

**Grande Ronde Model Watershed (GRMW)**  
**Board of Directors' Meeting**  
**April 28, 2015, 5:00 p.m.**  
**Elgin Community Center in Elgin**

**Approval of Minutes and Agenda:** Mike Hayward brought the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Introductions followed. Ted Taylor found an error in the February 24, 2015 meeting minutes under the Review of Executive Committee/BPA Conversation. The meeting in Pendleton was held in October not November. Larry Cribbs moved to approve the February 24, 2015, meeting minutes with the correction changing November to October; Ted Taylor seconded, and the motion carried. Jeff Oveson asked to add a discussion under the Staff Report on End Creek to the agenda. Allen Childs, Katie Frenyea, and Nick Myatt would cover this topic. With the addition, the agenda was approved by consensus (attachments to file).

**Calendar/Announcements:** Calendars for April thru July were provided (attachment to file). No additions were made to the calendars.

**Project Review:** The project proposals and the Technical Team comments on the Wallowa River Baker Project site visit were mailed out prior to the Board meeting for Board review (attachments to file). Lyle Kuchenbecker reminded the Board that there is \$300,000 in Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) funds allocated to Wallowa County. He reported that there are two Wallowa County project proposals: Lostine River/Sheep Ridge and the Wallowa River – Baker Project. The Lostine River/Sheep Ridge Project proposal was in the February 2015 project solicitation process. If approved, implementation would take place in 2016. The Wallowa River – Baker Project proposal has also been submitted to Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB). If approved this would take place the end of the summer or early Fall of 2015. The Technical Team held site visits on March 10, 2015. Coby Menton went over the two projects.

**Lostine River/Sheep Ridge:** The project objectives are to 1) restore fish passage at the Sheep Ridge diversion and fish ladder; 2) improve hydraulic complexity throughout the project reach; and 3) improve sediment transport continuity and restore natural bedload transport processes in the project reach. This is an action effectiveness monitoring project. Coby Menton indicated that the funding for this project will include BPA funds, OWEB funds, and in-kind services by partners: Nez Perce Tribe (NPT), Sheep Ridge Ditch Company, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and GRMW. Total project cost is \$213,380. BPA funds requested are \$108,550 and OWEB funds \$81,050. Staff recommendation is to fund as proposed. Nick Myatt moved to approve the project as proposed, Larry Cribbs seconded, and the motion carried.

**Wallowa River – Baker Project:** This project was designed to address identified limiting factors and priority attributes and to also meet the following goal: restore the Wallowa River to within its natural form and function, promoting natural, stable stream channels and instream habitat diversity. Funding will be used to construct four side channels, install 54 wood and habitat structures, planting and

seeding, reduce sediment delivery, promote aquifer recharge with flood plain reconnection and to prevent juvenile salmonid stranding. Coby indicated that there is the issue of the lack of weed management. It was recommended to develop a monitoring and maintenance plan. There is a planting plan. The funding for this project will include BPA funds, OWEB funds, US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) funds plus in-kind services by partners: ODFW, NPT and GRMW. Total project cost is \$952,820. BPA funds requested are \$300,000, OWEB funds are \$454,309 and USFWS funds will be \$20,000. Project implementation is planned to start in late Summer or early Fall of 2015. Allen Childs stated that they need to invest more money in plantings. Colleen Fagen stressed that ODFW does agree that there needs to be more planting and that will be covered with ODFW funds. Staff recommendation was to fund as proposed. Ted Taylor moved to approve the project as proposed, Joe McCormack seconded, and the motion carried.

Mike Hayward indicated this project is next to the Weber levees and the Weber bridge and that Wallowa County has an inspection every year by the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) on the levees. Every year, Wallowa County gets written up regarding the vegetation on the levees. ACOE believes that the vegetation needs to be gone. He would like help in working with the ACOE on this issue. He wants to satisfy the ACOE and the fish realm.

