



Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership Meeting

Date: November 16, 2023, 12 PM-3:30 PM

Location: City Council Chambers, Lincoln City, Oregon and Zoom

Conveners: Seal Rock Water District, represented by Bradley Wynn

Project Team: Suzanne de Szoeki, Leah Cogan, Mikaela Clarke, and Molly Monroe of GSI Water Solutions, Inc.

Meeting Participants

In person:

Bill Montgomery – MidCoast Watersheds Council Board Member and certified water treatment plant operator

Fran Recht – Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission

Jennifer Beathe – Starker Forests

Alan Fujishin – Gibson Farms, Lincoln County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Board Member

Alyssa Mucken – Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD)

Laura Johnson – Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

Stephanie Reed – City of Lincoln City

Nicki Hendrix – OWRD

Mark River – Weyerhaeuser

Tatyana Isupov – DEQ

Steve Parrett – DEQ

Billie Jo Smith – Lincoln County Water Systems Alliance

Bradley Wynn – Seal Rock Water District

David Rupp – Oregon State University (OSU)

Suzanne de Szoeki – GSI Water Solutions, Inc.

Leah Cogan – GSI Water Solutions, Inc.

Susan Haupt – GSI Water Solutions, Inc.

Mikaela Clarke – GSI Water Solutions, Inc.

Molly Monroe – GSI Water Solutions, Inc.

Online:

Caylin Barter – Wild Salmon Center

David Waltz – DEQ

Paul Engelmeyer – MidCoast Watersheds Council Board Member

Rick Beasley – Depoe Bay

Pat Heins – DEQ

Margaret Treadwell – McKenzie River Trust

Tyler Clouse – Lincoln County SWCD

Meeting Recording Timestamps

00:00 – 05:38 Welcome, participation protocols, agenda

05:38 – 18:51 Presentation of scoring criteria, imperatives and highest priority actions, explanation of breakout groups

18:51 – 29:30 Introductions

29:30 – 32:10 Questions about breakout groups

(Breakout groups / technical difficulties section was cut out)

32:10 – 49:34 Feedback from breakout groups

49:34 – 1:18:50 Water Reuse Program presentation from Pat Heins

1:18:50 - 1:46:36 Lincoln City Drinking Water Protection Plan presentation from Leah and Suzanne

1:46:36 – 2:08:22 Climate Impacts on Drinking Water Supply & Demand presentation from David Rupp

2:08:22 – 2:35:00 Private Forest Accord presentation from Jennifer Beathe

2:35:00 – 2:39:37 (end) Next steps, general discussion and feedback

Breakout Groups Discussion Notes (32:10 – 49:34)

- David Rupp's group feedback on first breakout group:
 - Importance of readiness – most projects had high readiness
 - Lack of high prioritization for infrastructure projects even though they're important
 - What is the role of the Partnership in supporting infrastructure projects?
 - Water Management and Conservation Plans (WMCPs) are an important tool, but it got a C
- Alan's group feedback on imperative 6 (source water protection):
 - Only one was ranked A, only one was ranked C, most ranked B
 - Hard to remember what some of the actions meant initially. Wanted to edit some of the descriptions.
 - The first two actions could possibly be combined.
 - Action 38: evaluate harmful algae blooms:
 - Low frequency/likelihood of harmful algae blooms in midcoast, but high impact. Maybe should be ranked lower; could be a C.
 - Action 37: enhance contamination prevention measures (scored a C):
 - Vague action; could have been ranked low because of that.
 - Is it referring to intentional contamination or not?
 - Lots of Bs but scores didn't seem too out of place.
- Laura's group feedback on Imperative 1:
 - This imperative was most important to a lot of people in this group.
 - Emphasis on planning in the actions doesn't necessarily translate to the local communities.
 - Generally, prioritization was good, but things could be combined.
 - Action 1 is so broad, some actions could be combined.
 - Drought declarations need to be clearer to the public – some water providers were even confused. Capture nuance between watersheds.
 - Curriculum development for public schools – MidCoast Water already working on lots of these initiatives.

