

**Water Resources Commission
Meeting
Ontario, Oregon
September 10, 2015**

Commission Present

John Roberts, Chair
Jeanne LeJeune
Bruce Corn
Carol Whipple
Bob Baumgartner
Dennis Doherty
Ray Williams

Staff Present

Tom Byler
Racquel Rancier
Cindy Smith
Racquel Rancier
Brenda Bateman
Doug Woodcock
Tracy Loudon
Dwight French

Others

Dan Joyce
Jay Chamberlin
Gary Faw
Eric Stricklin
Gil Riddell
Kimberley Priestley
Craig DeHart
Lisa Brown
Mike Blackaby
J.R. Cook
Gordon Lyford
Linda Rowe
Larry Meyer
Amber McKinney
April Snell
Annette Kirkpatrick
Sue Baumgartner

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. Staff reports and PowerPoint presentations are available on the Department's website.

Commission Meeting

Chair Roberts called the meeting to order, and asked the Commission, staff, and visitors to introduce themselves.

A. Commission Dialogue with Local Officials

Judge Dan Joyce, Malheur County; Jay Chamberlain, Owyhee Irrigation District; Gary Faw, Malheur County Soil & Water Conservation District; and Andrew Martin, Oregon Cattlemen's Association, discussed local water resources conditions and challenges.

B. Water Resources Development Program Update

Tracy Loudon, Administrative Services Administrator, briefed the Commission on the Water Resources Development Program components and implementation efforts. The Commission was asked for input on next steps for the various Water Resources Development Program funding opportunities.

Commissioner LeJeune suggested that the Department shorten the time between application and awarding because a long application time could decrease interest, as organizations could have different councils and budgets for project approval. She also suggested that the Department develop a one-pager to explain the key elements of the program.

Chair Roberts recommended that the applications be clear and structured, and that the Department develop a checklist of expectations for applicants.

Director Byler responded that the timelines are quite defined by SB 839. He also conveyed that it is the Department's intention to be transparent and get funds out in a timely fashion.

Commissioner Williams asked that the Department try to make applications consistent between programs, including OWEB's grant programs.

Commissioner Baumgartner commented that the Department should develop a structure to identify what a successful project would look like.

Commissioner Doherty likes the Letter of Interest approach for place-based planning but thinks that the December deadline is too short.

Commissioner Whipple noted that it is important to move forward, understanding that it is a pilot, and adjustments can be made along the way.

Commissioner LeJeune asked for an update on the proposed Umatilla Basin Water Supply Projects, to better understand what is currently being proposed and how it compares to previous efforts in the basin.

Chair Roberts also asked for an update on the Umatilla Aquifer Recharge project.

Louden said the Department will provide a report that gives a close-out of what funds were spent, what was accomplished, and the lessons learned in regards to the Umatilla Aquifer Recharge project. This would be the foundation for an overview of what is currently being developed and discussed.

C. Perspective from the Field: Watermaster Districts 7, 9 and 10

Jason Spriet, Eastern Region Manager, and Watermasters David Bates (District 7) and Ron Jacobs (District 9), briefed the Commission on field activities and conditions in Districts 7, 9 and 10. District 10 is in Harney County, with the majority of the water comes from the Silvies River. District 7 is based out of Enterprise, including the Wallowa Lake, as the primary storage facility. District 9 is based in Malheur County, and is supplied by the Owyhee, Beulah and Warm Springs Reservoirs.

D. Report on 2015 Field Regulations and Enforcement Activities

Doug Woodcock, Field Services Administrator, briefed the Commission on 2014 field regulation and enforcement activities. Woodcock described the staffing around the state and the territories they cover, what activities they are responsible, and regulations they monitor. He stated that timeliness suffers the most during low water periods due to lack of manpower.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully,

Lorri Cooper
Executive Administrative Support to the Director's Office

**Water Resources Commission
Meeting
Ontario, Oregon
September 11, 2015**

WRC Present

John Roberts, Chair
Ray Williams, Vice-Chair
Jeanne LeJeune
Bruce Corn
Carol Whipple
Bob Baumgartner

Staff Present

Tom Byler
Cindy Smith
Racquel Rancier
Brenda Bateman
Tracy Louden
Dwight French
Doug Woodcock
Jason Spriet
Ron Jacobs

Others

Kimberley Priestley
Lisa Brown
Sarah Liljefelt
Gordon Lyford

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Chair Roberts called the meeting to order.

E. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the June 18-19, 2015 meeting were offered to the Commission for consideration.

Commissioner Baumgartner moved to approve the June 18-19, 2015 minutes as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Corn. Voting for the motion: Commissioners Roberts, Williams, LeJeune, Whipple, Corn, and Baumgartner. Voting against the motion, none.

F. Commission Comments

Commissioner Whipple reported on water issues in her area, and that fire danger is still an issue. Commissioner Whipple remarked on how informative the tour was.

