

Siuslaw Estuary Partnership

An Integrated Multiple Objective Approach To Watershed Protection and Restoration

Community Stakeholder Group April 11, 2011 Meeting Notes May 16, 2011 DRAFT

Monday April 11, 2011
5:00 – 6:20 p.m.
Florence City Hall
250 Highway 101, Florence

Present (except where noted absent):

Stakeholders: Adele Dawson, Lane County Audubon Society & Local Birding; Rob Shepherd, Florence Board of Realtors; Lisa Walter-Sedlacek, Florence Area Chamber of Commerce; David Huntington, Recreational Fishing (absent); Mark Tilton, Florence Planning Commissioner; Clarence Lysdale, Recreation-Kayak and SCUBA; Nancy Nichols, Lane County Planning Commissioner; Anne Caples and Sue Noble, Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition; Bill Hennig, Salmon Trout Enhancement Project; Gus Gates, Surfrider; Jean White, Volkswalkers; Tiffany Rogato, Florence Area Hospitality Association (absent).

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

1. Welcome and Introductions

Wendy welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked them to introduce themselves. Rob Shepherd introduced himself as a new member for the Florence Board of Realtors, replacing Del Phelps.

2. Agenda Review and February 24, 2011 Meeting Notes (Attachment)

Carol Heinkel, Facilitator

[Provide comments on Elected Official and Community Stakeholder Meeting Notes](#)

Carol asked if there were any changes to the notes. There were none. She went over the agenda and asked if there were any requested modifications. None were requested.

3. Public Comment

No public comments were presented at this time.

4. Newsletter (Attachment)

Wendy Farley-Campbell
Information and Distribution

Wendy handed out the final newsletter. She said the last version she showed the Group was a mock-up and this one is the final. This version incorporates comments from both the Community and Elected Official Stakeholders. She said the Elected Officials had their photo taken last meeting but the March 31 meeting of this Group did not include enough members to get a photo, so they had to use last year's photo for the newsletter. She said she'd like to get their photo tonight for the web site.

Wendy said the newsletter is at the printer; it should be back by Wednesday and at the post office by Saturday. She offered that staff will be sorting the newsletters Thursday and Friday if any of them wanted to help. She said 9,500 will be printed. Wendy said the Full Team suggested this morning that, next year, we might involve the High School Graphics Class in formatting the newsletter. She said they would start the process a little earlier that way in order to meet the term timeline.

Lisa said the newsletter looks great. Mark said it was very readable. Other members of the Group praised the newsletter and commented that they really liked it.

5. Wetlands and Riparian Areas (Attachments)

Sandra Belson and Clarence Lysdale
Questions and Answers; Provide Comments

Sandra said that last meeting, she and Clarence Lysdale provided background information to introduce this topic for the Group. That memo included definitions of key terms, an explanation of the processes, and introduced the subject of local options. Tonight, they will present the key findings from the draft Inventory and Assessment for wetlands and riparian areas. She said they now have a better idea of where these resources are and a preliminary assessment of significance.

Sandra referred the Group to the Memo in their packets. She said this memo highlights the key findings on the inventories, assessments, and local options. Sandra said she will go over the wetlands piece and that Clarence will go over the riparian piece. She referred the Group to the maps on the wall which were also included in their packets and pointed out that the study area was broken into regions or quadrants as well as a City-wide map.

Wetlands Inventory and Assessment

Sandra said there are two additional maps in the memo on page 3. The first one shows the types of wetlands based on the type of vegetation, i.e., forested,

marsh, etc. so they could get a feel for the types of wetlands we have. She said the three most common wetlands in the area are: PFO - Forested Wetlands, PSS - Scrub Shrub Wetlands, and PEM – Emergent Wetlands, such as the “seasonal lakes.”

Mark asked if this is an interim product, comparing the information on page 3 to the information on page 6, where the two do not appear to be consistent.

Sandra said the inventories and assessments are draft, not final; however, the reason why these two do not match up is because one table does not contain “probable wetlands” and the final inventory will include those. Sandra added that wetlands smaller than ½ acre may or may not be included, depending on whether they were within or in close proximity to other wetlands that are part of a “grouped” wetland. She said Table 6 shows wetlands grouped by similar characteristics, as allowed in the ORWAP (Oregon Rapid Wetland Assessment Protocol) method used for the assessment. She said scores are given to both functions and values and the wetland needs to meet the criteria for significance for both values and functions in order to be considered “locally significant.”

Sandra said, for example, if wetland #1 serves high value for water quality but not a high function, it would not be deemed significant for that criterion.

