

WRIA 32 PHASE IV YEAR 3 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING GRANT APPLICATION

APPLICANT / ORGANIZATION

Applicant Signature		Official Contact	Judith S. Johnson		
Organization	Kooskooskie Commons				
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Project Name	Little Walla Walla Rivers Replenishment Strategies				
Project Location	Washington Little Walla Walla Rivers			County	Walla Walla
Sub-Watershed/Stream Names	W. Little WW River, Walsh Creek, McEvoy Spring Branch				

SUMMARY of PROJECT

DESCRIPTION

The project will: Assist landowners along the Little Walla Walla River McEvoy Spring Creek and Walsh Creek to replenish surface flows. This was a unique circumstance within the basin until last fall when Big Spring, associated with the East Little Walla Walla River system lost much of its flow. Additionally, wells upstream in Oregon are reported to be declining, indicating a systemic problem with flows throughout the Little Walla Walla Rivers area. This circumstance is confused by the need for more data regarding the seasonal surface flows within the West Little Walla Walla River system and a need to understand how ground water pumping affects the surface flows. This project will provide coordinated outreach to landowners and from local landowners along the spring branches and creeks to gather year round information about surface flows and ground water pumping. The riparian and instream conditions resulting from low flows will be assessed and the information from the studies will be used to provide evidence of need for funding to improve the in-stream and out of stream habitat. It will also provide information that could be the basis for coordinated water management in the area, if the landowners so choose. This story will be documented and told to garner support for cooperative water management that provides equity for the people, fish and wildlife in the area.

The project is designed in two phases: 1) Data collection, recording and distribution and 2) landowner approved development and implementation of an outreach plan to specific audiences to gain support for projects that will restore surface flows to the Little Walla Walla Rivers in Washington.

Phase I tasks

- Engage and train landowners along the West Little Walla Walla River, McEvoy Spring Creek and Walsh Creek in Washington to gauge stream flows at 25 points throughout the year in coordination with the Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council technical staff.

- Provide assistance to the Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council for seepage run measurements in fall of 2008 and spring of 2009.
- Assess surface and ground water pumping associated with water rights.
- Assess riparian and in-stream conditions to develop information for project funding to improve existing conditions for in stream and out of stream habitat.

Phase II tasks

- Develop an outreach plan with landowners on the West Little Walla Walla River, McEvoy and Walsh Creeks that includes the East Little Walla Walla River and associated spring creeks.
- Develop printed outreach materials; develop a web site to display data and a compelling documentary film to demonstrate ecological, social and economic effects of water loss and development of a collaborative approach to system replenishment.

Background:

Historically and until 2001 the West Little Walla Walla River, McEvoy Spring Creek and Walsh Creeks flowed all year round. Over the past eight years flows have diminished more each year so that the river and creeks flow only a few months. Much has been lost.

In the words of Yancey Reser, one of the landowners participating in the Little Walla Walla Working Group

“This project is about restoring dignity and respect and water to the West Little Walla Walla River. It has in very recent years been treated as a ‘ditch.’ It is right now for practical purposes dry in the project area. Only a few springs struggle to provide surface water and mosquito breeding puddles. Not long ago the project area was a year round stream, home to trout and steelhead, beaver, otter, mink and muskrat. Its waters, and shores providing nesting places for mallards, and teal, its trees for wood ducks and other birds, its swamps for turtles and snipe. Handicapped persons could have the excitement of catching a fish from a small flowing stream. A kid could learn to swim in its cold water. Warren Webb would tell you about catching a twenty-four inch trout in the stream. My Father could tell you about the salmon runs when he was a kid.

“ The following quoted two paragraphs describe the small streams in the Whitman Mission area where the project is located:

“ ‘ The soil, in the vicinity of the small streams, is a rich black loam, and very deep. The land fit for cultivation along these streams does not, however, amount to more than ten thousand acres. This quantity is susceptible of irrigation, and in consequence can be made to yield most luxuriant crops. In many parts of it, a natural irrigation seems to take place, owing to the numerous bends of the small streams, which almost convert portions of land into islands. These streams take their rise in the Blue Mountains about forty miles east of Wallawalla (sic), are known to never fail. The climate is very dry, as it seldom rains for seven or eight months in the year. During the greater part of this time, the country forty miles north and south of this strip, has an arid appearance. There are large herds of horses owned by the Indians, that find excellent pasturage in the natural hay on its surface.

