

Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership Prioritization Project Meeting

Date: Tuesday, July 11, 2023, 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Location: Hybrid (Seal Rock District Office and Virtual)

Conveners: Adam Denlinger (Seal Rock Water District)

Facilitators: Suzanne de Szoeka and Leah Cogan (GSI Water Solutions, Inc.)

In-Person Participants:

Suzanne de Szoeka – GSI Water Solutions, Inc.

Leah Cogan – GSI Water Solutions, Inc.

Mike Broili – MidCoast Watersheds Council Board Chair

Fran Recht – Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, MidCoast Watersheds Council Board Member

Bradley Wynn -- Seal Rock Water District

Matt Thomas - Oregon Department of Forestry

Adam Denlinger – Seal Rock Water District, co-convenor

Christine Clapp – Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Bill Montgomery – Certified Water Treatment Operator

Online Participants:

Mikaela Clarke – GSI Water Solutions, Inc.

Steve Parrett – DEQ

Clare Paul – City of Newport

David Rupp – OSU

Janna Stevens – Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Water Planning Coordinator

Kimberly Wollenburg – City of Depoe Bay

<p><u>Questions/Comments To Address</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<p><u>Decisions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our final method will be Method 1 with readiness criteria added to this method. • We will use high, medium, and low to score applicable criteria (instead of a numbered scale), and will use high, medium, and low to self-assess our own expertise or knowledge of each imperative as part of the scoring process. • Group members will each individually fill out a table ahead of the meetings (if possible) and then will discuss as a group at the meetings (2 hour meetings). This applies to anyone who wants to participate. •
<p><u>GSI Action Items</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a pdf of the imperatives to group members via email, and print them as well for the next meeting. • Provide a scoring table for partners to fill out prior to Work Group meetings. • Determine which imperatives/how many actions we will look at for the next meeting. • Develop a proposed plan for how many meetings we need to have to work through all the imperatives and actions. • Reach out to specific groups and people with expertise in different areas to invite them to meetings. • Email the list of partnership members to ask if they are okay with their contact information being shared with the rest of the group. Share with the Work Group the contact information of the list of signatories and partnership members who did not oppose contact information sharing. 	<p><u>Partnership Action Items</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individually fill out the scoring table prior to the next meeting. • Reach out to specialists or groups you may know whose input would be valuable in our meetings.

Meeting Agenda:

- Introductions, participation protocols, and guiding principles
- Review June meeting minutes
- Potential prioritization approaches discussion
 - Example test run of an action
 - Summary of input received on potential prioritization approaches
 - Selecting a prioritization approach
 - How to implement the chosen approach
- Updates on past Action items
- Review meeting questions, decisions, and action items

Summary:

June meeting follow-up:

- Disappointment that County wasn't there
 - GSI can reach out to them

Prioritization approaches summary:

Leah recapped the action plan and prioritization approaches. Method 1 includes action criteria such as whether actions benefit instream and out-of-stream uses, etc. (all criteria for each method are listed below in the test run section). Method 2 looks at readiness and urgency criteria which include whether actions are eligible for ARPA funding, emergencies, etc. Method 1a considers all criteria. Leah recapped the test run on the different methods.

Test Run Discussion:

Action 53: Restoring Streamflow was picked as an example to test each method.

- Involves supporting projects that result in increased water retention capacity in floodplains, wetlands, streams, riparian areas, etc.
- Examples of types of projects under this action: growing trees longer, restoring floodplain connectivity, riparian shading/buffers, restoring/protecting beaver habitat, etc.

Test run for Action 53 projects (prioritization scores for each method):

- *Method 1: Action Criteria*
 - Improves water quantity: 1 point
 - Improves water quality: 1 point
 - Both instream and out-of-stream benefits: 1 point
 - Regionwide benefit: depends on where project would be
 - Helps implement a state or regional plan: would benefit fish likely; 1 point
 - Improves stakeholder understanding: 0 points (but this component could be added depending on the project)
 - Improving stakeholder understanding may need more definition (it would depend). Usually, this criterion would refer to public education components of projects.

