

July 1, 2015
ENTIAT WATERSHED PLANNING UNIT MEETING MINUTES
Entiat Grange Hall, Entiat, WA
9:00 a.m.

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

Welcome / Introductions

Meeting began at 9:05 a.m.

Mike Rickel welcomed those in attendance and opened the meeting with a round of introductions.

- **Approve April 2015 EWPU Meeting Minutes**

Mike asked if there were edits to make to the April 2015 Minutes. No comments or edits were requested, and the minutes were finalized. He called for new business items.

Jon Small: I'd like to see a committee formed that will work on access to the upper Entiat. A committee of stakeholders and landowners who want to work with the USFS on access.

Mike R: We have an ad hock landowners steering committee, is this something that they could take on or a separate committee?

Jim Small: We need the federal and state agencies to sit and talk about the issues, find common ground and work with the Planning Unit. The EWPU policy needs to be used to work through the issues.

Jon S: Offered up a mission statement: "To ensure access now and for future generations to the Public Lands of the Entiat Watershed in a collaborative effort with all identified stakeholders."

Mike R: Would this be a topic to address at the EWPU meeting, or a similar forum to the EWPU?

Jim S: A similar forum. It is hard to talk about issues if you don't have an organization to give you creditability.

Mike R: Has the group approached the landowners to formerly engage the USFS?

Jim S: We have begun the process.

Mike R: I could offer a draft letter to the stakeholders on behalf of the EWPU, approaching specific landowners to engage. Ask the committee to identify the stakeholders.

Jim S: We hope for a landowner steering committee to deal with road access issues with the Forest Service and the County.

Mike Kaputa: Good timing. Communication has diminished. Issues come up with no way to have a discussion about them. We want to know contact information, who and how, so agencies and landowners can get the information they need.

Mike R: The issue is access in the Entiat and recognizing the county's larger needs. The motion to form a group for access issues was made and passed. I will bring it to the October EWPU meeting for an update.

Decision Point: *Approved: Form a committee to resolve road access issues in the Entiat.*

The July 2015 agenda was reviewed and accepted.

Entiat Landowner Steering Committee Update

- **Snow Pack Status and Flow Forecast**

(Attachment 3: Water Level & Temperature Graphs by Katherine Rowden)

Katherine Rowden: Entiat's snowpack level set a new low record and it ran off early with the warmer spring temperatures. Snowpack levels have been recorded at a Snotel at an elevation of 3,000 feet, since 1980. The run off occurred two months early.

The following references the Water Level & Temperature Graphs in the power point presentation:

Katherine R: The first graph shows the Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) records at the end of March. Red dots show the record breaking low snowpack levels of more than 30 years. April through June are much dryer this year and the precipitation is very low. Right now, Entiat is in the 2nd percentile of dry conditions for the last 100 years. The evaporation levels measured from April 1 through June 24 show the highest level of evaporation since 1980.

The runoff volume distribution is forecast by month. The blue bars are actual runoff through the winter. There was an above average runoff all winter long. It is below average in June.

Jim S: The ground wasn't frozen during the rains. How do you know that it didn't soak into the ground?

Katherine R: They account for the water absorbance in the model. The model does not calibrate for forecasts or account for extremes very well. Soil moisture disappeared faster than expected.

The stream flows, from the USDA, in the Entiat upstream show black as the minimum for the record. The line designating snow melt for this year shows an increase.

Mike R: Is that a function of the record high temps?

Katherine R: Yes. Looking at the USGS 7 day averages, peak flows in the Entiat this spring are the lowest seen in 57 years.

Jim S: If this is data for decision making, it would seem the 1980's is not a long time. I don't know if it shows with the model what is really going on. Sometimes the highest and lowest numbers don't really reflect the watershed. How would the periods not being counted figure in with this data?

Mike K: We are having a big conversation about water storage in the Wenatchee. I wonder if the Wenatchee could be used to calibrate some of the past years information in the Entiat model?

Katherine R: Based on the models now, that would be a lot of work.

Karin Whitehall: I wonder if Chelan PUD would have some of those records when they put in the dams.

