

Elk Creek Watershed Council

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

August 20, 2019

Board Attendance

× Marvin Akins	× Brad Chapman	✓ Cindy Johnsrud	✓ Bob Rundell
✓ Susan Applegate	× Joe Coons	✓ John Kittelman	× Gene Zuiches
✓ Nick Botner	× Kittie Coons	✓ James Mast	
× Harold Burris	✓ Linda Galetti	✓ Rick Reinhart	

Others in Attendance

Jen Bailey, Lee Russell

Meeting Minutes

The Board approved the July 2019 meeting minutes (motion by Susan Applegate, seconded by Rick Reinhart).

Treasurer's Report

The Board approved the Treasurer's Report of August 14, 2019, and the Accounts Payable, with the addition of \$750 to North Douglas Cutters and \$1,638 to 4-Q Timber (motion by Bob Rundell, seconded by Rick Reinhart). Lee will provide his project management invoice for \$4,033 to James Mast for review.

Beginning Balance: 1 July 2019		\$75,837.56
Deposits:	\$32,428.65	
Checks:	(\$59,002.35)	
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Ending Balance: 31 July 2019		\$49,263.86
Deposits		\$23,130.00
Outstanding Checks		(\$35,212.36)
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Balance		\$37,181.50
Accounts Receivable	\$7,879.15	
Accounts Payable	(\$39,545.05)	
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Fund Balance		\$5,515.60

Executive Committee and Council Business

James Mast have reported that the Executive Committee met once in the last month, to get updated on current projects.

Bureau of Land Management

Jeff McEnroe reported: “We are starting a small, restoration project in Big Tom Folley and North Fork Big Tom Folley tomorrow. We are spending out the remaining \$30,000 that is at PUR and about to expire. Kevin Saylor Excavating is going to place some of the snow down trees into the streams where we did the restoration work last year to enhance those structures. The project should take about 4 days.”

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Eric Himmelreich supervised the installation of 75 sites on Jack and Hardscrabble Creeks in the last month.

Douglas Soil and Water Conservation District

Walt Barton consulted with the Jack Creek land manager on development of two springs for off-channel livestock watering facilities, and will be providing drawings.

Board of Directors Report

Susan Applegate reported that ODFW Corvallis Research just completed their annual survey of Elk Creek on her property (below the bridge on Elkhead Road), and found more than 100 juvenile coho, more than they’ve seen before. Good news!

Council Coordinator

Jen Bailey reviewed the Council Coordinator’s report (*see attached*). Much of the work on the Jack and Hardscrabble Creeks Restoration project has been completed in the last month. Submitted photopoints and other documentation required by the grant agreement, to begin making fund requests of OWEB. Nick Botner recommended planting apple trees in the riparian area for wildlife.

Executive Director

Lee Russell reviewed the Executive Director’s report (*see attached*). He shared a draft of the new restoration plan. The rapid bioassessment survey on Big Tom Folley and associated tributaries is complete. Cascade Environmental will provide an in-depth anecdotal summary of their findings and impressions on fish use and distribution, habitat conditions and past restoration projects. Bob Rundell noted that there’s a bad culvert on Seneca’s land.

Lee explained that OWEB is continually raising the bar on what is considered a high-functioning watershed council. We are one of only three watershed councils that uses contractors, instead of having employees. He expects this to become an issue for the 2021–2023 biennium council support grant. In terms of restoration grants, we need to

show more planning and monitoring to make the grants competitive, focusing on quantitative results that demonstrate effective changes in habitat.

Old Business

Bylaws – Jen will distribute the proposed revision to the bylaws (with corrected references to the Oregon Revised Statutes) in next month’s board packet.

New Business

Strategic Planning – The Board discussed Lee’s recommendation that the Board hire a consultant to work with it to develop a strategic plan for the organization. Susan pointed out that it is not feasible for the Board to come up with strategic plan without Lee’s leadership, guidance and experience. Jamie asked Lee to bring a recommendation of consultants and funding sources to the next Board meeting.

