

MidCoast Watersheds Council
September 2, 2010

1. Introductions were made, 23 persons present
2. Recorder's Report: no actions were taken last meeting.
3. Treasurer's report- Financial statement ending August 31, 2010 shows about 40,000 in our account, with 11,111 of accounts payable and 56,453 of accounts receivable.
4. MCWC Activity Report – Coordinator Wayne Hoffman provided a written update on the progress of the Cape Perpetual Community Team meeting about marine reserves (MR) and reported that the team chose 4 scenarios for further analysis by the Science and Technical advisory committee. Additionally the Team will work together to get better understandings of how MR can provide protection of seabird and pinniped haulouts, protection from at-sea industrial development, land based pollution and learn about/discuss enforcement options and challenges, research and monitoring opportunities, appropriate fisheries to allow in marine protected areas, and how to reduce impacts of on-shore activities. Wayne wrote a new report with more details about on-going projects and activities. The report also details the grant proposals he is working on and gave information on the November OWEB conference. Wayne will be a presenter at the OWEB conference in November re Beavers and Habitat Restoration in Oregon as a part of the “Health Habitat” sessions. Other sessions focus on Clean Water, Unique Approach, and Working Together.
5. Education Program- - David Waltz from Oregon DEQ provided a talk on Water Quality Developments in the MidCoast. He provided an update on Total Maximum Daily Load process for impaired waters-- i.e. those not meeting beneficial uses (those on the 303(d) list under the Clean Water Act. DEQ has been working on the TMDL for the MidCoast area since 2004. Process started with water quality sampling and assessments, then it transitioned into modeling, stakeholder involvement, and pre-TMDL restoration projects. Primary group for the MidCoast TMDL is the technical advisory committee (TAC). People on the TAC from the MCWC are Wayne Demoray, Paul Engelmeier, Wayne Hoffman, and Jeff Light. This TAC was convened in April 08. There were 6 mtgs from then through 2009 and there was considerable stakeholder involvement. DEQ then placed process on hold for review. The results of the process to date have been documented – there hasn't been anything lost. There are two timelines in play here-- currently a consent agreement between DEQ and EPA and now a new one based on a lawsuit settlement agreement-- which sets a new timeline and establishes legally binding process and contents for the TMDL. Other recent developments affecting the TMDL process and timeline are state agency budgets; a NW Environmental Advocated vs Guittierz lawsuit (EPA/NOAA lawsuit, which involves OR's Coastal Management Program (Nonpoint program) which requires large investment by DEQ, DLCD and could effect the funding of state NPS programs including the 319 grants (which Lincoln SWCD have received for some of their work). 3 key areas were found to have deficient management measures for adequately protect resources under the settlement agreement and there is a timeframe for addressing these: onsite sewage disposal systems (single family, campground etc.); forestry sediment management, and new development (Highways-- e.g. along Hwy 101 and land conversion (forestry to urban) with emphasis on management to protect hydrology and water quality.
(The settlement doesn't focus on agriculture; ie.the lawsuit won't have an effect on SB 1010 but mostly on forestry).

DEQ activities to meet EPA and NOAA requirements – Implementation ready TMDLs for Forestry and New Development (will provide guidance for carrying out these new activities). The TAC will address the one-site sewage disposal systems-- e.g. at time of sale, inspections, lake protection focus.

Where to now?

- July 21, 2010 letter to EPA/NOAA with attachment details State's course of action.
- Complete MC TMDL by June 30, 2010
- Emphasize “Implementation Ready” TMDLs. Then work with Development/Management Agency (DMA) (land-use or regulatory authority-- counties, cities, state, agencies) in developing Implementation Plans to provide better assurance that TMDLs will be implemented. Current scenario is 18 mo. compliance plan for DMA to sure WQ goals will be met
- Working to provide specific requirements and clarify expectations for DMAs and reduce regulatory uncertainty.

Types of projects:

- Riparian restoration (all land uses)
- Fence and plant (ag and urbanized land)
- Road sediment reduction (state and private lands)
- Drinking water protection (Siletz basin)
- Whole watershed initiative (ecotrust -Alsea with federal partners)
- Urban-- storm water focus-- Low impact development.

Main purpose of TMDLs is to develop partnerships to get to water quality improvements and avoid impairments.

Prioritization

- most sensitive beneficial use
- existing plan/projects (MCWC, LSWCD, DMA)
- funding sources-- grants and budgets
- interested landowners
- partnerships – leverage efforts
- most return for investment

Other information:

Latest 9th Circuit Court ruling is that run-off from forest roads is a Point Source which is covered under the Storm water program. This ruling will be challenged.

DEQ analysis of a number of community drinking water systems have too high turbidity and sediments to meet standards. Determined that existing timber operations under the Forest Practices Act (FPA) do NOT protect community water. It costs a lot to plan for, treat for these impacts. Many communities can't store enough water until the slug of sediment passes. Trying to determine the magnitude of the issue.

FPA is supposed to protect beneficial uses. Do changes go thru Oregon Dept of Forestry (ODF) ? If

DOF not protecting water quality then DEQ has authority to do so; but DEQ will work with ODF directly instead of re-inventing FPA to meet goals; hopefully changes can occur without going through rule-making.