Mike K: It is sporadic. There is no specific date on record.

Jim S: Every day the news is an 'end of the world' forecast. We want to know if there is a way to apply more statistics to the model.

Katherine R: This is what we are looking at. We get through these things. Different impacts have different needs to help. The US Drought monitor (droughtmonitor.unl.edu) for the west shows severe drought in the southwest. The climate prediction center shows the average temperature will be warmer than normal through September. The precipitation has an equal chance. The snow is gone, crop watering will be affected, and fire potential goes up.

The El Nino forecast with all the models for next winter shows a higher likelihood for above average temperatures during the winter months. The outlook shows above average temperatures for this year and the same for next year.

Tom Desgroseillier: How does this fit in with hydrology?

Katherine R: It fits with what some of the models are showing.

Doug England: We are in a gray zone for precipitation monitoring, but we would like to get funds to allow radar for better coverage of the Entiat area.

Katherine R: Here is my contact information: Katherine.rowden@noaa.gov; www.weather.gov/spokane; or www.wrh.noaa.gov/ofx; phone: 509-244-0110 extension 228. Please let me know of your impacts.

Mike R: Are most of the irrigators senior water right holders?

Jon S: Most are. There are a few junior water right holders.

Mike R: I will share information with you Katherine.

Mike K: The Icicle and Peshastin are having problems getting access to water. They want to access the funds to improve their watering access.

Mike R: Thank you for the discussion. Any further questions? We'll move to the next agenda item.

- **Forest Service Watershed Restoration Efforts**

Emily Johnson: I'm the new zoned Forest Service fish biologist for the Entiat and Chelan Ranger Districts. I started this job at the beginning of May. The Entiat Ranger District is currently working on four large projects in the Entiat Watershed. The projects include; the Stillwaters and Stormy A stream restoration projects, the Tillicum Creek Watershed Restoration project and the Crum Canyon Vegetation Management Project. The Upper Stillwaters and the Forest Service portion of the Stormy A project are joint projects between the FS, Yakama Nation and BPA and are at 30% design level. Stillwaters will be implemented in 2016 (Stillwaters, RM 25-27) and Stormy A will be implemented in 2017 (Stormy A, RM ##). These projects involve development of a side channel and placement of large wood structures along portions of the Entiat River Road and along the Entiat River. We are very much in the beginning stages. The Tillicum Creek Watershed Restoration Project includes thinning and burning, stream restoration proposals, and road treatments such as upgrading, relocating, and decommissioning of roads as well as culvert removal or upgrades. Crum Canyon project is the fourth project and will be fuels management, vegetation management and burning.

Tom D: Do you have any documented culvert replacements in the Tillicum Creek drainage?

Emily J: The Indian Creek culvert was an undersized culvert that we replaced with a larger open bottom arch in 2014. There is one more undersized culvert on the mainstem of Tillicum Creek that needs to be upgraded, but it will be difficult. Tillicum Creek was determined to be a priority watershed for restoration through the Forest Service National Watershed Condition Framework. The watershed condition framework has 12 criteria that are analyzed to determine how a watershed is functioning. Forests then go through a

ranking process and determine priority watersheds to focus restoration and improvement efforts. The Entiat District is beginning the NEPA process for the Tillicum Creek Watershed Restoration Process. Implementation will occur once the NEPA process is complete and the District Ranger has made a decision.

Jim S: Are you taking into account the fish counts with the flooding above? How does it fit in I think the question was if there was concern about the impacts on fish in the Entiat River because of post-Duncan fire debris flows?

Emily J: Yes there is concern about increased sediment inputs to the Entiat River post fire and its impacts on fish species. There is also concern about the impact on stream restoration projects such as the Stillwaters and Stormy A projects from post-fire debris flows and sediment input. The Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) reports showed the potential for large amounts of sediment and debris delivery from the fire to the Entiat River over the next 3 years. .

Mike K: A similar project was done at 25 Mile Creek. The channel filled in with silt and sediment.

