

**Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Council
October General Council Meeting**

18 October 2006
Oakridge, OR
6:30 PM

Present: Nikki Swanson, Cory Lewellen, Don Hampton, Pat Burns, Stephanie Shroeder, Sam Fox, Eve Montanaro, Gail Haws, Eric Haws, Dave Bontrager,

I. Welcome/Introductions

II. Approval of the Agenda
Agenda approved as written.

III. Approval of the Minutes of July 2006 Steering Committee Meeting.
Minutes approved as written.

IV. General Council Concerns and Announcements

- ELSWCD ballot to hire new staff member and technical advisors. The ballot would support watershed councils every year.
- Mr. Hampton (Don) announced that he is running for Oakridge Mayor and his name will be on the ballot.
- Mr. Hampton announced the tree planting festival on May 5, 2007. He is hoping for a better Council member turnout.
- The Oregon Trails Committee has been meeting. Two goals are to 1) have urban trails in the City and 2) connect trails with FS trails. Another open house will be in November. The open house will be open to public comment and suggestions.

V. Coordinator Update- Ms Montanaro

- Two proposals were just submitted.
 - The first proposal is for phase III of the Lost Creek project, which will fund the last phase (13 acres) of the planting at the confluence of Lost Creek and Middle Fork Willamette. Site preparation is currently being implemented for phase II. The Council will know about whether the project will be funded in April of 2007.
 - The second proposal is for phase II of public outreach for the floodplain feasibility study in the lower portions of the mid and coast fork watersheds. Funding will support smaller group sessions with landowners to identify and develop projects with a geomorphologist and hydrologist. The Council is partnering with the Army Corps, Coast Fork Willamette watershed council and other agencies. Phase I included a three-day public outreach event for landowners. The event was successful and the topics of floodplain restoration were introduced to landowners in both watersheds.
- Jim's Creek Stewardship Collaborative Project – The project group is now looking at specific areas of interest and is being informed by agency representatives on ecological, archeological, geological, cultural, fire-related, and economical characteristics within the stewardship area. The group has agreed that community needs are a priority for Oakridge. The Next meeting will be Nov. 1st at 5pm at the Council office. A Field tour will be Saturday Oct. 28.

- The Council received funding to hire a watershed educator to fund a pilot education program at Lundy elementary school in Lowell. An RFQ was sent out and the Council is in the process of hiring a contracted educator for the project. One goal is to integrate a curriculum that complements the current Oregon benchmark standards in schools. There will be approximately 5 field trips. Contact Eve if you have interested in helping out with this project.

VI. Steering Committee Report, Pat Burns

- The last Steering Committee meeting took place on Wednesday, September 27.
- Eve, as project manager, presented an update on the implementation of projects for the Lost Creek Confluence Restoration Phase II, Lost Creek Landowner Riparian project, and Jim's Creek Stewardship Group. Site preparation activities to date for the Confluence Restoration Project have included salvaging and caring for native plants, removing blackberry, mulching and irrigating Phase I. Together with the East Lane Soil & Water Conservation District, Eve is working with landowners in the Lost Creek subbasin to sign up for riparian restoration projects. The focus of this project is landowners who have had the invasive Japanese Knotweed removed from their property. Eve presented three potential projects to the Committee and asked for our approval to write and submit grant proposals in October to fund these projects. The Committee approved Eve to write and submit all three proposals, if doing so did not interfere with ongoing Council activities. Committee recognized all three projects as high priority projects for the Council and all would accomplish work plan activities for this biennium.
- We thank Mike Bietz of Oakridge for serving on the SC. Mike has resigned from his position on the Committee and he will continue to participate as a member. A SC position is open for a City of Oakridge resident Next Steering Committee meeting will be next Thursday, November 2 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm at the Council office in Lowell.

