

MINUTES
WISE PAC MEETING

March 2, 2005
Medford City Hall
411 W. 8th St., Rm. 340, Medford, OR 97501

Attendance

Bob Hunter, WaterWatch	Jim Hill, City of Medford
Lu Anthony, Little Butte Watershed Council	Norma Fascilla, City of Medford
Bill Ryan, J. C. Farm Bureau	Tom Suttle, City of Medford
Keith Corp, Corp Ranch	Dave Nelson, US Bureau of Reclamation
Steve Mason, WISE Coordinator	Terry Buchholz, HDR Engineering
Carol Bradford, Medford Irrigation District	Craig Harper, RVCOG
Keith Emerson, Bear Creek Orchards	Valerie Holcomb, Jones & Stokes via telepho
Rose Marie Davis, RBCC	Chuck Root, Rogue Valley Sewer Services

1) Introductions

2) Approval of February 2, 2005 Minutes

Carol Bradford made a motion to approve the 2/2/05 minutes. Keith Corp seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

3) HDR FS/EIS Update

Jim Hill gave an update on the Pilot Irrigation Project. Jim reported that he held a meeting last week with the Pilot Irrigation Project landowners at the treatment plant to update them on the project. Jim stated that there are some regulatory issues pertaining to the treatment plant's NPDES Permit approval that have changed. It now appears that the Pilot Irrigation Project will be put on hold until the 2007 season.

The main issue is that DEQ is in the process of generating the Rogue Basin TMDL, which was to have been completed by the end of 2004. DEQ anticipates the modeling will be complete by the end of this year, at which point they will submit a draft of the TMDL to EPA. The significance of this is that the TMDL process is the basis for revising the treatment plant's NPDES Permit.

In March 2004, DEQ passed new temperature standards. The new temperature standards have numeric criteria in them. The numeric criteria are for the treatment plant to meet 61° three months out of the year and the other nine months to meet a 55° standard in the river. DEQ is using a natural conditions modeling for the TMDL, which means via a computer they are trying to determine what will be the natural conditions in the river. In doing so, this excludes certain anthropogenic activities. It also removes the dam (Lost Creek Reservoir). There are two TMDL's that preceded this. One is in the Willamette River and one in South

Umpqua. They discovered that removing the dam removes temperature cooling. The dam provides cooling in the rivers. The dams provide cooling flows to the rivers in the summertime. Impoundment of wintertime flows actually causes warmer flows on average in the winter.

If DEQ uses the model, there may not be temperature requirements for the treatment plant, at least up to the design flow capacity of 20 million gallons per day. We are now in a position to essentially say that we cannot proceed ahead until we find out more about this. Therefore, Jim met with the landowners to tell them that we are going to post-pone the project until we find out about the TMDLs.

Terry Buchholz distributed the latest Purpose and Need Statement. The new statement does not include any mention of the treatment plant. A lengthy discussion followed on whether or not the treatment plant should still be included in the Purpose and Need Statement. Bob Hunter stated that by including the treatment plant in the WISE project it would provide more options for the treatment plant. Jim Hill asked if it was the object of the WISE project to increase the options for the treatment plant. Terry added that by including reclaimed effluent in the Purpose and Need Statement, it could also include other areas such as the City of Ashland.

Terry stated that clearly items in the Purpose and Need Statement are there to keep certain parties at the table; for instance improving irrigation reliability and improving aquatic habitat. Should options for meeting municipal wastewater discharge standards also be one of the needs? It would improve the quantity and quality of water in the basin. That brings it back to being a part of the WISE Project. Further discussion ensued and the group agreed that the objective is still to have more water and better water for Little Butte and Bear Creek.

ACTION: Terry will list using reclaimed effluent as a distinguishing project element under WISE Alternatives Development rather than have it listed on the Purpose and Need Statement.

4) Outreach Update

Steve Mason reported that the Phase II contract has been extended from January 31, to June 30, 2005. He added that funding for Phase III from the Regional BLM office is on its way.

Jones & Stokes received the base map files from HDR yesterday.

Steve Mason will be making two presentations in the next week.

5) Updates

BOR Authorization – Steve Mason reported that as a follow up to get BOR authorized to act as lead agency for the feasibility study, Valerie West of Gordon Smith’s office has indicated

that this bill has been reintroduced on the senate floor (Senate Bill SB251). Keith Emerson added that a letter was hand-delivered to Commissioner John Keys in Washington DC. A copy of the letter was also sent to Bill McDonald (Boise BOR) and Ron Eggers (Portland BOR). Dave Nelson reported that he has given a favorable response to BOR and that we have adequately addressed BOR's previous concerns.

6) Other Business

Steve Mason reported that he is going to re-open the following sub-committees: Ag, In-stream, and Urban.

Steve is beginning to work on the CPI grant to fund his position. The current inter-governmental agreement funds Steve's position through the end of this fiscal year.

The next meeting will be April 6, 2005 at 9:30 AM, Medford City Hall, Rm. 340.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:00 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Norma Fascilla
City of Medford-RWRF