

Walla Walla Basin Advisory Committee (WWBAC)
MEETING SUMMARY
Wednesday, February 23, 2022
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Time*	Agenda Item (Action items are marked with “!”)	Reference Materials	Presenter(s)
1:00 (15 mins)	Welcome and Opening Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome from each of the Tri-Sovereigns Hopes and expectations for the WWBAC Introduce consulting team 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brook Beeler, WA Dept. of Ecology Chris Kowitz, OR Water Resources Chris Marks, CTUIR Amanda Cronin, Project Manager Susan Gulick, Facilitator
1:15* (15 mins)	WWBAC Member Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name, affiliation, and one sentence about your hopes for this process 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WWBAC Members Susan Gulick, Facilitator
1:30* (5 mins)	Other Introductions/Review Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Susan Gulick, Facilitator
1:35* (30 mins)	Overview of WWBAC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership Expectations of Members Draft Operating Procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion and adoption at March meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership list Draft Operating Procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Susan Gulick, Facilitator Tri-Sovereigns WWBAC members
2:05* (30 mins)	Overview of Phase 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of work plan and Working Groups. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amanda Cronin, Project Manager Scott Tarbutton, Ecology
There will be a 10-minute BREAK around 2:35			
2:45* (45 mins)	Short-term Priority: Legislative Funding Requests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of initial categorization of strategies from the Strategic Plan Upcoming legislative requests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion guide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amanda Cronin, Project Manager Tom Tebb, WA Dept. of Ecology Chris Kowitz, OR Water Resources Chris Marks, CTUIR
3:30* (15 mins)	Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WaterSmart application USGS study Bi-State Flow Study Tri-Sovereign MOU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tri-Sovereign MOU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tom Tebb, WA Dept. of Ecology Scott Tarbutton, WA Dept. of Ecology Chris Kowitz, Oregon Dept Water Resources
3:45* (10 mins)	Public Comment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Susan Gulick, Facilitator
3:55* (5 mins)	Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Next Steps Closing comments 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amanda Cronin, Project Manager Tri-Sovereigns
4:00*	Adjourn		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Susan Gulick, Facilitator

Welcome and Opening Comments

Brook Beeler, WA Department of Ecology (Ecology), Chris Kowitz, OR Water Resources Department (OWRD), and Gary James, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) welcomed attendees and thanked everyone for their participation in this next phase of work. The goal of this next phase is to continue to build out and implement the package of strategies included in the WWW2050 Strategic Plan in order to meet the Basin’s water resource needs.

Amanda Cronin introduced the Consulting Team which consists of AMP Insights, Sound Resolutions, Cascadia Consulting, and Northwest Land and Water.

Susan Gulick reviewed the agenda and led roll call. Attendees are listed in Appendix A.

WWBAC Member Introductions

WWBAC members introduced themselves and their hopes for this process. AC members expressed the following sentiments:

- Shared vision and collaboration across interest groups.
- Projects implemented on the ground to meet the needs of the Basin and provide multiple benefits, including habitat restoration, species recovery, clean, cool water for instream and out of stream users
- Integrated water management that conjunctively manages ground- and surface water.
- Effective Bi-State coordination on water management
- Coordinating messaging and political support for strategies.
- Plan that is resilient to future water use and climate change.

Overview of WWBAC

Susan provided an overview of the WWBAC Operating Procedures. The Operating Procedures outline the purpose of the Advisory Committee as well as the roles and responsibilities of AC members.

Discussion:

- Renee Hadley asked for clarity via the chat function that the purpose of the WWBAC is to implement and fund the projects and strategies that were prioritized in the WWW2050 plan.
 - The purpose of the WWBAC is to provide advice and recommendations to the Tri-Sovereign governments (State of OR, State of WA, and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation [CTUIR]) on the implementation of the WWW2050 Strategic Plan and the general management of waters within the Walla Walla Basin.

Overview of Phase 2

Scott Tarbutton, Ecology, introduced the work plan for Phase 2. Scott will serve as a Project Manager and will work closely with the Consulting Team to advance all tasks and deliverables. Phase 2 includes the following tasks.

Task #	Task Name	Deliverables
1	Project Management	Quarterly invoices and progress reports to ECY
2	Entrance Conference	Finalized workplan
3	Facilitate Meetings	15 AC meetings 12 Implementation WG meetings (<i>will begin in March</i>) 8 Funding, Policy, and Outreach WG meetings (<i>will begin in April</i>) 5 Bi-State Flow Study meetings (<i>will begin Summer 2022</i>) 1 Public Workshop
4	Phase 2 Elements and Flow Study Update	Strategy Scoping Memos Implementation Workplan and Funding Strategy Draft and Final Strategic Plan Elements Draft and Final Flow Study Update Report
5	Exit Conference	

Scott added that the Bi-State Flow Study WG will be included under the WWBAC umbrella. Ecology is working to solicit a technical contractor to continue the feasibility analyses around Flow Study objectives including looking at the anchor projects, design criteria, cost analyses, and cost-sharing opportunities.

