



Harney County Watershed Council

Meeting Minutes – March 15, 2022
meeting by Zoom & HCWC office
Hines, Oregon

Membership & Attendance:
(those in attendance will be highlighted)

Landowner positions:

Alvord –
Donner und Blitzen – Fred Otley
Guano –
Harney/Malheur Lakes –
Silvies – Rachel Beaubien
Silver Creek – Angie Ketscher
Drewsey –
Landowner General – Pat Sharp
Burns Paiute Tribe – Brandon Haslick

Concerned Citizen positions:

Burns/Hines – **Brenda Smith**
At Large –
General - Rep. Mark Owens
Sportsman –
Education – **Dustin Johnson**
Environmental – Alexa Martinez
County Court – Kristen Shelman
Harney SWCD – **Susan Doverspike**
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 – Jason Kesling – Harney SWCD, Mat Williams

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 healthy watersheds and thriving communities.



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The meeting was called to order at 5:35pm. Chairman Jamie McCormack welcomed everyone to the meeting, reviewed the agenda and asked each member to share a short update on what is happening in their world. Brenda Smith shared that there will be a “seed swap” at the fairgrounds on Saturday, March 26th from 10am to 1pm. They will have garden supplies, plants and the Burns Greenhouse participants will be taking orders. Jason Kesling from SWCD informed everyone that the SWCD is submitting an RCPP application. They are also working with HDP to organize the Senate Bill dollars that are coming for Fire Restoration. Dustin Johnson talked about the Research Center and the positions they will be hiring this spring and summer. Field season is getting started, seeding is happening and in another project they will be placing GPS collars on some wild horses in the Drewsey Area to study their affect on sage grouse habitat. Jamie McCormack updated that the BLM is starting to train for seasonal interns, they have room to hire three more interns. Mat Williams introduced himself as a candidate for County Commissioner. He lives here locally and works for ATT as a manager for the northwest region.

Continuing project updates/action items

Community Based Water Planning update:

CBWP Update: Next meeting will be held Thursday, March 31, 2022, from 5-7pm at the Community Center.

Karen shared an update from Holly Mondo, project manager

CBWP Updates- March 2022

January Full Collaborative Meeting: The group heard from OWRD staff on the definition and implications of the designation of a SWMPA or a CGWA and heard an introduction to OWRD’s rule-making process. The group then discussed an approach to determine desired conditions for the basin to include in the Groundwater Portion of the Integrated Water Plan. Thirty-four people attended the meeting.

February Full Collaborative Meeting: The group heard from the Environmental Defense Fund and Culp & Kelly, LLP on their Voluntary Agreements analysis, specifically on their project scope, approach, timeline, updates, and next steps. Those entities are working to help inform how voluntary agreements might be developed and implemented in the Harney Basin to address groundwater overdraft. They are aiming to have their final report complete by April 2022. The Collaborative then discussed an approach for strategy/issue sequencing, strategy categorization, and followed up on the desired conditions conversation in January (see Implementation Framework below). Twenty-eight people attended the meeting.



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March Full Collaborative Meeting: The next meeting will be held on Thursday, March 31 from 5:00-8:00pm at the Harney County Community Center with an online option via Zoom.

CBWP Strategies + OWRD: After the consensus event on the strategy list in December 2021, it became clear that OWRD was not supportive of 5 strategies. Project staff worked with OWRD to alleviate concerns by re-editing language. Those edits were then taken to the Coordinating Committee who decided that a special meeting was necessary to go through edits in depth; some folks felt that edits changed the intent of strategies that the Collaborative already agreed to. That special meeting was held and Coordinating Committee members and OWRD staff feel more comfortable with the language. At this point, the Coordinating Committee will need to decide if an additional consensus event is needed for Collaborative support of the new edits. This decision will be made during the upcoming Coordinating Committee call on March 16.

Implementation Framework: During a focus group meeting to discuss the first draft of the Groundwater Portion of the Integrated Water Plan, meeting participants came up with an idea to create a decision support tool that will help the Collaborative determine strategy/issue sequencing. Together, we came up with the following decision support tool idea to present to the Full Collaborative at the February 24 meeting:

Ken will categorize each strategy as foundational, operational, tactical, or organizational (adopted from [Great Salt Lake Water Strategies](#)). This will allow the Collaborative to make decisions related to sequencing strategies (i.e. what should be implemented first).

Holly will build a spreadsheet that focuses on each individual issue and how it will be addressed. The spreadsheet will include:

- The strategies (with their category) that address the issue
- Budget and funding opportunities to support implementation of each strategy
- Responsible parties to carry out each strategy
- Timing of implementing strategy
- Status of the strategy (i.e. ongoing, completed, not started, etc.)
- Whether the strategy is applicable to the rules advisory committee/ rule-making process
- Desired outcome of that specific strategy's implementation
- Performance metric for the strategy (i.e. how the strategy will be measured to track progress and determine if the action has been successfully implemented)
- Monitoring metric for the strategy (i.e. ways in which performance metrics can be measured)



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Once the decision support tool is built, it is hoped that it will clearly show which strategies to sequence first, based on timing, and therefore which issues to address first.

Groundwater Portion of Integrated Water Plan: After several weeks of editing, responding to comments, and rewriting some chapters, [Draft 2 of the Groundwater Portion of the Integrated Water Plan](#) is now available for Collaborative members to review. From now until Thursday, March 24, project staff are asking Collaborative members to review Draft 2 while keeping in mind the following questions: *Is it clear that a balanced representation of interests participated in the development of the plan? Is the draft representative of the community's interests? Is the plan readable and digestible by someone not involved in the Collaborative effort?*

Other important things to note during the review period:

- *Chapter 9, which is dedicated to implementation, is incomplete. Project staff need time to populate the Implementation Framework, which Chapter 9 will be based on. Chapter 9 and the framework will be ready for your review when Draft 3 becomes available in early April.*
- *The chapter on sustainability goals, milestones, and progress indicators (originally Chapter 8 in Draft 1) has been removed from the plan. This chapter was repetitive of the one preceding it. The information in this chapter is not lost and will be considered when populating the Implementation Framework and writing Chapter 9.*
- *For now, sub-area information (that was compiled during sub-area conversations) has been taken out of the main body of the plan. This does not mean sub-area information will not be included in the plan, but we need to discuss how best to represent this information throughout the plan.*
- *Planned Appendices (i.e. working group reports, issues list, strategy list, etc.) have been added to the Table of Contents, but have not actually been attached to the draft yet. If you'd like to see any of the planned appendices during your review, please reach out.*

During the review period, project staff will be working on populating the Implementation Framework, which is planned to be completed by March 24. We will then complete Chapter 9 by March 30. We'll compile and address all edits we receive on Draft 2 and then circulate Draft 3, which will include the completed Chapter 9, in early April. We hope that most of Draft 3 will be nearly final so that the Collaborative can focus their review efforts on Chapter 9.

Planning for Surface Water (Phase 2) Portion of Integrated Water Plan: Project staff have started planning for the Phase 2. For now, the Collaborative wants to stay focused on groundwater until the plan is complete before moving onto surface water. Project staff meet biweekly to discuss how to structure phase 2 so that we can wrap up by the end of quarter 1 in 2023.



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Strategic Planning

Karen shared the draft of the CBWP article for the Burns Times Herald. Members thought it was good and it will be sent to the paper by Friday. Karen will start a third article with the topic of the Groundwater Study for next month.

Board membership:

There was discussion on how else we could engage with landowners from the south portion of the County. It is difficult for them to travel over 100 miles to Burns for meetings. Possibilities mentioned include asking the schools if there is the possibility that people could come and use their internet for participating over Zoom. Holding satellite meetings periodically throughout the basin so people could participate. Or, offer proxy membership to someone who perhaps lives closer to town that is affiliated with people in the more rural area to represent that sub-basin.

New Business

Minutes & Financials: Minutes for the January and February meetings were reviewed.

The financials were not reviewed, as at this time there was not a quorum. Minutes and financials will be reviewed at the April meeting.

Items for next agenda: update for CBWP, budget for 22/23

Meeting adjourned at 6:23pm
Karen Moon, Coordinator