- *Method 2: Readiness and Urgency Criteria*
 - Eligible for ARPA funding: the types of projects under this action are likely to get funding (wetland restoration, beaver habitat, etc.); 1 point
 - Urgency/emergency: depends on the project
 - This criterion may need a clearer definition. Everything under this and many other actions is urgent to some extent.
 - One way to define it is if the project would fall under emergency planning (e.g. if infrastructure was about to fail). Definitions of emergencies differ but often involve threats to public health.
 - This criterion could also be interpreted as whether it prevents an emergency.
 - This may not be a good criterion for ranking but may be useful as a second step once projects are ranked using other methods.
 - Folks considered removing the urgency/emergency criterion and found that Method 2 may not be as useful as other methods.
 - Readiness: depends on the project
 - Readiness would get a point if a project (e.g. stream restoration, connectivity) was ready to be implemented and not in the planning stages
 - There may be some projects group members know about under this action that are 'ready'
 - Concept development: depends on the project
 - If the project was very specific and the plan was detailed, this would get two points, and only one point if the plan wasn't as developed.

Methods discussion:

- Instead of Method 1a, we could add the readiness criteria to Method 1. Then we could use the criteria under Method 2 to sort and prioritize once we have some projects identified.
 - Urgency/emergency is hard to use to distinguish actions. Concept development is part of readiness anyway, so instead we should look at action benefit criteria and add readiness criteria to it.
 - Readiness also can include whether there is an entity already committed to implementing the project/action. Additionally, the group can figure out what things are important and if there's not an entity working on them, find one.

Feedback on Approaches:

- Readiness and capacity (staffing) is important
- Methods 1a and 2 are responsive to opportunities
- Method 1a has lots of actions in Group B, but that's not necessarily negative
- Method 1a and Method 1 with readiness added and broadening the scores are good ideas
- Each category be further enumerated on a broader number scale. So scores would be not only 0-1. Under each criteria there would be a broader range of scores to aid in prioritization, and the scores can be defined in a glossary (e.g. different numbers for how much a project would improve water quality, etc.).
 - Fran brought up a concern about this approach: how meaningful would the difference between numbers (e.g. 3 points vs 4 points) be as opposed to a scale of low, medium,

high or something along those lines? Unless you're very familiar with another's project it would be hard to score criteria so specifically.

- Overall, the test run has its limitations because it is on an action level, which covers a wide range of projects and it is hard to say how we would prioritize specific projects yet. We could do multiple rounds of prioritization to help this issue.
- High, medium, low seems like a better ranking system since we may not always have the data available to measure a project on a numbered criteria scale.
- We will re-adjust after a year or so of trying out a certain method so that we can gain experience

How are we going to implement the chosen prioritization approach

- Option 1: Score actions together in Work Group meetings
- Option 2: Score individually and then share with the group
- Discussion points:
 - Each person could assess their expertise and knowledge on each action before prioritizing any projects.
 - There could be separate groups based on expertise etc. who could be delegated different actions. Subgroups could be based on what imperatives people want to focus on.
 - Another option is to pencil in prioritization individually and then discuss as a group
 - This option was a good idea to the group
 - People could rate their knowledge and expertise as high, medium, or low
 - Each meeting could either focus on one or two imperatives at a time, or we could work through the whole list at a pace that works
 - GSI could decide based on how many actions are under each imperative
 - It would be helpful to provide binders to members of the group with the tables of actions from the Plan
 - GSI has an electronic version
 - GSI will pull the actions from the action plan and send pdfs to the group
 - People want hard copies of the plan
 - Most group members generally think it would be helpful to work through prioritization as a group during the meetings. GSI can inform the group ahead of time what imperatives the meeting will focus on so that members with expertise in that area can attend.
 - GSI can post the test run section of this meeting so others can see an example of the group working through an action together.
 - For the next meeting, GSI will send out the table ahead of time so that people can pencil in their scores, assess their knowledge, and then the group will work through it together during the meeting.
 - We can summarize the input we get ahead of the meeting, but the next Work Group meetings are for working on prioritizing projects

Past action items follow-up discussion:

- Financial need request letter

- About 5 different groups submitted letters. GSI consulted with OWRD about the logistics of financial support and what other groups are doing. GSI has a template now from OWRD and the Coordinating Committee has some follow-up questions for groups who submitted letters. At the next Coordinating Committee meeting (at the end of the month), the goal will be to decide what this will look like going forward.
- Charter update ideas
 - At the next Coordinating Committee meeting, revisions will be decided on by the people with charter votes (signatories) and then shared with the larger group in the future.
- Co-convenor
 - We have drafted a description of the co-convenor role and will work with the Coordinating Committee to refine that. We are coming up with a list of potential people to reach out to regarding the role. This list includes the County or another group that works regionwide.
- Projects list
 - ODFW has sent and will send us more information which is helping this effort.
 - It's never too late to add in projects!

Next steps

- Review questions, decisions, GSI actions, and partners actions table at the top of these notes.
- Next Prioritization Work Group meeting: August 8