Amanda added that the Consulting Team will balance the facilitation tasks with the technical tasks. There is work needed to refine technical details with the package of strategies as well as develop funding and policy support for the strategies.

Discussion:

- Mike Ingham asked via the chat function who is evaluating and selecting the Bi-State engineering contractor?
 - Ecology will select the contractor but is coordinating with Tri-Sovereigns around evaluation and scoring criteria.
- Gary added that a more grounded technical analysis is needed to refine and implement the strategies.
 - Amanda added that roughly half of the budget is designated for technical work to refine and scope the strategies. AMP Insights is leading this phase of this work as they are technical experts and lead similar projects across the West.

Short-term Priority: Legislative Funding Requests

Amanda introduced the discussion to package strategies for the legislative requests. For the WA State legislature, the strategies will be grouped into categories. The OR state legislature needs a more targeted and prioritized list of strategies.

Melissa Downes added that Ecology needs to begin building its budget and policy proposals for the 2023 legislative session now. Ecology intends to work on authorizing the strategy through a Legislative Bill in the 2023-2025 session to provide authority to implement, as well as submitting a capital budget request. Last legislative cycle \$3 million was requested, but Ecology is looking to increase that amount this cycle, likely to about \$4-5 million for the next cycle. Currently, Ecology is looking for budget estimates per strategy category and would like to support a wide array of strategy categories to meet multiple benefits.

Chris Kowitz shared that OWRD will need to develop a short list of specific budget asks for the 2023 session. In OR, there is also a pathway for a state representative to carry their own bill. OR is committed to including budget requests in the 2023 cycle if the WWBAC thinks a project is ready to move forward. Additionally, OR is supporting the USGS Groundwater Study and is hiring for an outreach staff member to support the planning process.

Amanda presented a draft strategy categorization to group the funding requests for WA and comments are summarized below.

Discussion:

- Ralph Perkins emphasized the need for land use and cover strategies to address fuel loading via prescribed burning in the upper parts of the Basin particularly in the interface between federal lands and privately owned agricultural lands.
- Mike Fredrickson asked via the chat function whether 1.04 includes "dry rights" in Washington? He clarified that one of the reasons water right holders do not want to leave water in the stream is because there are active "dry water rights."
 - Amanda clarified that only water rights with beneficial use are eligible for transfers. In the event that there is documented instream benefit, then the transfer of dry rights would be considered
- Renee Hadley, Walla Walla Conservation District (WWCD) expressed support for the strategy categorization and shared comments about several strategies:
 - Floodplain and fish passage projects should be prioritized and completed earlier.
 - Tom Tebb and asked whether WWCD's project is scalable and if more work could be completed if additional funds become available.
 - Renee added that the current proposed project objectives do not overlap with increasing instream flows.
 - All strategies are moot if Ecology does not address the Bi-State water management issues.
 - While there are opportunities for additional metering, there are concerns that industry has not created a strong enough meter and Ecology has not followed through on 20 years of metering records.
 - John Foltz suggested tying specific projects to monitoring needs.
- John Foltz said the draft strategy framework looks great and asked whether there are opportunities to submit combined program and project requests for funding.
 - Tom Tebb added that Ecology will need project lists but would also like to have some flexibility within a category.
- John Foltz added that improving fish passage at Bennington Lake is a priority, but this is not something that the WA-state legislature can take care of, as it is a federal property. State level support from the Governors' offices would be beneficial.
- Gary James added that many of the strategies do not need specific funding requests but should be prioritized (e.g., 1.11- bi-state flow protection).
 - Tom added that he met with the respective state Governors' offices – Ecology is coalescing around the need to address this issue and is trying to get direction and support from state leadership.
 - Gary added that CTUIR works closely with the City of Walla Walla on aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) which supports instream flows in Mill Creek. Frank added that the Cities project with CTUIR and WWT tripled the flow in Mill Creek last summer
- Melissa Downes added that Ecology will need a rough outline for the funding request, it doesn't have to have project specific detail and more detail can be added over time.
- Chris Kowitz shared that in OR they need to develop a short list of budget asks and are committed to trying to get a specific budget request
- Linda Herbert shared that outreach and education is needed to help build public support for the Plan implementation.
- Steven Patten asked whether there are other funding options besides a state agency request or a representative carrying forward a bill.
 - There are several other funding options including other state agency funds, Senate bills, and competitive funding opportunities.