Emily J: There is a spawning channel on 25-mile Creek, a tributary to Lake Chelan, for kokanee but it has filled in with silt and sediment over the years.

Tom D: As a spawning channel, it worked.

Jim S: The fires pushed the sediment down.

Mike R: There are four projects?

Emily J: Tillicum, Crum, Stillwater and Stormy.

Karin W: Any ideas on stream temperatures this summer?

Emily J: We didn't have funding to continue the temperature monitoring.

Tom D: We do know that the temperature concerns are real. We are doing what we can to document that. We want to learn what we can about fish response so we know what to expect.

Mike R: Did I understand you to say that the run is about 3 weeks early?

Tom D: Yes.

- **Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP)**

(Attachment 4: Stewardship Checklist Handout)

Mike K: The County and Cascadia Conservation District, along with some other parties, are participants of a staff work group to put together the draft VSP work plan. The stewardship check list (*handout*) is a tool developed to help growers and ranchers encapsulate the programs they are already doing on their property. I wanted to share this with you today to get your feedback and help make it more streamlined.

Items to cover in this checklist are programs already in use and incentives to do more. The incentives don't really fit in the program yet. The first 4-5 pages are the most important to review today. Are there new programs that characterize what you are doing on your property? We have to keep track of who is participating, what practices they are doing on their property, and what practices are in place to improve critical areas.

We could walk through the check list here at the Planning Unit meeting, or it may be good to go through it more carefully with the Landowner Steering Committee. It would also be good to have a volunteer walk through the check list.

Mike R: Many folks are asking what this is and why are we doing it. We hope to capture the fact that many folks are already working toward protecting critical areas. We want to meet with landowners and talk about what critical areas are, see where they occur on their property and where they don't exist.

Mike K: We are trying to protect people from floods. There is a disconnection between critical area protection and geological hazardous areas.

Doug England: Is it 15% or 40% slopes on geological areas?

Mike K: Erodible areas are shown.

Mike R: Many growers are already meeting the needs.

Mike K: It would be good to make the distinction between the two.

Mike R: There is a list of actions required within the programs.

Jon S: Is it a book about an inch thick?

Karin W: With inspectors?

Jon S: How does Global GAP impact the VSP?

Mike R: There are individual requirements.

Doug E: Food safety went to socially acceptable. We document the soil, water usage, and need to be certified before fruit can be sold. There is even a waste removal program for dog poo in orchards. It is generally agreed if you are Global GAP certified, you are already doing the VSP practices.

Mike K: Good question Jon. We will be asked that at Olympia.

Mike R: We need to get familiar with the GAP requirements.

Mike K: Consider other programs that support VSP. What components of that program that are linked to the VSP program?

Mike R: It would be nice to have the folks that implement GAP requirements, share them with us.

Mike K: You can see under the #5 goals, the VSP hazard goals.

Mike R: Maybe reference step 2.

Mike K: The challenge with the tree fruit industry is that they may not be doing the NRCS program, but in many cases are already exceeding the standards.

Mike R: The agriculture intersection continues what landowners are already doing. We have to make a case to the technical group, and once every 5 to 10 years prove that we are continuing the improvement.

Mike K: I don't see if landowners are voluntarily implementing salmon recovery projects or habitat projects.

Doug E: We should include access for other work that supports VSP.

Mike K: We want to give credit for the actions that are going on.

Mike R: We will have to include fish habitat and monitoring on the VSP plan.

Mike K: If you see other actions that are protecting critical areas, as seen on page 5, please share them.

Page 6, incentives to advance the whole program. Could we appeal to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board to fund some of the improvements? Habitat farming enterprise? Tax incentives? If aggressive watering measures are implemented, could you use water on different properties?

Jim S: What about not charging for the removal of carbon credits?

Mike R: There is a market beginning for carbon credits.

Mike K: Flight miles and plant trees somewhere to offset the impact of emissions.

Mike R: My sense is we document what is already being done.

Mike K: We could have up to another year to finalize the plan. We would like to run through this with water and grower communities to see if it works and makes sense to them. Then we will be informed about what the work plan should say and form a final draft. The staff group will meet next week to lay it out. It's not a huge rush, but we want to take steps to make it better and finalize it. The technical panel hasn't been developed yet.

