

Minutes

Crook County Natural Resource Committee

July 10, 2019

Committee Members Present: Frank Porfily, Lynne Breese, John Dehler, Mike Lunn, Andy Gallagher, Ston McDaniel

Members absent: Trent Smith, Steve McGuire, Teresa Rodriguez

Guests present: Mike Kasberger (City), Eric Klann (City), Bruce Scanlon (OID), Steve Lent (Historical Society), Steve Forester (City), Kevin Keown (FS), Slater Turner (FS), Chris Ryan (BLM)

Public present: Mike Ervin, John Breese, Gayle Hunt, Melinda Kestler, Joe Hudspeth

Meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chair Andy Gallagher @ Crook County 4H Building, Prineville

Pledge of Allegiance

Review of Minutes: Frank moved to approve minutes as corrected. Lynne seconded. Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comment. Andy suggested that we have no more public comment at the beginning of the meeting.

Agency Updates:

Forest Service – Slater thanked the group for participating in the Open House for Walton Lake Campground discussion held at the Bowman Museum in June. There are still opportunities for public input. The Forest Service continues conversations with the wild horse coalition for additional campsites for horse counts. There was a single tree lightning strike in the Mill Creek Wilderness. They are monitoring and letting it burn. Currently it is less than ¼ acre. Hotshots are on their way to Alaska.

Kevin announced that Johanna Kovarik will be joining the Ochoco as the new District Ranger for Rager. Johanna has been serving in that role as acting. Black Mtn Record of Decision is out. Blue Mtn Forest Resiliency Project continues to wrap up and move to the various forests it dealt with. Bear Creek AMP EIS is about complete. Wild Horse herd plan will come out in an EA this fall.

BLM – Chris Ryan shared that the County's Rock Permit renewal is moving forward with a ROD due in October. 3 grazing permits are up for renewal, Paulina/Rabbit Valley and Indian Creek. Ag trespass is one of the issues that will be addressed in the EA. Chimney Rock Campground improvement project is still in the design phase and the Zao Fiber optic line project is moving forward, both FS and BLM are involved as the project crosses public lands.

Bowman Dam Hydro Project – Bruce Scanlon (OID) and Eric Klann (City) presented the group with information on the proposed Bowman Dam Hydro Project. Bruce shared information about the Irrigation

District, its history of dam construction and operation. Ochoco Dam was completed in 1916 and Bowman Dam was completed in 1961. Bowman Dam is an earth-filled structure. Its height is 245' with 1.424 million cubic yards of material to construct. Spillway can handle 8100 cu.ft./sec. The operational plan limits releases to 3000 cfs. The original capacity of Prineville Reservoir (water behind Bowman Dam) was 154,600 ac. ft. In 1998, a study indicated that the capacity had decreased due to sedimentation. Now 150,000 ac.ft.

Eric provided a review of the proposed power generation project. This is a joint project with the City of Prineville, Ochoco Irrigation District and Crook County participating. Water quality issues in the Crooked River below Bowman Dam include Total Dissolved Gases (TDG) and Gas Bubble Disease (GBD). One of the positive outcomes of this project is the potential for reducing TDG below the 110 % saturation level which is the point that fish develop GBD. A developed economic study based on historical data on the water releases (amount) plus power rates show that the most economical size of power generation is 2.5 to 3 megawatts.

Next steps for this project moving forward is meeting with ODF&W this fall to discuss a waiver to fish passage over the dam (a requirement for hydro projects in general). This is necessary to make this project feasible plus get the benefit of reduced TDG. FERC licensing process has been started and could take 2-3 years to complete. The group also needs to start working on a power purchase agreement, who buys the power. Once these issues are addressed and settled, then comes financing and construction phases.

Things yet to be known: What are fish/water flow requirements for winter flows? Cost of construction (\$15 Million)? Cost of operation (\$100,000 - \$200,000/yr)?

Steve Forrester emphasized that this project provides "base load". Always there, 24/7, unlike solar or wind.

Ston asked as an Advisory Committee, how can we help? Letter of support this fall? To ODF&W, letter to the editor?

Andy asked if we could hear from the fish biologists? Both those that did the study for the project and those from ODF&W. Andy suggested that Mike Harrington, Regional Fish lead for ODF&W be invited to our August meeting to talk about fish habitat, water quality issues in this segment of the Crooked River.

OLD Business:

Mining Subcommittee – Mike and Ston provided an update to the subcommittee meeting (minutes presented). Both Mike and Ston reported that they had provided the Bauer Family with information about process to appeal and work with the FS on a resolution regarding the use of the cabin on the mining claim. Mike emphasized to them that the presence and use of the cabin requires an operating plan. The 1986 operating plan, signed by the Bauer's and the F.S. says the cabin is not condoned and should not be used. Slater provided some history about his involvement, issuing a letter of implementation and the discussion that he and Mr. Bauer had about a plan of operation, the desire to close the road leading into the mine (Mr. Bauer's request). All parties are working together now to solve this issue. The subcommittee agreed to stay engaged as long as the conversation was moving forward and not involving litigation.

Frank moved to recommend to County Court, the action item proposed by the subcommittee.

Engage the Crook County Historical Society, Bowman Museum and the County in creating a policy regarding the importance of identifying and maintaining historical mining sites and structures within the County and that when public land management agencies (FS or BLM) are initiating the process to deal with these sites/structures that they the agencies consult with the County and Historical Society for the purpose of helping to decide the appropriate management decision.

Lynne seconded. Motion passed.

Committee reports: None

Public Comment: Mike Ervin stated that he liked the action item the committee adopted in regards to historical sites/structures on public lands.

Meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Next Meeting: August 14, 2019