

Siuslaw Estuary Partnership

An Integrated Multiple Objective Approach To Watershed Protection and Restoration

Community Stakeholder Group Meeting Notes March 11, 2010

Thursday March 11, 2010
5:00 p.m. – 6:15 p.m.
Florence City Hall
250 Highway 101, Florence

Present:

Stakeholders: Adele Dawson, Lane County Audubon Society & Local Birding; Del Phelps, Florence Board of Realtors; Lisa Walter-Sedlacek, Florence Area Chamber of Commerce; David Huntington, Recreational Fishing; Mark Tilton, Florence Planning Commissioner; Nancy Nichols, Lane County Planning Commissioner; Anne Caples, Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition; Bill Hennig, Salmon Trout Enhancement Project; Gus Gates, Surfrider; Melisa Buckwald, Surfrider alternate; Jean White, Volkswalkers

City of Florence Staff (City): Sandra Belson, Community Development Director, Project Manager; Carol Heinkel, Planning Consultant, Project Coordinator; Mike Miller, Public Works Director; Wendy Farley, Senior Planner

Siuslaw Watershed Council Staff (SWC): Liz Volmer-Buhler

1. Welcome and Introductions

Wendy Farley, Senior Planner welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending. She introduced City and SWC staff and then asked those present to introduce themselves, which interest group or organization they represent and how they disseminate information to members of their interest group. The group went around the table and introduced themselves. Adele Dawson stated that there are birdwatching groups that meet on Tuesday and Saturday. They also have e-mail. Del Phelps mentioned that the Realtors hold regular meetings and that he is also involved with the Pioneer Museum. Lisa Walter Sedlacek stated that the Chamber holds regular meetings and maintains a website as well as operates a Welcome Center. Bill Henning offered that the STEP maintains a website and communicates by e-mail. Dave Huntington said the recreational fishermen meet monthly. Mark Tilton shared that the Florence Planning Commission meets twice a month. Nancy Nichols said the Lane County Planning Commission also meets regularly. Anne Caples stated that Coast Watch has a website for the state organization and that they use e-mail for

communication. Gus Gates said Surfrider meets the 1st Wednesday of the month and that they have a website. Lisa Honsler introduced herself from the audience as an interested party. Wendy then introduced Carol Heinkel, Planning Consultant. Carol explained the ground rules printed on the back of their name tent. The group decided not to add or remove any rules. Carol then led the group in an icebreaker where by members were to state what they like most about the Siuslaw Estuary area. Carol then introduced Sandra Belson, Community Development Director.

2. Siuslaw Estuary Partnership Project Overview

Sandra Belson introduced herself. She stated how over a year ago she started looking at this grant opportunity. She explained that that she had been at the City for a year by then along with Mike Miller, Florence Public Works Director. She said that she and Mike Miller were seeing a lot of things needing to be done. The element tying all the things together was water. This relationship made a cohesive application for funding. Sandra explained how Florence was the first city to receive this type of funding and that only 2 awards were granted in Oregon. She went further to say the grant application had lots of consensus with partnerships and match; that it was supported by 12 federal, state, and local governments and the tribes, and unanimously supported by Heceta Water District Board and the Lane County Board of Commissioners as well as the Florence City Council. The project is broad with close to a million dollars in project costs of which over \$500,000 is grant funding and the remainder is match. She explained that it was a 3 year long project with multiple components allowing the opportunity to create relationships and to bring local agencies together on a positive project. Sandra started the power point presentation:

Slides 1-11 Sandra explained the information on each of the slides to include the study area, UGB and estuary boundaries, how land use policy outcomes are limited to Florence UGB, and the importance of the sole source aquifer and its proximity and connection to area lakes and river. She explained how important it is that since it is the only drinking water source available for City residents and rural residents on private wells, that it be kept in good quality. She explained that Heceta Water District got its water from Clear Lake. She explained how meaningful it was that trained experts from the state and federal agencies were providing the staffing necessary for this project. She explained how some of the participating agencies send technical staff from as far as Portland to participate.

Slides 14-21 Mike Miller, Florence Public Works (PW) Director, explained the information on each of the slides. He explained the Water Quality Monitoring Program goals and purpose to identify travel routes, flows, and contaminant identification. He stated how a year ago PW brought a proposal to City Council for 18 test wells within the city. This project doubled the count by adding them upstream, around golf courses, and residential areas. He explained the difference between shallow and deep wells and how the project will utilize both

for monitoring. Mike included that the surface water on Munsel Creek and Ackerley Creek would be monitored as well. He said gauging stations are typical but Munsel Creek and Ackerley Creek do not currently have one but need them to check the impacts from the water wells with data loggers that look at temperature and oxygen. The Confederated Tribes are being included because they have water quality info on the North Fork and its confluence with the Siuslaw River. He hopes to see what is happening to the aquifer from urbanization both in the city and the UGB, develop a source water protection plan, identify the sources of contaminants and correct them.

He explained the Munsel Creek culvert replacement project and its impact on fish passage.

Mike then discussed the Storm water BMP project and its goals to modify the currently used Portland BMPs for usage in the Florence area since some of its elements fit and others do not due to Florence's unique geology. He expects the BMP project to be completed in June 2010.

Mike discussed the Stormwater Interpretive Demonstration Project for the Siuslaw Bridge area. He stated that the project is two fold by providing a Siuslaw interpretive site and stormwater demo. The project will demonstrate both a natural treatment site and a mechanical treatment system. He said the parking lot under the bridge will be treated with cartridge filtration system and testing will be done to ensure the technology works. He stated how important it is to employ green approaches and have something on the ground that you can touch, see and feel.

