

MidCoast Watersheds Council
Meeting notes Dec 4 08

Introductions: 19 folks

Recorder's report: 1 official action

At last month's meeting a motion was made to approve providing \$2000 worth on in-kind services to support the Lincoln Soil and Water Conservation District's proposal for the Mid Coast Basin NPS Implementation Initiative May 2009-May 2011 and to send a letter of support and commitment by Friday Nov 14th.

Treasurer's report: \$42,993 in bank at end of November.

Education Program: TMDL Implementation Plans: Bridging science, policy, and community action by Stacy Polkowske, Lincoln County Soil and Water Conservation District .

Stacy reported on her graduate school thesis project which was working with the Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Council to do TMDL implementation plans for cities of Lowell and Oakridge with guidance from her OSU masters program.

She gave a background to water quality issues and regulations in the U.S., in Oregon and in the Willamette bringing the group up to speed with the history of the current TMDL regulations and requirements. She noted that until the 1950s the big challenges in the Willamette were point sources—from sugar beet production, meat packing plants and raw sewage. It wasn't until 1958 that even sewage was required to be treated to secondary standards on the Willamette (but not Portland) The Federal Water Quality Act in 1965 began making additional changes, with discharge permits required by 1968. In 1969 the Oregon State Sanitary Authority, first established in 1938 to begin dealing with sewage issues, became the Oregon DEQ. The EPA was established in 1970 and the Clean Water Act was passed in 1977. Section 303(d) of the Act requires States/Tribes to identify impaired or threatened water bodies and develop TMDL plans to address those problems. In 2000 the Oregon DEQ committed to implementing the TMDL program in Oregon on a 10 year schedule. [It was reported by a board member that this was a result of a lawsuit brought by NW Environmental Advocates, forcing action in Oregon]. There are approximately 693 river miles in Oregon that violate at least one water quality standard.

There are many components, details to the TMDL plan and there are different standards for different species and ecosystems, all designed to protect beneficial uses and the most sensitive organisms in the aquatic ecosystems.

In regards to temperature, for example the standard would be 64 degrees, and no measurable surface water temperature increase is allowed to result in higher temperatures.

She noted that TMDL's were not "self-implementing"—that is there is no specific requirements to work with watershed councils or others for implementation. The objective is to identify potential non-point and point sources of water pollution and present feasible and realistic management strategies to deal with them. She stressed that TMDL plans have the ability to bridge the gap between water quality policy and science and community action, with community based natural resource management organizations (e.g. watershed councils, SWCD groups)

being the key connections that the designated management agencies (the cities, who are responsible for making progress) need to draw on.

Through her work, a project plan was created for each community. It was a matrix followed by a narrative of how to deal with identified problems, but the big challenge was getting buy-in to the process—especially folks like City Council members.

e.g. Solar radiation input was the primary source of temperature pollution problems. (The streams need trees located within a 70% angle of the center of the creek to get shading all day long). Suggested solutions in the matrix were for example: Changes to the City development code to establish or enhance riparian protection requirements, work with the Watershed Council on riparian projects, education.

Another suggestion was that the wastewater treatment plant in Oakridge might divert a portion of their secondary treated discharge to the riparian flood during summer months (on USFS lands) rather than into the river.

The Cities she worked with did submit the plan in time, but it was more of a last minute thing as the City didn't have time and resources so they only gave themselves 6 month to meet the deadline. There were other challenges because of conflicting ideas, feedback and input between Oregon DEQ and the Cities and the Corps which operates Dexter Reservoir wasn't even in communication with them. She often played the mediator role.

In addition to the plan submission, other accomplishments were the development of a power point template for watershed councils delineating the top 5 things that they could do.

They have 2 years to implement plan. The DEQ checks up on progress at 2 year intervals and see if city is making benchmarks or they can be fined and the cities are required to submit progress reports. If DEQ fails to do this, EPA can. These communities needed to have plan in place by April 2008; by 2010 all communities in state will have to have implementation plans in place.

Comment: I think this was a comment from the festive audience. I'm not sure this is correct. I'll have to check.

