## DESCHUTES WATERSHED ADVISORY GROUP

Thursday, May 18th (9am-12pm)

Thurston County Emergency Coordination Center Training Room

9521 Tilley Rd. W, Olympia, 98512

## Summary Notes

1. Welcome and introductions

* 22 humans, representing members of the former Deschutes TMDL and Thurston County Deschutes Stakeholder Advisory Group, gathered to continue collaborative action to move the dial on Deschutes Watershed Recovery

1. A brief review of accomplishments
2. Group brainstorm of next steps for the advisory group

* Amy Hatch-Winecka & Ashley McBee facilitated discussion to address: 1) Why are we each here today, 2) What problem we are each working to solve in the Deschutes watershed, and 3) Why the problems we are each working to solve, are important.

**Why are you here today?**

* Bob Holman: Providing input to DOE as they work through TMDL issues
* John DeMeyer: Ensuring political process utilizes good science
* Erica Marbet: To get a minimum of 25 ft shade buffer on Deschutes River; To see restoration that should occur happen; To keep water quality in the discussion
* Allison Osterberg: Sees importance of building advocacy base around watershed; Values ability to make progress via stakeholder group with standing support and direct vision for what we want and how to get there; Values stakeholder driven process, rather than efforts from individual agencies
* Leanne Weiss: Opportunity to work together to improve water quality in region; Opportunity to hear others’ perspectives; To share DOE updates and keep stakeholders involved
* Andrew Kolosseus: To continue coordinating from the ground-up; Values a locally led effort for Deschutes recovery
* Charissa Waters: To connect and coordinate recovery efforts; To collaborate for all needs in the Deschutes watershed
* Joe Roush: Values clean water; To ensure accountability in Deschutes watershed recovery; To identify who is causing water quality problems and engage to be involved in addressing those issues; To ensure use of good science
* Jeremy Graham: Hear to listen
* Wendy Steffensen: To represent LOTT and because of impact the Deschutes TMDL could have on LOTT’s discharge requirements
* Amy Georgeson: To see what next phase of TMDL will look like & identify what Tumwater’s role will be in that
* Jeff Killelea: To help Thurston County participate in restoration of Deschutes watershed; Need to meet stormwater discharge requirements and want to impact positive water management throughout county and Deschutes watershed
* Elsa Pond: Values accountability; To figure out what is going to help improve water quality, based on good science
* Nicole Warren: Thurston Conservation District focuses on landowners and agriculture activity on Deschutes; To gather input on where to prioritize outreach and implementation in these areas
* Robin: To connect with stakeholders and collaborate for Deschutes watershed recovery
* Bob Barnes: To protect and promote salmon and wildlife for generations into the future
* Jim Lengenfelder: To provide historical knowledge of Deschutes watershed; To find out what is happening with TMDL plan & what accomplishments have been made by stakeholders to improve water quality on Deschutes River
* Sue Patnude: Sees that Deschutes and South Sound are often left out, but recognized this is where salmon rear; Deschutes estuary restoration creates important habitat for rearing salmon in South Sound; Values importance of salmon for future generations
* Dave Peeler: To help restore Deschutes watershed and estuary; Concerned that we lack implementation of plans and models that have been created; Concerned about lack of on the ground efforts to date; Wants to identify the obstacles and create solutions

**What problem are you working to solve in the Deschutes watershed? Why is the problem important?**

* Bob Holman: Ensuring the use of best science to address Deschutes Watershed recovery issues; Important because we have limited resources and need to support cost effective solutions
* John DeMeyer: Ensuring all public interests are included in problem-solving (look at whole picture); Ensuring scientific decisions are based on current data rather than modeling based on outdated water quality data; Sediment management of particular interest; If we don’t properly manage sediment, the Olympia harbor will no longer exist as we know it today; Port and marine activities depend on sediment management approach
* Erica Marbet: Implementing mandated buffers; Science has informed appropriate standards for buffers and there is no mandate to uphold; Here to find out how stakeholders here are going to work with landowners to implement buffers; Sees water quality parameters as the problem; Healthy river with enough water equals healthy ecosystem with enough habitat
* Allison Osterberg: Working to address the protection and improvement of water quality in Deschutes watershed, while anticipating increased population growth; Essential to ensure the things we value today are available to future generations and migrants to this area
* Leanne Weiss: Working to improve water quality & solve water quality problems; Specializes in Budd Inlet but sees as part of larger ecosystem; To support healthy water, fish, and humans in our region
* Andrew Kolosseus: Works on water quality issues, with eye towards system health for entire watershed
* Charissa Waters: Working to address non-point source pollution as part of water quantity and quality; Working with agricultural landowners; Identifies agriculture as an avenue to support and preserve ecosystems
* Joe Roush: Working on stormwater issues in the City of Olympia; City of Olympia encourages TMDL process to recognize landowners throughout watershed are responsible for solving water quality problems; Impacts not covered by permits need to be identified and solutions addressed, rather than only rely on regulated permittees; Sees need to identify how to work with private property landowners to address individual impacts; Hears incentives (vs. regulation) as potential way to engage landowners
* Jeremy Graham: Working for clean, living water; Important for life
* Wendy Steffensen: Working on increasing reclaimed water to lessen amount of pollution in Budd Inlet (asking, “Is it appropriate and/or feasible?”); Important because reclaimed water could help meet TMDL requirements, improve water quality, & prepare for population growth
* Amy Georgeson: Working on preventing, treating, & stormwater in Tumwater; Important to have clean water for everyone!
* Jef Killelea: Thurston County working hard on challenge of non-point source pollution from private lands; Permits limited in applicability; We need to find ways to incentivize restoration and treatment on private lands; Hopeful this group can be part of force to fund and incentivize these changes, rather than regulatory/political approach
* Elsa Pond: Finding a solution on how to move needle on Deschutes watershed restoration; WSDOT (and other state agencies) needs to be accountable to taxpayers; Need to find effective, responsible solutions; WSDOT acknowledges Non-point source pollution as a big issue: Important b/c environmental health, ecosystem vitality, & for benefit of future generations
* Nicole Warren: Working directly with private landowners, building relationships and trust & re-educating, with focus on ag landowners; Doing a project on Deschutes to identify data gaps and target priority areas that impact conservation and restoration
* Robin: Working to address agricultural contributions to non-point source pollution; Ag is an important area to concentrate efforts because shifting ag practices can create positive impacts for ecosystem restoration and protection
* Bob Barnes: Working on increasing establishing buffers, LWD input, creating stable native plant communities, & erosion control; Important because multi-generational benefit and requires time to solve the issues created
* Jim Lengenfelder: Working on sediment management, lifestyle impacts, waste treatment; Bottom line for managing fish is cost; Important because all life depends on clean water
* Sue Patnude: Working on restoring the Deschutes estuary and regaining public access to water in estuary; This is the fiscally conservative option; 5th Ave dam is a cause of low DO and disrupts watershed health and sustainability; Interested in how TMDL & EIS process will work together/impact each other
* Dave Peeler: Working on restoring Deschutes estuary; Wants to see implementation of established plans; Important to restore estuarine acres throughout Puget Sound in general to increase habitat, better water quality; Hard to conceptualize change and how to go about it
* Theresa Nation: Here to support efforts to improve Deschutes watershed; Working to restore self-sustaining natural processes and habitat; Efforts need to come from variety of sources, not just government

