

Joint General Member and Steering Committee Meeting

Location: Stayton Community Center; 400 Virginia Ave; Stayton, OR

Date: November 12, 2009

Time: 7:00 to 9:00 PM

Attendance:

Role Call for Quorum: John Caruso (Chair, Marion County Citizen), Jon Tucker (Lower Sub-Basin), Suzette Boudreux (Economic), Mike Kroon (Natural Resources) and Tom Fencil (Middle Sub-Basin). Quorum confirmed.

General: none

Contractors: Elizabeth (Liz) Redon, Erika Lang, and Pamela Archer

7:00 PM Steering Committee Meeting Called to Order

Public Comment and Announcements: none

Approval of Minutes: Members reviewed minutes for October 2009. John Caruso, Jon Tucker seconded.

Decision: Minutes for October 2009 approved.

7:05 PM Officers: November Election

Elections were conducted by Liz Redon and the following slate of officers were elected:

- Chair- John Caruso
- Vice-Chair- Suzette Boudreux
- Treasurer/Secretary- Bruce Rogers

7:15 PM Presentation: CREP and Landowner Revolving Fund

Erika Lang presented an overview of the CREP, the Council's role in the CREP process, and the Council's Landowner Revolving Fund.

- CREP: Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
 - Restoration
 - CREP is one of many tools in our restoration toolbox. Restoration activities include weed removal, control, fencing, planting, and livestock watering.
 - Rental payments
 - In exchange for taking agricultural land out of production and restoring it, rental payments are made to the landowner.
 - Payments are made for 10 or 15 years, similar to conservation easement
 - Opinion: is an underutilized tool in Linn and Marion counties. The Council could get more landowners to complete restoration projects with these incentives, which offers more to folks than the WC can alone.
- Incentives
 - Cost shares: financial assistance to perform restoration.
 - Agencies will only pay up to allowable amount specified by contract. There are limits for plants, planting, etc.
 - CREP payments are divided among the following agencies:

- 50% from Farm Service Agency (FSA)
 - 25% from Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB)
 - 40% practice incentive (at project final)
 - =115% reimbursement (with efficient spending)
 - Common question from landowners are whether or not they will have out-of-pocket expenses. Generally the weed removal is what you'll go over on. Blackberry is an exception, where costs will be prorated to high, med, low.
- Example CREP budgets for restoration practices
 - Mechanical site prep/mowing example budget
 - 50% cost share up to contracted amount
 - Total budget available is \$100
 - 50% cost = \$50
 - 25% cost = \$25
 - 40% cost = \$40
 - Total amount available for reimbursement = \$115
 - Plants and planting example budget
 - Total cost (contracted amt)= \$2/plant at 100% cost share
 - \$2/plant x 500 plants = \$1000
 - 50% cost = \$500
 - 25% cost = \$250
 - 40% cost = \$400
 - Total available = \$1150
 - POINT: You'll have more available than what your contract was initially for
 - WC will start writing budget templates for people to use
- CREP Process
 1. Landowner recruited for program*WC (where WC can help)
 - a. Before WC involvement, not a lot of landowners were being recruited for CREP
 - b. For the MMT Model Watershed, our goal is to recruit 15 landowners
 - c. Recruitment methods
 - i. Mailing
 - ii. Site visit
 - iii. Community meetings
 2. Landowner signs up (physically go to CREP office)
 - a. CREP gives you a number
 - b. Need to do this in order to start process
 3. Hold site visit with partners FSA, NRCS, ODF, Erika
 - a. Council is landowner's facilitator with CREP/partners
 - b. Landowner gets their voice heard, doesn't happen w/ WC**
 - c. Landowner gets bogged down with decisions like plants, cows, watering
 4. Landowner TURNS IN FORM offering acres to FSA—critical step, needs to be done before anything else
 5. Planning starts
 - a. ODF planting plan
 - b. NRCS Cultural Resource request,
 - c. NRCS writes practice specifications (WC can help give voice)

