

Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council Meeting
November 17, 2025
Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Board Members: James Baker, Jeff Catlin (Zoom), Ed Chesnut, Caty Clifton, Jack Ferrise, Joel Huesby, Steve Irving, Ralph Perkins, Vern Rodighiero, Kevin Scribner (Zoom), John Zerba

Staff: Michelle McClellan, Wendy Harris, Sara Harris, Tara Patten, Luke Adams, Eric Hoverson, Cat Garza

Guest(s): Mark Medina, Chris Kowitz (OWRD), Travis Trumbull (WWRID), Nina Lottsfeldt (Washington Water Trust via Zoom), Harlan Gough (Washington Water Trust via Zoom)

(7:00 PM) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair John Zerba.

(7:05) Business

- The October 20, 2025 meeting minutes were reviewed.
 - Motion: Ed Chesnut moved to approve the minutes.
 - Second: Vern Rodighiero
 - Vote: Motion passed unanimously.
- Board Nominations (Annual November Action)
 - Board members with terms expiring on 12/31/25: Caty, Jack, Joel, and Kevin
 - Each affirmed his/her wish to serve another term
 - Motion: Ed Chesnut moved to approve continuation of Board service for another term for all four Board members.
 - Second: Vern Rodighiero
 - Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

(7:15) Water Availability in the Walla Walla Basin (Oregon Side) – Chris Kowitz, OWRD

- Presentation summary
 - Water availability in the Walla Walla River for winter or non-irrigation season appropriation.
 - Classification of the Walla Walla River Subbasin and associated program rules.
 - Concept of reservations of water and the aspirational 40,000 acre-feet set aside for future storage projects.
 - Water availability reporting system (WARS) and its limitations – WARS is an allocation tool, not a representation of actual water availability.
- Discussion on water availability and storage
 - Chris presented data on water availability in the Walla Walla River, then discussed the challenges of allocating water for storage, including the need for a 200 cfs diversion capacity.
 - Vern Rodighiero and Joel Huesby raised questions about the impact of water diversions on natural streams and the potential for recharge projects.

(7:40) Water Decision Support Tool Demonstration – Nina Lottsfeldt, WWT

- Interactive mapping tool review
 - Partner project layers
 - Flow gage integration
 - Water right place-of-use analysis
 - Applications for Basin planning
- A discussion ensued about future funding needed to incorporate WWBWC projects into the tool.

(8:10) Expand & Lead Discussion – Basin Big Issues List

- Travis Trumbull gave an update on Nursery Bridge to add to the Basin Big Issues List.
- A brief discussion ensued about the possibility of the Project Committee taking ownership of list maintenance and share-outs.

(8:20) Announcements and Closing

- BAC Implementation Workgroup
 - November 19, 2025, 9:00-11:00 AM, WWCC Water and Environmental Center (in-person and Zoom)
- Valley Giving Guide
 - December 2-31, 2025
 - Sara Harris gave an overview of WWBWC's participation and campaign components.
- BAC Meeting
 - December 3, 2025, 1:00-4:00 PM, WWCC Water and Environmental Center (in-person and Zoom)
- Next WWBWC Board Meeting
 - December 15, 2025, 7:00-8:30 PM (in-person and Zoom)

(8:26 PM) Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 PM.