



Hood River Watershed Group

*"...to sustain & improve the
Hood River Watershed through
education, cooperation, & stewardship"*

SEPTEMBER 24, 2019 MEETING MINUTES

Watershed Group Members Present

Chuck Gehling	John Buckley	Alexander Ross	Shane Keep	Holly Cocolli
Cindy Thieman	Heather Hendrixson	Megan Saunders	Kathryn Arendt	Craig DeHart
Doug Thiesies	Janeen Tervo	Darcy Saiget	Annie Berinsky	Natalie (HS)
Rick Ragan	Jim Wells	Greg Short	Chris Baker	Kate Conley
Alix Danielsen	Karen Freeland	Katie and Simon Crafts		

Welcome and Introductions

At 6:00pm, Chuck Gehling welcomed everyone to the September meeting and started a round of introductions. There were 22 people in attendance.

Review and Approval of Last Meeting Minutes

Chuck asked if there were any corrections to the June minutes. No changes were noted and the group approved the minutes.

Monthly Informational Presentation

Kathryn Arendt, fisheries biologist from the U.S. Forest Service, presented on the West Fork Hood River 2019 Instream Habitat Restoration Project. The project was implemented between July 16th and August 12th and represents the completion of the Watershed Restoration Action Plan for the West Fork. Kathryn described the partners involved in the project, including Forest Service staff, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs, the Watershed Group, and Ecotrust Forest Management. Project was picked because of the gentle topography and the opportunity to reconnect the floodplain and sub-surface groundwater connection. Target conditions included increasing the number of pools, increasing the number of large wood pieces, decreasing fine sediment, and increasing spawning gravels. The project utilized a helicopter to deliver large wood to avoid disturbance that would have been caused using a skidder. Logs were from a parking lot project at Meadows ski area.

Approximately 11 structures with between 15-20 trees were constructed. This reach was previously treated with some rock structure and cabled log engineering that, based on photo interpretation, have proved to be effective. This project built on the previous work to build more scour pools and reactivate floodplain. A campsite and road were decommissioned to avoid disturbance to the riparian area and stream. Kathryn noted that projects are often done from downstream up to build the base for water retention.

Old Business

Eastside Lateral Pipeline Construction – OWEB and OWRD grants

Cindy explained that the design for the Eastside Lateral pipeline is close to 90% and the project is now moving into the implementation phase. Cindy is planning to apply for approximately \$300,000 of OWEB funding in October and approximately \$2-3 million of OWRD funding in April. Current secured funding from NRCS and CTWS totals ~\$1.8 million, but there is still approximately \$ 6.5 million to secure. Total project funding will be in the range of \$8-9 million. Cindy noted that this report is an update and consensus is not needed. The group concurred and is in favor of pursuing this grant funding.

Proposed Watershed Group logo update

Alix gave an overview of the development process of the new proposed logo. The original request to the designer was for an updated high resolution file, but the designer progressed with a logo design upgrade. The Watershed Group decided to take advantage of the upgrade opportunity. The design has been through several rounds of edits,

incorporating feedback from members at the annual picnic, Operations Committee members, and staff. Alix and Cindy asked for any final input on the proposed version of the logo. The group concurred that the shape of the mountain and the shape of the snow should be tweaked to be more representative of the view from the Valley. With minor tweaks to the shape of the mountain, the group provided first consensus approval for the proposed logo.

Columbia Insight Letter of Support

Columbia Insight requested a letter of support from HRWG to accompany grant applications to several foundations to help fund a series of articles on water. In June, Cindy suggested that the HRWG provide a letter of support that indicates our support for the Columbia Insight articles. Cindy walked the group through the letter, which includes a brief description of how our mission relates to water, our willingness to provide information to support the articles' development, and that we appreciate having a local media organization that can provide in-depth coverage of local issues relating to the watershed. The group concurred and provided second consensus approval to provide a letter of support to Columbia Insight.

New Business

Hood River Delta Fish and Water Temperature Monitoring – OWEB grant

Cindy described that the purpose of this funding would be to monitor temperature and fish presence at the mouth of the Hood River and Nichols Basin. Cindy has been communicating with Michael McElwee, the Port Director, about restoration opportunities at the mouth of the Hood River, and recently introduced the idea to a fisheries biologist from USGS and NOAA Fisheries. Questions that came up from NOAA Fisheries and others is how fish are currently using the mouth and why fish migrating up the Columbia don't seem to hang out in the cold water of the Hood River at the mouth. To address these questions, and to establish a baseline/pre-project understanding, we are proposing to analyze fish use of the area and temperature. Partners would include the Port, USGS, ODFW, CTWS, and HRWG. Cindy is proposing to pursue this project and apply for monitoring funding from OWEB. The group concurred and provided first consensus approval to pursue OWEB monitoring funding for the Hood River Delta Fish and Water Temperature Monitoring.