Commissioner Corn thanked everyone for coming to his area. He discussed that the three water districts – Owyhee Ditch Company, South Border Control, and Owyhee Irrigation District that share the Owyhee Dam – formed a committee to develop a Memorandum of Understanding to help provide water to users in times of drought. He was happy with the success of local people engaging and working together, resulting in better results for all involved.

Commissioner Baumgartner discussed the impacts on fish of low streamflows and warm water temperatures. He thanked Commissioner Corn for the tour, and commented on how impressed he was with the district, the understanding he gained about the issues, and the professionalism of the Owyhee Irrigation District staff. He talked about the water reuse projects he has been involved in.

Commissioner LeJeune visited the North Coast recently and noticed that stream beds were dried up, and that coastal communities did not seem to be taking conservation measures. She attended the Environmental Quality Commission (EQC) meeting in August, and they are working on updating their Water Quality Trading Policy. Commissioner LeJeune is a liaison for a water summit planning committee, and has provided them with information about the IWRS. She also thanked Commissioner Corn for the tour.

Commissioner Williams thanked Commissioner Corn for the tour and information. He also applauded the water districts in this area to work with the community's stakeholders to provide for the needs of all. Overall production in his area is down about 30 percent due to drought.

Chair Roberts thanked Commissioner Corn for the tour. The drought situation is unchanged in Southern Oregon. He has been working with the Rogue Basin Partnership, briefing them on the Integrated Water Resources Strategy (IWRS) and place-based planning. He also encouraged Commission members to work with their county commissioners to educate them on the IWRS. The WISE project is still moving forward; they are waiting for the Bureau of Reclamation to come back with their part of the analysis. He went to the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) meeting in Prineville in July. OWEB is changing its emphasis and issuing Focused Investment Grants that are larger in dollar value, as well as Planning Grants.

Chair Roberts said that sometimes projects funded by OWEB fall off the radar and end results are not reported. He thinks that will be important for the Department to expect a summary report from projects as the Department issues more and more grants. He would also like a summary report on the Umatilla Aquifer Recharge Project.

Commissioner Williams asked for a summary report on the aquifer recharge project at a future Commission meeting.

G. Director's Report

Director Tom Byler thanked Commission Corn, members of the district, and others for organizing the tour, reception, and dinner.

Commissioner Corn thanked Director Byler for spending time with local commissioners, and getting to know them and their concerns.

Director Byler briefed the Commission on Department activities, and responded to Commission questions and comments.

Director Byler clarified for the record, that yesterday he made a statement about reservations for future agriculture uses of water and pending in-stream water right applications in the Powder Basin. He clarified that the reservations do not have a senior priority date.

The Integrated Water Resource Strategy (IWRS) is due for an update to the legislature in 2017. Staff are beginning to work on the update and will be engaging stakeholders and having discussions with the Commission. Director Byler wanted the Commission to be aware that members may be asked to participate on sub-committees as work on the update continues.

Chair Roberts talked about development of the first IWRS and the opportunity for newer Commissioners to participate in the update. Commissioner LeJeune wants the update to be a priority for the Commission. Chair Roberts asked for an update and overview at the November Commission meeting.

Commissioner LeJeune asked for an in-depth report on Scenic Waterways at the next meeting to prepare the Commission for the big decisions. She also asked for an update and overview of the stock watering preferences in the Klamath area, possibly by spring.

H. Budget Update

Tracy Loudon, Administrative Services Division Administrator, briefed the Commission on the recently released Economic Forecast, and provided an overview of the Department's 2015-17 Legislatively Adopted Budget.

I. Legislative Wrap-Up

Racquel Rancier, Senior Policy Coordinator, briefed the Commission on legislation that passed during the 2015 Legislative Session, and outlined next steps for the 2016 and 2017 sessions.

J. Public Comment

Lisa Brown, WaterWatch of Oregon; Kimberley Priestley, WaterWatch of Oregon; and Gordon Lyford, citizen from Josephine County, provided information on a petition to withdraw the Smith River Watershed from further appropriation. They encouraged the Commission and the Department to support the withdrawal of the watershed for maximum beneficial use of the water. Kimberley Priestley also urged the Commission to participate in the public hearing process, and hold the public hearing in the South Coast area, preferably near Brookings. Commissioner LeJeune asked for more information on Crescent City and other small users as to where their water actually comes from, and what their plans for growth are. Commissioners asked for more information as to uses and options in the area and a more clear understanding of the processes when considering withdrawals such as this. Commissioners Williams and Baumgartner noted that it would be important to follow the public process, and not make a decision as a Commission

at this time. Commissioner Baumgartner would like to understand what all of the options are at a future meeting.

K. Update on Drought Conditions & Governor Brown's Executive Order

Racquel Rancier, Senior Policy Coordinator, provided a report to the Commission on current drought conditions and efforts underway to implement the Governor's Executive Order.

O. Other Business

No other business.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorri Cooper
Executive Administrative Support to the Director's Office

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