

Fifteenmile Watershed Council Meeting

Barlow Ranger District Office, Dufur

May 1st, 2018

6:30-8:00

MINUTES

In attendance:

Tatiana Taylor, *SWCD*

Abbie Forrest, *SWCD*

Phil Kaser, *Co-Chair*

Monte Wasson, *Member*

Jim Olson, *Member*

Chris Rossel, *Forest Service*

David Brewer, *Member*

Bill Markman, *Member*

Mike Kelly, *Member*

Gary VanOrman, *Member*

Mike Johnson,

Meg Belais, *TFT*

Bob Durham

Introduction, Review/ Approval of Minutes

Phil called the meeting to order and led introductions.

Bill Markman moved to approve the minutes as presented, Jim Olson seconded, and the motion passed.

2017 Pesticide Stewardship Partnership Results- Kevin Masterson, DEQ

Kevin began his presentation by explaining the origins of the program. The program started in Hood River and then migrated east. Kevin explained that the program stays in one area, collecting samples, long enough to develop a pattern. Kevin mentioned that more discussions with a wider variety of groups, allows for the program to receive better feedback. Funding goes through ODA, and some funding goes to DEQ to test the samples.

Kevin explained the key steps in partnership projects. The first step is to monitor for current use pesticides in surface waters from drift and runoff. The next step is to identify streams with elevated pesticide concentrations or high number of detections. The third step is to collaborate with other agencies to implement voluntary management practices. The final step in the program is follow-up monitoring to determine improvements over time.

Kevin discussed the Wasco Watershed PSP partners. Wasco County SWCD collects the samples and ships them to the DEQ lab. The other partners are OSU Extension Service and IPPC, Columbia Gorge Fruit Growers, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Department of Agriculture, The Dalles Watershed Council, and the Fifteenmile Creek Watershed Council.

Monitoring is focused near The Dalles, but the site at Dufur City Park is tested at least half as many times as the site in The Dalles. Dufur City Park was monitored with 7 sampling events and Mill Creek had samples gathered 15 times. Mill Creek has two sites, one at Wright Road, and the other at 2nd Street Bridge in The Dalles. Threemile Creek has one site at Highway 197. Fifteenmile Creek has two sites, one above Seufert Falls (aka Cushing Falls) and Dufur City Park was added for the 2017-2018 monitoring year.

Kevin explained the 2017 Wasco Monitoring timeframe. The 15 water sampling events were taken weekly from late March through Mid-April. There was a break and then sampling resumed weekly from late May through the end of July. There were also two sampling events in September.

There are approximately 130 pesticides analyzed, including insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, and breakdown products of those pesticides. Kevin mentioned that this list evolves over time as new products

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become available. In 2017, there were 12 pesticides or breakdown products found at all the monitoring sites in Wasco County. The Insecticides detected in 2017 were **Carbaryl (Sevin)**, **Malathion**, and Imidacloprid (Admire). The names in parentheses are the common names of the pesticide. The Herbicides detected were **Glyphosate (Roundup)** [and AMPA- a degrade), **2,4-D (Weedmaster, Barrage)**, Atrazine (Aatrex) [and 2 degradates], Diuron (Karmex, Direx), and Hexazinone (Velpar). The only fungicide detected was **Pyraclostrobin (Headline)**.

Kevin discussed the general downward trend of the total number of pesticide detections in the Wasco Basin. 2013 was the peak year, with 117 detections in the Wasco Basin. Despite adding to the number of analytes since 2013, the number of detections have declined. There were 62 detections in 2017.

Kevin explained the total number of benchmark exceedances in the Wasco Basin. Kevin mentioned that DEQ Water Quality and the Clean Water Act do not provide many standards for Pesticides. The EPA does have some benchmark listings, which they use as a reference point. Kevin mentioned the general decline of this graph as well, both are encouraging trends.

Kevin explained a graph that demonstrated the number of detections that were either over benchmark, 50-100% of benchmark, 10-50% of benchmark, or <10% of benchmark. Malathion and imidacloprid were the only two detected pesticides over the benchmark. In Fifteenmile, malathion was the only one above benchmark.

