

April 3, 2013
ENTIAT WATERSHED PLANNING UNIT MEETING MINUTES
Entiat Grange Hall, Entiat, WA

Meeting Attendance: See Attendance List (**Attachment #1**)
See detailed Agenda (**Attachment #2**)
Facilitator / Watershed Coordinator: Mike Rickel / Susan Dretke
Notes: Nada Wentz

Welcome / Introductions

Meeting began at 9:12 a.m.

Mike Rickel welcomed meeting attendees and started the round of introductions.

- **Approve January 2013 EWPU Meeting Minutes**

Mike Rickel: The April 2013 meeting notice and agenda were sent out with a link to the January 2013 minutes and posted on the Cascadia web site for review. Does anyone have any comments or edits for the January 2013 meeting minutes?

Hearing none, the January 2013 meeting minutes are finalized.

- **Review and Accept April Agenda**

Mike R: Are there any items of new business that need to be on the agenda today?

Jim Small: Will there be an update for the water exchange?

Mike R: Yes. That update will be included in the 'Water Resources' section of the agenda.

Keith Vradenburg: I have an update on the Entiat River fishing. We are proposing assistance from the tribes, and the Yakama Nation would like to back the proposal. I can give this update later on in the meeting.

Mike R: Mickey Fleming, from the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust, had a schedule conflict and is not able to attend the meeting today. The Decision point regarding the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust discussion and resale of upland property will be addressed at a future meeting.

Janet Flanagan and Pete Wier have agreed to update the Planning Unit about the Forest Service Restoration Strategy, and more specifically, the Dinkelman Canyon area. The Forest Service Restoration Strategy Update will come before the Water Resources item on the Agenda.

- **Forest Service Restoration Strategy**

Janet Flanagan: The National Forest Service is taking a look at the watersheds. With recent Congressional budget reductions, future projects are carefully chosen and more efficient treatments are used. Paul Hessburg put together a model landscape of the entire watershed. Aerial photographs are used with the model to compare the historical view to the current view. Areas of concern are what I call ‘hotspots.’

Once the Restoration Strategy is finished, it will be turned over to NEPA for review and site specific proposals for the best way to implement. I would like to get comments from the Planning Unit. We would like to see 30 or 40 inch trees.

Pete Wier: Dinkelman Canyon has about 9000 acres and is considered a hotspot. The objectives for treatment are to reduce catastrophic wildfire, modify forest stands, implement resilience to wildfire, and improve the health and vigor of aspen stands. Goals are to have big trees and have a lot of ponderosa pine.

The process would begin with thinning about 7000 acres of little trees that have a 7 inch diameter. The use of a chain saw may be necessary for a small portion. Density reduction would reduce habitat fuel on the ground. The downed trees would be moved off site and either burned, or possibly staged close to roads for commercial sale. Thinning would be done in a mosaic pattern versus the evenly spaced pattern of the past. The mosaic pattern would create natural openings as often seen under natural occurrences.

Jim S: What are hotspots?

Pete W: Hotspots are photo interpretations identifying components that give cause for concern. They can identify the structure of the tree stand, wildlife habitat needs, and the fuels component. They can even identify the level of departure from what the area was historically known as.

Jim S: Does that include areas set aside for spotted owls?

Pete W: We don’t have habitat identified for spotted owl. We will develop it into the plan in time. There will be a lot of treatments that will take a long period of time to implement.

Jim S: In wildfire prevention, what if DNR starts the fire – will it burn the forest down? They were not cooperating before.

Pete W: In order for us to burn, there will be communication and fire blocks. Treatments are designed to improve conditions.

Janet F: There is only a small piece of state land and DNR is agreeable. We had a chance to bring a road down through the state land, but the state wanted to have an agreement in place. We want to input from all the folks, early in the planning process.

Pete W: We want to be ahead of the next fire.

Janet F: We want the fire to be where we want it and when we want it.

Mike R: When does the comment period end?

Pete W: The legal ad should be in the paper tomorrow. Comments are due 30 days after the ad, around May 15.

Mike R: How does the Planning Unit feel about the Restoration Strategy? Are we in support of the actions? What are the thoughts of this type of action? What is the direction for me to take when drafting the comment letter?

Hal Hawley: Finding a tree with a 30" to 40" in diameter in the Dinkelman area is rare.

Mike R: Thinning the smaller trees will allow others to become larger.

Jon S: Thinning is an appropriate action.

Janet F: We had flag pole stands and multiple species toward the top of Dinkelman. A lot of smaller trees have grown in with them. Lots of brush has grown on the lower side.

Doug England: I think people would be in support of the reasons.

Keith V: There are lots of plants there. The brush is thick and it is not the area it used to be. It needs a lot of thinning. The next fire to go through will be hot and fast.

