



# Harney County Watershed Council

Meeting Minutes – November 16, 2020

meeting by Zoom

Hines, Oregon

Membership & Attendance:

(those in attendance will be highlighted)

## **Landowner positions:**

Alvord –

Donner und Blitzen – Fred Otley

Guano –

Harney/Malheur Lakes – Joe Witzel

Silvies – Rachel Beaubien

Silver Creek – Angie Ketscher

Drewsey – Tyler Harris

Landowner General – **Pat Sharp**

Burns Paiute Tribe – **Brandon Haslick**

## **Concerned Citizen positions:**

Burns/Hines – **Brenda Smith**

At Large – **John Thelen**

General - **Mark Owens**

Sportsman – **Ben Cate**

Education – Dustin Johnson

Environmental – Alexa Martinez

County Court – Kristen Shelman

Harney SWCD – **Shannon Brubacker**

BLM – **Jamie McCormack**

## Advisory Positions

ODF & W – Dave Banks

Malheur National Wildlife – **Jeff Mackay**

NRCS – Zola Ryan

EOARC – Chad Boyd

OWRD – JR Johnson

USFS -

## Staff

Coordinator – Karen Moon,

Guests –

## ***Mission of the Harney County Watershed Council***

*Harney County Watershed Council works to improve watershed health for the benefit of our communities and the environment!*

## ***Vision of the Harney County Watershed Council***

*People in Harney County are working together to ensure health watersheds and thriving communities.*



# Harney County Watershed Council

The meeting was called to order at 4:06pm. Chairman Brenda Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting, reviewed the agenda and asked each member to share a short update on what is new in each person's area that they represent.

Each member gave a short update. Chairman Brenda Smith shared a new program to support Harney County Businesses, the website ShopHarney.com. She also talked about the CREP meeting that took place last Friday with Meta Loftsgaarden from OWEB. Good news was that Lottery funding was better than expected, however with the upcoming shutdown for two weeks that trend may not continue.

## ***Continuing project updates/action items***

### **Community Based Water Planning update:**

Coordinating Call update was given by Brandon Haslick. Brandon talked about the work the CC is working on to begin to rank and refine the strategies that have been developed. Two Zoom calls have taken place to discuss ranking criteria and goals for refining and/or prioritizing the strategies.

Update from Holly Mondo was read by Karen Moon

- Twenty-nine people participated in the October Full Collaborative meeting during which a presentation titled *A Tour of Harney Basin Hydrology* was shared by Stephen Gingerich (USGS). His presentation highlighted: 1) information on geology, groundwater flow directions, and groundwater elevations across the basin and 2) how this material is being utilized in the development of a USGS/OWRD model. Collaborative members also took a quick virtual tour of the new website ([Harneyswaterfuture.com](http://Harneyswaterfuture.com)) that Holly Mondo (Project Manager), Brenda Smith (Co-Convener), Ken Bierly (Technical Consultant), and Ryan Gallagher (Communications Professional) have been creating. The site is *living* meaning it can be updated anytime. To close the meeting, attendees were asked the following question: If the Collaborative is successful, what will the Harney Basin look like in 10 years? Responses received will inform future (imminent) discussions regarding Collaborative goals/ desired outcomes of the overall water plan.
- The next Collaborative meetings are scheduled for Tuesday, November 17<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, December 17 from 4:00pm-7:30pm via Zoom.
- The Ecological Working Group continues to make progress on their Step 2 and 3 drafts and are aiming to wrap up the groundwater portion of their documents by the end of the year.



## Harney County Watershed Council

- The Vegetation Management Working Group received edits back from OWRD on their draft Step 2/3 Report and are currently working to reconcile those edits. They plan to finalize their report and draft a Key Takeaways document by November 30.
- Upon recommendations, the Coordinating Committee agreed to take the first stab at designing the strategy evaluation process upon the notion that the Collaborative will make all final decisions on strategy-related verdicts. A subset of the Coordinating Committee (known as the strategy evaluation (SE) group) has formed. The SE group has had two meetings so far (October 27 & November 9) to discuss the process for evaluating strategies. During their first meeting, the SE group broadly discussed goals/reasons for this process and focused efforts on the strategy evaluation matrix designed by Ken. SE group members discussed criteria for evaluation, desired outcomes for strategies, and measures of success. At their second meeting, the SE group identified steps that must be taken prior to actually delving more into the matrix. One of those steps is the need to wrap up Step 2-3 work and use lessons learned from Working Group reports to inform the [\*Harney Basin Known Critical Water Resource Issues\*](#) list that was drafted during the 2019 Summit. If you recall, that issue list was generated as a basis for one-pager development and thus strategies. It is essential that the issue list be updated and gains collaborative consensus for the strategy evaluation process to be robust and useful. Ken and Holly will be working together to “tie a bow” on Step 2-3 reports and will plan on presenting an updated issue list to the Collaborative in December.
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has a grant agreement in-hand from the Bureau of Reclamation and OWRD for the feasibility study on water markets for the Harney Basin, issued a RFP, and received two bids from consulting firms. Zach Freed (TNC Hydrologist) put together a small group to review proposals and they had their first meeting on November 10. A decision will be made after Zach receives responses from both firms on a few clarifying questions regarding process.
- Holly Mondo and Ken Bierly have started working with a cartography class at the University of Oregon. The students will be making maps that illustrate groundwater and surface water appropriations over time in the Basin. It is the hope that such maps can be housed on the new website and/or can be utilized as other outreach and educational purposes. At the same time, the Collaborative has an opportunity to work with engineering students out of Oregon State University who are wanting to create flow meters/sensors to be used in irrigation pipes and/or stock wells. The development of this project is ongoing.
- A Technical Team meeting for Harney CREP took place on November 13, 2020. The final proposal for FSA consideration was presented. The review process is as follows: present to the Harney FSA Advisory Committee and then to FSA State Committee before formal submittal to FSA for consideration.



# Harney County Watershed Council

## **Strategic Planning -**

The Strategic Planning Prep team met by Zoom to work on developing goals for the next three years. Outreach and Funding being the two main topics. Jamie McCormack led us through the exercise for each area and also shared the results with the group this evening. The spreadsheets that were developed were emailed to Adrienne and will be incorporated into the draft plan that Adrienne is putting together for our review, discussion and approval, hopefully at our December meeting. Pat Sharp shared that another one of our goals is to increase Board Capacity, we are hoping that by increasing our outreach to the Community and sharing the good things that we are doing, that people will want to participate with the Council and contribute to the good work that is being done.

## ***New Business***

**Minutes:** Minutes for the October meeting were reviewed. Financials for the Council were reviewed. Mark Owens moved to approve the October minutes and the financial report, Pat Sharp seconded and the motion passed.

**Items for next agenda on November 17, 2020 include:** Continued work on the Strategic Plan, Board membership, and Officer elections.

Meeting adjourned at 5:10pm  
Karen Moon, Coordinator