

Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Council  
General Council Meeting

16 April 2003  
Springfield, OR  
6:30 PM

Present: Kim Garvey, Jim Reed, Earl Dill, Rick Scott, Barbara Hazen, Marc Paulman, Brian Huber, Don Hampton, Dave Hulse, Mike Totey, Dan Cottrell, Mike Running, Bob Sward, Michael Balk, Trey Burns, Gary Sandgathe, Rick Movsky, Keith Perchemlides

I. Introductions

II. Approval of the Agenda and the Minutes of the Mar 19, 2003 General Council Meeting

The agenda was approved as posted. The minutes were approved as written.

III. Announcements.

- The Oakridge Tree Planting Festival is May 3. This is a community festival with a parade, street fair, Mountain Market day, a kids' area and a dinner theater presentation.
- River Day is May 16 and 17 with a Clean Water Festival on Friday for the younger children planned by Oakridge High School students at Greenwaters Park. On Saturday May 17 we will have the clean-up and an English Ivy removal. Sign up if you're coming so we'll know how much pizza to buy. Take a flyer and spread the word.

VI. Steering Committee Report Mr Movsky

- We submitted our fish passage database and prioritization grant to the USFS Resource Advisory Committee (RAC). The McKenzie Watershed Council, who will partner with us, has submitted the other half of the grant to the BLM RAC. We should hear in June.
- The Lane County watershed councils will have their first formal meeting with the Lane County Commissioners on May 7 at 11 AM. Members of the watershed councils are encouraged to attend.
- We have sent letters to our 4 legislators, asking them to protect lottery dollars funding the watershed councils.
- Chris Melotti spoke at our last meeting, soliciting our support for an oak savanna restoration project. We voted to be a partner on this project and would expect to take on some education and outreach tasks.
- The watershed councils throughout the state prepared an atlas of accomplishments for our state legislators. There is an office copy for those who are interested in looking at it more.
- Thanks for those who came out and helped pot the trees. We potted around 400 western red cedars and some ash, alder, maple and Doug-fir. These trees will be planted in Elijah Bristow State Park (EBSP) in the fall. Until then they need a home where they will be watered and shaded thru the summer. Anyone who can take some, please call Amy at 937-9800 or Keith at Food For Lane County 343-2822.
- We got our technical assistance grant and will be signing a contract with Bruce Newhouse who will be designing the EBSP restoration plan. We will meet him at the next Steering Committee meeting.

V. Mapping out the Future: Alternative Land and Water Use in the Willamette Basin - David Hulse

This is a report on a 6-year study done of the Willamette River Basin (WRB) by the Pacific Northwest Ecosystem Research Consortium, a group of 40 researchers. The EPA funded the study. They looked at the WRB from 1850 to 2050; the emphasis was on the trajectories of landscape change in the WRB. The research focused on 4 questions: 1)How people have altered the land, water and biotic resources since the EuroAmericans arrived around 1850, 2)How human actions might alter the landscape in the next 50 years, 3)What are the expected environmental consequences of these long-term landscape changes and 4)What type of management actions are likely to have the greatest effects. They used the 1850 General Land Office survey maps which were done by men walking the survey lines and recording everything they saw to get data for the 1850 status. The next year they looked at was 1990. In this case they merged satellite vegetation information and tax lot data as well as other information about roads, streams, etc. Then they projected three alternatives for how we might be using the land and water resources in 2050. They assumed a doubling of the population of the valley or roughly 4 million people in the valley by 2050. Plan Trend is the scenario in which we have comprehensive land use rules or continuing on the way we are going now with set Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB), etc. The Development scenario assumes a roll back of existing rules and regulations, making it easier to build houses in the rural areas and to expand the UGB. It permits market forces to drive land use. In the Conservation scenario we choose to maximize long-

term ecological function at the expense of economic gain. They looked at how these 3 different scenarios would each affect the ecological condition of the Willamette River, water availability and use, the ecological condition of streams and terrestrial wildlife.

Dr Hulse showed computer modeling of the changes in the floodplain of the Willamette River in one small area near Eugene. In 1850 there was a much more braided river, more trees and more wet-dry prairie; more oak dominated in the Coburg Hills. In 1990 there was a floodplain forest, agricultural lands and more rural homes in the Coburg Hills. In 2050 under the Development Plan there were a lot more rural homes with loss of agricultural lands and the urban growth boundary had expanded a lot. Under the Conservation Plan there was more riparian forest as some channels had been reconnected, oak savanna restoration in the Coburg Hills and a higher population density in the cities. The UGB had extended some, as there were set-asides for parks, etc in the city which allowed for some extension of the UGB. Overall since 1850 we have lost more of the bottomland forest, oak savanna, wet-dry prairie and emergent wetland vegetative types. This does lead to conservation and restoration opportunities in places that are biophysically capable of supporting the vegetative type and that are also politically plausible.

Dr Hulse said that no matter which scenario we pick there will be a problem with water quantity in 2050.

The consortium published an atlas and has a web site: <http://www.oregonstate.edu/Dept/pnw-erc/>

Questions and answers:

- Dr Hulse said that public outreach was done especially thru the citizen stakeholders who met as part of the community forum. He said that the atlas is not a plan but rather a way to start thinking about things; we need to have a strategy if we want restoration efforts to succeed.
- Transportation. The old roads went along the foothills to stay out of the wetlands along the river. Elected officials are going to be deciding what transportation in 2050 will look like. A parallel group used these scenarios to make transportation models. ODOT did a report but not an atlas.
- The atlas is already helping some counties with open space planning such as pointing toward prime sites for conservation easements, acquisitions, etc.
- Of the prime farmland noted in 1990, some is lost in all scenarios. The conservation scenario converts 90,000 A, the Planned scenario loses 9,000 A to development and the Development scenario takes 150,000 A. The Conservation scenario does assume active forestry, mining and farming. Its goals will not be easy to achieve.
- Watershed councils could use the atlas as a basis to start the discussion about what we want our watershed to look like. There are downloadable tools at the website.
- Paul Riser has chaired a group that produced a report urging the state to invest in tracking change in the river basin. Mr Hulse said that he is working on a grant application to track large scale change from satellite data. There are some limitations on satellite data in that it can't tell what kind of conifers are at a site but it can predict the age of the trees based on the canopy closure, etc.
- They didn't model growth and recreational pressure on national forest land. They did predict an increase consolidation of coniferous forest on public land.
- They did study water rights in the land use scenarios. Even in the Conservation scenario they predicted 150 miles of second order streams going dry at some time during the year. In 1990 there was already more water allocated in some areas than there was water e.g. the Pudding river, Tualatin R., Mollala R. This happens mostly in areas where agriculture started first.
- Water is going to be a big issue in the next 20 to 40 years. It is a tricky question. To understand it you have to look at all the sources of water. Mr Scott said that he would invite Gordon Grant who is an authority on the issue to speak to the council.

VI. Public Comment

None

VII. Next Meeting

Oakridge High School

Oakridge, OR

21 May 2003

6:30 PM

Meeting adjourned 8:38PM.

Barbara Hazen

Recorder