

**Bi-State HCP Coordinating Committee Meeting**  
**September 15, 2005 (Milton Freewater Library**  
**8 SW 8th Avenue, Milton Freewater, Oregon)**  
**9:30am – 12:00pm**

**Present:** Ben Floyd (HDR/EES), Bill Neve (WDOE), Brent Stevenson (WWRID), Cathy Udenberg (WW County GIS), Chris Hyland (USACE), Hal Thomas (City of Walla Walla), Jesse Schwartz (CTUIR), John Zerba (Landowner – Umatilla Co.), Ken Kuhn (City of Walla Walla - Planning), Kevin Scribner (WW Watershed Alliance), Michelle Eames (USFWS), Rick Jones (WW County Conservation District), Roland Schirman (Landowner Rep, Columbia County), Stuart Durfee (Gardena Farms Irrigation District #13), Tony Justus (OWRD), Yancey Reser (Native Creek Society), Tom Straughan (Umatilla County SWDC), Elena Escalante (WW County Watershed Planning).

**Handouts:** Agenda; Bi-State HCP Coordinating Committee June 16, 2005 meeting notes; WW County Watershed HCP Financial Report (9/08/05); Walla Walla Bi-State Habitat Conservation Plan Purpose and Needs Statement; Walla Walla HCP Hydrology Assessment (Excerpts from July 7, 2005) PowerPoint Presentation; USACE PowerPoint Presentation on Feasibility Study cost estimates; Draft HCP Notice of Intent.

**Summary of Action Items:**

1. Kevin to get more copies of the DVDs made for White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation ("Walla Walla Way, Water Without War")
2. Ben Floyd to coordinate with Michelle Eames and Dale Bambrick (NOAA/NMFS) to identify dates for the HCP NEPA scoping meetings.

**I. Housekeeping Items:**

Sign-in sheet was passed around. The Agenda and previous meeting minutes (June 16, 2005) were reviewed. Comments on the meeting minutes are to be submitted to Elena Escalante, [eescalante@co.walla-walla.wa.us](mailto:eescalante@co.walla-walla.wa.us), by September 22, 2005, at which time they will be considered approved. An error was found on page 4 of the previous minutes (second paragraph), *expended* should be replace with *extended*.

**II. Report on the White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation**

Kevin Scribner provided an update on the recent White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation held in St. Louis, MO on August 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. In preparation for the conference, video introductions were created of the various presenters. Several key agencies representatives attended the conference including Secretary Gale Norton, NMFS Director Bob Lohn, and EPA Director Johnson also attended. The conference proved to be an opportunity to network with various agency representatives, in addition to highlighting the basin work. The posters, interactive CDs and the DVD created are available for the HCP Coordinating Committee to use. Contact Kevin Scribner for DVDs or Judith Johnson for posters.

**III. Status on HCP Work Underway**

Ben provided update on the status of HCP work underway. HDR/EES is developing a hydrology assessment and will be putting together technical report summarizing information on this assessment. The information will be used to look at different flow enhancement scenarios as well as look at conservation scenarios with the irrigation districts. Ben reviewed the PowerPoint handout titled "Walla Walla HCP Hydrology Assessment, Excerpts from July 7, 2005).

Ben noted that NEPA work plan started October of last year and HDR/EES has developed a document that NMFS/NOAA will publish (Notice of Intent (NOI)). This document describes the types of actions to be considered under the HCP. Public NEPA scoping meetings will be held near the end of October or the beginning of November. Ben reviewed the handout "Draft HCP Notice of Intent" and described the four draft alternatives listed in this document.

Q: Who would be the signers of the draft alternatives document?

A: The three irrigation districts (HBDIC, WWRID, and GFID) are applying for separate permits and there will be specific obligations for each entity.  
Ben will be coordinating with Michelle Eames and Dale Bambrick (NOAA/NMFS) to determine the dates for the public NEPA scoping meetings.

#### Outreach Update

Judith Johnson gave update on recent outreach work. A confluence is being planned for late October early November to discuss the HCP. Judith also reminded the group that the monthly Merchants meeting meets at 8:30am last Wednesday of every month.

#### Database Management Update

Cathy Udenberg provided an update on the recent EKO-system database work. Cathy will be creating committee to assist in developing recommendations for future EKO-system (Paladin) work. Cathy asked that HCP Coordinating Committee members interested in participating on this committee contact her after the HCP Coordinating Committee meeting.

Q: Is CTUIR interested in working with the system?

A: CTUIR currently has a database system that they are working with.

#### **IV. HCP Funding Update**

Elena Escalante explained the process by which the USFWS federal appropriation of \$250,000 was allocated for projects benefiting fish passage. An application was created incorporating elements from Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) and Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) applications. A framework to rank the projects based upon project criteria was developed as well. Using the criteria developed, the Implementation Working Group (IWG) ranked the project proposals received. Rick Jones explained how the Implementation Working Group ranked the projects proposals submitted. Hudson Bay Ditch Improvement Company (HBDIC) and Walla Walla River Irrigation District (WWRID) both submitted project proposals. WWRID's project proposal was ranked first, HBDIC's ranked second. The HCP Coordinating Committee approved the project proposals and the IWG's project ranking. The Planning Unit and the Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council will be asked to approve the funding recommendation at their next meetings.

#### **V. USACE/CTUIR Feasibility Study Update**

Chris Hyland (USACE) presented a PowerPoint on draft cost estimates for the Feasibility Study. Chris noted that the Water Exchange idea that was initially tabled is being re-examined. Chris noted that a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) may be available by fall 2006.

#### **VI. List other discussion topic for next HCP Coordinating Committee Meeting**

The HCP Coordinating Committee discussed the request by the IWG to be formally recognized by the HCPCC. This formal recognition would allow the IWG to identify and allocate funding. The HCP Coordinating Committee requested that the IWG provide by-laws and operating rules to the HCPCC.

Tom Straughan noted that prioritization of the projects for funds through Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) (as recommended by the Subbasin Plan) have begun.

Judith Johnson noted that the Community Wildfire Protection Plan development is progressing. A draft should be available shortly for public comment.

#### **Upcoming Meetings**

The next HCP Coordinating Committee meeting will be on December 15, in Walla Walla.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30am.