

Mosier Watershed Council Meeting

Wednesday July 27, 2016

6:30PM – 8:30PM

MINUTES

Attendees:

Abbie Forrest, <i>Coordinator</i>	Kris McNall, <i>Co-Chair</i>	Bryce Molesworth, <i>Co-Chair</i>
Todd Stevens, <i>Member</i>	Emily Bailey, <i>SWCD</i>	Mike Igo, <i>Member</i>
Ken Lite, <i>OWRD, Member</i>	Walter Burt, <i>GSI</i>	Susan Gabay, <i>Member</i>
Bob Schwarz, <i>DEQ</i>	Karen Lamson, <i>SWCD</i>	Jason Melady, <i>GSI</i>
Mary Hingst, <i>GSI</i>	Heidi Hartman, <i>DSL</i>	Karen Bailey, <i>Member</i>
Kathleen Fitzpatrick	Aurora Bouchier, <i>OWRD</i>	Erik Thomasser, <i>OWRD</i>
JC Rappaport	Christine Johnson, <i>ODF</i>	

Call to Order

Kris called the meeting to order and initiated a round of introductions. She stated the minutes from the June meeting will require some edits; they were previously distributed, and will be approved at the meeting in October. Kris asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the April meeting. Karen moved to approve the April minutes, Ken seconded and the motion passed.

Mosier Urban Forest Management Plan

Christine Johnson, a grad student and an intern for the Oregon Department of Forestry has been working on the Urban Forest Management Plan for the City of Mosier. Christine explained the purpose of the plan which will address: management, restoration, resiliency, livability, stewardship and public engagement.

First steps to the plan is management that includes gathering a tree inventory, which Christine will be completing in the next few days. She will also develop a report with how much money will be tied to those services. Other aspects include a snapshot of the urban forest and ecosystem services. After those steps are completed the next process would be building a five and build capacity for future decisions.

Restoration in natural areas such as: Rock Creek, Mosier Creek, Columbia River, Pocket Park, and Mosier Plateau are all part of the focus areas. As well as restoring commercial areas mimicking nature and designing with nature. Christine discussed resiliency and the threats to the urban forest that are not uncommon in the Mosier area. Threats such as extreme weather, invasive plants, pest and disease, development and human and natural disasters (like a train derailment). Susan asked about the greenspace next to the Rack and Cloth. The property is for sale and she is concerned. She asked if there is something the residents of Mosier could do that is proactive to minimize the trees that could be cut down, if it was to be developed. Christine said there is an option for tree protection through a city ordinance and options for a minimal tree requirement. Christine said it is different in different cities and that Susan should talk with Kathy Fitzpatrick about more details.

Christine shared her points on livability. She explained an urban forest slows traffic, promotes economic vitality, encourages active lifestyle choices, improves safety and social connections, and gives a sense of place. She also discussed stewardship and public engagement. She encouraged the council to look up Tree City USA and the Arbor Day foundation for more information.

Rock Creek Post Derailment Planting Update

Mike Igo provided the group with an update since the last meeting. He said there were concerns last month about skeleton weed. They have been able to cut the stems and prevent the seed roll. So far there has not been any weed in bloom, and that is a good thing.

Mike said there are still some concerns on the backside of 7mile hill, where weed seeds are coming in through vehicle traffic. The Weed Master treated 80% of the weeds on the public ride-away but the weeds are a growing concern on private lands.

The weed of the month from the Hood River watershed council is knapweed. If you are able to identify it, Mike recommends pulling it, bagging it, and burning it in the fall or haul it off to the land fill. If you do not bag it and dispose of it, it doesn't do any good.

He also said the drillers have been moving in equipment into the derailment site to drill monitoring wells. He has been working and compromising with the drillers to save as much natural habitat as possible.

Rock Creek Groundwater Monitoring

Bob Schwarz from the DEQ presented at our emergency meeting back in June and did not have groundwater data, so he was invited back to share with the council what has been found and what the next steps are.

Bob stated they have started pumping water out of the two extraction wells, (30gal/min). He said the ground is very gravelly and did not find very contaminated water. DEQ has asked the City of Mosier to remove the booms that are currently in place to reduce the amount of contamination, but will have them put back in the fall as a precaution when the rains come. Kris said the booms were failing almost constantly, especially when the wind was blowing, and they were not containing anything. There was further discussion regarding the two extraction wells at the derailment site that were originally intended to pump groundwater to induce an inward gradient. Bob stated, that was not pursued because the flow rates were so high and the contamination was fairly low.

Bob continued with his presentation that included charts that show the amount of soil excavation under the railroad tracks, and the maximum petroleum concentrations after excavation of the contaminated soil. The contaminants being monitored are gasoline, diesel and motor oil. Max concentrations found and the Residential risk screening level are as follows (mg/kg): Gasoline – Max con. 23, Residential risk 1,200, Diesel – Max con. 350, Residential risk 1,100, Motor oil – Max con. 360, Residential risk not listed. Bob also reviewed the Maximum PAH concentrations after excavation of the contaminated soil. There are 18 contaminants that are being monitored, only 2 of those were detected over the residential risk screening level. Benzo[a]pyrene: Max con. 97, Residential risk 15; and Dibenz(a,h)anthracene: Max con. 17, Residential risk 15. Bob stated that the contaminants that were found are not at levels for concern of human health. However these contaminants are found close to a wetland.

