Present:


Guests: Jon Brough, Ron Brown, Teresa Yeager, Gary Miller, Eric Hoverson, David Haire, Marshall Barrows, and John Stephenson.

Regular Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by John Zerba

(22:25-22:29)- Review of minutes from October meeting – John asked if there were any additions or corrections to the previous meeting’s minutes. None were given and the minutes were approved as submitted.

(22:30-1:18:35)- US Fish and Wildlife Service Presentation regarding Bull Trout Recovery in the Walla Walla Basin – Marshall Barrows and John Stephenson provided a summary of status of the local bull trout population and the status of recovery planning. There was an emphasis on bull trout migration, low flows and fish passage barriers their studies have found.

(1:18:42-1:33:40) Walla Walla River Protected Instream Flows Report – Brian showed a map of BPA funded past projects, such as irrigation efficiency & piping that have been completed by WWBWC, the irrigation districts, and others to conserve water from since around 1999-2000. He discussed some new projects that we will be doing soon. There is a current list of conserved water projects that have been reviewed by the state and enrolled in the conserved water program as instream water rights. Conserved water in Oregon with instream rights is at around 20 c.f.s.

(1:33:42-1:39:35) Walla Walla Bi-State Stream Flow Enhancement Study and Water Planning Update- Brian gave an update from the quarterly meeting. They reviewed the 5 project bundles. All were based around an anchor project, either a reservoir or a Columbia River exchange and even a combination of the two. It became obvious with the water we have available for storage that we were going to need to bundle some smaller projects. They discussed turning the overseeing committee into a more formalized group that would have some degree of authority in overseeing the implementation of the projects. They also came to an agreement that if and when we implement a big project, that water would replace the voluntary by-pass water that’s being left instream for the fish bypass agreement. As part of this discussion, we really wanted to make sure that our state water management agencies are taking a proactive role in assisting with all of this and especially in protecting stream flows. Brian passed out a letter that was drafted saying that WWBWC, WWWMP and the tribes are working together to put together this Bi-State flow study and we would like to see the state agencies step up and protect that water.

(1:39:36-1:44:59) Nursery Bridge Fish Passage and Habitat Design Update- Brian showed a slide of an alternative plan using the fish ladder which addresses the issues of getting water to irrigators and alleviating the fish passage issue. The new plan would use the Eastside fish ladder and an alternate diversion point to hopefully reduce the instream construction that needs to be done every year to get water into the current diversion.
Couse Creek Entrance Fish Passage Design Update- Tetra Tech is working on designs to raise the riverbed to help eliminate the fish barrier and improve the habitat for possible Chinook and Steelhead.

WWBWC Board of Directors’ Nominations- John, Ed, Clark and Ray’s terms all end at the end of December. Wendy has spoken to all of them and they are all willing to stay on the board if so elected. Joelle, has resigned her position and so we also need to vote on whether you all think we need to fill her position or not. It is not imperative that it be filled according to the By-Laws, we are still in compliance. Sean nominated all 4 gentlemen to retain their positions with Ralph seconding. Unanimous vote in favor of all 4 retaining their positions. Vern motioned to keep the board at 13 members for the time being with Ed seconding. It was a unanimous vote in favor of the motion.

Education and Outreach Program Updates- Graham would like to apply to the Gray Family Foundation for an $8,000 planning grant.

Announcements-

- OWEB Hydrology Monitoring Proposal sent to OWEB
- Project completion updates at the Dec. 18th meeting
- WW Water Management Partnership board member vacancy
- Oregon Department of Agriculture Water Quality meeting on 12/5/17.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Next Meeting: December 18, 2017, 7:00-8:30 p.m., in the Rotary Room, Milton-Freewater Community Building, 5th Ave. and Ward St.

The times in the brackets next to each topic refer to the location of that topic in the meeting recording. There are copies of the recordings located in the “Board Room” on the WWBWC website.