershed Council Projects - In Development:

X.) Upper Elk Creek Habitat Improvement:

- Jen Bailey is coordinating a project on adjacent private lands with work that BLM is planning.
- There may be an opportunity to submit a grant to the SW Oregon Regional RAC to fund the private lands work.

Watershed Council Capacity Grant:

XI.) OWEB Council Support Grant:

- The annual report to the County Commissioners has been submitted.

XII.) 2015 Action Plan:

- The latest version of the Council's action plan was approved in April 2014. It is the Council's policy to update the plan annually. We should be able to include some of the recommendations from the Cascade Environmental watershed assessment into the update.

Watershed Action Planning:

XIII.) Cascade Environmental - Rapid BioAssessment:

- The pilot study, conducted this summer, used the enhanced protocols in approximately ten (10) miles of streams in the Jack Creek and Cox/Curtis Sub-watersheds. Data collected includes:
 - Snorkel surveys to document current fish numbers and distribution.
 - Habitat characteristics such as spawning gravels, deep pools and areas of bedrock.
 - Water temperatures.
- John Runyon is working on the first draft of the "process" that will be used to set restoration goals at the sub-watershed scale. This will be reviewed by the technical people that have been involved in developing the protocols – BLM Fish Biologists Jeff McEnroe and Corey Sipher; ODFW Habitat biologist, Eric Himmelreich, and others.
- This "process" will then be used for developing the action plans that will prioritize actions for restoration at a sub-watershed scale.
- These plans will form the framework for detailed restoration plans in other sub-watersheds as the bioassessments are completed.
- Together, the sub-watershed plans will be the basis for a basin-wide comprehensive watershed assessment and action plan.

XIV.) 2016 Field Work:

- Grants have been submitted to both OWEB and the Southwest Oregon BLM RAC for funding to continue action planning in the summer of 2016.
- The SW Regional RAC awarded \$10,000 for the bioassessment project.
- Once we know how much we have to work with, we will establish priorities for this work.

XV.) Landowner Outreach:

- A grant was submitted to the SW Oregon BLM RAC for funding to develop a landowner outreach strategy to provide landowners specific information on salmon usage and conditions on their properties.
- This grant was awarded \$13,310 from the RAC.
- This will be used to enlist landowner support for the projects that will be recommended in the sub-watershed action plans.

XVI.) Umpqua Focused Investment Partnership:

- This will be a major source of future funding for restoration in the Umpqua Basin.
- Funds will come through the Partnership for the Umpqua Rivers (PUR). This may be in the range of \$5-6,000,000 or more over 5 years.
- Funding to develop the restoration action plan that will guide this work has been recommended for approval by OWEB staff. The plan will probably be completed sometime in 2017.
- The action plan should identify priority watersheds and priority actions.
- It is important that the Elk Creek Watershed Council be represented in this process in order to take part in the restoration projects that will be identified in the action plan.