

# Upper Grande Ronde River Watershed Partnership Place-Based Integrated Water Resource Planning Stakeholder Meeting

## Meeting Minutes

August 15, 2018

OSU Extension Office Conference Room

10507 N. McAlister La Grande, OR

**ATTENDANCE:** Anton Chiono, Tony Malmberg, Jeff Oveson, Mike Burton, Bill Gamble, Larry Larson, Darin Walenta, Tim Bailey, Jed Hassinger, Kyle Carpenter, Brett Moore, Maurizio Valerio, Kathleen Cathy, Aaron Bliesner, Kathie Dello, Steve Perrett, Rodger Huffman, Donna Beverage, Dana Kurtz, Cinda Johnston.

The Steering Committee met prior to the Stakeholder meeting at 3:00 pm and discussed the project's progress, intended focus of the upcoming meeting, as well as some discussion about meetings in November when Union County will host the other four partnerships from around the state.

### I. **Welcome**

- a. Donna opened the meeting at 4:10 p.m. and brief introductions took place.
- b. Dana provided an overview of Place-based planning and provided information for newcomers. This partnership is currently working on Step 3 and moving towards Step 4. Community outreach and collaboration with stakeholders have been successful.
- c. Steve Parrett provided an update, including Legislative requests to continue Place-Based groups, projects, feasibility studies, and increased access for more user-friendly data. The 2018 Feasibility Study Grant application deadline is October 17. He suggested that the group consider inviting its Water Resource Commissioner to attend a future meeting. Donna asked if this group would be given priority for funding; Steve stated that it would not move ahead of other applicants, but the application would probably be stronger and more competitive than others considering the work completed.
- d. Dana provided an overview of the May 30 meeting.
- e. Donna shared information about the Ford Family Learning Partnership; they are offering \$10,000 to the five pilot groups to continue their work. All five partnerships recently met in Harney County to network, find commonalities, and share success stories and challenges. This local partnership seems to have less challenges than others in the state. All five partnerships will meet in Union County in November.
- f. Kathie provided an update on climate change work. Top concerns for this area will be available for review the first of September, followed by a training webinar later in the year. Dana hopes that their stand-alone report will verify this group's work.
- g. May 30, 2018 meeting minutes were approved by consensus.

## II. Work Session

- a. Discussion regarding Step 3 included suggestions to better define deficiencies/vulnerabilities and concerns about accurate data and the importance of it pointing to specific problems.

Larry commented that assessments about water flow and vulnerabilities should not be included because they don't necessarily reflect changes that take place over multiple years unless it is noted that it is assumed that there will be no improvements.

Rodger stated that after the presentation, many stakeholders felt that municipal water rights holders would get the water it needs because it has the legislative authority to get it. Most of the data is historical and does not reflect the changes that have taken place over the last five or ten years. The report should recognize that there are significant acres being added to in-stream leases, cutting down water volume for water rights holders. Agriculture producers cannot flood irrigate as they have traditionally, putting them in a situation where they must choose to either lease more rights or invest time and expense for a more efficient water irrigation system. It should be noted that there is more water in the streams over what has historically been there and it has a positive impact on the fish. Step 4 should reflect that the trend shows that the needs of fish are becoming more weighted than the needs of agriculture producers. Larry commented that a decreased occurrence of flood irrigating also changes the soil profile.

Steve noted that the draft guidelines identify vulnerabilities as natural events such as droughts, wildfire, floods, and seismic events; this is intended to be a small component of Step 3. Vulnerabilities of in-stream leases was not the intent according to the guidelines, but could be included in solutions in Step 4.

Dana acknowledged time restraints to review the entire document and encouraged everyone to review the executive summary. Feedback regarding Step 3 is needed within the next few weeks, after which time a second round of edits will be made.

- b. Four groups were formed to brainstorm scoring matrix priorities to be utilized as solutions in Step 4. Larry stated that more information and better data should be available before creating a matrix. Others suggested that there should be differential scales for sub basin scoring criteria and aggregate sub basin scores for each criterion. Also noted was that scores should be looked at individually and as an aggregate. Projects could be ranked by use category and higher scores could be given by addressing a category. Suggested scoring matrix priorities included:
  - i. Implementation/response time
  - ii. Length of benefit
  - iii. Number of demand groups benefitted/benefits multiple uses

- iv. Feasibility of implementation
- v. Cost to benefit ratio
- vi. Funding Source
- vii. Existing program expertise in basin to complete project
- viii. Broad community support
- ix. Legal/regulatory barriers
- x. Risk of uncertainty of perceived benefits
- xi. Future risk IF project is completed
- xii. Potential harm to others/Negative effects
- xiii. Differential scales of solution
- xiv. Sufficient information about access & validity regarding deficit/solution
- xv. Degree/certainty of deficit/vulnerability

**III. Conclusion**

- a. Next meeting is September 19, 2018, 4-6PM
- b. Following meeting is November 8, 2018, 12-2PM with field trip and dinner to follow
- c. The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Cinda Johnston  
Union County Planning Department Specialist