**Group Identified Thematic Watershed Issues:**

* Big Picture Solutions (TMDL, Need to move the needle and see improvement, countless years/hours/investments in planning and ready to see action and change on the ground)
* Sediment management (connected to everything)
* Landowner Engagement (non-point source pollution, accountability both to public and holding landowners accountable, sources of negative impact, incentives)
* Water filtration/management
* Habitat (shade, riparian buffers, improved habitat for all wildlife and ensure sustaining systems/fish & wildlife)
* All public interests included; Private property owner
* Good science (identify data gaps, utilizing clear & current data)
* Deschutes Estuary Restoration (habitat, sediment management, public access/interests)

1. Deschutes TMDL update: Leanne Weiss, Budd Inlet TMDL Lead

* Andrew - Deschutes Freshwater TMDL: DOE has received comments as of Dec 2015; Still waiting for EPA approval; Issues around use of natural conditions criteria effects listings in TMDL; May lead to partial approval; None of those listings impact overall implementation plan; DOE still stands by overall document and implementation plan to address issues identified within; Hopeful EPA will issue partial approval by end of year;

**Questions**

* Are their negotiations going on around natural conditions? Yes.
* Can it be used for reference before approval? Yes, can be cited for grants but a potential issue for use in permitting; DOE grants provide additional points for an approved TMDL, Not having it approved lowers ability to fund implementation; Not on list of approved TMDLs, Andrew will work to get it on the list
* What is DOE role in permitting new fish hatchery, with new discharge? Any hatchery above a certain size requires a NPDS permit; They have not applied for the permit & are in the SEPA process; If contributes to pollution issue in river via discharge, can it be permitted? DOE cannot issue permit that contributes to impairments but can threshold what are allowable contributions; DFW will have to show hatchery does not contribute to impairments; There is funding in legislative budgets to fund project; Group discussed various concerns with this project; Andrew suggested to add to future agenda to discuss hatchery project
* DOE is a regulatory tool, can control permits, regulations, etc. but seeking Deschutes Advisory Group to develop solutions that do not rely on regulatory approach
* Leanne: Existing conditions of DO show water quality violations for approx. 2/3 of Budd Inlet; Worst violation in East Bay; Depletion contributions are nonpoint, external sources (anthropogenic/not natural); Will be addressed via aggregate designations and divvied later via a Puget Sound reduction plan from PSP; Requires reduction of impact in all categories
* Plan moving forward: Start new set of modeling runs to determine combination of allocations that meet standards; Goal to issue draft allocations in December 2017; Seeking group comments/feedbacks through process

**Questions**

* Joe: Would like to hear more detail about nitrogen loading and dissolved oxygen; Nitrogen loading contributions seems to be significantly higher than models displayed here
* Charissa: Would be nice to have more information on what data informs the models; Will provide references to group
* Jim: Presentations raises lots of questions; Would like to review North and South Sound impact on Budd Inlet; Seeking more explanation of the basic assumptions of modeling with regards to natural conditions; Seeking synopsis of how waters of Salish Sea interact and what data is being utilized to drive models
* Want to see data from full year, rather than focusing on months we fall below standard
* Acknowledges and appreciates TCD for taking group on and implementing work to positively impact the watershed
* Follow-Up Action Items from Facilitators: Synopsis of group’s identified themes of issues to address; Synopsis of what group wants to see with action and science; Seeking input on who else group want to see at table

1. Next meeting date and time check: July 13, 1:00 – 4:00 *Tour of the Upper Deschutes Falls*