

Elk Creek Watershed Council

November 15, 2016 Board Meeting Minutes

Board Attendance

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|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nick Botner | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joe Coons | <input type="checkbox"/> John Kittelman | <input 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 type="checkbox"/> Rick Reinhart | <input type="checkbox"/> Gene Zuiches |

Others in Attendance

Jen Bailey, Walt Barton, Lee Russell

Meeting Minutes

The Board approved the minutes of the September 2016 board meeting (motion by Joe Coons, seconded by Cindy Johnsrud).

The Board approved the minutes of the October 2016 board meeting (motion by Brad Chapman, seconded by Joe Coons).

Treasurer’s Report

Lee Russell had two bills to add to the Treasurer’s Report of November 10, 2016:

- \$84 to the Oregon Department of Justice, for taxes
- \$450 to the Sunnydale Grange, for October – December 2016 rent

The Board approved the Treasurer’s Report of November 10, 2016, with these two additions, and payment of Accounts Receivable (motion by Brad Chapman, seconded by Kittie Coons).

Beginning Balance: 1 October 2016		\$77,551.98
Deposits:	\$10,000	
Checks:	(\$10,833.94)	
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Ending Balance: 31 October 2016		\$76,718.04
Deposits		\$15,834.17
Outstanding Checks		(\$18,269.92)
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Balance		\$74,282.29
Accounts Receivable	\$22,904.00	
Accounts Payable	(\$534.00)	
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Fund Balance		\$96,652.29

Executive Committee and Council Business

Jamie Mast reported that the Executive Committee has been working on various issues, but had nothing specific to propose to the Board as a whole at this point. He deferred discussion to Lee’s report.

Bureau of Land Management

Jeff McEnroe had nothing to report this month.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Eric Himmelreich attended in person to deliver his report and contribute to the discussion throughout the meeting.

- With the completion of this year's in-stream work period, Eric currently has more time for meetings and project development.
- Evan Leonetti is taking the ODFW lead on the Buck Creek project. He has arranged for Chris Claire, ODFW Habitat Restoration Biologist from Coos Bay, to visit the site this Thursday. Chris designed a fish passage project that entailed jackhammering a channel through bedrock, an approach suggested for Buck Creek by Jim Muck (NMFS).
- Jen Bailey asked Eric about his experience with the program to work with school kids to add Christmas trees to in-stream log structures. The trees are collected after Christmas and installed in the creeks in February. This both enhances the structures and provides an educational opportunity to the kids. Evan Leonetti is the ODFW lead on this, as the STEP Biologist tasked with working with the public. A schoolteacher in Reedsport is coordinating the program, which they are doing again this year on Fitzpatrick and Sawyer Creeks. Permitting issues are being resolved by going through the BLM ARBO permitting process. A waiver is granted for working in the stream outside of the July - September in-stream work period. Jen is researching this "Christmas Trees for Salmon" as a potential outreach/education project.

Douglas Soil and Water Conservation District

Walt Barton shared his experience with the Endangered Species Act's recovery plan for the Rough Popcornflower, a vernal pool (seasonal wetland) plant that grows only in the Yoncalla/Oakland/Sutherlin area. The recovery plan specifies that there must be at least nine sites, with at least 5,000 plants each, to down-list the plant. They are on target to down-list by 2020. Walt noted that landowners cannot get in trouble for removing endangered plants from their land (as opposed to removing endangered animals). While grazing typically negatively impacts wetland sites, the Rough Popcornflower (an annual) benefits from such disturbance. Sites on private lands are not counted towards meeting the goals of the recovery plan though. Walt

DSWCD included spurge laurel with the Portuguese broom and gorse spraying this year.

The Local Advisory Committee for the Umpqua Agricultural Water Quality Management Plan approved the most recent version of the plan. The next update will be in 2018.

Walt is still trying to track down a bridge for the Yoncalla Creek project. It has been difficult to find anything reasonably priced, especially in the 89' length.

Executive Director

Lee Russell reviewed the Executive Director's report (*see attached*).

Lee noted that we are gaining traction on the bioassessments. The BLM RAC grant was 100% funded. The OWEB grant has been resubmitted. The goal is to survey 25 miles next summer.

The board discussed the Umpqua Focused Investment Partnership. Eric Himmelreich noted that getting everyone on board is a big undertaking, and he's not sure how it's going to work out. Walt Barton wants to see the priority areas to be worked on. Lee believes that the scope of the plan is too broad – it reads as an economic development plan.

Bob Rundell shared that a landowner on lower Hardscrabble Creek is interested in restoration work on his land and may be open to CREP. Lee and Eric plan to visit the site.

