

# **Marys River Watershed Council**

## **Board Meeting**

### **August 11, 2009**

The meeting began at 6:35 PM.

Board members present: Jennifer Beathe, Ken Crouse, May Dasch, Bud Laurent, Wayne Phillips, Curt Seeliger, Mark Taratoot, Thom Whittier  
Contractors present: Xanthippe Augerot, Karen Fleck Harding  
Guests present: Meleah Ashford, Jana Seeliger

### **Introductions, Announcements and Reports**

Xan has a stack of the booklet titled, "On the lookout for aquatic invaders identification guide for the Pacific Northwest". These booklets, from Sea Grant Oregon are available to those who would like a copy.

#### **Chair's report**

Thom reported that he met with Xan at least five times in the last month, including two field trip days.

#### **Treasurer's report**

Written report went out to the board.

The \$7500 that the Council received from Allied Waste, via DEQ is not restricted money. Xan commented she would like to apply the funds strategically. For instance, it might be used to ensure that Karen can continue her outreach work given that the Council doesn't very much education and outreach funding for FY09/10..

Administrative funds analysis- Xan said that she would prefer to leave some of the additional administrative where they are for use such as rent, bills and utilities. Xan would like to meet with Karen to discuss where the spending is expected to occur on the open grants and what remains available (if anything) from the closed grants.

Xan reported that the analysis is coming along well, but not finished yet.

Bud asked about where the money for the council support grant goes. It goes to pay the the coordinator's time.

#### **Outreach and Education report**

The rapid bio-assessment and field work at Beaver Creek has been completed. There has been a lot of landowner support.

Karen reported that Shotpouch has all the components, including gradient, spawning gravels, floodplain connection and cold water for high potential for success in restoring fish habitat.

Equipment moved in today for the Ervin Creek wetland project. The project is being implemented in cooperation with ODFW and USFWS Partners Program. OWEB small grant is paying for equipment rental.

Karen visited with a landowner in the upper Marys River basin (northeast of Summit). Due to the low gradient, low flow, upstream historic grazing land use and lack of gravels, the site did not have a lot of immediate potential for improvement outside of increased shading to mitigate temperature.

Bud asked if we have a plan for conservation easements, since they may prove to be important, especially, on smaller properties where agriculture is not economically feasible. Xan said that no, the MRWC does not, but that she would like to talk to Greenbelt Land Trust to investigate further.

May asked about the Upper Marys stream that Karen visited and Karen that that we need to get a better understanding of watershed-wide potential and priorities.

Karen was also involved in the City of Corvallis Rock Creek Explorers camp where she taught children how to snorkel in the stream. ODFW was there and offered a seining lesson. Karen reported that the campers really enjoyed the snorkeling and were able to observe Cutthroat trout and sculpins.

Woods Creek wood placement is expected to begin in September.

### **Coordinator's report and update on Council transition items**

Xan submitted a written report to the board prior to the meeting.

Xan thanks Karen Fleck Harding and Steve Trask for the two day watershed tour. She is looking forward to having time to meet with additional board members and contacts from other agencies to get to know those involved in the watershed.

Xan worked with Anne White to put together a reimbursement request form to note what financial and time commitments are being made by the board members. Xan would like this to be submitted every month. OWEB support grant requires a match and the match can be board member time. Bud suggested adding a section for proposal review and Xan thinks that strategic planning will become more important in the future and will include a section for that as well. Once Xan revises the form, she will send it to the board members.

Bud encourages better record keeping in terms of invoices for consultant and contractor activities. He would like the Council to have historical accountability for how time and money are spent.

Xan is also working on a new letterhead for the MRWC.

Jennifer asked for background information about the written report tour comments related to stream protection and "payment for ecological services". Xan explained that it was about the Oregon Forests Practices Act (OFPA) not requiring buffers on small, non fish bearing streams in headwater tributaries. Payment for ecological services referred to paying landowners to keep a buffer on a stream for temperature mitigation. Jennifer said that, as forest landowner representative, most forest landowners are supportive of the OFPA and leaving a buffer where it is not needed (as is suggested in the paired watershed

studies) would suggest that landowners don't agree that the OFPA is adequate to protect water quality, which they generally do (agree that it is adequate to protect water quality).

## **Draft Council Workplan**

Xan reviewed the 2003 action plan for the MRWC as a basis for the new work plan. After discussion with Karen and Thom, Xan has created new conceptual goals for the MRWC.