Jon S: The funding could establish the program and encourage other counties to implement VSP too.

Mike K: It would be good if we could use some funding money to implement beta demonstrations, but most of the funds are for administration and draft of the document.

Mike R: My sense is Jim and Jon are already meeting the intent of the VSP. We would not have you enroll in the program but meet with you in the next 10 years to make sure actions are still being implemented. Take these handouts with you. I'm interested in getting your feedback.

- **Shoreline Master Program**

Mike K: The update is brief. We are re-initiating the shoreline master program. New priorities have been set. We are working with different entities. It will take a few months to work through it with the Planning Commission and the County Commission. The strategy is to have community engagement. The new document will be different than the first, so we need community engagement to give feedback on it. We have a couple of meetings in Wenatchee, Entiat, Chelan, and the Squilchuck areas. Public access is an issue. We should have a full strategy developed in a few months.

Mike R: Are there substantial updates?

Mike K: I expect substantial updates. The older version was onerous. The new version will be very different. There are land use issues. The shoreline master program will have plenty of opportunities to volunteer and participate in the process.

Habitat

- **2016 Design Projects Update**

Jason Sims: We are about a year into the project design process and currently at 30% design completion. We are working with landowners and developers to flesh out the best design. We had an informal outdoor meeting so landowners could get information about projects and discuss their concerns with the agency folks that were in attendance.

Mike R: The meeting was a couple of weeks ago. We didn't want to bring up too much with the community until the landowners are happy and have signed agreements for the projects.

Jason S: We will have another meeting this fall. Between River Mile 21.2 down to River Mile 16.5 you'll notice there are a lot of wood structures. There are about 70 structures, with 30 to 50 pieces of wood per structure. These designs are very technically advanced, but still at 30% completion. A lot can change between now and design completion. Many of the projects could be dropped.

(Attachment 5: Maps of Proposed Designs Hand Out)

Jason S: These maps show the locations of potential projects. I have more detailed plan sheets upon request, and I'm available for questions.

Steve Kolk: Show the structures and the ones crossed off the list.

Mike R: Are there questions or comments?

Karin W: Has NEPA or SEPA been contacted yet?

Jason S: Not yet.

Mike K: SEPA is a project by project stance.

Emily J: NEPA is on Forest Service property.

David Morgan: I'm really glad to have had the meeting a couple of weeks ago. It was good to work together and get more communication between the agencies.

Mike K: Are we on the right road for getting information out? Is there going to be some unexpected concern?

Jason S: There was an audible gasp when we said how many structures are planned to go in the river. After the explanations of why structures are going in where they are shown, folks became more comfortable. There have not been any red flags so far.

Jim S: What needs to be addressed is the anger about not being able to fish, and structures in the way. We feel like the agreement we put together to start with has been ignored by Fish and Wildlife and now by the Forest Service too. It will not take much to blow the lid off. Be aware of it and communicate well.

Part of the problem is our own fault. We have protected the community in many ways and they feel left out.

David M: The communities are gray. Another meeting at a later date is a good idea. Let the community know what will happen to get the information out.

Mike R: Mike Kaputa, you asked if we feel confident. I don't feel confident. But we will do what we can to communicate. There is an underlying current of simmering frustration.

Jason S: I have heard this frustration. On the whole, we have had a lot of community outreach. There are some holes, but the outreach is good.

Jim S: You can't make any mistakes.

Mike K: It will be interesting to see what the response is when the wood shows up. That might prompt more community meetings.

Jim S: The folks living down river will be more concerned about the structures than the others. They need to be in the loop.

Mike K: We will have to figure a way to address other issues. We spent many years getting the EWPU plan together. If only a few ideas in a contract are used, the community will be frustrated that not all of the ideas are incorporated.

Tom D: Is the group for the recreational fishing changes as of today? Hopefully we've made a step toward progress. I can see that frustration.