Kevin explained the detections of malathion across all the sites. Malathion has a low benchmark due to its toxicity. Kevin noted the clustering of detections in Mill Creek and Threemile around July. He mentioned that malathion was historically used on cherries for the Spotted Wing Drosophila, and it was notable that there was a clustering despite few cherry orchards in that area. Kevin mentioned that malathion can be used to treat mosquitos, which might be another use. In 2011, 86% of the detections were above the water quality standard. By 2017, that percentage dropped to 20%. Malathion is one of the few pesticides DEQ has a standard for.

Kevin discussed the findings for the pesticide carbaryl (Sevin). In 2016 they had higher levels and more detections. Since then, the frequency of detection and amount has decreased.

Kevin presented a graph describing the detection frequency of desethylatrazine (Princep or Atrazine degrade). The minimum benchmark is 1000 ug/L, and Kevin explained that the levels look so low due to the high benchmark for this pesticide.

He explained a graph demonstrating selected herbicides in Fifteenmile Creek. He noted that Simazine has not been detected since 2013, and diuron has not been detected since 2015. The graphs allude to a downward trend in the amount of pesticides ending up in the watershed.

Kevin discussed the merits of the program, and several instances of effective partnerships. In 2011 when the program first started, the road department was using diuron. After this was pinpointed as an area of interest, the road department in the county ceased usage, lowering frequencies of diuron. Kevin noted that many times success comes from effective management, not stopping usage all together.

Kevin explained the results of glyphosate (Roundup) monitoring. There was a spike of the chemical Mid-September. Kevin noted that there was a large rainfall event around that time. Kevin theorized that the

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spike in glyphosate could have been due to runoff. The half-life for glyphosate is approximately 44 days, so the chemical could have been applied much earlier, and run off into the creek.

Kevin asked for questions. He explained the overall benefits of the PSP program. The program is designed to provide a feedback loop for people, it is an alternative to a regulatory program. There is support in the legislature from the agricultural community due to the non-regulatory status, as well as support from conservation groups. The program found that many places didn't have many issues. In areas with problems with pesticides, those areas have progressively changed for the better.

Phil inquired how their funding was set up, and if they were to be funding into the future. Kevin replied that ODA received funding for 2017-2019, which also pays for pesticide collecting. The program used to have to search for grants for funding. The ODA funding also supports a variety of related projects.

FAST and Instream Leasing- *Tatiana Taylor, SWCD and Meg Belais, TFT*

Tatiana explained that they did not yet have an official word from OWEB regarding the instream leasing funding for this year. She explained that the FAST contracts are almost done, and she can get signatures from whomever is attending the meeting. She mentioned that she is still working on creating maps to accompany the contracts. She thanked the council for their patience as she learned the ropes of the position.

Meg reiterated that although funding was not official, there was a belief that the lease-bank would be funded.

8Mile Strategic Implementation Area (SIA)- *Abbie Forrest, SWCD*

Abbie explained the Open house for ODA's Strategic Implementation Area. ODA has performed the evaluation of the 8Mile watershed and will present their findings and send out letters inviting landowners to the open house. Once landowners with problem areas have been contacted, ODA will perform site visits with the SWCD to create conservation plans to address the issues identified by ODA. The Open House will take place on May 16th from 6-8 at the Dufur School District.

County Appointments- *Abbie Forrest, SWCD*

Abbie explained that there were four council members whose appointments expire on June 30th, 2018. Those members are Gary Van Orman, Mike Kelly, Steve Springston (ODFW), and David Brewer. Abbie mentioned that Steve Springston was not at the meeting, and it would be preferable to have another ODFW member on the council. Gary, Mike and David all accepted to be reappointed.

Phil agreed that having an ODFW member would be beneficial to the council. He mentioned that if anything was ever a conflict of interest, they could always excuse themselves.

Jim Olson moved to have the County reappoint Gary Van Orman, Mike Kelly, and David Brewer. Bill Markman seconded, motion passed.

National Watershed Condition Classification- *Chris Rossel, USFS*

Chris began his presentation by explaining that the Forest Service had developed a new approach to prioritizing watershed restoration. Originally, restoration was performed haphazardly, which made it difficult for the Forest Service to monitor results. Chris explained that the motive behind developing this classification system is to focus on areas with the most need. This approach would also allow the Forest Service to document the improvement to watershed condition.

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Chris explained that the OMB (Office of Management and Budget) was a driving factor behind this change. The OMB Audit indicated issues with accountability, and that the USFS was spending lots of money with little return. The Forest Service used the USDA Strategic plan as a template for their program, which uses the restoration of watershed and forest health as a core management objective.