“ ‘There is a vast quantity and profusion of edible berries on the banks of the streams above spoken of, consisting of the service-berry, two kinds of currants, whortleberry, and wild gooseberries: these the Indians gather in large quantities, for their winter supplies.’

“These observations were made by professionals. They were part of the United States Exploring Expedition report to our Government. The party was at Whitman Mission in 1841 for a period of time. This was a time when it was not known whether this ground would be British or American. The quoted excerpt is from Volume IV, Chapter XI, Walla Walla, at page 394, of the Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition.

“The stream meanders in the project area are still there. There are still the almost islands. The berries have mostly been long gone. Even some of the alder and cottonwood have died from lack of water. The restoration proposed will include currants and service berry and will conform to what the Government now believes a riparian area should be. The plantings will provide shade and habitat. The fencing will keep out all animals except the numerous deer in the area and the few moose who have recently wandered into the area.

“The plantings will end the circular arguments that you cannot have water until you have riparian plantings, or you cannot have riparian plantings until you have water. The hubris of man has seldom been more on display than in the shameful destruction of the West Little Walla Walla River.”

1. The West Little Walla Walla River, Spring Branch, Walsh and McEvoy Creeks have experienced substantial loss in flows for increasing lengths of time over the past six years.
2. Considered causes include upstream water management resulting in reduction of winter shallow aquifer recharge that has affected surface flows and spring viability in the project area.
3. Shallow aquifer recharge and well level monitoring have benefited McEvoy Spring Branch and information is needed to determine if additional recharge sites are appropriate to recharge of the West Little Walla Walla River and Walsh Creek in the project area.
4. Data that determines the gaining and losing reaches in the West Little Walla Walla River and Lewis/Walsh Creek will assist in determining where and when recharge enhancement projects would be beneficial.
5. Documentation of current conditions, project implementation, data collection and monitoring and distribution of information are necessary to the project's success.

BENEFITS:

I. Water Quality-Habitat Improvements

1. Implementation of TMDL findings by WADOE to improve water quality through assessment of stream reaches that can be improved through best management practices projects that may include riparian restoration, increasing shade and reducing invasive in-stream vegetation, streambank stabilization and channel floodplain connectivity, fencing and grazing management of livestock.

II. Monitoring

1. Filling identified data gaps in consistent flow regime data in project area streams through technical training skills for in stream flow measurements by at 25 sites on the West Little Walla Walla River system water right holders in Washington.
2. Acquisition of stream flow measuring equipment for long term monitoring through Bob Bower and the Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council to coordinate with studies of flows on the West Little Walla Walla River in Washington.
3. Data collection of well levels and ground water pumping to assist in developing coordinated water management in the area.

III. Information for Water Management Initiative

1. Level 1. Organization of independent water users in Washington and definition of potential flow for flexibility options. Opportunities for water exchange /banking

IV. Provide credible scientific data for funding environmental enhancement projects.

STATUS: Preliminary Measures

A CIDMP Phase I Assessment for the “West Little Walla Walla Spring Branches” area (Washington side) determined the following:

- Of 2,500+ acres on the Washington side, approximately 1,700 acres have associated irrigation rights;
- There are about 125 households, and 275 residents;
- All area residents are enduring loss of surface flow, lowering groundwater levels, and associated land management, crop profitability, fish and wildlife, and potential property value impacts;
- Residents in Oregon along the system, and north of the Walla Walla River Irrigation District boundary are enduring similar impacts;
- The trend for flows and groundwater levels is steadily deteriorating;
- Independent water users, both agricultural and domestic, in Oregon and Washington, are engaged in evaluating alternatives for forming a water user’s organization, and for participating through an organization in internal water management decisions, creek and branch maintenance and rehabilitation, and liability mitigation.

