

Fifteenmile Watershed Council Meeting

Barlow Ranger District Office, Dufur

December 5th, 2017

6:30-7:30

MINUTES

In attendance:

Tatiana Taylor, *SWCD*

Abbie Forrest, *Watershed
Coordinator*

Shilah Olson, *SWCD*

Phil Kaser, *Co-Chair*

Bill Markmen, *Member*

Merle A. Keyes, *Member*

Monte Wasson, *Member*

Jake Benes, *Forest Service*

Bill Hammel, *Co-Chair*

Derrek Faber, *ODFW*

Jason Keller, *GeoSystems*

Analysis

Walter Burt, *GSI*

Meg Belais, *The Freshwater
Trust*

Stan Ashbrook

Martin Underhill, *Member*

Amy Kaser

Chris Rossel, *Forest Service*

Introduction, Review/ Approval of Minutes

Phil called the meeting to order and led introductions.

The council took a moment to review the minutes. No changes were proposed.

Merle Keys moved to approve the minutes as they stand, Bill Markmen seconded, and the motion passed.

Annual Steelhead Update- Derrek Faber, ODFW

Derrek discussed the unfortunate news that the budget for this program had been cut to a third of its previous size. The reduced budget can only cover maintaining the screw trap and possibly the video feed at the confluence of Fifteenmile and Eightmile creek weir. Derrek mentioned his concern that the data set needs continuity when dealing with both juveniles and adult fish. They will continue to search for OWEB grants for funding. BPA will continue to fund the juvenile portion of this project, however they have made it clear that they are giving focus on funding the Klickitat River for winter steelhead habitat.

Derrek presented the video footage from the weir at Eightmile and Fifteenmile. There are two independent cameras that use motion capture to begin recording video. The footage is then run through a software program that searches for fish. After the footage has been narrowed down, Derrek examines the footage and tallies the number of fish that are headed upstream and downstream.

The first graph demonstrated the abundance numbers throughout the years. Monitoring began in 2011 and over five years of population data have been recorded. Last year was a huge water year and the weir blew out. They are still estimating numbers, however smolt abundance was way above average. The second graph showed the steelhead smolt abundance numbers through 2015. In previous years, the highest smolt count was 30,000. In 2016 smolt populations were over 50,000 and 5,000 were tagged with pit tags.

Graph 3 demonstrated the steelhead production, which was also very high in 2016, which is thought to be due to the extra water. The extra water should have pushed the smolt out of the river, past predation risk. Viability is measured by how well the spawners reproduce, and in 2016 there were 200 smolt per spawner. Previously the average was approximately 20-30 smolt per spawner. 2016 viability numbers were comparable to those of Alaska or hatchery numbers. In 3-4 years there should be a bumper run, depending on ocean conditions.

Phil inquired about the effects the funding cuts would have on the station. Derrek replied that the screwtrap and video will still receive funding but the handling of adult fish will discontinue. Phil offered the councils support in any way that it would help.

FAST and Instream Lease 2018- *Tatiana Taylor, SWCD & Meg Belais TFT*

Tatiana Taylor explained that in light of Nate Woodward's resignation, she has taken over both the FAST Program and instream-lease programs. She discussed FAST sign-ups and that both option 1 and option 2 will be offered. Funds were secured previously for FAST. The funding tiers that were proposed at the last meeting by Nate will not be in effect until the next FAST season. The updated tiers are simpler and have more accurate compensation. Tatiana and Meg both explained that there has been some language revisal in the contacting for FAST. Previously there had been confusion about using groundwater and supplemental water during alerts. The new language will clarify that using supplemental water rights is not allowed during FAST alerts. To use supplemental water rights, groundwater must be exhausted and enrolling in FAST does not 'exhaust' water rights. Tatiana explained that this will be reiterated at FAST sign ups which will start in February.

Tatiana explained that funding for instream leasing cannot be guaranteed until April due to the new funding process. They were unable to get complete funding through previous sources so the process is different from last year. She mentioned that she had been in communication with all landowners who are interested in the instream lease. All landowners have been sent a letter of support for OWEB and Tatiana is working on getting signatures for the funding application. Tatiana asked for an official letter of approval from the watershed council to submit a letter of support from the leasing application to OWEB.

Bill Markmen moved to create a letter of support from the 15mile watershed council. Bill Hammel seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Quick Subsurface Storage Feasibility Study Phase 2 Update and Q&A- *Walt Burt, GSI and Jason Keller, GeoSystems Analysis*

Walt explained that previously he and Jason had presented on the Phase 1, a desktop study. Phase 1 looked at any potential fatal flaws and unknowns. Phase 1 examined regulatory feasibility, physical feasibility, and other consistent alternative methods for supplying water. There were no fatal flaws discovered in Phase 1, however there are some key unknowns. Walt explained that there are two possible ways to divert the water and treat turbidity. The first option is soil infiltration and the second is an engineered media.

Jason discussed that the test pits for Phase 2 will start in January. Soil testing will begin near Fifteenmile creek. The test pits and geological logging will identify the optimal locations for boreholes and piezometers. Testing will determine the material permeability, the alluvial aquifer production, alluvial aquifer and stream connectivity (this is a measure to see if pumping causes water from the stream to go into the aquifer), and filtration effectiveness. The second option of an engineered basin has less focus in Phase 2. In this option the water will infiltrate down and then the water would be collected through wells near the creek.

Jason discussed next steps for Phase 2. Jason mentioned that the team is now contracting excavators or backhoes to dig 5-8 test pits a day, depending on weather and the type of equipment. These will also examine the composition of the soil- including what percentage of clay and sand the soil is. These test pits will be approximately 12-15ft. deep. Jason explained that they will keep records of what depth they hit groundwater and the depth of the basalt. The well logs are not consistent regarding the depth of basalt.

Samples from the test pits will be sent in to the lab to test for soil texture and saturated hydraulic conductivity.

Jason explained next steps. Previously, the team came out and checked the potential of test pitting outside riparian areas. All test pits will be at least 20ft outside of the creek and away from riparian buffer zones. Jason mentioned that Stan Ashbrook and Paul Shanno are interested in test pits on their property, and in regards to Stan's property, test pits can go on either side of Fifteenmile creek.

Updates & Announcements

Shilah announced the next meeting will be after the neighborhood meeting at Parish Hall. She inquired if the council had any dates that worked better for them. Abbie mentioned that the meeting would be scheduled for later in the day, seeing as how some were feeding cows at this point in the year.

The council agreed that no date was better than another; they would prefer to follow the neighborhood meeting. A meeting confirmation date will be sent as soon as possible.

Abbie updated the council that the City of Dufur fish passage project was completed and she is working with Marty Olson to close out the grant.

Phil asked the council if there were any questions and then adjourned the meeting at 7:15.

Minutes Prepared by Tatiana Taylor