

Mosier Watershed Council Meeting

Wednesday November 16, 2016

6:30PM – 8:30PM

MINUTES

Attendees:

Abbie Forrest, <i>Coordinator</i>	Kris McNall, <i>Co-Chair</i>	Bryce Molesworth, <i>Co-Chair</i>
Mike Igo, <i>Member</i>	Ken Lite, <i>OWRD, Member</i>	Walter Burt, <i>GSI</i>
Bob Schwarz, <i>DEQ</i>	Karen Lamson, <i>SWCD</i>	Adrienne Grimm, <i>GSA</i>
Karen Bailey, <i>Member</i>	Aurora Bouchier, <i>OWRD</i>	Erik Thomasser, <i>OWRD</i>
Phil Evans, <i>Member</i>	Todd Stevens, <i>Member</i>	Jim Reed, <i>Member</i>
Peter Dalke, <i>Member</i>	Frank Cochran, <i>NRCS</i>	Andrew Merritt
Kristin Currin	Isaac Stranz	Tiffany Stranz

Call to Order

Kris called the meeting to order and initiated a round of introductions.

Karen moved to approve the June and July meeting minutes, Bryce seconded and the motion passed.

Derailment Oil Spill & Fire Cleanup – Bob Schwartz, Oregon DEQ

Bob Schwartz briefly reviewed the information he presented from our last meeting. The groundwater treatment system is now up and running. The two extraction wells did have some contamination and are now being used for monitoring contaminants. On October 17th, the DEQ added 4 monitoring wells to see if any contamination is expanding further than predicted. He showed the most recent data (from Oct 31) of the eight different contaminants that are being monitored. There are two wells on the South side of the tracks that are being monitored as well as a control well. Bob did not have recent data from those wells but said the CH2M report contains the recent data which can be found on the DEQ's website.

Bob explained “biosparging” which is a cleanup method that encourages microorganisms to biodegrade contaminants by injecting air into the groundwater. He also shared maps with the location of all of the monitoring wells along with contour lines to show the direction groundwater flows. However, he indicated that groundwater flows vary with river levels. He said DEQ plans to add another well on the South side of the highway after the highway is stabilized and re-sloped.

The council discussed groundwater levels in correlation with the Columbia River and gauging stations. Bob said the information that was gathered from the closest gauge, in Stevenson, was not included in this presentation because the well water levels were rising before the river because the Stevenson gauge is significantly downstream from Mosier.

If you would like to view presentations from previous meetings visit the Mosier Watershed Council website at http://wascoswcd.org/wcswcd_021.htm

Derailment Restoration & Oaks Reprise – Mike Igo, plantings and other remediation of derailment damage; baby oaks.

Mike said a lot of remediation is being done. He has been actively working to monitor the native plants that were damaged during the derailment and the work above the surface has been diligently protected. Mike said a new concept has to be devised before any more native plants can be planted where the native plant area used to be. He emphasized the need to plant nature's way, which is in the fall. He added the railroad wants to plant exactly what they destroyed.

Mike explained, if the concept plan moves forward "we" the council and community, only have 14 days to get all appropriate parties involved; and a small planting window to get seed in the ground. There does not need to be a long concept plan to let the city council and manager know, to gather public input. Restoring the vegetation right now is on hold except for noxious weeds that were introduced because of the derailment.

Kris said there are additional considerations from the plan from 2003-2004 based on the trees and corridor that was there before the disaster. There is concern that if the seeds don't go in now they won't get established, however there may be different types of hardscaping that may help other problems including the flow of traffic through that corridor. Kris asked the council to think of this as a good opportunity for a big picture tradeoff. Kris explained the plan from 2003 is based on the conditions from that time period which isn't based on current conditions. The area has changed as well as the traffic. She urged the council to think of this opportunity. Discussion ensued.

Peter moved that the Mosier watershed council advance planting as soon as possible to restore the site consistent with the concept plan, and use of all native plants with consideration of the hardscape. Karen seconded.