In regards to Stacy's work with the Lincoln SWCD, she is working on the temperature, bacteria and DO issues here. One of the things that interest her here is the shade model being developed. She also will works with agricultural landowners through the SB 1010 process especially as it relates to water quality plans. She will also work with the Local Advisory Committee in the area which Wayne and Elmer are on.

Refreshments—with continued thanks to Jan Christensen for providing food and beverages

Special Comment—Elmer Ostling commended Fran Recht for her taking on the small grants program tasks and presented her with a certificate. He said that he is undertaking a small grant project which is rocking in a feeding area that gets pretty muddy and doing some riparian planting which should be completed this week. This pocket of funds is pretty helpful and he appreciates the work.

Technical Team Report: John Spangler gave the report and noted that is was a short meeting. There was a discussion about stepping back and taking a look at where we are and seeing if we should be working on a special focus area in the watershed, e.g. estuaries. It was decided that

there was no particular focus where we should work—that we want to work in the entire watershed and continue being strategic about it, by following the limiting factors approach. e.g. with one of the projects- Wright Creek – estuary, fish passage and more large wood in the stream are all needs.

Future projects may be impacted by the recession and we should look for opportunities to employ more people.

Lincoln SWCD is handling the native plant nursery and they have large potted stock for planting projects. The program is ending and they need to get the plants planted. There are approximately 2700 plants remaining and SWCD has a tally of these. There are in addition to trees, special species of ferns (which keep other plants from spreading-“allopathy”).

Siletz group approached tech team to seek input re applying for grant funding for two projects: a the design for the Mill Creek project and boat launch area and a debris removal grant (there are large items such as car bodies, washing machine, steel, tires). Tech team supported these projects.

Virginia reported to tech team about Robert Pearson, Eddyville teacher who got \$12,000 in funding for K-12 grades (Eddyville and Siletz) to have classes go out to do projects—e.g. inventory of small mammals, ecosystems. They were looking for clear protocols to follow so that data could be useful to others. Tech team recommended that they talk to OSU extension and Susan Barnes from Clackamas.

Basin Planning Team Reports:

Siletz

Greg Harlow reported that the group heard from Chris Lorian, ODFW about the salmonid life cycle monitoring that has been going on there for the last 11 years and received a written report about this as well. They also discussed the Mill Creek park project. Group members have been doing fall chinook spawning surveys and returns have so far been “dismal”. They would like ODFW to look at more regulations. They believe that allowing folks to keep 5 adult wild salmon is too many with the Siletz weak runs; there needs to be fish allowed to spawn. ODFW doing intense monitoring but people are fishing for chinook above the green bridge where chinook fishing is closed. This was reported to ODFW and signs were posted earlier today.

In terms of the clean water initiative for the Siletz—there is no news on the gas motor removal effort above the water intake.

Some in the group are currently participating in fin clipping. There is a need for folks to participate. Shifts are 4 hours in a heated trailer.

Yaquina—Debra Spoelstra reported that the group had a successful field trip the 2nd weekend in November after the heavy rains. 20 people, mostly from one church group, with people from Newport, Siletz and Toledo visited Simpson and Cook Creeks. The group viewed spawning salmon and past restoration projects where 4 culverts had been replaced and banks replanted. The group planted a few trees and did some clean up work. James Ray helped interpret the trip. The group would like to get together again in the spring. Many people had no idea this type of resource was in their back yard and 4 people took friends and relatives back out there the next weekend. There are other non-faith based organizations that also have been contacted and

want to do something in spring—probably another field trip and possibly a community project. While they were out in the field a landowner stopped by who had done projects with Parker Ogburn in the past and reported that he is interested in doing more.

Salmon Drift Watershed Council submitted a written activities report which was reviewed by Corrina Chase. They too reported that their spawning surveys have been very disappointing, but that they have a lot of volunteers interested and participating in this and they also have another regular volunteer for water quality monitoring work. Some redds have been sighted above the newly repaired fish ladder. They are planning to go to Drift Creek and N. Creek for their monthly outing.

They got a grant for large wood placement in Sampson Creek (Drift Creek) and a mini grant for waders and other equipment for doing their spawning surveys. They would like to get an additional staff person to help with administrative matters especially. They have submitted a small grant for control of scotch broom and planting trees at Pixieland and have continued to work with the fisher crew hired through the OWEB program

They announced they are looking for new board members. Board positions are for participants in the group and should contact group if interested.

