

Oregon Water Resources Commission Meeting
May 21, 2004
Salem

WRC Members

Dan Thorndike
Jim Nakano
Jay Rasmussen
Tyler Hansell
Susie Smith

WRD Staff

Paul Cleary
Shannon O'Fallon
Diane Addicott
Cindy Smith
Debbie Colbert
Adam Sussman
Juno Pandian
Gerry Clark
Juno Pandian
Tom Paul
Donn Miller

Phil Ward
Barry Norris
Doug Woodcock
Mary Grainey
Bob Harmon
Dave Jarrett
Mike Auman
Dave MacMillan
Ken Lite
Gary Ball
Mike Reynolds
Kristen Bonano

Others

Kimberley Priestley
Patrick Griffiths
Emilie Wolff
Shawn Gerdes
Anita Winkler
Roger Prowell
Juliette Gunderman
Lucien Gunderman

Written material submitted at this meeting is part of the official record and on file at the Oregon Water Resources Department, 725 Summer St. NE, Salem, Oregon 97301-1271. Audiotapes of the meeting are on file at the same address.

H. Commission Comments

Commissioner Hansell commented that Umatilla County has created a task force to address areas where ground water levels are continuing to decline. Hansell is one of 24 members of the task force which has had six meetings to date. Hansell complimented the Department for their support of the task force.

Commissioner Hansell also announced that the OSU Extension Service is hosting a tour of the Madison Farms aquifer recharge project in the Hermiston area on May 25, 2004.

Commissioner Rasmussen commented that the Water Resources Department will be hosting the Western States Water Council meeting in Newport on July 14-16, 2004.

Commissioner Nakano said that progress is being made in the Upper North Fork of the Malheur in regards to installing measuring devices and fish screens on diversions to address Bull Trout concerns.

Commissioner Thorndike commented on how much the Commission appreciated the hard work and leadership that Paul Cleary gave to the Department and the Commission.

I. Director's Report

Director Cleary reviewed his written report to the Commission which summarizes on-going staff work in several different areas. Cleary discussed the addendum to the Director's Report detailing Klamath Basin activities.

Barry Norris, Technical Services Administrator; and Doug Woodcock, Ground Water Manager, gave a PowerPoint presentation on ground water activities in the Klamath Basin. Woodcock expressed the need to continue monitoring ground water in the Klamath Basin and tracking water levels and use in the area.

Emilie Wolff, Water for Life, requested that the Commission support the creation of more water storage and help end the conflict between fish and farmers.

William Kennedy, Lost River Ranch, shared his involvement in working with the Bureau of Reclamation, Water Resources Department, and citizens to protect and manage water in the Klamath Basin. Kennedy encouraged the Department to continue its association and collaboration with California's Department of Water Resources.

Martha Pagel, representing Wood River District Improvement Company and other Klamath irrigators, encouraged the Department and Commission to stay the course.

Patrick Griffiths and Roger Prowell, City of Bend, thanked Paul Cleary for all hard work over the past four years.

J. Legislative and Budget Update

Phil Ward, Deputy Director; and Adam Sussman, Senior Policy Coordinator, briefed the Commission on the Department's essential and policy packages along with legislative concept development for the 2005 Legislative Session.

Ward said that the agency is looking at 10%-20% cut scenarios for the next budget cycle and that the Governor's staff is developing a matrix to be used as a decision-making tool in evaluating agency programs.

Sussman explained that the preliminary legislative concepts will be reviewed by the Department of Administrative Services and the Governor's Office. Approved concepts are to be submitted to Legislative Counsel for bill drafting by May 31, 2004. The deadline for submitting detailed concepts to Legislative Counsel for bill drafting is July 15, 2004. The Department will have until November 1, 2004, to request revisions to draft bills. The Governor must pre-session file agency bills by December 16, 2004.

Staff will continue to work with stakeholders during the legislative concept development process. Staff will discuss the legislative concepts and present draft language for the Commission's consideration and input at the October 2004 meeting.

The Commission and staff discussed exempt uses in ground water limited or critical areas. Commissioner Smith asked to have a full discussion on this topic at the next Commission meeting.

Conservation Award Presentation

Commissioner Thorndike presented the Commission's Stewardship and Conservation Awards to Juliette and Lucien Gunderman of Crown Hill Farm and to Shawn Gerdes, Manager of Arnold Irrigation District.

The Gundermans operate a sophisticated "minor" hydroelectric project at Crown Hill Farm near McMinnville and have employed exemplary conservation measures over the years. The Gunderman's hydroelectric project is a great example of the potential that small hydroelectric projects can play in meeting Oregon's energy needs in a sustainable fashion.

The Arnold Irrigation District's comprehensive water measurement program demonstrates that responsible water management can have dramatic benefits for district water users and the state's water resources.

K. Instream Water Use Report Update

Tom Paul, Administrator, Field Services Division; Debbie Colbert, Water Policy Analyst; Mary Graine, Water Use Reporting Coordinator; and Bob Harmon, GIS Coordinator, presented the Instream Water Use Report. Under ORS 537.099, it is required that government entities holding water rights report water use on an annual basis. As holder of an instream water right and on behalf of the public, the Department must measure and report water uses for instream water rights. Staff presented the Instream Water Use Report for 2001-2003 and used GIS to view streamflow and instream water right data from around the state.

L. Principles and Application of Irrigation Optimization

Professor Marshall English, Oregon State University, provided an overview of a federally-funded pilot project to provide advisory service to Oregon farmers interested in applying the principles of irrigation optimization. Professor English gave a PowerPoint presentation of this new approach to irrigation management that focuses on maximizing new economic returns rather than the traditional approach which seeks to maximize crop yield.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Smith
Commission Assistant