Sandra said that the locally-endorsed Guiding Principles for wetlands provide policy direction on optional criteria to use in addition to the required criteria in the Oregon Administrative Rule. She read the first Principle which says: “1. Protect the functions and values of significant wetlands for water quality, water storage, fish and wildlife habitat, public recreation and use, and education.” She said that “Public Use and Recognition” is an optional criterion which was used in the draft wetlands assessment because the Guiding Principles, although not adopted policy, do provide direction to staff in developing these products.

Referring to Table 6 in the memo, Sandra said there are four wetlands that would be deemed locally significant by virtue of the “Public Use and Recognition” services they provide: wetlands #10, #27, #29, and #33. She said these areas are shown in orange on the map in the memo.

Nancy asked if the determination of locally significant had to be all or nothing.

Sandra said she will ask the Wetlands Team that question but that she believes it may be possible to say that some wetlands are significant and not others based on their unique characteristics.

She said that wetland #33 is on City property which is why it scored high for Public Use and Recognition. Wetland #10, by the Casino, west of the North Fork, scored high for Public Use and Recognition because it is owned by the Tribes.

Wetland #29 is partially in private ownership and partially in public – county land. She said this area is already protected through the Prime Wildlife Overlay Zone in the City Comprehensive Plan and in the Lane County Coastal Zone Management Plan.

Mark asked if state and federal requirements also apply to that area?

Sandra said yes, for all of the wetlands, whether locally significant or not.

Sandra said wetland #27 is partly inside the UGB and partly outside the UGB. Any land use measures adopted by the City as part of this project will apply only within the UGB. So, it is really up to Lane County as to whether or not to adopt measures to apply to the portion of this wetland that is outside the UGB. She said the portion that is inside the UGB is part of “The Reserve,” a subdivision developed by Mike Van, although not all of the homes have been built; some wetlands have been integrated into the subdivision and those are protected, according to their county land use approvals. The wetlands created through mitigation are monitored over time and must be preserved.

Sandra said when you look at how these wetlands scored, it is important to consider that the scores are relative, ie., that the wetlands score in relation to the qualities of other wetlands.

She said the question now is whether or not to call these significant.

Nancy asked if it is legally required for the Tribes or BLM to protect their wetlands. Sandra said no for the Tribes and yes for BLM. She said both the Tribes and BLM are on the Interdisciplinary Team and that she will follow-up with them on this question.

Mark said that he was looking at the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the City’s recent survey and that access to nature trails and natural areas are important to the Florence community. He said he thinks it is appropriate to use Public Use and Recognition as criteria but not to force additional restrictions on private property owners because of it; but for public lands, it is important for the City to protect as much as it can.

Sandra said that, as far as “the Reserve” is concerned, she has been communicating with Lane County Land Management to determine what, if any, impact it would have to classify wetland #27 as significant.

Carol noted that the Wetland and Riparian Area Team will be meeting this Thursday, April 14, and the Stakeholder comments on both the wetlands portion and the riparian portion will be forwarded to the Team to address. Sandra said one change she knows will be made is to change the references to the “City of Florence” in the report and replace those with “Siuslaw Estuary Partnership.”

Carol encouraged the Stakeholders to read the Draft Report and become familiar with the implications of it; to ask staff questions via phone or email communications; and to get comments to staff either before or after the Open House.

Riparian Area Inventory and Assessment

Clarence discussed the riparian areas. He said a lot of property owners are involved and potentially affected because these riparian areas are not isolated like wetlands. He said there are many important riparian areas around the lakes outside the UGB; and that comments on the riparian areas inside the city and UGB are particularly relevant because outside the UGB, they are outside the City's control.

Clarence went on to describe how the riparian widths were determined – using typical tree height in some cases and topographical break (i.e., a level area providing a natural edge to the riparian area) in others. He said there are 48 sites in total, 16 riparian reaches, 11 streams, and 5 lakes. For each reach, a score of low, medium, or high is assigned. He said there is flexibility in the assessment method and no pre-ordained definition of significance, as there is with wetlands. He said it is also possible to change the weighting of criteria; that all we know now is high, medium, or low. Also, there is a lot of flexibility in how to protect and what measures to use to protect locally significant riparian areas, unlike wetlands.

Clarence said the inventory and assessments were conducted according to State rules. Now, how to go forward is a local call. He said the Guiding Principles help guide us in that.

He said we start with the inventory before moving on to protection measures after that. Looking at the Northeast Region, the eastern side of the lakes is pristine; so tree height made sense for that area and a 120 foot width was assigned based on typical tree height; the north side is developed and 50 feet to top of bank was assigned; the west side is sand dunes with no substantial riparian widths. The lakes are outside the UGB, so, the City won't be saying how those will be treated.