West Little Walla Walla River Working Group is progressing in development of an organization with draft by-laws and tentative name, The Little Walla Walla Rivers Replenishment Coalition. The working group and proposed organization includes all the major water users on the West Little Walla Walla River, McEvoy and Walsh Creeks. The organization proposes to be a bi-state organization of water users and interested parties who are dedicated to restoration of flows in the Little Walla Walla River s and associated spring creeks. Monthly meetings are conducted at Valley Chapel and include participation by a core group of pro-active landowners who have identified the tasks in this proposal as priority actions.

The organization is advised by a technical advisory team listed below. Additional advisors include Bob Bower and Brain Wolcott from the Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council to insure synergistic data collection and coordination with their work on the Little Walla Walla Rivers in Washington.

Technical Advisory Team

	Mike	Denny	Walla Walla County Conservation District Washington Department of Wildlife Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
	Dave	Karl	
	Brian	Mahoney	
	Bill	Neve	Washington Department of Ecology
CON	Stacia	Peterson	United States Forest Service

TEXT: Relevancy of this project to the Watershed Plan and if applicable the Walla Walla Subbasin Plan, Snake River Salmon Recovery Plan

In the myriad of plans that have been conducted in the Walla Walla River Basin the West Little Walla Walla River and Spring Creeks project area has been described and recommendations have been made for priority restoration in the WRIA 32 Watershed Plan. Please see below for specific references in these plans to conditions and recommendations for implementation actions in the Project Area.

1. The West Little Walla Walla River and Spring Creeks are mapped in the Snake River Salmon Recovery Plan in an MSN.
2. **WRIA 32 Community Supported Actions- Pg 3-15**
 - a. **Little Walla Walla/Spring Branches flow and habitat restoration –Ranked 3rd in over-all preference for project implementation.**
3. **WRIA 32 Tier 1 Projects Table 3-4, pg 3-17**
 - a. **Little Walla Walla/Spring Branches for and habitat restoration-Listed second in over-all list of projects**
4. South East WA Ecoregion Assessment-Walla Walla SubBasin Plan
 - a. Loss of wetlands and riparian habitat-Pg 26 table 14, and 73 figure 30 and 31
5. Walla Walla Watershed Temperature Total Maximum Daily Load Water Quality Improvement Report, June 2007, Publication No. 07-10-030
 - a. Table D-4 2004 303(D) listing ID's and load allocation information West Little Walla Walla River
 - b. Walla Walla Subbasin Plan Strategy for BMP's for riparian restoration
Page 88, Table 18. Summary of implementation actions for the Walla Walla Temperature TMDL
6. Walla Walla River Basin pH and Dissolved Oxygen Total Maximum Daily Load-Water Quality Improvement Report-June 2007
Table 17, pg 129 Implementation from other watershed plans that will help achieve TMDL targets
 - a. TMDL-Install Enhance and protect Riparian buffers
 - b. WWBSBP-Adjust seasonal timing of livestock grazing within riparian areas (MIC 4.1.5)
 - c. WWBSBP-Improve the extent, structure & function of riparian buffers...through selected livestock fencing.(MC 1.1.1, etc
 - d. TMDL-Stabilize streambanks using accepted bioengineering techniques
 - e. SRSRP-Restore historic channel meander, create pool and riffles... along McEvoy Creek (Action 10)
 - f. **TMDL Seek additional funding**
 - g. **TMDL Educate the public**
 - h. **WWBSBP-Increase landowner participation in local programs that enhance watershed conditions (MC 1.1.19, etc**
 - i. TMDL-Identify problem areas

List of affected landowner(s): All work is to be conducted on private land.

Landowner members of the Little Walla Walla River Working Group Randy Bright, Yancey Reser, Linda Strong, Shareen and Greg Knowles, Steve Kinnaman, Tom Page, Roz Duthie, Phil George, Brian Maiden, and Alvin Knopf, agreed to cooperate with the work described in this application. These landowners represent the majority of the irrigation rights and irrigated acres along the affected waterways in the area. Additional landowner agreements will be obtained during the project.