Slide 22 Sandra discussed the Wetland and Riparian Protection and Restoration project element. She stated how the city is updating their existing wetlands inventory with a new methodology, which Florence will be one of the first cities to utilize. Once the properties are inventoried, protection policies and measures will be created. Additionally the potential for restoration on city properties will be assessed.

Slides 23-25 Liz Vollmer-Buhl, Siuslaw Watershed Council Coordinator/Executive Director, presented the Key Estuary Wetlands Project element. She stated the project had several partners that include McKenzie Trust, both state and federal agencies and private funding. The goal is to protect and restore high priority tidal wetlands. These high priority tidal wetlands will provide connectivity with adjacent habitat, among other benefits.

Liz explained Site A saying that it is in its early phase, consists of approximately 200 acres. She outlined the 4 phases of the project—Under Phase 1 McKenzie Trust is preparing for property acquisition, and the partners are collecting baseline data and monitoring which is funded under this grant, Phase 2 will

consist of additional analysis and permitting, Phase III includes removal of the tide gate and levee and Phase IV includes post construction and research.

Liz then explained Site "B" in that it consists of North Fork Marsh which was formerly owned by the Wampler family, who sold it to McKenzie River Trust (MRT). She explained that it has several sensitive plant species and would make a great reference site for comparison. Liz stated that McKenzie River Trust acquired the property last year and that they are developing a management plan. Siuslaw Watershed Council sub-contractors and partners will be collecting base line measurements for the development of MRT's management plan.

Slide 26 Sandra finished the presentation by explaining the last project element-- Ecological Growth Planning. She said it involves developing policies and measures to protect the quality of life as we increase population while also being sensitive to water quality and quantity and ecology.

3. Stakeholder Group Roles and Responsibilities

Discussion: Carol explained the roles sheet. She named off the different participants and explained why Siuslaw Watershed Council is participating on the Elected Officials Stakeholder group. Carol continued with why the stakeholder group was envisioned. The group was to be a sounding board for feedback as draft products are developed. The first product will be the Guiding Principles which will give a feel for the issues or concerns for the projects. Carol stated that the stakeholders are emissaries for the project. It is hoped that stakeholder participants will share with their groups the project elements and bring recommendations back from the group. Carol explained the difference between the elected officials group and this group.

Questions and Answers:

Nancy Nichols asked if the water quality stream logger reports are available. Mike replied that the design is not finalized with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. He thinks it will probably be a notched weir rather than instant reporting. He stated that either way information will be made available.

In response to a question about how the project could be carried over in the future, Carol said there may be opportunities to request additional federal funds to support expansion of programs started with this effort; she stated that the EPA may want to use this process as a model and showcase these efforts, if they are successful..

Gus Gates asked how much interface opportunity will be available between the Elected Official and Stakeholder groups. Del Phelps asked if the Elected Official group will have access to the Stakeholder comments and will the Stakeholder Group have access to the Elected Official group? Carol responded that the

process is not designed for the two groups to meet together; and that flip charts will be used during meetings to record input and their statements will be transcribed into meeting notes which will be posted on the project web site. She said the same will occur for the Elected Official Stakeholders meetings. She suggested to the group that meeting notes from each of the groups be shared with the other; so that they can be informed of each others' discussions. She stated that the Open house and the newsletter to residents will provide broader exposure.

Carol flip-charted the concerns. 1. both groups need to interact, 2. share notes from SH group with EO and vice versa.

Melisa Buckwald asked if blogging was going to be available on the project website. Wendy and Carol explained that the work plan was still being worked out with the consultant and the project budget would dictate what could be included.

Mark Tilton asked if the next step is looking at the Guiding Principles and if the Scientific Committee was drafting them. Carol stated that yes, the Interdisciplinary Team has been working on the Guiding Principles since October.

Del stated that the group needs to know the base line testing early on. Carol stated that is the intent with the monitoring program.

Gus asked how often they would be meeting as a group. Carol stated that the timeline gives a sense of the product due dates and shows anticipated timeframes for stakeholder meetings. She said the Stakeholders will meet in Spring 2010 and Spring 2011. By 2012 the final draft products will be done and volunteers from the Stakeholder group will review them through a focus group process. She said the work plan estimated nine meetings would be needed for the focus group because about nine products would need to be reviewed. She said all the Stakeholders would be invited to participate in the focus group, and it was voluntary, and not necessary for all of them to participate, especially given the time commitment that entailed.

4. Sum Up and Next Steps

Carol checked in with the group that the meeting notes would be shared between the two Stakeholder Groups and that is how the two groups can stay informed of each others' discussion; she asked if that was agreeable. Members nodded consent.

Nancy mentioned she had concerns with the next meeting dates and times proposed on the agenda. It was decided that the next meeting needed to be at the end of April before the open house. Thursdays are good for everyone. There

was discussion about when the next meeting will be and the group agreed to meet next on April 29, 3:30-5:00.

Lisa Walter-Sedlacek asked if they could do some reading to prepare for the next meeting. Carol stated the Quality Assurance Project Plan was complete and can be sent out. Sandra said that existing plans that will be affected or updated by the project work could be made available to the stakeholder groups so they could become familiar with the affected documents.

Melisa asked if the current BMP was available. Sandra stated that we could provide the documents that we have and those that will be updated.

Del asked that the dunal aquifer plan and associated maps be made available.

Melisa stated that they could get us the Liquid Assets documentary as it is relevant.

5. Adjourn

Carol thanked the group and stated that it will be fun working together.

6. Set Regular Meeting Time and Adjourn

The next Stakeholder Meeting was set for Thursday, April 29th at 3:30 pm in Florence.

Attachments:

- Products and Timeline Chart (handed out)
- Table of Products and Stakeholder Group Roles (handed out)
- Stakeholder Mission and Lists