Don Olin: Then the worry is flooding. Thinning small trees and brush works. Thinning by mechanical means is the only way to do it. Thin the brush and get the wood in there again.

Jim S: I think it is a good idea. There are always problems with loop holes, but thinning is long overdue.

Karin Whitehall: This plan meets the wildfire protection plan.

Don O: 9,000 acres is a small area.

Janet F: The intent is to treat the whole district. Dinkelman is a pilot area. Restoration modeling will be done for the entire district. If folks would like to come and talk as we go into each watershed, we can do that. It is important to get the partners involved.

Don O: That little bit is a good start.

Janet F: I hope the process gets faster.

Mike R: If the Planning Unit is agreeable, I will draft comments in support of the plan and send it no later than May 4. Thank you, Janet and Pete, for your updates.

Janet F: I'd like to know if you are interested in future discussions.

Mike R: We would like to have you attend the July meeting, with updates and proposed actions.

Water Resources

- **Water Exchange**

Mike R: The agenda was juggled to allow time for a water exchange update. The folks in the Stemilt & Malaga water district have formed a "Board of Joint Control" in order to facilitate water right transfers within their district and hopefully keep the rights within their district. The water exchange web site, discussed at earlier Planning Unit meetings, did not go live out of concern for potential water right sales out of the Entiat Watershed.

Karin Whitehall has been working with Marc Marquis gathering information on the way a Board of Joint Control could potentially be used in the Entiat Valley to help with water right transfers. Herb Gardner came to the meeting to help field potential questions from the Planning Unit. They can give us ideas of how they formed their board and what the responsibilities of the board are. Thank you both for coming today, Herb and Marc.

Karin W: It is exciting to have a little more hands on with water rights control. The Planning Unit has questions regarding how to have the reserve in our instream flow allocated as a water right. How do we reserve water rights upstream? How do we move reserve water rights further downstream? How can we balance water rights allocation between the upper and lower Entiat River?

Marc Marquis: The water transfer process goes through the Department of Ecology (DOE) or through Chelan County Conservancy Board. The Board of Joint Control is authorized by the Irrigation District. The Board of Joint Control reviews and considers water transfers within their boundary. They can approve or not approve the transfers. Full authority for transfers is with the members of the Board of Joint Control. The boundary is as small or as large as you plan for it to be. If you get all of the participating district members to join the Board of Joint Control, you will have a municipal entity.

There are unlimited ways to go about doing this. The Board can make decisions or review applications and utilize Chelan County Water Conservancy Board as advisors to the Board of Joint Control. The advantage is the members of the Conservancy Board are up to speed and well versed in water transfers. The alternative is each participating member that signs on to the Board of Joint Control could have a sub-committee to review applications and issue letters to the Joint Board of Control who can then decide how to act on the application. This allows the community to make decisions on their own. The

statue itself is non-specific. It allows a broad authority. This can be expanded to a county level. You can scale it up or make it small. The jurisdictional boundary of participating members is up to the group. It depends on what the needs and interests are.

This system seems to work well in the Stemilt area. There is not a lot of feedback from DOE. They know, but have not indicated if they will challenge it. My impression is they don't want to do anything that would appear as a blessing. They don't like this system because it leaves them out of the loop. They recognize the authority of the Board of Joint Control to do this.

Herb Gardner: We set up the Board of Joint Control with Stemilt. It was convenient. We keep moving water around. Malaga is in the middle of changes. There were a lot of handshakes a few years ago, like 50 years or 100 years ago. Nothing formal was written down. So far we have about 6 – 8 water right changes sent forward to DOE. They have not said yea or nay. Once the Board of Joint Control is formed, if DOE wants to challenge it, the Board has been set up with authority over their jurisdiction.

Jim S: They will probably try to circumvent that law later.

Marc M: This is a fairly progressive creation we are trying here. We can't anticipate where legislation might go. If laws changes later – the Board is set up and ready.

Jim S: We set up an irrigation district years ago. DOE was setting up court cases to basically stop what the district was doing.

Don O: If you don't have the whole valley included, it will be hard to get a Board of Joint Control going.

Marc M: We use the existing authority with the members that signed on.

Jim S: We don't have DOE on our backs now as we did. People joined the irrigation district out of concern with DOE.

Jim S: I think it was modeled after the same rules. It worked for what we needed it to do.

Jon S: We spend lots of time discussing this at meetings. It would be better if Entiat had representation on the county wide board so we are not duplicating efforts.

Marc M: If people are willing to make a bigger group, the bigger group has more advantages. And more options.

Jim S: We are sensitive to water issues and want to tailor this to our area. We want to be represented county wide, and to be involved from the beginning. We want to help design how the Board would work and what the Board would cover.

Doug E: Who gets to play referee, the county or the area?