#### **Update on Catherine Creek & Upper Grande Ronde Atlas:**

**Catherine Creek Atlas:** Jesse Steele indicated that the first implementation team meeting was held on April 16, 2015, where they started using the atlas and assigned five or six opportunities out of the atlas. There will be monthly implementation team meetings to identify opportunities and to give progress reports. There will be a transition period. You will see projects that are currently being worked on and then you will start seeing the opportunities in the atlas in 2016. The Charter is now called the Atlas Implementation Guidelines. There have been three or four drafts of the guidelines out for review. Cardno, a contractor, is working on the detailed maps and are expected to be completed by May 30<sup>th</sup>. A manual is being developed to show how the atlas was developed and show the decisions that went into it. They are brain storming on where all the products will be housed.

**Upper Grande Ronde Atlas:** The third Science Tac meeting was held in March and the final Science Tac meeting will be on April 29, 2015, to add the biological (fish) data. Then they will start the process of developing all the products. Jeff Oveson thanked Dave Kaplowe for his work efforts in this. Dave stated that it was a team effort and he thanked everyone for their teamwork. Jesse stated that there will be enough information within the atlas for an OWEB FIP proposal.

**Atlas Implementation Guidelines:** The Atlas Implementation Guidelines were provided for Board review (attachment to file). Larry Cribbs asked if the education/outreach can still be accomplished with one less staff member? Jeff Oveson stated that they will work with their partners and will focus on specific landowners at a smaller scale. This could help us to reach a larger scale outreach plan. BOR is helping with the outreach plan. We could see a plan before Fall. If there are socioeconomic concerns associated with a project or a group of projects, the GRMW Board will weigh in with opinion. GRMW

will rely on their partners to help in the outreach efforts. Ted Taylor indicated that BOR and the ACOE have experience in socioeconomic impacts. BOR might have an analysis that we could use. Katie Frenyea stated that Union Soil and Water Conservation District (USWCD) have two new employees that could help out in the outreach. Dave Kaplowe stated that partners will need to collaborate together. He indicated that this will not be a signed document.

**OWEB FIP:** The Focused Investment Partnerships (FIP) Solicitation Process schedule was provided in the Board packets (attachment to file). Jeff Oveson indicated that within the process, they are waiting for OWEB to schedule a consultation meeting with him and GRMW's partners. This should take place by May 20, 2015. BOR's technical writer is working on a draft of the strategic action plan. The plan (Phase I Application) is due on July 1, 2015, in Salem. When the draft is complete and in hand, Jeff will send it out to the Board for their review. If OWEB approves the action plan, then GRMW will submit a full-blown (Phase II) application. On the Union County end of the basin, Catherine Creek and the Upper Grande Ronde will be under the Implementation Funding and the Wallowa County end of the basin Wallowa River, Joseph Creek, Imnaha, and the Minam will be under the Capacity-Building Funding. We would bring in a contractor to help support the development of the Atlas process in Wallowa County. Jeff went over the handout on the Inland Aquatic Habitat for Native Fish Species (attachment to file). The NPT is working with Eric Quempts (CTUIR) on the priority map. Partners for Wallowa County could be the NPT, ODFW, SWCD, The Freshwater Trust, and GRMW. These funds would help fund outreach, design, and implementation.

**Staff Report:** A written staff report was provided in the Board packets (attachment to file).

**RCPP-Regional Conservation Partnership Program (USDA Program):** Katie Frenyea reported that the RCPP have several priority areas and we have qualified for the Columbia River priority area. The program deals with water quality, water quantity, and fish habitat. There was one meeting held last week. Partners include SWCD, NRCS, ODFW, GRMW, ODF, CTUIR, Tri County Weed, and others. She will update the Board as they move forward through the process.