Additionally, Corrina reported that she is teaching a career tech class. This isn't part of her work with the watershed council directly, but has invigorated her and changed her whole outlook on things.

the group is currently ceived the go ahead is working on some projects which have been approved monthly report handout and request for permission to write grants. Repairs of Mill Park boat ramp. Letter from City of Siletz-outreach and grants for development of Mill Park. Outreach event in October poorly attended. Surrounding property owners generally in favor. Important historic/cultural areas not present. Grant permission: MOU is needed for each grant type to describe roles. Make sure that the grants make a clear connection to the mission and goals of the MCWC. Make sure the linkages are clearly stated and reviewed. Large debris is inventoried. Cost out removal fees and write grants to remove the debris from the river. James Ray (ODFW) winter steelhead brood stock collection, lactic acid problem and high mortality rate, angler caught still has high mortality rate so stopped for now.

Administrative Committee Report: Jan Christensen gave the report. The group approved the financial report and noted that we're quite poor this year as we don't have a lot of large projects scheduled so we'll have to cut the admin budget. She also reported that we offered the job to do the annual report to the low bidder. There is a council support grant meeting scheduled for Thursday Dec 18th after the tech tem meeting.

The MCWC January meeting will be on January 7th (a WED night) at Thompson's since the first Thursday was New Year's Day. The February meeting will probably be at the PUD building again and that will be our election and annual meeting.

The Audit report came back and everything looks good. The only suggestion was there was not enough financial separation of duties, but with an organization so small it is difficult.

Rennie Ferris then reminded the group of the election and that we need more representation. Open seats we would like to fill are port, county government, city government, aquaculture,

academic, small woodlot/timber producers. There will also be officer and 2 public at large nominations next month.

Education Committee Report: Virginia sent out a written report as she was not able to attend. She is serving on the state education grant review team for OWEB. She reported on a great stream studies/salmon watch trip with Eddyville 6th graders. The group saw spawning Coho, Chinook and Chum salmon and had fish biology, riparian, macro invertebrate and water quality sessions. Olalla Creek studies continued this year with a new group of 7th and 8th graders. They spent two days reviewing the creek and checking the changes. The beaver dam is definitely changing the bottom marsh area as well as the creek bottom. The students did macro invertebrate studies and did the first mycology survey for each area. They also reviewed the photo points for tree growth changes (the photos will show the beaver dam changes too). The landowner dropped by to see how we were doing and assured us that Lincoln County students are welcome to study on his property. The plan is to return again in the winter and spring.

Virginia also reported that thanks to Patrick Buxton, Parker Ogburn, Rennie Ferris, eight trucks of green house building and green house growing materials for the youth native nursery project were moved to storage on a private site.

Jan Christensen also reported too that work has begun to establish a permanent outdoor education site for all of Lincoln County schools at Beaver Creek

Coordinator's report: Wayne Hoffman reported on the Ona Beach Meeting held by State Parks to begin scoping for a long master planning process for the recently acquired 318 acre site near Ona Beach which will be managed as a state natural area. About 100 acres is wetland, the rest upland. There is also the potential for acquiring 500+ acres of adjacent Forest Capitol Partners land and an appraisal is underway for acquisition. The total acreage managed will be about 1000 acres. They're looking for public input. Funding for this is the \$23 M authorized by the legislature from Measure 66 funds.

Wayne also reviewed the Port of Newport's port terminal project and that there would be a meeting to help inform the public a week from tonight. That same evening there will be the SWCD's annual meeting in Toledo.

Announcements:

Corrina—speaker next month (January) is about lichens, with the following Saturday a planned field trip to Cascade head.

Joe Steer reported that he got a notice from the Corps of Engineers about the Millport Slough bridge change out with pilings to be removed at Salishan as part of their mitigation plan.

Paul Engelmeyer asked Wayne to report on plans for a field trip to the lake area S. of Florence to see spawning salmon. This area often supports densities of over 200 fish per mile. It's about an hour and a half ride from Newport. He'll send out a notice—with plans for the weekend after Christmas or the next weekend.