VII. Bull Trout Making a Comeback in the Upper Middle Fork Willamette; US Forest Service, Cory Lewellen, Nikki Swanson

- This is a joint collaborative project between the FS and the MFWWC Council. One goal is to remove a culvert and replace a bridge, project funded by OWEB.
- Bulltrout formally thrived in the upper watershed, but have quickly declined due to construction of various dams in the late 80s. The Bulltrout recovery program was issued in 1995. About 10,000 fry were collected and released over a period of nine years. "PIT" tags were implanted in fish. These tags are easily implanted and can be picked up by various antennas placed across the creeks as fish swim by.
- In 2005, 12 sexually mature bull trout were caught spawning. In 2006, the trap is still going, and 5 new spawning bull trout were found. The main objective now is to follow the fish and see if they were successful.
- Restoration efforts: These fish require pristine habitats. Root wads were placed in certain creeks, including swift creek, and an excavator was used in some creeks to place logs more accurately. OWEB funded a huge portion of this project. Release sites for the fry are also good spawning habitat. A helicopter was used to add spawning gravel at all release sites. In 2006, 4 reds were found in Aiko and Chuckle springs.
- It will cost \$260,000 to replace a culvert with a bridge. The MFWWC and McKenzie WC looked at culverts in the watershed to determine which ones needed replacement for fish

passage. Buck Creek rated #4 in ~500 culverts. Buck Creek has benefits for both bull trout and Chinook salmon. The total cost for the Buck Creek project is \$500,000.

- Ms. Swanson showed historical pictures of the streams within the upper watershed.
- This is the first successful bull trout recovery program in the world.

VIII. Oregon Chub Recovery Program and Local Progress: ODFW, Peggy Kavanagh and Ms. Montanaro

- Oregon Chub are endemic to the Willamette River. They prefer slow moving water and lots of vegetation to lay eggs, and are best in communities with other native fish species. They were federally listed as endangered in 1993.
- Factors affecting Oregon chub populations: channelized streams, removal of snags, draining of wetlands, dams, predation/competition with non-native fish. Current threats include pesticide spills, non-native fish, logging, and increasing habitat loss.
- Chub are currently located in the mid fork Willamette, coast fork, and down towards the Santiam River. They are further upstream now than historical data from the early 90s taken by ODFW has shown.
- The research focus includes: 1) To determine Oregon chub current distribution, 2) To monitor their status and abundance of populations 3) To identify potential introduction sites 4) To conduct and monitor re-introductions, and 4) To conduct life history investigations.
- Recovery plan goals are to downlist (must have 10 separate populations of 500 adults that are stable for >5 years) and, ultimately, delist (20 populations for >7 years). Currently, there are 37 populations of over 500 fish, of which 14 populations are in the mid fork.
- Haws property: There is a population on Gail and Eric Haws property. Ms. Montanaro said that the Council received partial funding from OWEB to create another pond on the property, which would improve the existing population. She will write another proposal the ODFW Landowner Incentive Program to request the remaining funding. The project idea is to have an 'island' in the center of the pond to provide wildlife habitat. Both ponds will act as 'donor spots' for future re-introduction projects. Total cost for the project is \$75,000. Half of the funding is coming from OWEB and the other half is from ODFW. Work will commence in July 2007. Plants will be installed in March 2008. Gail Haws expresses how she fully supports bringing back the native plant communities to encourage more wildlife habitat. Restoration activities on their property have been a great experience for her. Eric Haws stated that it is a shame not to utilize their property to its full potential for watershed restoration. Ms. Montanaro thanked Dave Bontrager for managing the riparian restoration projects at the Haws. Dave looks at the whole picture beyond just looking at the fish. He takes all wildlife into account. Mr. Bontrager states that this is "habitat planting" at the Haws. While birding at the property, Mr. Bontrager noticed fish. Fish traps were set up and Greg Taylor noticed the first chub. There are currently at least 7 species of fish in the existing pond.

XIV. Eve thanked the Haws for their continued work. She also thanked Mr. Bontrager, Ms. Swanson, Mr. Lewellen, and Ms. Kavanagh for contributing to the meeting.

XV. Next Meeting: 15 Nov 2006, Springfield, 6:30PM

Meeting adjourned 8:30 PM.

Stephanie Schroeder
Recorder