

**Upper Grande Ronde River Watershed Partnership  
Place-Based Integrated Water Resources Planning  
Quarterly Implementation Meeting  
September 21, 2022; 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.  
Conference Call/Misener Room**

**ATTENDANCE**

Anton Chiono, Alexandria Scott, Shiloh Simrell, Dana Kurtz, Donna Beverage, Joe Lemanski, Shad Hattan, Jed Hassinger, Jim Webster, Steve Parrett, Tim Wallender, Janna Stevens, Chuck LeBold, Darrin Walenta, Zamoria Remiza, Cole Hendricksen, Curt Howell

**I. WELCOME**

Meetings will continue in hybrid format.

**II. STRATEGY GROUP UPDATES/ACTION ITEMS**

- a. Project Management – ARPA Grant application is due September 30. Projects under consideration to move forward were listed in the action plan, with some projects not eligible for these grants. Dana is open to help from others interested in the application process.
- b. Outreach – N/A
- c. Municipal – Did not meet. Some ARPA projects would affect this land use group.
- d. Administrative – Did not meet.
- e. Infrastructure – Jim has been working on this; BOR has new engineer working on the model. Meeting will be scheduled in near future.
- f. Public Land – Interim District Ranger replacing Bill Gamble, look forward to their involvement.
- g. Habitat – There is no standard way to calculate how much water is stored with natural storage projects; there are a couple ideas to discuss today
- h. Data – Helped with RFP for Grande Ronde IFIM study. Anton reported that the Catherine Creek data collection wrapped up and results are expected Summer 2023 from ODF&W.
- i. Agricultural Land – Did not meet.
- j. Built Storage – Working on feasibility study; update below.

**III. STORAGE FEASIBILITY STUDY UPDATE**

a. Background/Objectives

Shiloh reported that studies are funded through OWRD and OWEB grants with match dollars from the Partnership, CTUIR, and ODF&W. The goal is to identify storage locations and assess site suitability while conducting large-scale instream flow studies. Specific objectives include 1) determining if suitable above ground storage locations exist in the UGRR watershed for ecological and agricultural use; and 2) completing ISF studies on ODF&W-identified priority habitat sections of Catherine Creek and the UGRR that are likely to be identified as storage sites.

b. Tasks/Timeline

1	Completed	<b>Technical feasibility assessment</b> Identified using existing literature, light detection & ranging data, contour maps and aerials maps overlaid with several GIS layers
2	Completed	<b>Social and legal feasibility</b> Preliminary items to consider: capital, operation, and maintenance costs; storage capacity; months of water availability; impacts on flows; ESA impacts; environmental harm or impacts, landownership issues, public safety, fundability, permitting

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 205 potentially feasible sites identified from task 1</li> <li>• 43 remained after first analysis</li> <li>• 28 remained after revisions by storage work group</li> <li>• 18 contain ESA fish distribution</li> <li>• 15 are within UGRR or Middle Grande Ronde subbasin reservations (see table on page 4)</li> </ul>
3	In process	<p><b>Select four target sites</b>          If one site becomes infeasible, the next ranked site in that category will be assessed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Non-ESA small site</li> <li>2. Non-ESA large site</li> <li>3. ESA site (need to pick one large or small) – top excluded due to McCoy Meadows active restoration, 3<sup>rd</sup> excluded due to Hall Ranch restoration</li> <li>4. Natural storage concept (2 projects – calculation and instrumentation for Hall Ranch)</li> </ol> <p><i>Proposed sites:</i>          Little Fly Creek (#1 nonESA, small)          Five Points Creek (#2 nonESA, large)          Grande Ronde/Sheep Creek (#3 ESA, large)          Whiskey Creek (#4 ESA, small)</p>
4	Ongoing through June 2024	<b>ISF studies</b>
5	July – October 2022	<b>Environmental feasibility assessment on target sites</b>
6	Expected June 2023	<b>Feasibility study report</b>

c. Next Steps – approve section of sites

Discussion notes

Some members were happy with the candidates presented and there were several requests to hold more work sessions to find consensus of the top six sites.

Quantifying storage capacity could be helpful when applying for future project funding, but there is no easy method to quantify the existing data gap. It could be a beneficial tool in siting and for consultants doing natural storage calculations. It’s also important to avoid getting caught up in trying to quantify those benefits. Those studies are in-depth and expensive with multiple years of data. It’s uncertain if getting into the research level would be of value to this group considering the time and money involved. Hall Ranch is slated for 2024 implementation; it would be hard to make inferences from one year of data collection. The natural storage list could be useful for other purposes like strategy planning for future restoration and feeding into outlet revisions.

