Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council  
September 17, 2007  
Meeting Minutes

Present:
Staff: Troy Baker, Jacqueline Boatman, Bob Bower, Bob Chicken, Will Lewis, Brian Wolcott
Guests: Jon Brough, Larry Givens, Chris Hyland, Kevin Lindsey, Brian Mahoney, Tom Straughan, Tonya Dombrowski

Meeting started: 7:03  
August Minutes stand approved.

Update on WWBWC Proposals to Wash. Department of Ecology  
Funding decisions have been pushed out to a later date. Both monitoring proposals are being held up  
Reduction in funding likely, but it looks good for most of the funding to come in.

Update on WWBWC Proposals submitted to OWEB  
OWEB Meeting in LaGrande. Friday will have answer about three proposals  
Zell Ditch Diversion / Burlingame Corral Relocation / Lampson Levee Setback  
Talked with Karen based upon request around the state they look good for funding  
Small grant for water users of East Mud Creek – will be reviewed by the Regional small grant review group  
The East Mud Creek proposal is for 6 headgates, and mainline pipe that serves two users

New projects for OWEB  
Education/Monitoring/On-the-ground Restoration Activities. Ideas on what we will be putting together.  
Ideas:  
Two bulges with partial funding – looking to see if we could match BPA with state funds  
Additional ponds in Weston Mountain  
John Brough - Local American Legion parking lot canal – bury it  
Hudson Bay’s primary POD takes water out at Nursery Bridge  
Agencies looked to take water down stream  
Study of putting in alternative water system for the HWY corridor by a switch to deep water – to address water quality / water safety issues.  
Feasibility studies for this could fit in the non-cap funding  
Hulette Johnson – Another small county like ours did a loop system. Connecting the loop so the pressure system was much better that way. Here it would involve the County road area.  
Brian – Should the storm water issues be tied together – April 08 – Assessments grants  
Board thinking:  
John Zerba – I don’t think we are close to having enough parameters to propose  
ED Chesnut – reading about new program for exempt wells on the Washington side – we should take a look at additional use would put us in that situation – Hermiston is in a critical water state / how far are we from that point? Add the component of future expandability – run water and sewer to state line

Project Updates  
Cottonwood: Contractor has delivered rock for the structures that will help turn the creek. This will help form meanders again – Richard Ray remembers seeing steelhead / has trout. Project moving forward.

Eastside: Had 1 contractor verbal bid and another will deliver tomorrow. Higher than available funding – trying to come up with additional $10,000 dollars. Work window talking with ODFW they are very probable to say we can go into October. Once it starts, it should take 2 weeks for instream work
**BPA Walla Walla River Flow Contract:** Expense Contract 07-08 has been signed. The Capital Funding after NEPA study completed - looking for cultural sites and then write a report on the project site.

**Update on HCP Walla Walla**

- Different draft alternatives – idea is to have those finalized in November or December – no action alternative (maintaining the current or backing to 18 cfs in summer) the other actions are looking at addition mitigation measures adding in the other water diverters below Gardena farms – bypass and get some protection for being involved – this will reduce the need for another fish rescue like the one in late June to move fish up stream in Lowden area – flow issue that exposed rocks

Kat Brigham - Tribes are pushing for Oregon – Washington to protect the instream flow – if the council would pass a motion to protect it would be an additional support

- Ed Chesnut – if we put 17 over nursery is it going to be in all the way to the Columbia
  
  Kat’s suggestion makes sense! Let’s get it on the table

Keith Wood – it’s not a Washington state law

Kevin Scribner – water law is done by the states – State of Washington has no mechanism to protect that water – they have allocation – Salem is talking to Olympia – there are some things shy of a bi-state compact – Ecology can not do what OWRD does on that side

- Larry Givens – Does US FISH and Wildlife have the same agreement for Washington as Oregon?

  Kevin Scribner – according to the water policy, they can’t protect the water– right now they are trying to get people down the river to keep the water going – this may stimulate them to talk through agreements

  John Zerba – The Districts have voluntarily left water in the river

  Kat Brigham – we have to figure out how to do this because the state may not put more money into it

  Larry Givens – Federal rules don’t seem to apply to Washington as they do to Oregon?