Updates

- US Bureau of Reclamation: WaterSMART Basin Study Application
 - Ecology coordinated with OWRD and CTUIR to submit a joint letter requesting a Basin Study review of work completed to date including:

- Assess if all water supply demand needs are fully considered including how water from the Columbia River might replace water.
 - Address water supply challenges and opportunities.
 - Review, propose, and modify alternatives to improve water delivery and reliability.
 - Review conceptual plans of each alternative.
 - Have bureau provide discussion on regional/institutional frameworks.
 - Tom added that it is beneficial to bring in the Bureau of Reclamation as a potential partner as they are in the water supply and development business.
- USGS Groundwater Surface Water Study:
 - The goal of the groundwater study is to simulate projects and water resource management techniques in the Basin and evaluate potential strategies.
 - In 2022, will be looking at data collection to understand the hydrogeologic framework, lithologies, and the water balance.
- Tri-Sovereign MOU:
 - The Tri-Sovereigns crafted a draft MOU to describe how the governments of WA, OR, and CTUIR will work together. The Tri-Sovereigns are looking for feedback from the Advisory Committee.
 - Discussion:
 - Ralph Perkins asked when the federal partner is identified, will there be 4 entities?
 - Yes - they will join as a 4th Sovereign.
 - Renee raised objections to clause II.2.D in the Tri-Sovereign MOU ("the three sovereigns shall support one another and may participate in any third party litigation challenging implementation of the Strategic Plan..."), saying this clause seems to negate working together.
 - Tom added that this is an agreement between the Three Sovereigns. They are missing a dispute resolution mechanism.
 - Randy Jones suggested clarifying the audience for education and outreach activities. He added that there is a need to reach younger generations.
 - Mike Ingham asked whether the MOU is drafted with a federal compact in mind.
 - Yes – need a federal partner to help build the infrastructure, which was one of the intentions of bringing in the Bureau of Reclamation via the WaterSMART Basin Study.
 - Mike added that there might be a role for a federal compact to support water protection across state lines particularly in the context of a multi-million-dollar project.

Public Comment

No comments.

Closing

Brook Beeler added that Ecology is hopeful that we can shift to hybrid/in-person meetings with an in-person option later this spring.

Tom Tebb, Chris Kowitz, and Gary James thanked everyone for their time and closed the meeting.

Appendix A. Attendance

WWBAC Members & Alternates

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Brook	Beeler	Ecology
Cindy	Boen	USACE
Ron	Brown (alternate)	WWRID
Annie	Byerley (alternate)	WA Irrigation at-large
Arnold	Coe (alternate)	WWBWC
Sarah	Dymecki (alternate)	WWT
Colleen	Fagan (alternate)	NMFS, NOAA
John	Foltz	Snake River Salmon Recovery Board
Bill	Goss (alternate)	OHA
Renee	Hadley	Walla Walla County Conservation District
David	Haire (alternate)	CTUIR
Marty	Hall (alternate)	Columbia County
Linda	Herbert	Blue Mountain Land Trust
Gary	James	CTUIR
Randy	Jones	ODEQ
Chris	Kowitz	OWRD
Allie	Newhouse	OR Irrigation at-large
Jerry	Norquist (alternate)	Community Member
Steven	Patten	City of Milton-Freewater
Ralph	Perkins	WWBWC
Tom	Tebb	Ecology
Travis	Trumbull	WWRID
Nicholas	Velluzzi	Walla Walla Community College
Mark	Wachtel	WDFW
Mark	Wagoner	Gardena Farms Irrigation District
Justin	Yeager	NOAA NMFS

WWBAC Members Not in Attendance

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Dan	Dorran	Umatilla County
Judith	Johnson	Kooskooskie Commons
Todd	Kimball	Walla Walla County

Other Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Troy	Baker	WWBWC
Chris	Beard	Ecology
Adriene	Borgias	Ecology
Caroline	Burney	Cascadia Consulting
Anton	Chiono	CTUIR
Amanda	Cronin	Amp Insights
Jon	Culp	WA Conservation Commission
Jeff	Dengel	WDFW
Melissa	Downes	Ecology
John	Fazio	

Michael	Fredrickson	Port of Walla Walla
Susan	Gulick	Sound Resolutions
Dan	Haller	Aspect Consulting
Eric	Hartwig	Ecology
Mike	Ingham	Gardena Farms Irrigation District
Deborah	Johnson	DOH Office of Drinking Water
Teresa	Kilmer	Walla Walla River ID
Mark	Kirsch	
Stephanie	May	Ecology
Bill	Neve	Water Right Solutions
Frank	Nicholson	City of Walla Walla
Tim	Poppleton	Ecology
Molly	Reid	GeoEngineers
Jaime	Short	Ecology
Jessica	Swift	Ecology
Scott	Tarbutton	Ecology
Sean	Thurston	Columbia County