These are:

- Enhance the ecological functionality of Marys River streams to reduce stream temperature at the mouth and provide increased spawning and rearing habitat for cutthroat trout, as a leading indicator.
- Ensure the sustainability of subbasin landowner engagement and systems-based project design
- Support upland restoration for threatened and endangered wildlife and plant species, as a component of overall watershed health.
- Develop a comprehensive monitoring strategy based on clear restoration goals, planned project outcomes and baseline data collection.
- Build on our successful K-16 education program by focusing strategically on schools serving families residing in the Marys River watershed.
- Build the organizational capacity of the Marys River Watershed Council.
- Communicate effectively to the Council membership, partners, funding sources in support of our vision and mission.

Xan would like to introduce the strategic planning process at the September 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting.

Thom said that that the council will be at the beginning of the strategic planning process and the work plan will take up a fair bit of time at the next board meeting in September.

Bud said that on goal five, he doesn't see the last four years (13-16) of k-16 education included here. Karen said that we need to look at education piece and determine where we are going to focus the efforts. She added that maybe Philomath will get more emphasis than other cities.

Regarding cooperative agreements, Bud said that we are going to be better positioned to do the administration on cooperative agreements in the future. Thom said that prospects for additional outreach and education funds are slim. We have to figure out where we get the best value.

Bud would like to suggest that if something is consistent with the work plan then indicate that on paper. If it is new, explain how it will be included in the work plan.

Mark asked about Philomath and why that school system has priority. Karen said that it would be good to focus on where we have the capacity to be effective. There was also a suggestion that the Philomath School District served more families in the watershed than

the Corvallis School District. However, the answer is unknown because of the location of the watershed boundary in Corvallis.

## **MMT/BEF Letter of Interest**

Xan provided a background for the Board and a draft outline. The background reflects Xan's discussion with Todd Reeve. Highest probability of improving the biological function of the basin is important.

Xan will be meeting with the coordinator of the Luckiamute Watershed Council to get to know her and to also discuss the LWC interest's in the MMT-BEF Model Watershed Program.

Bud asked about the timing of our strategic plan and the deadline for the MMT-BEF submission.

Bud asked if Xan intends to have the draft LOI ready for the board to act on by the September meeting? Yes

Bud would like to see the council focus its resources on restoration and thinks that idea of mandatory quarterly meetings takes away from contractor's time to work on restoration.

Thom said that he disagrees and that we need more than four quarterly meetings.

Bud said that there is another pathway: the media, a regular article in the paper, to show the good work that is being done by the council.

Back to the draft outline:

Mark has concerns about the program, that if awarded this grant, we would be hindered to follow the rules of the project and not be able to do other things that are outside of the MMT-BEF. Xan thinks that we should be able to have adjustable targets, so that if we decide that something isn't working a change in course can be made.

Thom said that we need to make sure that we don't have limitations that we don't want. There is and should be a need for duality...to be focused and strategic with respect to ecological restoration goals for the Marys and to be opportunistic and responsive to landowners and other partners.

Bud on bullet two: should we be proposing sub-basins more in keeping with what they are looking for - to have a greater probability of showing measurable success through monitoring? Xan heard Todd say "probability of ecological success" so she wants there to be a great deal of ecological potential.

Jennifer commented that the original charge for the Oregon Plan was to improve fish passage and that we should remember that stand alone projects had their place when the Oregon Plan was first implemented. Making culverts passable to fish was the quickest

and easiest way to increase accessibility for fish use/habitat in streams. It's important to keep that in perspective rather than assessing those "single culvert" projects as a waste of money.

Re:#6, Jennifer said that there may be some historical stream temperature information available from Starker Forests.

### **Annual Membership Meeting**

Thom suggested that board members that are staying on the board could be on for three year terms.

Curt is leaving the board. Ken said that he has limited time for the board and would like to also leave the board.

Thom asked for suggestions for other people that would be willing to join the board. Two people have agreed to run for a board position and a few other board members have to make a few additional contacts.

Xan plans to put together a voter's pamphlet. She also plans to assemble a draft agenda with Karen.

There is interest in a bylaw change that will redefine the chair elect as vice chair.

Xan asked about press for the annual meeting. May offered to submit something to the Corvallis Gazette Times.

### **Misc. Topics**

Karen passed around a flyer for a "picnic on Marys Peak" on Thursday, August 20<sup>th</sup>. There are three speakers on Pacific lamprey planned for the September MRWC meeting.

Ken suggested revisiting the definition of membership.

Xan and Karen met with Ken McCall and Tom Penpraze to mitigate stream temperature by riparian planting.

Karen-Marys Peak Stewardship Group wants to work with the MRWC. There is \$2000 of outreach funding that MRWC could use as match with the expectation that Karen would bring a project proposal. It would be a project similar to the Rock Creek Watershed project where the MRWC would serve as the applicant. She is working on a proposal for riparian planting and alternative to riprap for streambank stabilization with 3 adjacent landowners on Greasy Creek. It is due Sept 1.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.