**Catherine Creek CC44 Project:** Katie indicated that there will be a site visit on May 30<sup>th</sup> for phase three. Bid solicitation took place two weeks ago. They had eight or nine contractors. The final plans are due on the 30<sup>th</sup> for the walk through. Two of those contractors are from the basin. The BPA contract will start on June 1, 2015. Allen Childs spoke on the Smith property (phase 3) and Southern Cross. The first week of May the engineers will be redirected. The plan is to get the design work done and the solicitation ready for late July or early August. Katie stated that Smith decided to go back to CREP for 15 years. The last two landowners chose easements so no construction until next year.

**Bird Track Springs:** Allen reported that Bird Track Springs is in Longley Meadows. Jesse Steele has been working on the concept planners' team. There are four river miles on 60% National Forest land and 40% on private land with two private landowners. The final set of concepts for the whole reach is done. They are working on maximizing summer and winter rearing and the long-term chinook spawning habitat.

BOR is subcontracting out and hoping to get an engineering firm on board within the next couple of weeks. This will be a 3 to 4 phase project.

**Cunha Ranch:** Allen stated that they have 2,900 acres of permanent conservation easement on the Joseph Cunha Ranch in Dark Canyon Creek and the mainstem of Meadow Creek. The purpose is to protect Dark Canyon on Cunha Creek. Dark Canyon is a cold water refugee.

**Bill Tsiatsos:** Childs reported that he has been working with the Tsiatsos Family on concept designs for restoration work and are looking at conservation easements from CREP and BPA. Doing background work on archeology and moving towards the final designs.

**End Creek:** Allen mentioned that this restoration conservation easement (WRP) project is near Summerville. The project has been in place since 2006. There are three landowners with 776 acres (South Fork Willow and End Creek) with eight miles of new channel reconstruction. There have been ongoing water right issues on the South Fork Willow. A landowner diverted South Fork Willow out of the new channel and back in to the ditch. There was \$600,000 in BPA funding in 2006. NRCS is deciding the course of action. A violation notice could be given to a landowner. Katie Frenyea stated that the SWCD did approve the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) easement. SWCD will host a meeting with NRCS and the landowners. Nick Myatt indicated that the issue is that there are multiple violations and potential ESA violations. He thought that the partners need to get together on this matter.

Staff went over their work that was mentioned in the written staff report (attachment to file). Coby Menton spoke on the Wallowa River 6 Ranch II project and the Lostine River Sheep Ridge project. Mason Bailie shared information on the new FLIR camera and the larger framed drone. Jesse Steele reported on Catherine Creek Hall Ranch and the Idaho Power Mitigation (B2H) project. Lacey Moore gave an update on the Ripples newsletter, GIS in Action Conference, data updates and outreach activities that took place in April and others that will take place in May.

Jeff Oveson mentioned that the Board and Staff have been invited to have a BBQ at the Starkey Experimental Forest in August. This will be on the June meeting agenda for discussion.

**Next Scheduled Board Meeting:** The next scheduled Board meeting will be held on June 23, 2015, at 5:00 p.m. at the Wallowa Community Center in Wallowa. If you have any questions or comments, please call (541) 663-0570 or write GRMW, 1114 J Avenue, La Grande OR 97850. To reach us electronically, visit <http://www.grmw.org>. The mission of the Board of Directors' of the Grande Ronde Model Watershed Program is "to develop and oversee the implementation, maintenance and monitoring of coordinated resource management that will enhance the natural resources of the Grande Ronde River Basin." Meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

**Meeting Attendance:**

**Board Members/Alternates:** Mike Hayward, Ted Taylor, Jed Hassinger, Joe McCormack, Nick Myatt, Katie Frenyea, Allen Childs and Larry Cribbs.

**Others:** Dave Kaplowe (BPA), Mitch Daniel (NPT), Montana Pagano (NPT), Collen Fagen (ODFW), Bill Howell and Lyle Kuchenbecker.

**Staff:** Jeff Oveson, Jesse Steele, Mason Bailie, Coby Menton, Lacey Moore and Mary Estes.