In the Southeast Region, there is Munsel Creek and 50 feet based on topographic break makes sense for this area; 50-50/each side, for the most part. He said there are four different reaches along Munsel Creek down to Highway 126; the area south of Highway 126 is tidal with characteristics of its own; it is already protected in City Code. There are some areas where the creek boundaries have changed and the homes are no longer setback the required 50 feet. If the City wants to set exemptions for prior development, it can do that; there is more flexibility than there is with wetlands.

In the Southwest Region, from the high school, by the airport, along the back side of Greentrees Development, the streambed has been bulldozed and straightened out; the water resource here is judged to have very narrow widths – 20 feet on each side.

East of the hospital, the riparian area has the most dense vegetation he has ever seen; this is a very valuable resource. There is a fair amount of water that runs through here; 65 feet on each side, based on the typical tree height of Alder, was determined to be an appropriate width. He said there are large trees, rhododendrons, huckleberry, woody debris, and very dense habitat. He said he recommends 65 feet because this is the most valuable riparian area within the city limits.

Clarence said the reach at the far north – RHB-B – is nice and wide and not very dense. Shore Pine is the dominant tree here. 50 feet makes the most sense; seems reasonable for all the property along it. In terms of value, it is not as valuable as the area to the south.

In the Northwest Region, RHB-A is in the UGB and in the city through a culvert; it is a surprising riparian resource, draining a wetland. There is a lot of water coming out of it. RHB-A ranked high according to the rules; a lot of value in this resource.

Clarence said that about sums up his findings. He said there are a lot of judgments and detail in the report and he encouraged them to go through it in detail to find out exactly how he went about making the assessments he made.

Lisa said it looks as if the main thing is tree size as opposed to the actual vegetation composition in the riparian area.

Clarence said that the strict use of the Oregon Urban Riparian Inventory and Assessment Guide (URIAG) would base the riparian width strictly on tree height, yes; but that he did not follow this strictly in every case and the process used needs to be logical as well as consistent and reproducible. He said vegetation is used to determine whether there are significant habitat values;.

6. April 25 Open House and Art Contest

- Overview and EPA Visit Coordination
- Power Point Presentation (Hand-out)
- Room set up
- Stakeholder Participation and Tables
- Comment Forms and Surveys
- Getting the word out

Discuss and Provide Guidance

Carol said that the staff will be in touch via email to find out who will be involved in the Open House and what your needs are, i.e., if you want to have a separate table, share a table, wall space, etc. She said a draft Power Point was handed out at the Team meeting that morning and there was not enough time between meetings to make changes. She asked the Stakeholders to please let her know if there are any specific points they think should be covered. She said it will be very similar in format to last year.

7. Information Items and Update Reports:

Mike Miller, Florence Public Works Director

For Information Only:

- Groundwater Monitoring Well Locations
- Water Monitoring Program Status Reports (Attachments)
- Aquifer Protection Plan Work Plan (Attachment)
- *Florence Stormwater Design Manual* (Attachment)
- *Stormwater Demonstration Site*

Mike said there are a total of 15 groundwater test wells and one deep water well at Miller Park making the total 16. He said they had water quality test results from the well field (deep aquifer), but not in town, which is why the Team selected that one for a deep well. At the end of February/first of March, they did full sampling for all the constituents and again last week for coliform, e-coli, and stream flow. He said they are on schedule with the sampling routines. He said we will have a more comprehensive report at the end of April/early May. He said there is a shorter report in their packets and on the web site that talks about what we have seen up until now. There is a lot of variation in rainfall in the City, based on volunteer weather stations. He said specific conductance is interesting from the monitoring wells.

In terms of surface water, he said in November there was an interesting decrease in stream flow in the mid portion of Munsel Creek and down stream an elevated flow. He said December, February and March were as expected, i.e., an increase as water flows further from the source due to the influx of water from tributaries into Munsel Creek (including stormwater outfalls).

Mike said there are no conclusions yet from the monitoring program, although there have been some surprises. He said it is important to keep tracking the data to determine if there are any trends, rather than just anomalies.

Anne asked how deep the wells are. Mike said up to 30 feet.

There were no questions about the remaining items under this agenda item, which were all posted to the web site; and the meeting drew to a close.

8. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

9. Adjourn

Staff took the Group's picture and the meeting adjourned at 6:20.

Key Dates:

- Monday, April 25, 2011: Public Open House, Florence Events Center, 4:00-7:00 p.m.

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