

**Upper Grande Ronde River Watershed Partnership**  
**Place-Based Integrated Water Resource Planning**  
**Stakeholder Meeting No. 45**

**Meeting Minutes**

**January 5, 2022**

**4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.**

**Teleconference & Misener room**

**ATTENDANCE:**

Dana Kurtz, Donna Beverage, James Johnson, Kim Ogren, Joe Lemanski, Tim Wallender, Jim Webster, Steve Parrett, Danette Faucera, Jed Hassinger, Adrienne Averett, Jesse Steele, Matt Insko, Anton Chiono, Curt Howell, Bill Gamble, Roxy Nayar, Larry Larson, Kyle Carpenter, Dave Johnson, Rodger Huffman, Darin Walenta

**I. WELCOME**

a. Introductions

Donna opened the meeting and Dana reported attendance.

b. Meeting Guidelines

Use chat function, state your name, speak up, one speaker at a time, and respect differing viewpoints.

**II. UPDATES**

a. Vote tonight

Dana provided a history of the group's efforts over the last five years. The group originally approved the Plan last year and then received suggestions and comments from the state review agencies in April 2021. In September 2021, the group started addressing those comments with several rounds of revisions and small group meetings to resolve issues. Everyone had the opportunity to look through the Plan prior to this vote; changes were reviewed and agreed upon as a group prior to this meeting.

b. Present Plan to Water Resources Commission - March 17-18

The approved Plan will be presented to the OWR Commission in March.

c. Transition to quarterly implementation and strategy group meetings

The group will begin quarterly meetings for the implementation phase.

**III. Step 5 Plan Vote**

a. Voting/Statements

All voting members were polled and everyone present had an opportunity to make statements. Because of the weather and timing around the holidays, Donna said it would be ok to accept statements, comments, and votes until the end of the week.

**Dana facilitated a vote to approve the plan:**

Anton Chiono (CTUIR) – **Yes**, happy to vote in favor of it. Thanked everyone for all the hard work and time spent. Should be proud of what we have here today.

Curt Howell – **Yes**. Folks like him are looking forward to actions and seeing some real things coming down the pike.

Darrin Walenta (OSU Extension Service District) – Dana reported that he was not able to attend but said he supported the group's decision; Dana will verify his vote.

Dave Johnson (City of Cove) – **Yes**.

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Donna Beverage (Union County) – **Yes.**

Jed Hassinger (Union County Farm Bureau) – **Yes.** Thanked all the stakeholders. It's been a long journey to get here, thanks for hanging in there. He looks forward to implementation to benefit all of the stakeholders.

Jesse Steele (Grande Ronde Model Watershed) – **Yes.**

Jim Webster (Union Soil & Water Conservation District) – **Yes.**

Kyle Carpenter (City of La Grande) – **Yes.**

Larry Larson – **Yes.** Suggested doing something so that there is consistency when having a review from the state agencies. Sometimes it felt like the group was working with one set of state agency personnel, and then had a review conducted by other people. If Things would go a whole lot more smoothly if that could be avoided in the future.

Leonard Flint (City of Union) – **Yes.** (Donna reported that she received his vote via text. He was not able to attend due to weather)

Matt Insko – **Yes.**

Rodger Huffman – **Yes.** Thank you for all the work and efforts. Hopes the Commission will adopt our Plan, as our Plan, as we present it.

Roxy Nayar (DEQ) – Did not participate in the vote at this meeting as she plans to participate as the planning review team member for DEQ.

Steve Parrett (OWRD) – **Yes.** Thanked everyone for working together over these last five years, very happy to see where we have come.

Joe Lemanski (ODFW) – **Yes,** as the required elements as part of the State review process have been incorporated into the plan. ODFW has appreciated a lot of the group's constructive discussion and flexibility throughout the process. He looks forward to collaboration as a partner during implementation.

Tim Wallender – **Yes.** Thanks for all the hard work.

**Other comments:**

Kim Ogren (OWRD) – Really appreciative of all that everyone has done.

James Johnson (ODA) – No comments at this time.

Danette Faucera (ODFW) – Joe did a great job and Steve will capture the review team's comments. The group did an amazing job of maintaining momentum and working through the challenges.

Adrienne Averett (ODFW) – Nothing to add.

Bill Gamble (USFS) – Recognized and complimented everybody for their commitment to the process with respectful and civil dialogue throughout the process. Big kudos to Dana for her leadership and Donna for getting us through this process.

Steve Parrett (OWRD) – Shared the review team's combined comments. The state agency Plan Review Team, consisting of OWRD, DEQ, ODFW, ODA, and OWEB, appreciate how the planning group worked to address the required improvements that were identified by the PRT during review of the Draft Plan. The PRT believes the group followed the draft planning guidelines and planning principles outlined in the

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Statewide Integrated Water resource Strategy. We believe the final Plan includes required content and meets the criteria described in the Planning Step 5 Guidance and, therefore, the PRT will recommend to the OWR Commission that the Final Plan receive state recognition.

Donna Beverage (Union County) – She appreciated working with the PRT and that they were all able to move in different directions in order to make something that we feel will be successful for everyone. She believes this is a milestone in history. Just a bunch of people working together that no one knows about, but they really have accomplished something. The next accomplishment will be implementation and be successful in solving some of the problems that have been seen in the UGR basin.

**IV. Conclusion**

a. Next meeting

Wednesday, February 2 (4-6pm) Conference Call/Misener Room

This meeting will be optional and will focus on reviewing the presentation and providing feedback. The two biggest implementation steps on the radar are the storage feasibility study, linked in with IS flow work. Future implementation meetings will leave space for everyone to give updates on all the topics. Meeting time options and information about strategy groups’ availability will be emailed

The offices of Senator Wyden and Senator Merkley will present information about the water infrastructure bill passed last year. Anton shared that the bill passed last year earmarked considerable funding for western water infrastructure. This group is in a good position to pursue some of that to finance some implementation of the Plan.

b. Other comments

Donna reported that she would be talking to Congressman Bentz about the finalization of the Plan and gaining his support for it through the infrastructure bill.

Donna thanked everyone for putting the time in; this is so important and as a pilot project, there are going to be other groups watching to see this group’s successes and failures. We weren’t perfect, but we did a good job working together, depersonalizing different opinions, and being successful.

**Action items:**

1. Will send out information about strategy groups to check availability and meeting time options.

Feb.	Review/feedback on planned presentation
Mar.	Step 5 Plan presentation to Water Resources Commission

The meeting was adjourned.