A cursory review was completed with the intent of completing a more detailed review through conversations with ODF&W, the Watermaster, and landowners after sites are narrowed down to those with the highest potential. Feedback included a broad range of perspectives that indicated sites that people would feel good about moving forward. There were differing opinions about how deep to dive into details at this stage – there’s value in seeing the big picture and also value in steering away from getting too much into the weeds. Joe believed details are important at this stage, particularly cost and other considerations

like recently performed evaluations, before this group spends money, time, effort and resources on projects that may or may not be dead ends. Funding these projects will be in the tens and hundreds of million-dollar range, and some will heavily rely on federal funding. Recent appraisal studies by BOR have said that federal funding will likely not be available for these projects. He hopes the group is going in with eyes wide open and recognizes how large and monumental of an effort this is going to be. A comment was made to the point that it is critical for permitting and funding that all groups are listened to and mutual benefit remains the purpose of this partnership. Donna added that the group's goal is to help as many water users as possible, harm none, and address flooding to look out for future generations, wildlife and the economy.

One idea was to consider several small sites instead of one large reservoir; another idea was to select the two that make the most sense, regardless of size. Joe discouraged prioritization of ESA and Non-ESA sites because all the proposed locations would have impacts on ESA-listed critical habitat. Dana noted that impacts are lower on Non-ESA listed sites impacts than ESA listed sites. Jed pointed out that smaller non-ESA sites might be less expensive if they did not require an instream flow study. Dana agreed that storage specific requirements are only triggered if they are on a perennial stream channel, over 500 acre feet, and have ESA habitat so those sites could go more quickly if the permit reviewers don't add a study requirement. Jed asked how much weight should be given to cost. Anton thought the group should address the hardest part of this, which is agreeing on feasible sites based on criteria, and then funding will follow.

In response to a question about sites best suited for funding, Joe saw sites 124 and 17 as reasonable locations that are likely to have smaller impacts to native fish. Jed agreed with the candidates Dana proposed; he would support 133 if it had lower impacts on fish and have large storage volume. Larry indicated to Dana via email that he was interested in 133 also. Shad will look at the options and send his opinion. Anton thought more detailed discussion of the sites was needed before advancing options. Donna suggested that to avoid an in-depth review of all 205 sites, more time could be given for everyone to review the sites and then select six to move forward. OWRD staff indicated that once the partnership narrows down potential sites then staff would have the opportunity to offer input on the most feasible sites and provide additional guidance.

Tim noted that sites could have detriments and benefits at the same time so it's important to go back and revisit the group's goals with more transparency from all of the groups sharing what they see as benefits from specific sites. The group supported scheduling additional work sessions to work together before selecting the top six sites to move forward. The next work session will be Wednesday, September 28 @4-6pm with virtual and in person options; the location will be based on expected attendance and determined after Dana receives email responses. User groups should come prepared with sites they like or do not like, but do not necessarily need to meet prior to the session.

#### **IV. ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES**

OSU – Darrin thanked Jed for providing great updates at the Crops and Conservation tour. Last week in the Columbia Basin, an informative workshop was held regarding the satellite-based ET (evapotranspiration) online tool; they are looking at doing something similar for this region. Jed noted that this technology would have been helpful a few years ago when this group was working on the Step 3 report.

#### **V. CONCLUSION**

- a. Next meeting: December 14 @4-6pm, Misener Room and Teams
- b. Other comments