- Talked about what ecological flows are and whether ODFW will work on that. Could gather information about what agencies are working on some of these imperatives.
- Zoom group:
 - Caylin feedback on online breakout group:
 - Should provide meeting materials ahead of time to the full partnership.
 - Breakout groups don't seem necessary.
 - Not having materials in advance is debilitating, caused frustration
 - Paul:
 - Prioritize and link source protection and ecosystem protection.
 - Committee about ecosystem protection, strategies for easements, acquisition, and negotiation
 - Public awareness is long-term.
 - Infrastructure is a no brainer that the community is funding.
 - David Waltz:
 - Splitting the actions was useful
 - Algal blooms are a complex phenomenon, and reflect excess eutrophication and warming, is increasing across Oregon. Actions that address the underlying causes of them are important. Excess nutrients, warming, withdrawals of water etc. We should synthesize the actions that address these causes somewhere down the line.

Pat Heines (DEQ) – Oregon's Water Reuse Program (49:34 – 1:18:50)

- Water has been reused across the state before it was a state, first regulations implemented in 1990.
- In 2003, SB 820 required DEQ to review water cycle regulations, and make them less restrictive.
- 2005 order required agencies to work together on recycled water effort
- DEQ went back and reviewed regulations, since then budget cuts have limited agencies' connections
- HB 381 passed this past summer is to reestablish these programs for agencies to work together on
- Pat trying to reach out to other states & OR municipalities to identify issues
 - If there are specific issues where DEQ is restricting your recycling efforts let Pat know
- Recycled water classes within rules
 - Domestic sources
 - Industry can discharge to a wastewater facility, but bulk has to be a municipal source
 - If it's treated more, there are less restrictions and it's more beneficial.
- Recycled water in Oregon (2021)
 - 381 munis in OR, 142 with wastewater facilities with water recycling programs
 - Most of them produce Class C and Class D
- Industrial water reuse in OR (2020)
 - If looking for options for greatest volume of water to be reused, industrial reuse is the best option.
 - 53 facilities – this number counts just the permits, it is not a complete inventory of reuse projects.
 - Industrial sources make up less than 1/3 of domestic sources but produce 2x as much as domestic sources. Significant potential for reuse.

- Oregon's reuse program
 - 53 graywater permits – not complete inventory
- Recycled water program
 - Recycled water use plan is written by municipalities, details what they will do with it & how it will be recycled
 - Requires land application plan too if water will be used for irrigation or released into the environment.
- Public engagement very important from the beginning
 - A number of municipalities have lost programs because a number of individuals were misled
- DEQ recycled water page: <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/wq/programs/pages/water-reuse-recycled-water.aspx>

Questions/Discussion

- Rick B: The water being used by fish plants in Newport was astonishing, much larger than domestic users. Can that water be recycled?
 - Pat: The quality of water coming out of fish processing varies. Biological oxygen demand (BOD) is the largest contaminant I'm aware of, and high nitrogen and nutrient content. That water could be reused for agriculture; the limiting factors would be the BOD load and nitrogen. The soil profile could turn septic if you exceed the soil's capacity to be able to assimilate that material being land applied. We have to make sure there's boundaries for how much of that water is put down over how many acres & etc.
 - Paul: We could do a credible audit which could include the nutrient levels, where it's being dumped, the effects of runoff on salmon etc. especially on 303d streams with no management or TMDL (Siletz or Alsea ag land). Community is critical to raise awareness.
 - Caylin: Also can be recirculated within processing facility but requires infrastructure changes.
 - Pat: water reuse inside a building/plant is not regulated by DEQ (no release to environment), but is dictated by the water quality of the plant or whatever process they are applying (OHA would be involved for fish processing). Other agencies could step in.
- Alan: potential land application areas not extensive in midcoast, and tend to be far from treatment plants/potential sources. Expensive to move water. Are there examples in Western Oregon or the region where municipalities are reusing wastewater as clean water?
 - There are three: Beverly Beach state park, Angell Job Corps, and Cape Perpetua have reuse programs at those facilities. Water is reused for irrigation, and some is applied to forest land. They also discharge water over the winter months.
 - Short window of beneficial reuse on coast, and moving water is frequently cost prohibitive.