- d. =Conservation plan
 - i. Landowner needs to sign plan
 - ii. At this point, landowner can still walk away
 6. Conservation plan is developed
 7. County committee needs to sign off on plan
 8. Practices implemented (not before anything else)
 - a. Not usually a timeline written for individual practices, but needs to be completed within a certain time frame
 - b. Given list of contractors but NRCS can't give recommendations (WC can recommend)
 - c. Check-in (need to write letter to county committee if need more time)
 9. Assignment of payment
 - a. Is called a reimbursement, but is technically a payment
 - b. When you do a practice as a landowner, you turn in your invoice, you get paid 50% of the initial cost share, few weeks later, get 25% cost share
 - c. So you are out 25% at one time, technically
- Assignment of payment—How the Watershed Council could facilitate the CREP process
 - Assignment of payment would be directed to the council
 - 50% goes to council from FSA
 - 25% goes to landowner from OWEB (program rules)
 - 40% practice incentive payment
 - Won't be paid to council until all practices are done
 - Is dependent on landowner completing project
 - After project is complete, council is paid back 90% of the bill
 - Landowner owes Council 10%
 - Landowner pays council from 25% OWEB money, landowner receives remaining 15% of money
 - If needed, council can ask for extra 1% for administration. If we do this, the landowner would get 25% (OWEB) -10% (to WC) -1% (WC admin) = 14%
 - Sometimes WC makes money, will work out with landowner
 - As long as landowner spends within contract, will be fine.
 - Landowner agreements would be signed between landowner and watershed council
 - Agreement states that if they change their minds and back out, and WC has started paying, there is a clause stating that they need to pay back or lean on property.
 - This process has been done in Douglas county and has worked for a while
 - Contract could specify requirements, put cap on spending, request lean rights, and clearly spell out conditions for release of lean rights. Keep as transparent as possible.
 - Erika: would be nice if assignment of payment were for certain things but WC must
 - Comment: who keeps track of the budget? Erika did for now. FSA does a little bit.
 - LR: what if cap per landowner? Erika: yes, on landowner payment can put in there.
 - Council will always be out 40% and will take a couple of years to get council money back.
 - JT: WC can be an advocate of the process

- EL: investigate assignment of payment further, how can WC further protect themselves. Sit down with Dan and determine how.
- JT: reduce apprehension. Get good positive planting done, show neighbors.
- EL: issue for landowners is fronting the cost themselves. They'll mostly do the work themselves, but can't pay for it up front.
- Final remarks: It is important to remember that CREP is a federal program and there is a particular order and process that needs to be followed. It's important for landowners not to start physically working on their property before all the paperwork and all requirements are met (i.e. protecting federally endangered species and national artifacts). You won't get paid if you start early.

Decision: Council will read a draft landowner agreement which incorporates a Council assignment of payment and administration piece.

8:00 PM Update on Regional Meeting

Liz Redon provided an update of the Regional Meeting on the Calapooia-Santiam Collaboration

MMT Introduction

Liz provided background on the Meyer Memorial Trust (MMT) and Bonneville Environmental Foundation (BEF) "Model Watershed Program" and regional partnership. This partnership began between Calapooia and North Santiam watershed in the name of getting more projects done. As a result, a grant was written and Erika Lang's position began as an AmeriCorps position. The South Santiam Watershed was eventually brought in as a fellow collaborator. Common watershed and restoration priorities are:

1. Wanted more outreach capacity to landowners and more projects
2. 303 list for temp/water quality
3. We all have salmon! Streams can be restored for salmon habitat.

Erika created landowner recruitment for restoration project/two year program. Had a lot of landowner response.

Opportunity for Meyer Memorial Trust (MMT) Model Watershed restoration. MMT wanted to significantly invest in Willamette Valley on a meaningful and measurable scale—small tributaries!

MMT Mission: Thinking and collaborating regionally to build capacity for work locally.

MMT Vision: Clean healthy waters with ecological flows, native species recovered and diverse, floodplain connectivity and healthy riparian forests, as well as stable economies with working landscapes that support local populations, and communities that sustain those natural resources. The vision's foundation is sustained by educated youth and adults who behave as stewards of their watershed resources and prioritize investment into their local economies.

Other priorities arose

1. Be strategic for restoration/ setting priorities for projects to invest money
2. Effectiveness monitoring
3. Capacity for long term relationships w/ landowners to maintain restoration

MMT Timeline and Activities- Outreach, Sub-Basin Assessments, and Status of the Monitoring Program Development

- Eric provided background on the timeline (handout: Calapooia-Santiam regional collaboration timeline)
- MMT is a ten year program and this timeline is for the first year, which is the length of our first contract.
- Main goal is to fulfill contract obligations to ensure extension of 10 year contract. Timeline is separated into two intense activities:

MMT Model Watershed Program

1. Landowner recruitment to secure access to private land for assessment
2. Development of matrices
 - a. Guiding tool for measuring ecological uplift
 - b. Matrix will help measure at 3, 5, 8, 10 years
 - c. Need good baseline data for year 1
3. Watershed assessments/analysis by Demeter Design
 - a. Used to develop matrices
4. Community meetings in January and February
 - a. Preliminary results will be given out
 - b. Take landowner comments & possibly incorporate
5. Implement monitoring program—water quality, fish passage, vegetation, stream flow
 - a. Will hire another shared contractor/employee
 - b. Will help with further development of matrices

Landowner recruitment for restoration program

1. Outreach/recruitment
2. CREP recruitment
3. Riparian plantings
4. Landowner workshops
5. Project maintenance (robust)

MMT Program deliverables/workplans

- Liz: During our summer meetings for MMT/landowner recruitment, we determined how the work will be shared among councils. Created a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with all chairmen, which stated that each of the three watershed councils would hire one of the three following positions:
 - Landowner recruitment (NSWC contractor)
 - Outreach person w/ MMT (CWC employee)
 - Monitoring (SSWC employee)
- Contractors:
 - Erika is entering her 5th year, working with landowners for 3.5 years
 - Sarah, undergrad at OSU, moved to Alaska as biologist/restoration, moved to Coos Watershed Association as project manager, worked at Benton SWCD in Corvallis on restoration/conservation practices

Erika:

Landowner Recruitment and Restoration—on the ground, meetings, workshops, write project plans, implement projects (grants for 21 landowners from OWEB TA, DEQ, TNC, NFWF, City of Salem)

MMT—recruitment, assist w/ phone calls, develop relationships. In the future, the program will be writing more grants.