Marc M: If the Board of Joint Control is county wide and Entiat has an individual Board of Joint Control for the Entiat area, Entiat would have jurisdiction over its own area.

Doug E: If Entiat wants to go county wide and Stemilt doesn't want to join forces, who has control?

Karin W: Folks at the mouth of Malaga could choose whether to go to the County or Malaga for water right changes.

Marc M: It is not all that different from the Conservancy Board. They can only offer changes in their district boundaries. You can choose who you will submit your application through. You can go through a county authority or a state authority. The advantage of the Board of Joint Control is that you have more control of your area.

Doug E: If Entiat says yes, and Malaga says no, who wins?

Mike Kaputa: We have questions about it too. It is good to see this move forward without the county to help Stemilt. Does this additional tool help with the process? Questions in the Entiat water reserve are about protecting the base. How do we do this? What are the needs of the Entiat? What are the potential tools that would allow that? How does that provide flexibility to the landowners? This is a double edged sword to the advantage of group to individual needs. A municipal group can pool funds to get more done. We want the reserve to be accessible.

Marc M: That is a good point. There are limitations of what the Board of Joint Control can do. Will it address all the needs of the Entiat Valley? There are other aspects of managing your basin that a Board of Joint Control can't help with.

Mike K: What are the things we want to achieve? How will these things line up to be most beneficial to the Entiat basin? We haven't figured out what the goals are. We know generally what we want, but there are multitudes of ways to get there. I suggest we get a small work group to gather more information.

Marc M: The intent was to bring this vehicle to your attention. Chew on it and think about what you want to do in your basin. Hopefully I've accomplished that.

Herb G: it was my impression that the county would need to have a representative on the board.

Mike K: If it is a county wide community control – what does that mean for the county in general? We have questions.

Jim S: It is a good idea to flesh this out and get involved.

Marc M: If we get specific questions, my partner can research and bring back more specific information to the group.

Mike K: We could bring all these ideas to the table and information on tools to accomplish this. We want to stay ahead of the water issues. I'm very interested in creative solutions and stay under the radar screen. It is good to see we are having these conversations. I suggest we have a discussion with the Landowner Steering Committee regarding what we are doing with our water rights situations.

Mike R: I appreciate your offers. We want to continue getting information on this. We have gone a couple of directions without much progression. My hope is to have a local work group to bring information to July meeting. I will access the Landowner Steering Committee email list.

Jon S: Will Mike Kaputa facilitate the meeting?

Mike K: Let's get numbers, and have a discussion about goals first.

Karin W: That is a good idea.

Mike R: To wrap up this segment, I will coordinate a meeting with the Landowner Steering Committee to identify goals for future discussion. We will meet before the end of this month. Thank you for attending.

- **Retirement Party Information**

Keith V: Bob Whitehall's party is April 23, from 1-4 at the Entiat Grange Hall. Notices will be sent out this week.

Habitat

- **2014 Project Planning Update**

Susan D: There are five main projects with multiple elements in each for 2014. We are going to the Regional Technical Team (RTT) next week to present preliminary designs. They will give us feedback to let us know if our plans will biologically achieve the desired outcomes. The projects would go out to bid next spring with construction to follow in the summer. At this point all of the landowners with property that would be affected by the projects are on board with the plans. They are not necessarily committed, but they know about it. The third filter will be the review of the projects with the landowners.

Joe Kelly: Are all five Cascadia Conservation District projects?

Susan D: Cascadia Conservation District is proposing 2 ½ of the projects, from Keystone to the KIOSK; Keystone Ranch is a Chelan County project; Harrison Side Channel is a county project; and the Yakama Nation is proposing a final project of a series of treatments between RM 3.3 and 2.3 with boulder clusters and bank stabilization.

Mike R: We didn't bring the designs today because they are subject to review and change after the RTT presentations. The projects are from the Hatchery to the KIOSK.

Susan D: We will have designs for you to see at the July meeting. It is a possibility that we will hold a public open house and share the designs with the larger community. Further information will be forthcoming on that aspect.

Janet F: I met with the Yakama Nation looking at three to four project proposals. Could we coordinate some efforts?

Susan D: The projects you are referring to are a round of projects for 2016 and 2017. The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) has conducted a reach assessment on the Gray reach. After the 2014 project round; the Gray Reach, the Stormy Reach and the Yakama Reach will have assessments. They are further up the river. We are trying to get 2014 projects wrapped up and rolled out. The 2016-2017 projects are in the infancy stage.

Janet F: Is there a way to introduce the community to the full range of plans?

Susan D: We are trying to roll out the big picture and trying to provide context as it is being developed.

Mike R: We are working closely with the landowners and their concerns.

Steve Kolk: There has been a meeting for the Reach assessment.