CIG Pipeline Pollinator Habitat Project

Heather provided some background on the genesis of the project, and how the SWCD came to be the applicant for this project. The project will create pollinator habitat on 2.7 miles of FID pipeline and will serve as a pilot to develop best management practices that can be utilized for other infrastructure projects around the state and beyond. The grant has been awarded and the grant agreement should arrive soon. The group concurred and provided post-grant award consensus approval for the CIG Pipeline Pollinator Habitat Project.

Mt. Hood National Forest Climate Vulnerability Assessment – letter requesting information sharing with local stakeholders

Cindy described that Mt. Hood and Willamette National Forests are conducting a climate vulnerability assessment. Hood River Forest Collaborative, Wasco Forest Collaborative, Clackamas Stewardship Partnership, and Sandy Basin Watershed Council have drafted a letter to the Forest Service expressing interest in taking part in information sharing about the assessment. Information would likely be shared at a joint presentation. The group concurred that participating in the information sharing would be worthwhile and were supportive of being a signatory on the letter.

Reports and Announcements

Coordinator Report: Cindy briefly described the status of the Bear Creek Fish Passage project design, noting that the design is currently at 60% and is being reviewed by the Forest Service. Additionally, Cindy wrote a grant to partially fund the implementation of the West Fork at Red Hill Instream Habitat Project in 2020. The grant was ranked first and recommended for funding by OWEB staff. Brian Bair from the Forest Service will be doing the design, and the Watershed Group will be working with USFS and the Tribes on project implementation next summer.

Project Manager Report: Alix gave a brief update on the Action Plan Financial Plan contract. An RFP was distributed, and one contractor submitted a proposal. Dianna Alves and Lisa Brown of Fresh Take LLC submitted an impressive proposal that met the requests within the RFP. Alix spoke with several of their previous clients and received positive feedback. A contract has been sent to Fresh Take to be signed. Additionally, Alix described the status of the Neal Creek Instream Habitat Restoration Design Project. The OWEB TA grant was recommended for funding but fell below the staff recommended funding line. The Pacific Power Blue Sky Habitat Fund was awarded and Alix is working with Interfluve to develop a contract and begin the project surveying this fall. The OWEB TA grant will be resubmitted in October in the hopes that the full design can be completed next year. Alix is also assisting with the financial management of the DID Distribution Pipeline Project over the next few months – construction is set to begin October 1st. The HRWG website is in development, and a polished draft of the site should be available by the end of the month. Lastly, the Sense of Place lecture that Cindy and Les will be presenting will be on January 15th and will focus on the major events that have shaped the Watershed over the past 30 years.

Member Announcements:

Megan Saunders announced the FID fish salvage on October 1st and asked for volunteers to help. Contact Megan to sign up.

John Buckley announced the EFID fish salvage on October 25th. He also mentioned that this year they have noticed significant levels of juvenile lamprey in the District's canals and ODFW is looking into the issue. Megan Saunders noted they have the same issue in FID – that no screen is small enough to keep the ammocoetes out. John recommends that the Watershed Group line up another lamprey presentation to increase awareness.

Heather noted that the new SWCD website (www.hooddriverswcd.org) is live. Watershed Group meeting documents will continue to be shared on their website until the Watershed Group's new website is live.

Greg Short noted that the Fish Commission is going to close the Chinook fishery this week.

Shane Keep followed up about the EFID fish salvage, requesting volunteers. Contact Shane to sign up.

Summary of Consensus Items and Establishment of Next Meeting

Items that Received First Consensus:

- HRWG approval, with minor tweaks to the shape of the mountain, for the proposed logo.
- HRWG approval to pursue OWEB monitoring funding for the Hood River Delta Fish and Water Temperature Monitoring.
- HRWG approval of the CIG Pipeline Pollinator Habitat Project.

Items that Received Second Consensus:

- HRWG approval to write letter of support for Columbia Insight grant applications to write articles on water.

The next Hood River Watershed Group meeting will be October 22, 2019.

Adjournment

Chuck thanked the group for attending and adjourned the meeting at 7:52 pm.

Reported by: Alix Danielsen