  Kevin Scribner – they don’t know that those users are putting fish in jeopardy – now sparked by the fish rescue they may come under the Settlement Agreement lens

Brian Mahoney - NOAA is looking at that area now that those fish were rescued – they had been there two weeks earlier – two adults and two dead fish

Bob Bower – Instream flow: we talk like we can track it! Focus always ends on these end users and the twenty new homes and wells may be the problem. In reality outside of huge diversions, it is impossible to track water like this and yet we talk about instream flows. It may not be just people with a pump in the river that affect this problem

  When we did the full seepage runs – two or three years the 27 to 25 cfs was reduced to 3 cfs were getting to that point – we are using everything other than 3 cfs – there are so much on the instream flow irregardless to all the connections with groundwater uses

  Kevin Scribner –Washington side of the basin is closed – they won’t do any retroactive,only from now forward – Washington is over-appropriated – must find senior users willing to provide protected insream water

Larry Givens – I’ve driven all summer along the river, Milton-Freewater to Hermiston – that is pumped all summer long – why does not federal rules applied
Brian Mahoney – study of juvenile fish that will give real information down and up will take 4 – 10 years to collect with pit tags – we’ll have complete life history on those fish – this data will assist ODFW and WDFW to determine the water needs for the river

Bob Bower – there are legal issues about protection the water – scientifically it is impossible to track

Kat Brigham – Feasibility study will require that water protected before federal funds will be awarded – we don’t have to find a way to do it, we just have to say we want it

**Kat Brigham made a motion** – Ed Chesnut second – all in favor – Vern opposed – draft letter at next meeting

Vern Rodighiero – I know it’s not protected – we are still getting the same water to town – with less water who’s going to get the short end of the stick – WW River always went dry – Little WW system was the route for all the summer water, not through the main stem – the Tumalum branch – we are changing the historical way water moved through the valley.

*Correction from October review of meeting minutes:*

Vern – would like to clarify his statement about the request to present a letter.

“If we give 25 cfs and the amount of the river drops we could be giving the whole river. Vern would like to see that number be a percent rather than a set number amount.”

**EQIP**

Helps farms by providing 50% cost share to manage water and land. EQIP has an easy application – NRCS folks will help you get though it – it can help fund orchards and vineyards – like to see some other proposals go forward in this coming year.

**The Washington Group – Kevin Scribner**

Develop an equivalent to the Watershed Council on Washington side

They legislate for planning – the planning unit’s watershed plan is now complete

Recognition that is being reviewed – do the existing structures have the capacity to do all that the plan has outlined to accomplish – as well as the WMI – if the structure has the capacity to implement the WMI – The next couple of months there will be a process to design a mechanism of shared governments – inviting Brian Wolcott to inform what is on the Oregon side – so we can link up the WWBWC – and also possibly with the Snake River recoverably board

A week from Wednesday there will be a kick off meeting – to have reps from Washington also Brian Wolcott and John Zerba – the Washington side effort wants to inform and be informed by Oregon. May come to a compact with common policies on both sides of the border – we will have reports at every board meeting

**319 Program – Tonya Dombrowski**

The 319 program is being re-tooled to be more strategic and interactive. We can work with you rather than just reviewing a final proposal. Specific dollars to specific watersheds. WWBWC staff have identified several good project ideas. If you have information or interest in other projects I’d be interested in talking with you hopefully we can get this in place soon – Brian Wolcott has contact information

Vern Rodighiero – pesticide detection final numbers / dropped 70% since last year

Troy – in the process of final report – looking good

Announcements - Bill Duke is ODFW Fish Habitat Biologist now, replacing Tim Bailey.
Bob Bower – was approved to fund Jon Brough and Ray Williams to go to the recharge conference
$1600 Oct 28th – Nov 2nd in Phoenix, AZ

The motion was made by Stuart Durfee – Kevin Scribner second and all were in favor

Over at 8:45