Deliverables

1. Outreach activities, mailers phone calls, site visits, 6 community presentations
2. Educational activities: 6 presentations, 6 restoration tours, 2 workshops (regional or sub-basin specific), media publications, interpretive signs at highly visible sites, website updates
3. Project planning and implementations: 21 small projects (related to fencing, planting, weed removal or a combination), cooperative agreements, 15 CREP sign-ups, 10 in-stream pre-plans. (Note: CREP & in-stream pre-plans will be tailored to other funding source)
4. Maintenance and monitoring assistance
5. Office work: reports, database, updates, in-kind documentation, budget maintenance, invoicing, contractor management

MMT Budget Review

Handout: Calapooia-Santiam Region Collaboration—July 2009-June 2011 Budget

- We have learned much since the beginning...hard to get enough money to pay for one person with one council alone. By working together, we can recruit funds to pay for people.
- Generally grants provide money that pays for people and money that pays for moving dirt. It's often harder to get planning and permitting money.
- Initially wanted grants to pay for people (harder). Not so much dirt moving money right now (easier to get later). Want to be able to plan now, benefit of working together that we got more people.
- On back of handout, table from Cascade pacific: Joint Regional Projects Summary

Member involvement

Big priority for coordinators to have council members involved in MMT

- Monthly regional meetings every last Friday of each month—coordinators will send out notice (2 hours)
- Quarterly council member meetings
- Sub-basin advisory members for Erika and Sarah to approach for assistance and local knowledge, the go-to person for the sub-basin and landowners
- Oversight provided for staff/contractors (management committee, oversight committees, etc.)
- Future volunteer assistance with monitoring sites

Liz Redon also discussed what has been happening in NSWC now:

- Sarah sent letter and is now calling bear branch landowners, will be on valentine next
- Stout creek is already done
- Data will be used to update “matrix”—the timeline and benchmarks to track restoration
- Want to incorporate more landowner interactions via community meetings and phone interviews. Erika has done Breitenbush already. Can incorporate info into report more. Will be easier to do projects because have built relationships with them.
- MMT wants to create model for funding restoration and a successful granting relationship. Determining monitoring strategy (along with other MMT's Long Tom Watershed Council and Middle Fork)

8:15 PM Progress Reports-

Treasurer:

- Budget did not arrive from CPRC&D in time before meeting

Operations:

- Discussed assistant work, particularly a how-to document for council operations. Also discussed steering meeting agendas and upcoming speakers.

Projects:

- **Landowner Recruitment:** Erika Lang planted today at Stout, hys and rigg's, more plants at Ron's this year. Blanchett High School has great students and hard workers! From 9am-2pm. Wire caged cedars. Will put herbicide around plants in summer.
- **Snake Deford-** Tom Fencil is working on CREP process. Council sent letter/postcard to landowners requesting access permission, Pamela Archer made calls to track down landowners, River Design Group will walk other portion and inventory on that side
- **Stout-** Liz Redon reported the OWEB proposal for lower 1.5 miles was turned in. Taking RDG report and fulfilling priorities. Soil lifts, additional plantings. From junction to one more property upstream of mill. Erika Lang reported that on the recent field trip, the site looked really good, with water in island/side channel and the first layer of stakes were inundated.
- **Hatch-** Liz Redon reported that the project made the front page of Statesman Journal and Stayton Mail, result of tour with Oregon governor's office, has a power point with before/after at Tom's place, Stout.
- **Greenwoods-** Jon Tucker reported that River Design Group can't do engineering required for concrete bridge, took designs to other company, trying to get good deal. Bridge and wood structure can be done at separate times. Big equipment will be needed.
- **Respect the River-** Darren Cross reported finishing tomorrow at planting, few stumps and boulders.
- **Stayton River Front acquisition-** OWEB approached us to be partners helping Stayton doing education and work. Stayton has AmeriCorps member who will do project on weekday morning to start doing riparian plantings with students. Pamela Archer will work to help design plantings and apply for OWEB landowner small grant assistance. City of Stayton will have to sign landowner agreement with us which includes a plant maintenance requirement.

8:40 PM Other Business –none

8:48 PM Meeting Adjourned