Adjournment

Elk Creek Watershed Council

Council Coordinator Report

August 20, 2019

Restoration

1. Jack and Hardscrabble Creeks Restoration

- Instream Habitat Restoration: ODFW has signed off on Rundell Inc.'s placement of 75 instream habitat structures along 3.5 miles of Jack and Hardscrabble Creeks. The original designs specified 363 logs, but Snowmageddon 2019 presented the unique opportunity to add significantly more LWD (large woody debris) to the project. At least 150 trees with rootwads, along with numerous downed riparian trees and large branches, fell directly or were moved into the creeks. Willamette Valley Forestry augmented the eight instream structures on Lower Jack Creek with ~300 donated Christmas trees.
- Hardscrabble Creek Bridge Replacement: Engineer Don Porior has signed off on Rundell Inc.'s construction, after multiple site visits. ODFW handled fish salvage and follow-up inspections. Excavation of the basalt bedrock took longer than expected for the bridge abutments. The gate and fencing will be replaced before hunting season.
- Jack Creek Livestock Crossing: The railcar bridge is in place, courtesy of the landowner (funding), Douglas Soil and Water Conservation District (design), ODFW (fish passage approval) and Rundell Inc. (construction).
- Jack Creek Riparian Restoration: The landowner is halfway through clearing 2.6 miles of streambanks along 1.3 miles of Jack and Johney Creeks, mulching and mowing the blackberries and brush. They start riparian fencing (minimum 35' setback) this week. Willamette Valley Forestry will plant native trees and shrubs this winter, and has bid on the three-year, twice-yearly herbicide regime to which the landowner has committed.
- Jack Creek Off-Channel Livestock Water: Walt Barton visited the site with the land manager, and is providing detailed technical guidance on spring development and watering facilities.
- Grant Funding: The grant agreement is now in place with OWEB. Provided required documentation (landowner agreements, secured match forms, permits, photo points, etc.) to submit funding requests.
- Riparian Planting: Willamette Valley Forestry will plant 5000 willow stakes along five miles of Jack and Hardscrabble Creeks this winter. The crew will also plant trees and shrubs along 1.3 miles of Jack and Johney Creeks. Negotiating to expand the scope of the project to plant conifers along at least half a mile of Hardscrabble Creek, including the necessary herbicide treatment.

2. Clover Creek Livestock Water Improvement
 - The landowner has completed the work, and we are one receipt away from submitting the final documentation to OWEB.
3. Turkey Crick Livestock Water
 - The rancher has completed most of the work.
4. Kennerly Stream Protection
 - Walt Barton met with the landowner to kick off implementation of the project.
5. Lower Jack Creek Livestock Water
 - Now that the instream work is complete, the landowners can fence the riparian area. They've been busy with many related projects, so work on the livestock watering pipeline and troughs has not yet begun.
6. Ellenburg Creek Habitat Improvement
 - The OWEB Regional Review Team recommended funding this project, but ranked it 11th out of 17 projects. This will fall below the funding line for this grant cycle. While OWEB won't provide feedback on the grant application until the end of September, the revised application is due at the end of October.
 - Eric Himmelreich and I will survey the creek above the bedrock ledge for juvenile coho. The blockage has been cleared since the 2016 survey, and the expectation is that coho are present. There's more than another mile of high intrinsic potential coho habitat upstream of the ledge, along with a culvert due to be replaced.
 - I'm setting up an on-site visit with ODFW, BLM and others to refine the instream designs, incorporating the Snowmageddon 2019 trees with rootwads, and evaluating upstream instream work.
 - ODFW Corvallis clarified that the 'permanent denial' on their spawning surveys is limited to the first .4 of a mile of agricultural private land.
 - Still pursuing the fact that Ellenburg Creek is now on EPA's 303-d list for biocriteria.
7. Buck Creek Fish Passage
 - Eric Himmelreich and I will survey for juvenile coho above the project area.
8. Big Tom Folley Instream Restoration
 - Cascade Environmental completed the rapid bioassessment survey of Big Tom Folley and key tributaries. We need to plan for an October 2019 OWEB technical assistance grant for project development.
9. Yoncalla Oil Spill Funds
 - Douglas County Natural Resources wants to submit a grant application for amphibian habitat development on Billy Creek. Full disclosure, on my own land! Will be lining up technical review of the project, and exploring opportunities for instream habitat work on Billy Creek in general, as our watershed assessment highlights Billy Creek as high potential for winter and summer coho habitat.

10. OWEB Small Grant Program

- Waiting on small grant team to be re-established for the 2019–2021 biennium, as there are at least four potential projects on the horizon.