Leah and Suzanne – City of Yachats Drinking Water Protection Plan (DWPP)

(1:18:50 - 1:46:36)

- Timber harvest operation in Salmon Creek Watershed affected water plant and was a reason the City wanted to do a DWPP. Timber was harvested on the side of a slope above the water treatment plant. It was an extreme turbidity event.
- Examples of strategies:

- Communications with landowners, advocating for an integrated pest management approach
- Technical assistance for septic systems
- Critical areas could be steep slopes etc.
- Water conservation plans and program development, master planning
- Monitoring water quantity and quality
- Hazardous waste collection events
- City can support groups that do watershed restoration
- City submitted plan to OHA and DEQ, it was approved in 2021
- Implementation grant from OHA was focused on;
 - Education & outreach: helping community understand water sources, conservation, outreach to a variety of people in watershed.
 - Water conservation ordinances: plumbing code to make new homes water efficient, what is achievable, to reduce pressure on water supplies.
 - Monitoring plan: focused on new monitoring related to risks like timber harvesting, climate change, etc. (City is already doing some monitoring)
- Laura: does City want to pursue funding to continue implementation?
 - Yes, this is in progress
- Rick B: What is the impact of new forest practices act on watersheds? Was this act good for preserving water quality on coast? Can legislation be used as a tool to protect primary water source supply?
 - Jennifer's presentation can address this
- Caylin: there is new OWEB money for source water protection, and \$15M a year for Private Forest Accord mitigation fund.
- Alan: Does DWPP implementation funding address water quantity issues for Yachats? Lots of implementation actions focus on quality. (question for Rick from City maybe)
 - Critical area protection is an important one to protect water quantity.
 - Laura: City lost Salmon Creek source for a couple years due to quality issues from forestry land use
- Mark: Yachats has room for improvement for conservation (Mendocino is a good example)
- Paul: City's [potential] drinking water source is in the lower portion of basin, which is fish rearing habitat. ODFW has a priority of minimum streamflows. ODFW has likely not completed minimum flows for Yachats River. There is lots of use on Yachats. Thinking about the "sponge", how do you keep water in the basin? If funding sources for source water protection had been in play, the Salmon River [Creek] attachment would have been able to be bought but couldn't move quick enough. Water quality and filtration is on the public's dime. There is still room for improvement (e.g., aquatic conservation strategies).

David Rupp – Climate Impacts on Drinking Water Supply and Demand (1:46:36 – 2:08:22)

- Methodology for water demand projections:
 - Statistical relationship between changes in temp., precip., & historical conditions, projected them out into 2070.
 - Early on, demand didn't seem sensitive to changes in local temperature. Possibly because of the mild coastal climate.
 - What drives coastal demand?
 - Tourism, fish influx, etc.

