

Attachment 1 – Strengths Identified by the Plan Review Team

In the review of the Upper Grande Ronde River Watershed Partnership’s draft place-based integrated water resources plan, the review team identified a number of strengths of the draft plan. They are documented below and organized by the criteria identified in the Draft Planning Step 5 Guidance.

Planning Guideline or IWRS Principle	Strengths Identified by Plan Review Team
Balanced Representation of Interests	The planning process involved diverse stakeholders including landowners, industry, and municipalities as well as local, state, and federal agencies and Tribes.
Collaborative and Integrated Process	The Planning Group took initiative, invested time and volunteer energy to complete this process, and completed the first draft plan during this pilot phase. This group gamely completed this process with relatively limited resources and data. The team spent ample time to make a plan with stakeholder support from Union County stakeholders.
Public Process	The group should be commended for a high level of involvement overall. All meetings were advertised and open to the public. The mailing list included over 100 recipients. Anyone could be added to the mailing list. All meeting materials, draft summary reports and the draft plan were distributed to the full mailing list. The list of participants on the Stakeholder Committee as well as participating members of the interested public is extensive.
OWRD Consultation	OWRD appreciated the opportunity to participate in the Steering Committee in addition to engaging as a partner in the planning process.
Scope of Planning Effort	The planning area is clearly identified and it works well that the Union County boundaries match up fairly closely with the basin boundaries.
Understanding Water Resource Supply, Quality, & Ecological Issues	A great deal was accomplished given the limited time and resources, and the review team acknowledges that much of the information needed for the assessment was not readily available when needed. The planning group is to be commended for compiling what was available and working to understand the basin’s water status. See additional strengths listed under “Validity of Information.”
Current and Future Water Needs	The planning group invested considerable time and effort in learning about current and future water needs.
Solutions or Recommended Actions	Stakeholders in the planning area have already seen success for some solutions identified in the plan and that success could be built upon. For example, priority #4, non-structural water storage and habitat management is an ongoing action in the project area. The team of restoration practitioners in Union County have been doing this work for years, they are adept, and funding sources are available. Habitat work including floodplain connectivity, riparian restoration, side channel development, and wetland creation at increased scale in the project area will yield improvement to both stream flow, water quality, and perhaps improve groundwater quantities.

Addresses In-stream and Out-of-Stream Needs	The Plan seeks to move forward strategies that can address both instream and out-of-stream needs.
Validity of Information	The planning group used a data-driven and science-based process. They conducted a thorough review of existing data and information and acknowledge remaining uncertainties and the need for further research on some topics. There is significant documentation of data and analysis used to inform plan development (available in the Step 2 and Step 3 documents).
Information and data gaps	<p>The Plan acknowledges outstanding information or data gaps and recommends actions to fill gaps. The planning group took advantage of readily available information to assess surface water quantity. Additionally, the gaps identified regarding the period of record for surface water availability information were captured. The proposed work regarding the operation of stream gages to attempt to update this information is important and will be critical for the proposed solutions.</p> <p>The review team acknowledge that changes in agency staff assignments and participation over the lifetime of this effort challenged the ability of some the agencies to participate consistently. We appreciate the planning group’s efforts to overcome limited state resources to create this plan.</p>
Plan Adoption by Planning Group	The relationships and trust developed during this process will help the partnership move from plan development to adoption and implementation.
Implementation Strategy	<p>The group is in a strong position to begin implementing the plan, with a Capacity Building Technical Assistance grant from OWEB and a Feasibility Study Grant from OWRD. Members of the Partnership are already demonstrating their commitment and collective ability to implement the plan. There are team leads and activities identified for each of the strategies to make sure things keep moving forward. Strengths included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan implementation to start immediately. • Some funding opportunities have already been identified and applications submitted. • Implementation team leads have been identified. • Data collection, monitoring and research team is identified as feeding information into other teams.