

Upper Grande Ronde River Watershed Partnership
Place-Based Integrated Water Resource Planning
Stakeholder Meeting No. 36

Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2021
Conference Call

ATTENDANCE:

Bill Gamble, Jed Hassinger, Steve Parrett, Jesse Steele, Winston Morton, Jim Webster, Larry Larsen, Donna Beverage, Dana Kurtz, Kathleen, Alex Towne, Brett Moore, Cheryl Murchison

I. WELCOME

a. Introductions

Donna opened the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

b. Meeting Guidelines

Dana reviewed guidelines for virtual meetings: state your name when speaking, speak up, mute your microphone when not talking, and use chat function to share ideas/comments when others are speaking.

c. Recap of December 9, 2020 Stakeholder meeting

The partnership unanimously voted to approve the Step 4 Report.

II. Step 5 Plan

a. Review and comment on table of contents and content of plan

Dana noted that this will be the tightest deadline for the partnership:

Jan. 13 2021	Revisions to Step 5
→	Work Groups meet
Feb. 10 2021	Adopt DRAFT Step 5
Mar. 10, 2021	Finalize/approve Step 5 Submit plan to allow 30-60 days for agency review (ODA, ODFW, OWRD, DEQ)
Apr. 2021	Wait/work implementation
May 2021	Wait/work implementation
Jun. 9, 2021	Presentation to OWRD
Jun. 30, 2021	Grant extension expires

Dana stated that the implementation phase would include quarterly stakeholder meetings, work based on individual groups, followed by advice and feedback given to the larger group as needed. This work will be used to do the OWEB strategic action plan, more geared towards the project side of things.

Steve asked if it could be too ambitious to have the draft plan ready by March 10. Dana agreed and added that to allow for agency reviews, the last date it could be submitted would be March, or maybe April. Steve said that the plan should be submitted when everyone is satisfied with it; the agency will be prepared to turn it back around with comments as quickly as they can. Donna said the group probably

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would not be able to incorporate upcoming feedback from work groups in time to submit in March, but it could be fine-tuned by April. Dana agreed that Steve had a good point: the review and final draft process has taken longer in the past but this timeline won't allow for that. More work on the OWEB strategic action plan can be done in the implementation phase, so hopefully cutting that out makes this part of the process more succinct and ready for approval. It will be good for everyone to be aware of the timeline since this process will be limited to one or two revisions.

Dana said the executive summary would be at the beginning of the report. The introduction of the Step 5 Report will explain why we started the process, include background, and then the next four sections are summaries of important parts of Reports 1-4. Section 5 is discussion of the implementation strategy. The report could describe milestones or goals, starting with year one, and most goals ending in 2040 (this is where work groups will be really helpful). The hope is that the spreadsheet will be a working document for planning; items can be crossed out, progress noted, and annual updates documented. Donna stressed the need for this to be short and easy to read, it doesn't have to be a long document.

Feedback was sought from stakeholders about the document and if it met expectations.

Steve stated that it closely mirrored the suggested format; photos and graphics make it more accessible. The plan can emphasize what was accomplished over the years.

Larry asked if the plan would identify water deficit locations or the entire watershed as a whole. Dana said that although it is broken down by sub-watersheds with different risks, it could be placed at the front of the report for more emphasis. The storage feasibility study will identify water sources, and the report will list different types of projects within the top five strategy categories. Brett agreed that the action plan needs to identify the scope and scale of goals; will it be aggressive with whole-watershed goals, or only those in the valley? We may not be able to say what it will solve but the scope and scale still needs to be identified. The feasibility study will seek to resolve the deficiencies. Larry thought that specific actions should be looked at instead of addressing the whole watershed since that may be more than the group could achieve and some goals may not be a high priority. Brett stated that specific actions/strategies should be left up to the working groups to get the biggest bang for our buck, allowing some to be more aggressive. Larry concurred.

Jesse asked for guidance from Water Resources on the Step 5 for review; Dana will send that out.

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Dana clarified that working groups will produce a similar spreadsheet with tasks, which will then be fed into sections of the Step 5 report. The hope is to attach a report summarizing milestones instead of outlining every little detail. Group work outcomes could include:

1. Identify team members and leaders, invite others
2. Reference scope and scale of each subtask, then map the path you'll take
3. Connect tasks & objectives to main tasks & objectives in study goals
4. Identify a lead person for each task
5. Notate original action plan changes (active/inactive, would not qualify, etc.)
6. Define goals for one year from now and through the 2040 timeline
7. Provide a progress summary with meeting dates and milestones met

b. Confirm work group membership

Work Group members were reviewed with suggested changes/updates. Built Storage: invite Anton Chiono. Ag Land: send invitations to Mike Burton (NRCS) and Tony Malmberg. Data: will start with GRMW as lead with hopes to add more help. Personnel changes at ODFW may not allow time to help, but leave possibility open.

c. Set meeting for work groups

Dana will coordinate meeting times to take place next week so that those serving in multiple groups can contribute. That will help determine whether or not another meeting will be needed prior to the February 10 meeting.

III. Conclusion

a. Next meeting is February 10, 2021 (5-7pm)

Donna hopes to have space in the Misener Room for at least some attendees; everyone will have to socially distance and wear masks. Dana asked for everyone to RSVP for that meeting so we can make sure there is enough room.

b. Other Comments

Alex Towne, GIS Specialist with GRMW, said she participated earlier in the process and is now checking back in. She plans to make a storyboard video with Donna.

Jed said that there are some Legislative bills to keep an eye on; one would establish groundwater monitoring across the state and another would fund implementation. It may be too late to submit a letter of support, but it would be worth making changes or additions to our research and data goals.

Steve reminded everyone that Place Based Planning is on the next Water Resources Commission meeting agenda and every PBP partnership group is invited to talk. Testimony can be offered via Zoom on February 18, 9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.; the meeting will be available on YouTube for viewing.

Steve noted that it is important for this group to be its own best advocate. A number of bills affecting the state's ability to implement plans are up for consideration. For example, one proposed budget cut would affect groundwater monitoring and gauging, which would be contrary to this partnership's plans. There will be an

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opportunity for groups to voice what they want and an email will soon be available that would show where the budget is cutting these things; he hopes to get that email out to Donna soon. It's important to make your needs known to the Legislature, which is most effective through your State Representative.

Donna adjourned the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cinda Johnston
Union County Planning Department Specialist