

Minutes
Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Council General Council Meeting

Lowell, OR
18 April 2001
6:33 PM

Present: Margaret Hartzell, Greg Vollstedt, James Johnston, Rick Movsky, Warren Weathers, Al Johnson, Fergus McLean, Barb Hazen, Juan Welsh, Gary Wells, Pat Wells, Marc Paulman, Val Rogers, Vivienne Torgeson, Cary Hart, Mike Running, Rick Bastasch, Jim Reed, Larry Haftl, Doug Powell, Greg Taylor, Robert Emmons, Paul Bell, Dan Van Dyke, Larry Bellinger, Chuck Davis, Sarah Smith

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Agenda

The agenda was approved after moving the presentations by Vivienne Torgeson and Rick Bastasch up before the break.

III. Steering Committee Election - Mr Welsh

Mr Welsh said that the two very qualified candidates represented the Fall Creek area. He then explained who was eligible to vote as defined within the Council Charter.

IV. Willamette River Initiative (WRI) - Mr Bastasch

Mr Bastasch said that the WRI was formed in 1998 to look at the entire Willamette River Watershed and make recommendations to the Governor and the legislature about what should go into the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds. He passed around copies of the Executive Summary. The goal is to integrate with the river environment. He showed the changing concepts of the river. It is predicted that the population of the watershed will double in 50 years. The WRI committee picked 27 actions which address water quality, quantity, habitat and institutions. The selection was science based. Recommendations for clean water include: finish the TMDL recommendations and the 1010 planning process and connect these two to the Endangered Species Act requirements as landowners need one set of integrated rules and plans to go by, reduce toxins and use economic incentives to get landowner compliance. Recommendations for water quantity included improving water management, education, and stream flow restoration and assessing dam management operations. In the area of habitat and hydrological process they recommended establishing riparian protocols, inventorying, mapping and conserving priority habitats, floodplain investigations, education about invasive species, incentives to landowners, prioritizing salmon passage and examining hatchery and harvest protocols. They suggested that we need smarter institutions with improved information management and public awareness. He said that watershed stewardship needs assessment, public awareness and education, a common message and a local capacity for technical assistance. He said the WRI is working to get funds to cover the shortfall in funding in the basin. WRI sunsets in June. Their website is: www.oregonwri.org

Mr McLean , Ms Torgeson and Mr Bastasch discussed the need for safe harbors for landowner liability.

V. OWEB Watershed Council Funding Update - Ms Torgeson

The Governor made a recommendation that OWEB get the same funding as the last biennium. The legislature sets the level of funding that OWEB can commit to council support. OWEB divides the state into five regions. In the Willamette there are a number of new watershed councils and new requests. They decided to provide enough money to support the coordinators (salary plus benefits), provide no operating funds and there still wasn't enough money to fund all the watershed councils in the Willamette Basin. OWEB recognizes what no operating costs means to the councils and is looking for more funding from Federal agencies so perhaps there will be a small amount of money for operating costs. They will continue to look for funding. Since there isn't enough money to fund all councils, OWEB is trying to decide how they will decide who to fund, e.g. merit?, need?, ESA need?. OWEB funding from lottery revenue is for on the ground projects not assessments.

VI. Approval of the Minutes from the 21 March 2001 General Council Meeting.
The minutes were approved with the following clarification:

"The questioning process that takes place at the General Council meetings is looking for specific personal knowledge. This is only one of many sources of input on the questions. Anyone reading these questions in the minutes and future minutes and who has personal knowledge of the subjects in question is encouraged to call, write, fax or email the information to Mr Welsh so that it may be added to the information collection."

VII. Public Comment

Mr Emmons said the Lane County Commissioners considered the proposal for critical habitat to address 4D Rules that Bill Sage presented at the General Council meeting last month and rejected it. He said that we as a watershed council have to stand up for what's right and let our commissioners know what it is.

Mr Powell in response said that the Commissioners and the County planners are waiting for NMFS to give them guidelines.

Mr Welsh said that he would see if we could get the County representative back for another General Council meeting.

VIII. Announcements - Mr Welsh

- Next General Council meeting is in Oakridge at the High School at 6:30 PM 16 May.
- The Fish Passage Conference is Jun 9 at the U of O Law School. Mr McLean and Mr Davis have worked hard to line up an excellent program. Need volunteers to help with the flyer, the poster and the mailing.
- The tour of Guistina lands is tentatively set for Jun 30.
- The Tree Planting Festival in Oakridge is May 5. Mr Welsh needs volunteers to help with the booth.
- The Army Corps of Engineers is having a public meeting April 24 at 7 PM in Eugene to discuss reservoir levels.

IX. Update on the Assessment - Ms Rogers

Ms Rogers said that we are in the start up and issue identification phase. Part of the assessment is talking about what we see as issues. We need to identify landowners along streams to inform them about the assessment. Please give her the names of stream-side land owners and community groups. She reported that there is a new volunteer. Larry Haftl has volunteered to do some historical conditions interviews. Ms Rogers requested that anyone with the names of long term residents who are willing to share their historical knowledge of the watershed let her know. She reported that Al Johnson of the USFS has joined the Assessment team. Ms Rogers will be working on the channel modifications, Mr Johnson, Ms Rogers and a volunteer from the council will be working on water quality. Fish and fish habitat will be conducted by Greg Taylor, Kim Jones, Al Johnson, Juan Welsh and volunteers from the Council. Condition evaluation will be a group process. Actual document production will hopefully be done by a volunteer from the Council. Weyerhaeuser is willing to share information from the watershed analysis they completed within Little Fall Creek and Hills Creek. BLM has done an assessment of Lost Creek, and the City of Eugene is conducting an OWEB assessment covering most of the lower Middle Fork done by Shapiro and Associates. The results from these three assessments will be used by our technical team and we will put our efforts into verification and follow-up of areas. If anyone has second thoughts about using this data they should contact Ms Rogers. She is planning to focus on the data gaps in areas that the OWEB manual requires. Ms Rogers finished by showing slides taken by George Cosmos in an aerial flight with Ross Bondurant.

X. Results of the Steering Committee Election - Mr Welsh

Mr Movsky won by a narrow margin. Mr Welsh thanked both men for participating in the Mid Fork's first Steering Committee election.

XI. Next Meeting

16 May 2001 Oakridge High School 6:30 - 8:30 PM

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM. Barbara Hazen Recorder