Deschutes Basin Water Collaborative

Planning Team Meeting Notes
Friday, June 6, 2025 | 10:30-12:30 PM | Hybrid

Tri-Chairs: Commissioner Phil Chang, Deschutes County; Craig Horrell, COID

Members: Kate Fitzpatrick, DRC; Mike Britton, NUID; Jeremy Austin, COLW; Josh Bailey, NUID; Jessi Talbott, COID; Carolyn Sufit, OWRD; Kimberley Priestley, WaterWatch; Owen McMurtrey, COCO; Scott Aycock, Governor's Office; Lori Faha, City of Bend

Attendees: Jon Skidmore, COID

Staff: Jenn Greco, COIC; Lisa Seales, Alex Ehrens, DRC; Andrew Purkey, AMP Insights; Angella Reinhold, OWRD

AGENDA

1. **Welcome, Last Meeting Recap, Brief Updates** — *Lisa Seales, DRC*
   - Review and Accept Last Meeting Notes — ***Attach. A May Meeting Notes***
   - Outreach to Date — ***To Date***
   - Summer Schedule Update

The group did introductions since Angella Reinhold (with OWRD) is new to the group. There were no edits to the notes.

Kate and Lisa went to NUID's Board Meeting to give an update on where the DBWC is at in the Place-Based Planning process and progress to date. They are open and want to do more stakeholder outreach. Please reach out to Kate and Lisa with ideas of groups they should visit. NUID's Board suggested going to each irrigation district board in the region and then doing a follow-up visit again once the Plan is completed. Craig also spoke to Erik King about the process and engagement.

See scheduling updates in Calendar Invites.

2. **Chapter 5, Section 1 Discussion** — *Alex Ehrens, DRC*

We received comments from two people. There were at least three big issues raised. Lisa proposed punting this discussion until the July 10 meeting, and instead, spending the bulk of the meeting on the Municipal Tools.

Alternative Pathway – We will revisit the language in the chapter, and make sure it's consistent across all the chapters (a pathway, not THE pathway). We will also convene a group to discuss concerns about the alternative pathway.

Timelines on Water Savings – break out water savings by timeline (near-, medium-, long-term) to align with the HCP timeline was proposed. Staff will work with the districts to determine where we're at with outcomes and make a plan.

Private Laterals, On Farm Efficiencies – this will require ad hoc meetings to address the big issue of water savings from these projects.

The Groundwater Subcommittee has just wrapped up, so staff will move the other two conversations (alternative pathway and private laterals/on-farm efficiency) forward.

3. **Big Issues Session – Municipal Tools** *DRC Staff and Group*
   - Shared Understanding ***Attach. C Municipal Tools Matrix***
   - Positions and Interests

Alex shared the Municipal Tools Matrix with the notes from the last meeting. The top two tools to discuss are Access to Groundwater Rights and Mitigation Credits.

Municipal conservation tools were discussed in an expedited process, since cities already implement conservation measures. It was suggested to not limit the cities' conservation efforts to the requirements of their Water Management and Conservation Plan, as they evaluate and implement voluntary conservation measures beyond WMCP requirements. The Plan should include both the required programs and the cities' process to evaluate other programs. Phil raised a question about opportunities for stakeholder and public education through more specificity around municipal water conservation measures in the Plan. It was decided that the Plan would provide high-level overview, with information about how the public can get more involved. Cities will need to update WMCP and there will opportunity for input from stakeholders and the public.

Another suite of tools is related to Municipal Infrastructure. Owen made the argument that these tools are expensive to implement and don't result in decreased water use from a basin water budget perspective. The money that could be spent on infrastructure could be used to elsewhere create measurable savings and return water instream. Owen suggested we focus less on infrastructure overall. Stormwater and wastewater are recharging the aquifer. Reusing that water is expensive - those funds could go towards flow restoration in the Middle Deschutes to generate mitigation credits. This is currently happening in the City of Bend with the Hatfield Ponds. Many in Central Oregon are moving towards the wetlands recharge. Kimberely suggested that we might not want to eliminate the construction of treated water storage reservoirs as a tool to consider for inclusion in Chapter 5; it's potentially intertwined with the accessing groundwater rights. Owen argued that if this tool is included in the Plan, it won't reduce groundwater pumping and it will put a significant burden on cities.

The group briefly explored the idea of cities funding artificial recharge for mitigation credits. The PT discussed the problem of losing water to Ryan Ranch and not being able to fix the dikes there. NUID loses roughly 35% of their water Ryan Ranch. There are no water rights associated with the Ryan Ranch restoration project. This is a much larger conversation. Perhaps we discuss this in the Plan with sideboards for mitigation projects? Need to tease out NUID's loss of water. This is complex.

Access to Groundwater Rights was discussed and the group started going through positions and interests. The notes are available in the Matrix.

4. **Roundtable Updates and Sharing** *All*

Action Items:

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- Create a Private Laterals, On Farm Efficiencies Work Group
- Create a Meeting for the Alternative Pathway