There will be long term studies – DEQ working with ODF-- looking at the effects of harvest on small and medium headwater streams from harvest. 7 year studies. “Rip Stream” (??).
Pre and post-harvest effects..

Technical Team Report-(written report provided of August 19th mtg). 8 items were reported on. These included: an update on the Creosoted piling survey (24 sites identified with creosote pilings); Yachats River outreach (Paul Engelmeyer suggested that we hold a public meeting for Yachats Valley residents); Beaver Conservation Update (Wayne reported that OWEB had accepted his proposal for a beaver conservation session); Policeman Helment project (Elmer suggested a project to control this invasive weed; tech team suggested that outreach be included in the current Five Rivers outreach project); Beaver Creek (Fruitvale) Technical Assistance proposal (tech team received preliminary information); Ojalla Creek large wood placement proposal (tech.team received preliminary information); Fall chinook harvest regulations on the Siletz River (technical team review a draft letter from Stan VandeWetering from the Siletz Tribe and recommended endorsement of the tribes' position regarding ODFW monitoring of the run with possible curtailment of harvest midseason if necessary).

Action Item: General Council discussed the Siletz Fall Chinook issue and recommendation of the Technical Team. The group decided that instead of endorsing the Siletz Tribe position, to write its own letter which incorporates those concerns. A motion was passed unanimously to:

To write a letter to Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to support adequate monitoring of fall chinook returns on the Siletz River to allow for in-season management if fewer than the expected number of fish return. The letter should mention the concerns about increased fishing pressure (from cutbacks in other basins) and the fact that the Siletz has been designated as a salmon stronghold.

7. Siletz Basin Planning Team Report- Jan Christenson and Wayne Hoffman provided the report. Siletz had a meeting that discussed the Salmon Stronghold Program. There is a bill in Congress that is expected to pass this winter which will allocate \$30M per year for restoration for designated sites (approximately 20). This money is designated for implementing conservation work to “protect the best places”. Siletz is listed as a strong hold for the number of its runs. Next month Shelly Miller from ODFW will discuss the mark and recapture program on the Siletz. Group meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7 pm, Siletz Library.
8. Yaquina Basin Planning Team-- a written report was provided by Coordinator Lisa Mulcahy. The field trip to the Hwy 20 ODOT project site was held August 27th, planning was held for the Ivy pull event on Big Creek Oct 2nd, attended the coastal forest and streams water school as a part of the “Master Watershed Steward Program” offered by OSU extension. Planning was also held for the Upper Yaquina Outreach Meeting scheduled for September th in Nashville.
9. Salmon Drift Watershed Council Report-a report was provided by Coordinator Corrina Chase. Pixie land summer project work going well. The major earthwork phase done and came in under-budget and ahead of schedule. T Plans are in the work for an Oct 9 volunteer day and an Oct 23rd celebration for Pixieland. They are working on a culvert survey to fill in gaps in their last survey and are looking for volunteers for their water quality monitoring program. . Next month's meeting (2nd Tuesday in October, 6:30, S. 51st St.Lincoln City) will be an update on research in the Salmon River

Estuary.

10. Alsea Watershed Council Report- Elmer Ostling brought a written report from Coordinator Linda Johnson. The report noted receiving a presentation by ODFW's new STEP biologist Christine Clapp; approval of the Williamson Creek small grant; submittal of the Canal Creek Stream Enhancement project to the Alsea Stewardship program; announcement that the Lobster/Preacher Creeks TA grant has been recommended for funding by OWEB's staff. The report also notes progress on the Recovery Act USFS large wood placement project, with tree marking and felling, a botanty suvery in progress and the signing of a helicpoter contract, with work on two sitesexpected to take place the 2nd week in October. Work on the other 2 sites will take place next year.
11. Administrative Report-- group approved financial statement, discussed procedures for unemployment, and the upcoming council support grant (new rules are expected but aren't out yet).
12. Education Committee Report. Virginia Tardaewether provided a written report. It gives updates on the work that has been done by the natural resource crews including work to improve Silver Spot butterfly habitat in South County, transplantation of eel grass for the Port of Newport as mitigation for the NOAA restoration project, and a dune lake survey for USFS surveying for fresh water mussels, lake fish and taking water quality samples. Two of the research Natural Resource Crews provided a presentation to the public on August 4th. Covered was the work with John Chapman on ghost shrimp surveys for the parasitic copepod and the work with Jose Marin regarding surveying for chinook salmon use of the surf zone. The Ocean Literacy Committee has made "watersheds" the focus for the Lincoln County School District's 6th grade classes to support the Forest to Sea Outdoor School and its curriculum. Outdoor school counselor trainings were announced as were the Yaquina Bay Clean-up.
13. Announcements: Sept 25th from 10-2 was a special event for prescription drug turn in. It was announced that in Lincoln County there is a drop-box always available at the Courthouse. There is possible diversion program for people with fish and wildlife or environmental violations that might provide assistance to our work. Some of these people might have valuable skills that could be put to use for good-- e.g. excavators. Jan Christenson again noted a flyer on the table regarding Non-profit data collection and new legislation proposed in Congress, for more information see www.councilofnonprofits.org.