

Mosier Watershed Council Meeting

Thursday June 30, 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>	Wade Root, <i>Member</i>	Emily Bailey, <i>SWCD</i>
Ken Lite, <i>OWRD, Member</i>	Walter Burt, <i>GSI</i>	Mike Igo, <i>Member</i>
Susan Gabay, <i>Member</i>	Andrew Merritt	Kristin Currin
Jim Reed, <i>Member</i>	Mark Ochsner	Rich Sedman
Miles Johnson, <i>CRK</i>	Jack Dahl	Bob Schwarz, <i>DEQ</i>
Lauren Mancuso, <i>UP</i>	Steve Kramer, <i>Commissioner</i>	Pete Dalke, <i>Member</i>
Jim O'Brien		

Call to Order

Kris called the meeting to order. The minutes from April 27th were not approved because this was a special meeting called to focus on the train derailment and clean-up efforts. Kris introduced herself along with the Mosier Watershed Council members that were present. Agency representatives introduced themselves and briefly explained what role they played in the clean-up and aftermath of the derailment.

Note: The meeting did not follow the agenda. Topics were the same although there were different representatives and presenters.

Q & A All agency's stepped in to answer questions

Kris explained to the group that this is not a time to talk about oil and trains, but to focus on discussing the spill and restoration.

The train that was derailed had 96 cars, 4 were derailed and 3 caught fire. There were 47,000 gallons of crude oil spill that was released although a lot of it was consumed in the fire, and vaporized soon after the spill. Roughly 2 million gallons of water was used for cooling the cars as a precaution so that they too would not catch on fire. Only a very small amount of the oil contaminated the water. The fire burned 1.3 acres, on the hill and by Mosier Manor. Although the fire damaged the vegetation in the immediate area, most of the trees will recover.

Part of the clean-up included removing a 200 by 75 foot area of soil. Some locations were dug down to 20 feet while others were only 7 feet deep. A total of 2,960 tons of soil that was removed to the permitted Wasco County Landfill. Representatives said the material that was removed was mostly rock and gravel on top. There were some finer sands removed and the deeper they dug they discovered more rock and silt. They did not find a confining layer which, is why they had to dig so deep. All contaminated soil was taken out by Union Pacific (UP) before the new track was laid down.

Agency folks that were on scene during the initial spill explained that they had to put enough water down until it ran off the cars so they could then apply the foam. The 2 million gallons of water were used for the entire process of putting out the fire. Around 18,000 gallons of oil was taken out of the soil, 16,000 gallons were burnt, and 13,000 were taken to the treatment center. All of the water that was contaminated was taken to the waste treatment plant.

There were 3 trailers containing foam to put out the fire brought on site. Only one trailer was used which is around 10 gallons to put out the 3 cars; an average fire would have needed closer to 15 gallons. The general guidance is to use 5 gallons per car, so they ended up using less than anticipated. ARFF or Buckeye is the type of surfactant. Foam is comparable to a glorified Dawn soap. Foam in discharging surface water is illegal in the United States unless permission is given; in most cases it is acceptable if needed in a populated area.

A representative from DEQ said they thought that the oil sheen in the river was minimal. Some oil showed up at the outfall pipe but when a spot would come up, it would disappear. UP cleaned the pipe numerous times, vacuumed and dug test holes. The sheen never made it outside the boom. Washington Ecology sampled the area and never had any results of concern. The council members shared their concern for oil that spilled into the non-confined gravels and those that will resurface during the high flows.

Surface Restoration – Mike Igo

Mike said a lot of plants were lost in the fire, which is an area where he has put a lot of his effort in the past. He put together a map of the burn area and what trees should be removed. He said there are 6 large conifers (4 Douglas firs and 2 Pine) that are hazardous. Mike has been working with ODOT and so far they have removed 16 trees. He said he will continue to work with the ODOT forester to monitor the trees to make sure there are not any left that are stressed which may attract the pine beetle. The organic material was consumed in the fire so that will be reestablished. The plan is to reseed with a mix called Mosier Grit, and then go back through with grass seed. Mike said a lot of the area will reseed naturally, but there isn't enough soil to plant anything with any sort of root. The seeding will have to be timed after the fall rains and prior to the leaves falling off.

Kristen with Humble Roots said once they collect seed, it will be contingent on the designs and timing of the City's plans with the road/ railroad driveway. Knapweed and Skeleton weed will become an issue as it's about to go to seed. If the area gets good rains this year everything should come back and recover on its own.

Mike was able to go into the burn and test well area to flag trees to keep. Mike said there have been many pine beetle killed trees that were taken out before the fire which is something to be thankful for. If they had still been there a lot more cars could have caught fire.

Walt briefly talked about what he has been doing in the watershed. He said the city is looking to drill a backup well for additional capacity. There weren't any wells that went dry due to the train derailment, and the aquifers are fine. He said that because there was so much water being pumped out at a fast rate they lost pressure and that was what triggered the boil water advisory.

Walt also mentioned GSI has been looking into putting a well on the opposite side of the thrust fault.

Groundwater Cleanup and Monitoring, Bob Schwarz, DEQ

So far DEQ doesn't have the groundwater data but plan to have it very soon and will add that information to their website. Bob said the wells that were drilled are about 25 feet deep, and will start pumping water soon as well. They have had a detection of contamination but was nothing of concern. DEQ is sampling weekly and will continue for 4 weeks. If there isn't anything major, they may scale back to once a month, but may sample more in the fall when the rains come.

He explained that the Columbia River has a lot of boat traffic, and there were hits up stream. Of the 60 contaminants that are being sampled for, only 8 of those had a hit. The 8 that were detected were parts/billion (well below the standards). DEQ is also sampling and monitoring volatile organic compounds (VOCs) at the mouth of Rock Creek. Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) are being tested through their soil excavation confirmation samples. Bob's presentation shared the concentration and the Risk Screening Level (for a residential property). Of the 18 PAHs only 2 of them were above the risk screening level;

Benzo[a]pyrene concentration 70, risk screening level 15; Dibenz(a,h)anthracene with a concentration of 19 and risk screening level 15. The chemicals that were detected are not that harmful or a concern.

The groundwater extraction began on June 29th. The water is pumped into a 20,000 gallon tank. DEQ measures the groundwater elevation at the other five wells while pumping and are testing the groundwater prior to and during pumping. There were 4 wells installed on June 16th and 17th and the first sample was taken on June 22. There are 4 weekly sampling events and three subsequent quarterly sampling events. As data becomes available DEQ will add it to the website.

If you would like to view these presentations please look on the Mosier Watershed Council website, http://wascoswcd.org/wcswcd_021.htm or follow the links to DEQ's monitoring data webpage.

Click on the link below and follow these instructions: Select the link "Search Complete ESCI Databas" midway down the page. Next screen input 6115 (the ESCI# for Mosier Train Derailment) inside the 1st box labeled "Site ID". Select submit at the bottom left of the form. Next screen select 6115 under Site ID/Info. Scroll through the page, the bottom portion contains links to documents and pictures.

<http://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/ECSE/ecsi.htm>

Meeting adjourned at 8:30PM.
Minutes prepared by Abbie Forrest.