Contaminants found in well 4 (MW-4) above ecological screening levels are as follows: 1, 2, 4,-Trimethylbenzene, Benzene, Ethylbenzene, m-Xylene & p-Xylene, Naphthalene, o-Xylene, Toluene, and 1-Methylnaphthalene. Bob stated that some of the chemicals are frequently found in petroleum, but are way above the ecological screening levels for animals.

The cleanup system is a technique called biosparging. Biosparging consists of pumping air into groundwater so the oxygen in the air stimulates growth of naturally occurring microbes. There will be 5 sparge wells, one which is already in place. DEQ is also looking at drilling 3 monitoring wells to put in north of the sparge wells.

Ken asked if DEQ is monitoring the inorganic materials. Bob said he is not sure but will follow-up when he has an answer. If contaminants are found in the monitoring wells DEQ will be in touch with Dept. of State Lands (DSL) to acquire emergency permits to sample the wetlands. Kris asked if there is any information on the flow of groundwater and levels, and if there is any relation with the consistently low levels in the Columbia? Bob was not able to answer the question. Walt said GSI has been tasked with getting the geometry for Mosier Well 2, which may include surface mapping and sampling. There will be one comprehensive report that will be available to the public, and Bob will continue to post his status levels on the DEQ website.

Well Evaluation Progress Report & Next Steps

Mary Hingst who has been working alongside Jason and Walt provided the council with the well evaluation progress report. So far GSI has conducted desktop assessments on 70 wells. Mary stated the water levels have dropped so low, the ground isn't even saturated, which makes it difficult to know if wells are commingling or not. She shared three videos of wells where the water is just a trickle (cascading water is an indicator of commingling) above the water level. The videos showed particles, and holes where particles are coming out and water entering the well, but at a very slow rate. A video even showed water coming down and water coming up in the same well. In one well

video, the well was so dry all the way down to 400ft. there was a lizard on the wall.

Mary showed a map of well evaluation status, it indicated what wells have completed desktop evaluations, desktop and field evaluations, and wells that are unlikely commingling based on desktop assessment and/or discussion with OWRD staff. Results and conclusions from year 3 assessments show groundwater levels have continued to decline which has slightly shifted the locations of where the composite groundwater elevations intersect the Pomona and Priest Rapids Aquifers northwest to lower elevations. Water levels have dropped below base of aquifers, reducing occurrence and rate active commingling. Mary explained a lower repair (sealing the lower commingling aquifer) in the wells that were field assessed would not provide any benefit.

The presentation also included the well prioritization scheme, along with the total number of wells to date that include information on; wells identified, desktop assessments completed, field assessed, repaired and remaining wells in need of field assessments.

She said there are a couple of other ag wells used for irrigation that will be assessed this fall. Plans for the next year will be similar to this past year. GSI will continue to contact well owners, complete field assessments and prioritize wells. The work is being completed to prioritize repair/replacements in 2017 and beyond. There are three assessments scheduled for early July.

All presentations will be posted to the Mosier Watershed Council page on the SWCD website at http://wascoswcd.org/wcswcd_021.htm

2016 – 2017 Outreach

Kris reviewed the spreadsheet with the council that has been shown at previous meetings, with a list of well owners and who is the contact person. She quickly went through the list to get the council up to speed on what was discussed at meeting before the council meeting and who is in charge of contacting that person. Kris explained to the council to make sure the watershed council works/approves the prioritized list and scheme that Ken developed. The highest on the list (with access) will be the focus and then will continue to work down the list.

Susan commented that she is willing to continue going to landowners, as a Mosier resident that has had her well assessed, but would like GSI as a form of authority come with her. She felt if she continued to go by herself she won't make as much progress.

Letter of Support (agenda item was added because of extra time)

Kris briefly explained to the council a flow chart that the SWCD has been working on to develop a plan as to how the Mosier Million will be handled. The flow chart was not completed for the council to review. However, the flow chart is not final and will continue to evolve. Ken said he has added blocks to the chart with information from the Scope of Work that are more important and involves that council.

Ken said he is asking for the council to support the list of wells to draw upon if money becomes available before the 2017 bond sales. Walt shared a list of wells and the estimated repair costs per well. He said they are planning level cost estimates and are not a bid.

Ken explained to the council how the Mosier Million will work. GSI comes up with the well repair estimates; GSI gives information to OWRD to see if they concur; Then the information goes to a bidding process for drillers; The SWCD selects the contractor to do the job; Contractors then send the start card to OWRD to begin that process; Requirements include the contractor to inform the SWCD when they are done; SWCD lets OWRD know the contractors are done; OWRD approves the work; SWCD pays the invoice from the drillers.

Todd moved to approve the prioritization scheme and recommends the council and SWCD move forward with repairs at the earliest possible opportunity, Kris seconded, the motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40

Minutes prepared by Abbie Forrest