Mike R: Keith, somewhere under the Habitat agenda we wanted to address the fishing and permitting information.

- **Fishing Proposals**

Keith V: I approached different groups to get the steelhead fishing going. I contacted Brewster, Pateros, Winthrop and Twisp and they are all on board for fishing guides. If we only got 10% of the fishing sales for tackle and permits, that would bring in money for Ardenvoir and Manson. We want to get the tribes on board with steelhead fishing in the Entiat.

Mike R: We have two goals, get the hatchery to begin steelhead starts and include the Entiat with the opening fishing season along with Brewster, Pateros, Winthrop and Twisp.

Keith V: Once we get it going, we can bring information to the July meeting. It may take a year to get it going.

Derrick Van Marter: There is a special tag for fishing the Columbia that goes for support of steelhead.

Keith V: The pictures we have are for documentations.

Mike R: I will coordinate with Bob Whitehall for the July meeting.

Keith V: Dennis Beach is the Fish and Game guy in Ephrata. I have met with him. NOAA didn't have any objections to steelhead in the Entiat.

Jim S: If you can get the tribes on board, we can get it started.

Keith V: It is a reference reach and it has been closed for 10-14 years.

Karin W: There is no reference reach designated, so there is no report.

Keith V: If we can get the video from Mike Kaputa, it would provide a good support. We want to get rid of the reference reach. It would help economically too.

Outreach Efforts

- **Watershed Report Distribution Update**

Mike R: There are copies of the Report on the back table

Susan D: I would guess that you have already seen a copy. Copies were inserted with the Entiat Leader.

- **Yakama Nation Informational Signs**

Susan D: The Yakama Nation has floated a proposal of a 4 x 8 sign to be installed at strategic locations giving information like: why wood is important in the river, different types of wood used, river boating and safety, active salmon habitat going on in the watershed. I met with Bob and Susan Driver on the possibility of installing one at the KIOSK. They had a couple of other places for installation and will work with the Forest Service to get them installed. It is an effort the Yakama Nation has asked different agencies to sponsor.

Steve K: I think they were offering to pay for the signs.

Susan D: They would pay for the signs but not for the installation.

Joe K: I suggest that someone from the watershed or agency proofread the signs before installing them. Then the correct signs will be in the correct areas.

Susan D: They are proposing a generic sign that doesn't name a specific area. It will be consistent information of what habitat is being constructed.

Mike K: We are getting clarification of what requirements or permits are needed to install the signs.

Keith V: The city has a sign permit.

- **“Top Ten Frequently Asked Questions” FAQ**
(Attachment 3: Frequently Asked Questions)

Susan D: Copies of the draft FAQ sheet are on the back table. This has had a couple of different reviews. I don't expect to get all the comments you may have back today. I would like you to look at it. It is a starting piece. If there are any comments including comments on the graphics, please contact me. I don't want this going out without everyone's approval. If you wouldn't mind, I would like to have your feedback by the end of next week.

Mike K: On #4; how would this be distributed and who will it be distributed to?

Susan D: It will probably be inserted in the Entiat Leader. The purpose is specific to the Entiat.

Mike K: On #'s 7, 8 and 9; these are difficult to answer. We need someone with a legal background to answer. There may be a difference of opinions on accuracy and opinions.

Derrick VM: #8 is not correct.

Susan D: This is why I sent them out for feedback.

Mike R: The fear is to water it down so much it says nothing.

Susan D: I would appreciate any feedback. It is part of the strategy provided by the communications expert. We want to disseminate information in as many different ways as possible.

Mike R: We are not quite at a decision making point. What is the timeline we hope to finish this by, July?

Susan D: I had originally hoped to have it finalized by the end of May.

Mike R: Comments are needed by April 12, and send it to the Planning Unit before finalizing.

Craig Chisam: On #2, this is the first year the four year old fish won't need brood stock for this. But I hope to start in July of this year and keep the ball rolling. We don't know what the fish counts will be. The goal is to open it this year.

Meeting Close-out, Evaluation and Adjournment

Mike R: Are there any other discussion items for this meeting? Given that July 3 is next to the 4th of July holiday, I would like to schedule the next Planning Unit meeting on July 10.

The Planning Unit agreed to move the next meeting to July 10, at the Entiat Grange Hall.

Steve K: That will be a conflict with the RTT meeting at that same time.

Mike R: Please make sure to sign the 'sign-in' sheet before you leave, if you haven't already done so. Evaluation sheets are available for comments and/or improvements. Thank you for your attendance! See you on July 10, if not before.

The meeting adjourned at 11:03 a.m.

List of Attachments

<u>Attachment</u>	<u>Contents</u>
1	Attendance List
2	April 2013 Agenda
3	Draft 'Top Ten Frequently Asked Questions'