Jim S: Having the Entiat River serve as a test tube for other rivers is frustrating. We are losing our community because of the economic impact of these decisions. We need to generate enough income in the winter to survive. As we lose our businesses, we lose our community. That is what is at stake. We want to resolve these issues. We don't want the agencies doing one thing, and others coming in and doing the opposite. It is hard to participate in the process when there are no resolutions. We wanted the Entiat to be a river to study to help others. If it didn't make muster with the science, we didn't do it right. Now groups are not helping us but harming us. It feels like everyone is taking a swipe at us. We want the best science and the best plan to implement it.

Mike R: We don't want the EWPU to lose its relevance.

Jim S: We've lived with floods and fires for many years. It really gets folks in the guts. Decisions are made that haven't been thoroughly communicated and asked about.

Hal Hawley: The road closure is a ticking time bomb.

Karin W: I suggest that Cascadia have a presentation with the new Forest Service manager. No other district had public participation in the watershed analysis. I believe they are not aware of the promises made through the watershed plan.

Emily J: You are right! I found the letter and showed it to Janet. It is on the Cascadia Conservation District website.

Tracy Eisenhard: Are these contracts in perpetuity?

Karin W: One manager can look at it and say they don't want to accept the watershed analysis.

Tracy E: Is there a coordinated policy between the agencies of what the plan is?

Karin W: Under the watershed planning act, through the Department of Ecology (DOE).

Emily J: I don't believe the analysis included fires and road closure.

Mike K: Looking at the group, there is personal investment for the founders of the plan. New people come in without an understanding of the original plan, and the Planning Unit can lose its collaborative nature over time. I see this in the Wenatchee watershed and other places. The commitment becomes less important. Find a letter to give it leverage. Are the agencies still committed to the forum? The road closures should have been brought to this group first. The Planning Unit decision making has changed.

Emily J: The Forest Service is constantly given new rules. The watershed plan and the letters need to be brought to the forefront.

Mike K: With the Forest Service, we have had six or seven different Forest service folks involved. It is a challenge to not have consistent representation by each agency.

Mike R: There are a couple of things we can do. Is there a partnership commitment?

Jim S: If you talk to the people that will be impacted, you will make a better decision that works for all. We are all interested in the public. We shouldn't do things to the public that doesn't make sense. The agency leaders don't have a clue what is involved. This is a forum for the different agencies to bounce their ideas off of and come up with the best answer for all. That needs to be impressed with the new people coming in.

Mike R: I think Karin's suggestion to meet and greet, engage with the Forest Service leaders and make these issues known.

- **House Relocation Project**

David M: The house is in the flood plain and needs to be relocated or demolished. We prefer relocating it. What is the Planning Unit's preference? Relocation or demolish? Are there other ideas we haven't thought of? We are not looking to make a profit from moving the house. We want to keep the property value up for the school district. This property is important to the fish. The Land Trust does not want to destroy a house that would be a good home for a family.

Jim S: Will the woody structures cause trouble?

David M: The house was built in 1993. The fill was brought in to comply with the County building code to keep it above the flood plain.

Mike K: We do allow building when compliant.

David M: We want to move the house.

Mike K: Did the CCD board discuss this?

Mike R: Yes. And they would love to see it relocated.

Mike K: We don't have a lot of wiggle room in what we allow.

David M: If you have information of someone who would like the house, contact the Land Trust or Cascadia Conservation District.

Mike K: Our code allows construction on built up soil when it is higher than the flood plain, but that doesn't make it smart.

Hal H: There was an offer made a month ago. The party is still interested. They need a contact person. Call Martha Travis. She will be elated to hear about that.

David M: We haven't heard from any purchasers. No one has contacted us.

Mike R: This information needs to be made available to the public. The Land Trust doesn't own the land yet, so it hasn't been the right time to let out the information.

Meeting Close-out, Evaluation and Adjournment

Mike R: The next Planning Unit meeting is on October 7, 2015, at the Entiat Grange Hall. Please fill out an evaluation of the meeting before you leave. They are found at the back table.

Thank you for coming! See you on October 7, 2015.

The meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

List of Attachments

Attachment

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