Consultant

Project Manager and Outreach Coordinator; Judith Johnson, Kooskooskie Commons

Judith Johnson holds a BS in Education from Washington State University. Her professional experience includes ten years in medical microbiology research at the University of Washington and Harvard Medical Schools. Post graduate work in art and the University of Washington and Massachusetts College of Art resulting in art exhibitions in Massachusetts, Washington and Oregon. She coordinated National Audubon Society's Adopt-a-Forest Program in Eastern Washington and Oregon coordinating over 100 volunteers to map and ground truth Ancient Forests in cooperation with the US Forest Service that resulted in the East Side Screens and generated the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Plan (ICBEMP). She was a co-founder of the Columbia River Bioregion Campaign a coalition of 40 environmental organizations who tracked and provided information to the ICBEMP.

Judith's work in the Walla Walla River Basin over the past 10 years as Program Coordinator for Kooskooskie Commons has been as a participant representing the environmental community in the many planning processes, serving as Outreach sub-committee co-chair for WRIA 32 Watershed Planning and the Bi-State Habitat Conservation Plan. Recently Kooskooskie Commons' contributions have been to develop and implement riparian and wetland restoration projects in Walla Walla Public Parks, School campuses and private backyards, through coordination of the Walla Walla Backyard Stream Team. Judith was the writer and co-producer of three films on the Walla Walla Basin that have received wide public acclaim and have helped generate knowledge of "The Walla Walla Way." She has recently partnered with Randal Son, and Many Waters to assist in the development of a landowner's organization associated with the West Little Walla Walla River, Mc Evoy and Walsh Creeks.

Judith has served on numerous boards including the Flintridge Foundation Board for 12 years and represents that foundation in their membership in the national Sustainable and Food Systems Funders Group.

Judith grew up in an Indian town in Oklahoma and the Columbia Basin on a farm. Her father and mother were both dust bowl survivors on farms. He was a conservationist, farmer and in agribusiness all his life. Judith is the mother of three daughters and enjoys three granddaughters.

PROJECT FUNDING/BUDGET (Other state funds will not be acceptable as match)

2008-9 Project Implementation Funding requested in this application: \$ 16,000
 Total sponsor match/in-kind cost share contribution (10% required): \$ 6,500
 Total cost of project (match & project implementation funding requested): \$ 24,500

BUDGET BY ELEMENT	Requested	Match	Total
1. SALARIES	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
2. BENEFITS	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
3. CONTRACTED SERVICES	\$ 9,000	\$ 500_	\$ 9,500
4. TRAVEL	<u>\$1,000</u>	\$ _____	\$ <u>1,000</u>
5. EQUIPMENT	\$ _____	\$ 1,000	
6. GOODS/SERVICES	\$6,000	\$ _____	\$ _____
7. OVERHEAD	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
8. IN-KIND	\$ _____	\$ <u>7,000</u>	\$ <u>24,500</u>
TOTAL BUDGET BY ELEMENT	\$ 16,000	\$ 8,500	
TOTAL REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR (09)		\$ 16,000	

PARTNERSHIPS: COST SHARE and LANDOWNERSHIP

Matching Funds or In-Kind Contributions					
Individual/ Organization	Description	Cash cost share or In- Kind	Secured or pending	If pending, until when?	\$ Amount/Value
WLWWR and Spring Creeks Working Group	Monitoring and volunteer time	Cost Share	S		5,000
Kooskooskie Commons	Administration	I-K	S		1,000
Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council	25 staff gauges and technical assistance for gauge placement	I-K	S		1,500
Technical Advisory Team	Oversight for Project Protocol and Design and Permits	I-K	S		1,000
Estimated Project Cost share (must be 10% of total project cost):					8,500

SCOPE OF WORK

PROJECT TITLE: Little Walla Walla Integrated Replenishment Strategies

PROJECT GOALS: Integrated, collaborative replenishment of surface flows in the Washington Little Walla Walla River System through: landowner stream flow measurement and monitoring, detailed assessment of riparian and in-stream habitat, monitoring of wells and ground water withdrawal to provide information for future stream and aquifer enhancement projects. Increase awareness, support and additional landowner participation through outreach and education.