- Compared demand data to variability of temp in the valley, got a clear relationship.
- Demand projections shown are on valley data, not coast.
- Saw a similar response in Toledo (doesn't get huge influx of tourists)
 - Removed Seal Rock sales from Toledo demand data and then the demand dropped significantly.
- Website with demand projections:
 - Projections for Newport, Lincoln City, Toledo, Waldport, Seal Rock (longest ran datasets) and supply change projections for some districts (data from hydrological models on a large scale). Numbers are "squishy".
 - Background on water providers
- Lincoln City projections:
 - Projected streamflow projections and demand projections.
 - Projections show demand driven by population and demand due to warming with pop.
 - Pop. is a good reference but not always accurate
 - Baseline of 2021 demand numbers
 - 2070 estimate = about 24.7% increase without climate data, and extra 28% monthly demand in August using climate scenario RPC 4.5
 - Climate scenario RPC 8.5 (most extreme): almost 33% demand increase out to 2070
 - Climate impact lower in winter, higher in summer
- Population discussion:
 - Based on PSU Population Research Center forecasts from 2017
 - New forecasts estimate Lincoln City population going down after a while
 - PSU said the old forecasts didn't properly account for aging population and lowering birthrates.
 - Not just local population should be considered though.
 - We could put together other info besides PSU population forecasts
 - New development on coast
 - Climate refugees
 - Lincoln county school district projects decreasing class sizes
 - Highest demands are when streamflows are lowest
 - Seasonal tourism is becoming linked with valley temperatures & climate change (and wildfire smoke with increased frequency and severity of wildfires).
 - Demand projections could be linked with Portland (or Salem & other major sources of tourism) population.
 - Increased tourism demand would increase development.
 - New unit construction projections for Newport were for 50 per year but its averaged 80 per year over last several years, so projections showing population decreases do not seem to be accurate.
 - Consider projecting peak/max daily demand
 - David: many sources only have monthly demand data. Suppliers typically have a multiplier/peaking factor to estimate max.
 - David: also see the water supply projections on the website.

Jennifer Beathe – Private Forest Accord New Forest Practices Act Rules (2:08:22 – 2:35:00)

- Old rules were 99 pages, new rules are 199 pages
- Global demand for wood products is expected to increase by up to 50% between 2010 and 2050
- Act started in 1971, there have been many changes over the years
- A habitat conservation plan hopefully will come out of the rules
- Large landowners own more than 5,000 acres
- Old rules are still effective if notification of operation was sent in before July 1, 2023
- There are 60,000 small woodland owners that own less than 60 acres
- ELZs (Equipment Limitation Zones) and RELZs (Retention Equipment Limitation Zones) not shown on map. RELZs are 35 foot buffers where equipment may not enter, must leave all trees & shrubs under 6 inches in diameter. ELZs are just 35 foot buffers, can cut smaller trees.
- Rules establish buffers as no harvest zones. Some see thinning not being allowed as a negative thing
- Fran: Where can equipment go?
 - Streams that aren't ELZs or RELZs you can operate equipment on hillsides above them. Equipment can go in really small perennial headwater streams.
- Bill: When did they decide there were no fish in the streams?
 - Methods include shocking, site visits, USDF or ODFW historic data, or other ground surveys
- Hydrologic disconnection will be implemented on forest roads (e.g., if a ditch flows from near a road into a stream) to make sure water filters through forest first
- Rick B's question from earlier: What is the impact of new forest practices act on watersheds? Was this act good for preserving water quality on coast?
 - Rules will improve drinking water quality with buffers on large and small, fish and non-fish bearing streams
 - Adaptive management committee can direct research on this
- Rick B: there is concern around pesticides and herbicides in communities in the region. How do the new rules address this? Can municipalities work with landowners to ensure waters are free of chemical influences?
 - Jennifer: I believe safe herbicide use to help get forests established is possible, but I understand not everyone agrees with that.
 - Rules in place (e.g., drift is illegal)
 - Alan: New rules don't directly address herbicide use, but use will decrease naturally with the buffers.
- Caylin: I wish the full partnership knew the Forest Practices Act presentation would happen ahead of time. These rules will bring the state up to the best management practices of forests. Folks from both sides who negotiated this agreement would be valuable perspective. Also be aware that we have to get a habitat conservation plan that implements these rules in place by 2027 or else these rules will go back.

Next Steps (2:35:00 – end)

- GSI will solidify prioritization and work on workplan approach after receiving partnership feedback.
- GSI will send an updated Charter and would like partnership feedback.

- Workgroup meetings are on the second Tuesday of each month (next one is December 12) and a Partnership meeting in the spring.

GSI Action Items <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Send partnership meeting materials	Partnership Action Items <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feedback on prioritization document and workplan by December 8• Feedback on proposed charter by January 3
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