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

# Potential Storage Sites

Name	On/Off Channel	Estimated Earthwork (CY)	Storage Volume (ac-ft)	GIS Acres	CY/ac-ft	Cost per ac-ft	Total Cost	Months Available Water 50% Exceedance	Months Available Water 80% Exceedance	Nearest Reach	ESA Fish/Critical Habitat	Subwatershed	Benefit of Project	Approximate Elevation	Ownership	Special Considerations
Site_8	On Channel	10601	399	20.1	27	\$ 540	\$ 212,020	0	0	Little Fly Creek	No	5	Fish/Agriculture	4,697	Federal (Forest Service)	
Site_133	On Channel	916163	9506	96.8	96	\$ 1,928	\$ 18,323,260	7	0	Five Points Creek	No	4	Fish/Agriculture	3,526	Federal (Forest Service)	
Site_6	On Channel	200300	1680	75.7	119	\$ 2,380	\$ 4,006,000	4	0	Sheep Creek	No	5	Fish/Agriculture	4,345	Private/Federal (Forest Service)	
Site_30	On Channel	222679	1616	56.0	138	\$ 2,756	\$ 4,453,580	7	0	Pelican Creek	No	4	Fish/Agriculture	3,471	Private/Federal (Forest Service)	
Site_19	On Channel	164403	1044	312.7	157	\$ 3,149	\$ 3,288,060	3	0	Spring Creek	No	4	Fish/Agriculture	3,367	Federal (Forest Service)	
Site_126	On Channel	121169	556	34.9	218	\$ 4,359	\$ 2,423,380	8	0	Jordan Creek	No	4	Fish/Agriculture	5,293	Federal (Forest Service)	
Site_17	On Channel	601044	4881	77.4	238	\$ 4,760	\$ 12,020,880	8	0	Jordan Creek/Grande Ronde River	No	4	Fish/Agriculture	3,214	Private	
Site_124	On Channel	501749	1859	49.7	270	\$ 5,398	\$ 10,034,980	8	0	Grande Ronde River	No	4	Fish/Agriculture	3,243	Federal (Forest Service)	
Site_22	Off Channel	178179	412	20.4	432	\$ 8,640	\$ 3,583,580	8	0	Grande Ronde River	No	5	Fish/Agriculture	4,179	Private	
Site_145	Off Channel	175282	275	32.7	637	\$ 12,748	\$ 3,505,640	2	0	Catherine Creek	No	8	Fish/Agriculture	4,221	Private	
Site_68	On Channel	89756	6286	307.6	14	\$ 280	\$ 1,795,080	5	0	Meadow Creek	Yes	5	Fish/Agriculture	3,358	Private	Restoration in progress. Unlikely to be accepted by the tribe.
Site_211	On Channel	280454	19311	543.6	15	\$ 300	\$ 5,609,080	8	0	Grande Ronde River/Sheep Creek	Yes	5	Fish/Agriculture/Food Control	4,117	Private	Mainstem Grande Ronde River
Site_66	On Channel	523557	20521	448.0	26	\$ 520	\$ 10,471,140	5	0	Catherine Creek	Yes	8	Fish/Agriculture/Food Control	3,313	State	Restoration in progress. Mainstem Catherine Creek.
Site_39	On Channel	72862	2283	69.5	32	\$ 640	\$ 1,457,240	8	0	Whiskey Creek	Yes	4	Fish/Agriculture	3,342	Private	
Site_213	On Channel	69113	1770	114.8	39	\$ 781	\$ 1,382,260	8	0	Grande Ronde River	Yes	5	Fish/Agriculture/Food Control	3,303	Private/Federal (Forest Service)/Federal (BLM)	Mainstem Grande Ronde River
Site_27	On Channel	279188	4691	162.7	60	\$ 1,200	\$ 5,583,760	5	0	McCoy Creek	Yes	5	Fish/Agriculture	3,565	Private	
Site_33	On Channel	471529	7687	246.2	61	\$ 1,220	\$ 9,430,580	4	0	Sheep Creek	Yes	5	Fish/Agriculture	4,257	Private	
Site_73	On Channel	354328	4885	260	72	\$ 51,451	\$ 7,086,560	6	0	Fly Creek	Yes	5	Fish/Agriculture/Food Control	4,346	Private	
Site_79	On Channel	199366	2219	70.4	90	\$ 1,800	\$ 3,987,320	4	0	Sheep Creek	Yes	5	Fish/Agriculture	4,278	Private /Federal (BLM)	
Site_80	On Channel	218522	2214	93.2	99	\$ 1,980	\$ 4,370,440	6	0	Fly Creek	Yes	5	Fish/Agriculture	4,530	Private /Federal (Forest Service)	
Site_212	On Channel	390969	3740	152.0	105	\$ 2,091	\$ 7,819,380	8	2	Grande Ronde River	Yes	4	Fish/Agriculture/Food Control	3,229	Private /Federal (Forest Service)	Mainstem Grande Ronde River
Site_72	On Channel	290142	2493	37.3	116	\$ 2,323	\$ 5,802,840	6	0	Little Fly Creek	Yes	5	Fish/Agriculture	4,480	Private	
Site_85	On Channel	155054	1267	54.9	122	\$ 2,440	\$ 3,101,080	5	0	Meadow Creek	Yes	5	Fish/Agriculture	3,532	Private	
Site_42	Off Channel	115964	644	35.8	180	\$ 3,601	\$ 2,313,880	7	0	Pelican Creek	Yes	4	Fish/Agriculture	3,639	Federal (Forest Service)	
Site_29	On Channel	216629	1161	48.9	186	\$ 3,732	\$ 5,848,620	7	0	Pelican Creek	Yes	4	Fish/Agriculture	3,662	Federal (Forest Service)	
Site_92	On Channel	240959	1271	49.8	190	\$ 3,800	\$ 4,817,180	7	0	Five Points Creek	Yes	4	Fish/Agriculture	3,216	Federal (Forest Service)	
Site_131	On Channel	305750	1532	51.9	200	\$ 3,992	\$ 6,115,000	7	0	Five Points Creek	Yes	4	Fish/Agriculture	3,153	Federal (Forest Service)	
Site_37	On Channel	88908	260	23.3	342	\$ 6,839	\$ 1,778,160	4	0	Dry Creek	Yes	5	Fish/Agriculture	4,447	Federal (BLM)	

All information is preliminary