Council Support

1. Bylaws

- Bylaws need to be updated to be consistent with the Oregon Revised Statutes.

Communications and Outreach

1. Landowner Contacts

- Ongoing contacts with landowners, including a recent concern about water quality on Elk Creek.

2. Landowner Free Lunch

- The Landowner Free Lunch program has been scheduled for Saturday, March 14th at the Drain Civic Center.

3. Brochure

- How can watershed assessment outreach effort benefit this project?

Executive Director Report

20 August 2019

OWEB Restoration Grants:

I.) Jack and Hardscrabble Creeks Restoration: (#219-2029)

- The edits that OWEB required were submitted and the grant agreement signed and returned.
- OWEB is requiring that some conditions be met before they will release funds.
 - ODFW certification that instream designs meet criteria established in the OWEB Aquatic Habitat Guides.
 - Establishment and map of project photo points. This requirement is being added to all OWEB restoration grants.

II.) Ellenburg Creek Instream Restoration: (#220-2009)

- The OWEB Restoration Grant was submitted on April 29th. The total request was for \$183,375.
- Seneca has agreed to donate lots of trees with root wads that went down in the snow storm. This should make it a great project.

Watershed Council Assessment & Planning Projects:

III.) Cascade Environmental Data Evaluation & Restoration Plan:

- We met with Seneca to show them the results of our habitat analysis on Ellenburg Creek, and how we will use this to prioritize restoration in the Elk Creek Watershed.
- John Runyon has submitted a draft of the restoration action plan for the Elk Creek Watershed. I'm working on reviewing and editing it.
- We should have a final draft for approval at the September Council meeting.

IV.) Landowner Outreach and Education Grant (BLM):

- Cascade has used some of this grant to develop the presentation materials that we presented to Seneca for restoration in Ellenburg Creek.
- This format can be used in the development of landowner outreach materials for any subwatershed.

V.) Watershed Assessment/Bioassessment (BLM):

- The bioassessment survey in Big Tom Folley Creek was completed on July 29th.
- Cascade Environmental is reviewing and entering the data into the GIS database.
- The final component of this contract will be an initial report on the findings with supporting graphs. I've asked that this include anecdotal summaries of the reaches that will give Seneca land managers an overview of the fish use and distribution, habitat conditions, and past restoration projects and their effectiveness.

Watershed Council Fiscal Management:

VI.) OWEB Council Support Grant:

- The final completion report and fund request for the 2017-2019 biennium has been submitted and approved. Final payment should be received by the August meeting.
- After several edits to the council support budget, the application for 2019-2021 funding has been approved. We will be recommended for full funding for 2019-2021 - \$122,900.
- The Board should note that the budget edits moved **all** expenses associated with council management to “Contracted Services.” This means that any expenses such as office supplies, software, postage, etc. will be part of the contracted services agreements.

VII.) Douglas County CREP:

- Payments for the April to June quarter have been received.
- Applications for 2020-2021 are due September 13th.

VIII.) Oregon Weed Board Grants:

- The final payments for the 2018 Weed Board grants have been received.
- The 2019 Woolly Distaff - Patterson’s Curse application was approved - \$48,576.

IX.) NRCS Farm Bill Assistance:

- The first quarterly report and fund request have been submitted to OWEB.
- This is the first report for this grant. We’ll see how smoothly it goes through OWEB.

X.) Umpqua Basin Collaborative:

- The Umpqua Basin Collaborative has not met for more than a year. Until someone steps up to provide the leadership to move this forward, the Umpqua will not be able to submit an application for an OWEB implementation grant.
- I talked with PUR’s new interim executive director about interest in trying to get funding for a “Coho Business Plan” for the Umpqua. This plan would be focused on coho restoration, and open up new sources of funding.

Watershed Council Organizational Development:

XI.) Strategic Planning:

- The Council *really* needs to consider some long-range planning. Articulating even a rudimentary vision for what the council should look like in the future can help shape strategies to achieve council goals. Planning can also clarify obstacles, and strategies to overcome them.
- The strategic plan should also establish the Council’s priorities, and guide the expenditure of resources to achieve priority goals.
- This plan, and the process to develop it, needs to be generated by the Council Board. The Council should consider hiring a consultant to facilitate the process.

XII.) Action Plan:

- The Council’s 2018 Action Plan is obsolete and needs to be updated.
- The Action Plan should reflect the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan.