

Oregon Water Resources Commission Work Session  
February 6, 1997  
Salem

Members

Nancy Leonard  
Mike Jewett  
Tyler Hansell  
John Frewing  
Ron Nelson

Others

Kimberley Priestley  
Jerry Schmidt  
David Moon

Staff

Martha Pagel  
Geoff Huntington  
Steve Sanders  
Diane Addicott  
Charlotte Haynes  
Tom Paul  
Bob Main  
Rick Cooper  
Bob Devyldere  
Barry Norris  
Fred Lissner  
Ken Lite  
Weston Becker

In addition to those listed above, other staff were present for particular segments of the work session. Written material submitted at this work session is part of the meeting record and on file at the Oregon Water Resources Department, 158 12th St. NE, Salem, Oregon 97310. Audiotapes of the meeting are on file at the same address.

**1. Public Information and "On-line Outreach"**

Weston Becker, Public Information Officer, gave an oral presentation with slides on the agency's public information strategy. In setting policy or discussing management of water it is important to have all the entities involved well informed. The four points of Becker's discussion were: the need for information, both internal and external; the Strategic Management Plan; education, customer service and involvement; tools and products to meet public information needs.

Becker reviewed various agency publications available to the public. In addition to publications,

Water Resources staff offer events such as tours to the Commission and public; informative meetings on projects such as the Governor's Coastal Salmon Restoration Initiative; speaking engagements by watermasters and field staff with civic groups and schools in their local area; and updated information on the computer web site.

The Water Rights Division staff are now providing pre-application counseling to applicants to help familiarize them with the process and eliminate confusion.

The number of news releases provided by the Department has doubled in the last year.

Becker said the general direction for the public information strategy is to make better use of illustrations and graphics in publications, to have a consistent and professional look to department products, and to provide these products in a simple and accessible way.

Hansell asked about the availability of teaching materials for grades K-12. Vivienne Torgeson, Governor's Watershed Enhancement Board (GWEB), responded by saying that GWEB has just completed a high school curriculum dealing with upland watershed issues. GWEB also helped produce material through the Department of Fish and Wildlife called the Stream Scene dealing with the aquatic elements of watersheds. Torgeson said there are many professional entities that offer curriculum available to teachers. The difficulty is getting information to teachers on what is available and what would be suitable for their grade level. The Water Resources Department could be a tremendous resource in providing information to entities developing curriculum and keeping educators informed.

Bob Devyldere, Information Services, presented a live on-line demonstration of the agency's newly revised and improved computer internet web site. Computers were set up and available for the Commissioners to explore the Internet during the lunch break.

## **2. SB 1033: Applications for Ground Water Use In and Above Scenic Waterways**

Ken Lite and Fred Lissner, Field and Technical Services Division, presented this item for discussion.

Lissner spoke on the implementation of Senate Bill 1033 (1995 Legislative Session) which amended the Scenic Waterway Act in the review of applications for ground water use in and above scenic waterways. To deny a water right application under SB 1033 the Director must find, based upon a preponderance of evidence, that the use of ground water will measurably reduce the surface water flows necessary to maintain the free-flowing character of a scenic waterway in quantities necessary for recreation, fish and wildlife. This finding must be based upon the application of generally accepted hydrogeologic methods using relevant and available field information concerning the proposed use. All applications must be reviewed to see if this

preponderance of evidence finding can be made; if this finding cannot be made, the issuance of ground water rights is exempt from any consideration of scenic waterway flows. The bill does make a provision for mitigation and specifies a permit condition stating that if at any time in the future it is discovered that this use of water measurably reduces flows in the scenic waterway, that water right will be regulated in favor of the scenic waterway.

Lissner said that from the summer of 1995 to the present, staff have evaluated approximately 1,200 ground water applications. Of those applications, 437 were in or above scenic waterways.

Ken Lite spoke on the investigations of ground water resources in the Deschutes Basin. In the Deschutes Basin the entire river is the subject of either federal wild and scenic rivers or state scenic waterways. The Deschutes Basin study is a cooperative with the U.S. Geological Survey to characterize and quantify the ground water resources. The goal is to quantify how much water is available for development, how ground water interacts with surface water, and how canal losses impact the ground water resource in the area. The major drainages included in the study are the little Deschutes, the Deschutes River, the lower portion of the Crooked River and the Metolius River. Lite explained the study process and data collected using charts and maps. Throughout the entire basin it appears that precipitation drives the ground water system. In the Deschutes Basin the ground water resource is connected to the surface water resource.

There being no further discussion, the work session was adjourned and the Commission went into Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane K. Addicott  
Commission Assistant