The council continued discussion around the two part plan, mitigation needs now and hardscape later, and potentially beneficial or negative impacts. Discussion also included concerns around having to buy plants twice, and the main goal of making sure weeds don't take over.

Kris thought that the council needs to look at the big picture of traffic control and leaving a path forward.

There were eight members in favor of the motion, one opposed, the motion passed.

Kris volunteered to visit with Mike about actions to move forward with the City.

Implementation of Mosier Repair/Replace Project – Ken Lite, OWRD

Ken presented "Mosier Wells Repair / Replacement and Abandonment Project Summary" which was also presented to the Water Resources Commission (WRC).

The beginning of his presentation was defining the project scope. After assessing the wells, OWRD, had identified 70 wells; completed 70 desktop assessments with 47 of those with the potential for commingling. There were 25 wells that were field assessed, either from GSI or USGS/OWRD. The 22 remaining wells are still in need of field assessments.

Ken also explained the steps and key elements with initiating the Mosier Million grant.

The Key elements include:

- Partners and Cost Share

- Wasco County SWCD and the Mosier Watershed Council
- Cost Share: State 90% Local 10%
- Estimated Cost per well: \$20,000 to \$70,000
- Program Implementation
 - Selecting wells for repair or replacement
 - Landowner agreements
 - Driller contracts
 - Well inspections
- Program Tracking

Ken also reviewed the well prioritization and selection process; and the hydrologic criteria that was used. He also reviewed the well repair/replacement selection matrix, and the map of the area of interest.

The WRC Agenda Item D handout was distributed to council members before this meeting. Erik Thomasser added that the average well costs were around \$25,000. Erik said that the OWRD will be involved in selecting the drillers and inspections. Ken said that we do not get to start fixing wells until the bond sale in April of 2017. Since the money is not available until April, and will not come until after the legislative session, it would be good to get all of the pieces together before the end of that session. It would be helpful to have all of the landowners, drillers, etc., ready to go as evidence and leverage to get another million dollars.

Ken also reviewed progress on the deep well project, which is another grant the SWCD was awarded through OWRD. The project is to drill two deep wells into aquifers that haven't been explored yet. One well will be drilled to 1,200 feet, and the other well will be drilled to 1,600 feet. The goal is to see if these wells will take pressure off the higher aquifers.

Commingling Wells

Walt gave the council a brief status report. He said GSI has been working with the SWCD and the Watershed Council to assess the identified wells. The 2 wells that have liners did not get a full assessment but did have the water levels measured. There is follow-up needed to verify if some wells may or may not be commingling. They believe they have all of the tax lots accounted for. Walt shared the "Well Evaluation Status" map that includes all of the wells that have been desktop assessed.

Walt reviewed the Preliminary Repair and Replacement Prioritization table that was used to score the wells. The table included: Wells (numbers are not included in the presentation for privacy reasons), Proximity to Thrust Fault (1-8 points); Contributing Aquifer (1-4 points); Commingling Flow Estimate (1-8 points) and then the Total Points (4-20). Walt said GSI still needs to compare scores from the matrix with Ken; there may be differences because of the cascading water in some wells.

Kris provided a quick update on the outreach list and next steps that are being taken. Abbie has taken over project management for outreach and will be working with GSI and OWRD about contacting landowners.

Announcements and Set Next Meeting Date

Reappointments: *Jim Reed, Peter Dalke, Ken Lite and Susan Gabay.*

Jim, Peter, Ken and Susan all agreed to be reappointed to the Mosier Watershed Council.

Kris moved to reappoint Jim Reed, Peter Dalke, Ken Lite and Susan Gabay, Karen seconded and the motion passed.

Peter shared that the County Commissioners took a stance to not approve the double track, and instead took a more thoughtful position. Discussion ensued.

Karen moved to approve Kris and Bryce to write a letter of appreciation for their thoughtful position in regard to the double track to the County Commissioners. Jim Reed seconded and the motion passed.

Next meeting is scheduled for January 25th, 2017 at 6:30PM at the Mosier Grange.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Minutes prepared by Abbie Forrest