The board discussed the challenge of getting OWEB funding for projects that do not include riparian fencing. This seems to be a requirement of the current Regional Review Team. Eric said he was supportive of our projects to Mark Grenbemer at OWEB, and that the Jack Creek OWEB grant was one of the best ranch projects Eric has seen. Walt Barton elaborating on techniques to keep cattle out of the streams without fencing: stock water and feeding stations installed away from the water have had documented success. OWEB's strategy appears to prioritize enhancing habitat where fish are already present vs. restoring habitat to extend their reach. This may focus on forested land to the exclusion of agricultural land, which is critical passage and rearing habitat. The executive committee will pursue these topics with Mark Grenbemer.

Lee is planning on a modified watershed assessment plan for Big Tom Folley that will show Seneca what has been done on their land, how it is working, and what we'd like to do.

New Business

The Board decided to cancel the December 20th board meeting, given its proximity to the Christmas holiday (motion by Brad Chapman, seconded by Kittie Coons).

Adjournment

Executive Director Report

15 November 2016

Current Watershed Restoration Projects - In Progress:

- I.) **Upper Bills Creek Habitat Improvement: (2015 OWEB Small Grant)**
- Riparian planting will be completed later this winter.
- II.) **Zuiches Riparian Improvement: (2015 OWEB Small Grant)**
- Final Completion report in progress.

2013 OWEB Small Grants:

- III.) **Elk Creek Channel Improvement:**
- Project completed. The 2-year monitoring report is due in December.
- IV.) **Gilliland Erosion Control:**
- Project completed. The 2-year monitoring report is due in June 2017.

Current Watershed Council Monitoring Projects:

- V.) **Bacterial DNA Study (BLM):**
- Nothing new to report.
 - Jen is managing the analysis of samples by the Seattle lab.
- VI.) **Watershed Assessment/Bioassessment (BLM):**
- Survey work for 2016 started on August 6th. Surveys were done on Hardscrabble, Ellenburg, part of Jack Creek (Reach 3), and part of Tom Folley Creek.
 - The BLM RAC grant for 2017 work was approved by the SW Oregon RAC.
 - 100% - \$29,210.
 - The OWEB grant was resubmitted.

Current Watershed Council Projects - In Development:

- VII.) **Headwaters Elk Creek Habitat Improvement:**
- The boulder structures were re-designed and the OWEB application resubmitted.
- VIII.) **Jack Creek Habitat Improvement:**
- The Jack Creek project was scaled down to include only the section where there are no livestock accessing the creek, and resubmitted to OWEB.
 - The BLM RAC application was approved at 64% - \$20,264.
- IX.) **Yoncalla Creek Livestock Crossing:**
- Nothing new to report. We still need to locate a suitable bridge.

X.) **Ellenburg Creek Habitat Improvement:**

- Preliminary analysis of the bioassessment data show almost no coho use in the lower reach of Ellenburg Creek. We will work on getting landowner permissions to prepare a proposal for habitat improvements in the upper reaches.

XI.) **Elk Creek Fish Passage Improvement:**

- Jen is working with PUR to develop a joint project to improve fish passage at a failing culvert on Elk Creek near the Headwaters project.

Watershed Council Capacity Grant:

XII.) **OWEB Council Support Grant:**

- The main reason OWEB used to reduce our funding related to outreach to the community and inclusion in the council. We have talked about a website and a Facebook page to expand access to the council's activities.
- The structure for both the website and the Facebook page have been set up. Jen and I will start adding content to both.

XIII.) **Watershed Council Self-Evaluation:**

- OWEB requires a self-evaluation every two (2) years. Courtney Shaff's revision for this process is now available.
- The Executive Committee has started working on the OWEB forms.

Watershed Action Planning:

XIV.) **Landowner Outreach Grant (BLM):**

- This BLM RAC grant (\$13,310) will begin landowner outreach for rapid bioassessment work in priority sub-basins.

XV.) **Umpqua Focused Investment Partnership:**

- My fear is that the strategic action plan that is developed by this group will just be another synthesis of "broad" data at sixth-field scales with little more specific actions other than to focus more planning, or a recommendation to implement each core group's existing action plans.
- After a long conversation with Kendra Smith, I'm not optimistic that this process will lead to a project-based action plan.
- The partners met on November 8th to review the first drafts of the goals and objectives. A lot of talk about economic and social goals and the scope of the plan. Not much was resolved.
- The partnership agreed to meet every 2nd Tuesday to work on the plan.

Other Activities:

XVI.) **2015 State and Federal Taxes:**

- Tax returns are due December 15th.