



## **Tualatin River Watershed Council Meeting Minutes January 10, 2019**

### **Stakeholders Present**

Jan Miller	Citizen at Large Primary Representative
Ashley Short	Environmental Organizations Primary Representative, Tualatin Riverkeepers
Bob Baumgartner	Services Districts (Sewerage) Primary Representative, Clean Water Services
Tom Nygren	Small Woodland Owners Primary Representative, Washington County Small Woodlands Association
Rich Van Buskirk	Education Primary Representative, Pacific University
Jon Pampush	Fisheries Primary Representative, Trout Unlimited
Stephen Cruise	County Primary Representative, Washington County
Erin Poor	Citizen at Large Primary Representative
Alexis Cooley	Drinking Water Provider Primary Representative (shared position), City of Hillsboro Water Department
Lacey Townsend	Soil and Water Conservation District Primary Representative, Tualatin SWCD

### **Staff Present**

Scott McEwen	TRWC Executive Director
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### **Guests Present**

Wade Peerman	Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Tualatin Basin Coordinator
Kellyn Baez	Clean Water Services personnel
Brandy Saffell	Tualatin SWCD personnel
Katy Weil	Metro personnel
Tim Sautter	Washington County LUT Operations Department

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Bob Baumgartner, Chair, opened the meeting at 7:00 pm. Stakeholders, staff, and guests introduced themselves.

### **December 2018 TRWC Minutes**

Minor corrections to the minutes were mentioned. Jan Miller moved to adopt the December 2018 minutes as corrected. Tom Nygren seconded. Adopted by consensus.

## **Public Comment**

None

### **Presentation by Katy Weil, Metro: *Metro Parks and Nature Wildlife Monitoring***

Katy started with an overview of Metro's Parks and Nature Program, showing a map of natural areas acquired since the original 1995 bond measure. The focus of the presentation is the Tualatin Basin and wildlife monitoring on restoration sites.

Amphibians are a key indicator species monitored by Metro and other partners in the Tualatin Basin. Amphibians are an environmentally sensitive species and therefore a good indicator of the health of wetland ecosystems. Egg mass surveys provide an easy, effective way to detect amphibian breeding habitat and changes in habitat use. These surveys also give a rough idea of breeding population size for select species. Egg mass surveys are done by several organizations using staff and trained volunteers: Metro, Clean Water Services, The Wetlands Conservancy, Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District, and Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge. Katy compiles all the data for every restoration site and shares with Metro scientists. Tualatin basin partners do a good job of sharing data and information on amphibians. The Quamash Prairie restoration site is a good example of where there has been an increase in amphibian habitat and an increase in egg masses. Egg masses need attachment material.

Birds are another important indicator species closely monitored. Metro and volunteers conduct breeding bird surveys and waterfowl surveys. One challenge is minimizing disturbance while maximizing conservation actions. The nesting season is an important time to minimize disturbance.

Q: Are there certain metrics that can be share with the public?

A: One example is sharing pollinator metrics from Xerces Society. The public is very interested in bees. People ask how many frogs are in an area. Katy is looking for better ways to share amphibian results.

Q: What about forest surveys?

A: Katy gave an example of an oak release project where bird surveys were completed prior to project. Shortly after the oak release, 18 new species of birds appeared that were oak-related. Later, as Douglas fir started coming back in, there was a drop-off in species numbers. Chehalem Ridge is a natural area where thinning occurred in the dense forested areas. In the first couple of years there were only 3-4 bird species. After thinning, more open area bird species have been coming in (30 species now).

Comment: There's going to be more thinning in the county because of old, overgrown Christmas tree farms. It would be helpful to have wildlife data to show forest landowners benefits of thinning. Many landowners have a goal of increasing wildlife.

Q: How can the Council be involved with Metro's wildlife monitoring efforts?

A: The connection piece is very important. Being able to connect with the public and partners to get the word out about the importance of wildlife monitoring.

### **Council Business: Update on transition plan**

The Council is in its initial implementation mode now. Bob recognized Clean Water Services, Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District, and Joint Water Commission for funding support, which is critical for the Council vision going forward. Scott is starting to build relationships with partners the Council needs to be successful. The Steering Committee will be focused on strategic planning and visioning over the next several months. Rich Van Buskirk encouraged Roving Steering Committee members and others to attend those meetings. April has departed Council but will be available until the end of February for questions.

### **Executive Director Update**

There are five on-the-ground projects scheduled to be completed this year. For the transition to be successful, Scott cannot manage those projects in the same way April was and will need to figure out a way to meet those needs. One option may be to hire a contractor to manage on-the-ground projects.

Partner meetings have been very helpful. Scott has met with several Tualatin basin partner organizations, Council Coordinators from other Watershed Councils, staff at the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, and Network of Oregon Watershed Councils staff. He has been focusing a lot of effort on office organization. Jan Miller has stepped up to help with some bookkeeping. To succeed, Scott needs everyone's help.

At next week's Steering Committee meeting the agenda will include volunteer opportunities and an in-depth conversation on how to transition on-the-ground projects. An agenda will be sent out to the group soon.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lacey Townsend  
Secretary

**February 6, 2019 TRWC refreshments:** Tom Nygren  
**Roving Steering Committee member for January 16 meeting:** None