Chris presented the objectives of the program. Watersheds were sorted into three categories by determining if the watershed was properly functioning, at risk, or not properly functioning. This was done for each watershed on forest land. Watersheds off Forest Land were also evaluated but on a different scale. Wilderness areas were categorized as properly functioning. Chris presented the watershed condition framework for the program. The steps are as follows: classify watershed condition, prioritize watersheds for restoration, develop watershed action plans, implement integrated projects, track restoration accomplishments, and finally monitor and verify the project.

Chris explained the timeline for the beginning of the project. USFS completed HUC Watershed Condition Classifications March 2011. The Priority Watersheds selected by July 2011. Justifications for priorities were submitted in August 2011 and USFS wrote WRAP's and began implementation in 2012.

One priority watershed was Still Creek. Trillium Lake is the headwater for Still Creek. They performed upland thinning and culvert repairs to restore the watershed. The original hope was to have the work completed in 5 years and move to a new sub-watershed. USFS applied and received an extension and the work should be completed this year. Priorities are based on existing aquatic restoration plans, partnerships, fund leveraging, total cost, WCF Rating, demonstrated past success, and funding opportunities.

Fifteenmile Creek was also selected for repair. The elevation changes found throughout Fifteenmile's reach causes large ecosystem differences. Fifteenmile has the last remaining stronghold of pine and oak habitat, and 66% of its headwaters are on USFS land. Chris explained the watershed condition indicators that were used when analyzing watersheds. They are as follows: water quality, water quantity, aquatic habitat, aquatic biota, riparian/wetland vegetation, roads and trails, soils, fire regime or wildlife, forest cover, rangeland vegetation, terrestrial invasive species, and forest health. Chris mentioned that it is more important to hit at risk watersheds rather than not functioning watersheds, because repairing the not functioning watersheds is very expensive.

To determine priority watersheds, they compiled weighted data to find which watersheds needed restoration. Most systems with dams were closer to at risk or not properly functioning. Watershed condition framework is "aquatic centric", which defines the watershed as "hilltop to hilltop".

Chris explained that the Watershed Condition Classification (WCC) is to be updated annually. Focus is to be placed on: watersheds where improvement activities have been implemented, and watersheds that have experienced extensive natural disturbance. Every five years the watersheds are checked again to see if the classification changes (potentially due to a wildfire or other warranting conditions).

Chris described the differences between regional and national strategy. He demonstrated the estimated amount of money in 2010 it would take to restore the analyzed watersheds. The Headwaters of Fifteenmile creek were estimated at \$2,885,607. Upper Fifteenmile creek was estimated at \$316,411, and Lower Fifteenmile estimated at \$174,366. Middle Eightmile Creek estimated at \$312,735 and Upper Eightmile was estimated at \$1,669,909.

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Chris presented the WRAP, and explained that it was similar to the strategy already provided, but more detailed. The WRAP fine tunes the strategy. Every five years USFS reassesses the condition classes and then set new priority watersheds. The USFS works on three watersheds at a time.

Chris explained potential projects in the Fifteenmile watershed. The potential projects are listed below.

- Four miles of instream and floodplain Large wood placement in Fifteenmile Creek
- Fish screen placed on Orchard Ridge Ditch Headgate (ODFW lead, NEPA to be completed by 2019)
- Two culvert replacements on Ramsey Creek, FSR 4450 and FSR 4421-150 (snowmobile trail route)
- The Watershed Council is interested in piping a segment of the Orchard Ridge Ditch, and altering irrigation strategies from Fifteenmile
- Plantation thinning, [as of 2010 there were 270 acres of PCT and 165 acres of riparian commercial thinning (on and off Forest, needs NEPA)
- Range fence along eastern Forest Boundary and FS road 44 (buck-n-pole) ID'd in Fifteenmile Creek Sportsman Paradise EA)

Chris emphasized partnerships and inquired if anyone had any suggestions for projects along Fifteenmile.

Updates & Announcements

Abbie explained that the next quarterly meeting would be scheduled for August, but seeing as how that is a busy time for most, she inquired if the council would be accepting of a meeting in September. The council tentatively set a new meeting for September 11th at 6:30.

Phil asked the council if there were any questions and then adjourned the meeting at 8:00.

Minutes Prepared by Tatiana Taylor

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