PROJECT PURPOSE/NEED:

- The West Little Walla Walla River, Spring Branch, Walsh and McEvoy Creeks have experienced substantial loss in flows for increasing lengths of time over the past six years. Considered causes include upstream water management resulting in reduction of winter shallow aquifer recharge that has affected surface flows and spring viability in the project area. The area suffers from a lack of credible data that profiles seasonal stream flows, gaining and losing reaches and real water use.
- Shallow aquifer recharge and well level monitoring have benefited McEvoy Spring Branch and information is needed to determine if additional recharge sites are appropriate to recharge of the West Little Walla Walla River and Walsh Creek in the project area.
- Data that determines the gaining and losing reaches in the West Little Walla Walla River and Lewis/Walsh Creek will assist in determining where and when recharge enhancement projects would be beneficial.
- Documentation of wells levels and ground water pumping will provide information for possible coordinated water management.
- Documentation of current riparian and in stream conditions and land use will provide information to gain support for on farm projects that meet best management practices for in stream and riparian habitat.
- Data collection and monitoring and distribution of information are necessary to the project's success.
- The area is composed of independent water users and many life long residents in the area. who have a strong history with the land and the benefits of water. Just recently these landowners have joined together to form an organization to accomplish work together that will aid in replenishing the stream flows.
- The organization needs to increase outreach water users on the East Little Walla Walla River and associated springs . They also require a place to record and display data from in stream measurements and well logs and other information. Funding is needed to develop an implement an outreach plan that includes printed media and distribution, development of a web page and a way to tell the story of the historical assets, current trends and actions for cooperative solutions.

Phase I: Data collection and management

Coordinate with Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council to establish stream gauges for landowner measurement of in stream flows. Compile and report well level measurements and ground water pumping information. Assess current conditions on a reach by reach basis to identify projects for in stream and out of stream improvements.

TASKS

1. Engage and train landowners along the West Little Walla Walla River, McEvoy Spring Creek and Walsh Creek in Washington to gauge stream flows at 25 points throughout the year in coordination with the Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council technical staff.
2. Provide assistance to the Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council for seepage run measurements in fall of 2008 and spring of 2009.
3. Assess surface and ground water pumping associated with water rights; create report
4. Assess riparian and in-stream conditions to develop information for project funding to improve existing conditions for in stream and out of stream habitat.

DELIVERABLES:

October 1, Map of stream gauge location

December 31, Report from stream gauging; well monitoring and pumping information

January 31, 2009 Web page lay out and design and first round of data

February 28, 2009 In stream and riparian assessment and proposed project report

Compensation: \$8,000

Training and Data Collection	\$4,000
Data management	\$2,000
Report	<u>\$2,000</u>
	\$8,000

Phase II: Landowner to landowner outreach and interested publics information and outreach

Coordinate with landowners to develop an outreach plan for their use. Create printed materials and distribution plan, and web page to display information from data collection. Document, in film, historic and current conditions and riparian and aquifer recharge projects to demonstrate ecological, social and economic effects of water loss and development of a collaborative approach to system replenishment.

TASKS

1. Develop an outreach plan with landowners on the West Little Walla Walla River, McEvoy and Walsh Creeks that includes the East Little Walla Walla River and associated spring creeks.
2. Develop printed outreach materials, distribute and follow-up
3. Develop a web page; display information and data

DELIVERABLES:

October 1, 2008 Outreach Plan:

November 1, Copies of printed outreach materials

December 31, 2008 Web page lay out, design and preliminary information
March 30, 2009 Film script and rough cut
May 31, 2009 Edited final film and distribution information

Compensation: \$8,000

Outreach plan	\$1,000
Printed Materials/postage	\$1,000
Web site development	\$1,000
Video production	\$4,000
Distribution	<u>\$1,000</u>
	\$8,000