

ENTIAT WATERSHED PLANNING UNIT MEETING MINUTES
Entiat Grange Hall, 14108 Kinzel St., Entiat, WA 98822
November 7, 2018
10:00 a.m.

MEETING ATTENDANCE: See Attendance List (*Attachment #1*)
See Detailed Agenda (*Attachment #2*)
FACILITATOR: Mike Cushman
NOTES: Nada Wentz

WELCOME / INTRODUCTIONS

Mike Cushman called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed those in attendance, followed by a round of introductions.

Approve August 2018 EWPU Meeting Minutes: The minutes were attached to the emailed meeting reminder, and also posted on the District website for folks to review. The August minutes were approved.

PROJECTS

October Project Tour Highlights: The project site tour was attended by 18 people. The group visited the Yakama Nation and USFS project at Tillicum creek and the Trout Unlimited Roaring Creek project, which removed a surface water diversion from Roaring Creek. A request for signage by the Tillicum site was made to help explain the project and who completed it.

USFS Projects and Planning: The US Forest Service is working to open an opportunity to remove burned trees along the forest service roadways before the next fire season in the Tyee and Cougar Creek burned area. Rehab work on trails, weeding and road work has ended for the season. There is remaining storm proofing work on culverts that needs to begin, they will be armored for over flow. Also, the Forest Service worked with Yakama Nations on the Tillicum Enhancement project this year.

The Forest Service is reviewing the Mad River and Roar Creek project. The assessment results will determine the extent and timing of projects in this area.

Yakama Nation Projects: The Yakama Nation Mad River Reach assessment is finished. The Regional Technical Team (RTT) will review it next week. Feedback from the review will be shared with the Forest Service, the watershed action teams and the public. The final report should be ready in January or February of 2019.

Chris Clemons went over the Tillicum Creek Fan Habitat Enhancement Project handout with the group. He reported on the work that has been done, the project goal and objectives, as well as some of the challenges that occurred during implementation. (*Attachment 3 – Tillicum Creek Fan Habitat Enhancement Project*)

Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group (CCFEG) Entiat Barrier Assessment:

Matt Shales discussed barrier assessments for the Wenatchee and the Methow rivers. They just received funding approval notification for a barrier assessment for Entiat River tributaries. The current information for the watershed is incomplete and about 20 years old. There is a great need for updates on culvert locations, diversions, and bridges. Once the barrier passage assessment is determined, the Fish Passage and Diversion Screening Inventory database (FPDSI) can be updated. Ways to conduct landowner outreach was requested. Signage with contact information listed was suggested. Cascadia Conservation District can assist with landowner phone calls and outreach.

Entiat Post Fire Projects – Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP): The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has an Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) program geared for the protection of life and property after a natural disaster, in this case a wildfire. A property risk assessment and associated eligibility criteria is part of the requirement for potential projects.

The Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) report was completed. Currently NRCS is completing evaluation for several small drainages as well as the Mad River watershed. The type of storm event that NRCS has developed models as part of the evaluation include a 25-year 24-hour storm for the Mad River Watershed, and a 25-year 1-hour storm for the small drainages.

A public meeting is coming up where this data will be presented and the next steps will be discussed.

Middle Entiat Projects: The Area B levee removal project went out to bid and a contractor was chosen. Many bids came in for the project. Cascadia Conservation District will go out to bid for Area E soon. Permitting plans were finalized for the Stormy A project area for the Yakama Nation, with plans to go out to bid and construct next year.

UPPER COLUMBIA SALMON RECOVERY BOARD (UCSRB) – Sarah Walker

In an attempt to maximize Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) money this year, a targeted solicitation for proposals was put out. The targeted areas this year are Twisp, Methow, Upper Lake Wenatchee and lower Nason Creek. The announcement went out the second week of October. Proposals are due the day before Thanksgiving. The selection will be made in December and implemented in the spring of 2019. The hope is to get the Upper Columbia Salmon recovery Board more engaged with RTT and Yakama Nation, and to share overall information with all agencies, sponsors and stakeholders. This includes the updated prioritization work for the Upper Columbia, which Sarah hopes to share with the Entiat group for review.

401/404 Meeting, FY19 Targeted: A discussion about permitting came up at a forum in June. The wetlands component raised concerns among the sponsors and landowners. It was a good all day session with tangible outcomes discussed at the meeting. Oregon has a program that covers a whole suite of projects for permitting. We are looking for a permit that could be put into place that covers more things under the Regional General Permit (RGP). There are places in the state that can permit ahead of time for land purchasers, which may be a policy option to look in to as well. Sarah offered to send a summary to Mike.

Mike would like to get the permitting change information to the EWPU folks. There are wetland management concerns with some of the projects. It would be good for the group to know what the changes and the challenges are.

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Entiat Reference Population / Stream Designation: (*Attachment 4 – WDFW – Entiat Status handout*) - Bob Whitehall talked with the WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, regarding Reference Stream information. Bob was able to get some clear answers about the fisheries concerns, but he is ready to step down and hand the job over to someone else. Generally he felt that changes in fishing policies in the Lower Columbia need to be addressed to improve fish returns in the Upper Columbia. The work Travis and others from WDFW have done to get fishing in the Entiat is appreciated. Tom encouraged Bob, Karin and Keith to let him know if there are more questions or concerns. Their knowledge, as well as other local knowledge in general, is invaluable to the EWPU group and fundamental to its purpose.

Ecology Water Reserve: Vanessa recapped some of the reserve and water usage information presented at previous meetings. The Department of Ecology (DOE) is doing an exercise in Chelan to see how to stretch water further and gather better data on how much water is used. This exercise will be in December. DOE is looking at meter usage and AgriNet for different crop usage in the area. Experts will gather data, GIS imagery and help come to a realistic view of what the water usage is. Mike would like to have conversations about the outcome of this exercise at the EWPU May meeting. Currently in the Entiat watershed there are about 35 new permits in process.

ROUNDTABLE UPDATES, MEETING CLOSE-OUT AND ADJOURNMENT

Greg Fraser reported on the fish numbers. The spring chinook numbers for the year were low. The summer chinook did well with close to normal numbers. The Entiat Fish Hatchery is doing well. Annual Bull trout data gathering was been delayed because of the fires this year.

Vanessa has information on Hirst funding for stream flow restoration. She can bring more information to the next meeting if requested.

Road closures for camping and snowmobiling, road paving and questions about the BAER report were briefly discussed.

Mike Cushman mentioned monitoring was completed this summer to develop a baseline for the habitat projects planned in the Middle Entiat. He will make it a priority to bring new information to the group for discussion as it becomes available.

Mike thanked folks for coming. The next meeting is scheduled for February 6, 2019.

Meeting adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

List of Attachments

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