

**Baker City – May 7, 2012**  
**Face to Face Session – Chart Comments**

**Question 1: Looking 10 years into the future, what outcomes should OWEB achieve through its investments and how will we know we have achieved them?**

Strategic approach to whole watershed restoration – riparian, stream, upland, weeds – not just listed fish

- Monitoring – baseline and beyond
- Identify outcomes that will indicate if the system is restored, e.g. beaver are supported
- Improve summer base flows and water quality improve natural water storage and maintain existing better management practices through restoration grants
  - Monitoring: baseline and beyond; private and public
  - Coordination of public/private effort and data about watersheds, success, projects
    - Example GIS information
- Baseline – show results from funding to support monitoring
- Funders – agencies want data but the money is not there (travel costs)
- Public awareness about watershed issues is increased – private sector role/understanding
  - Know your audience and choose words carefully – connect why it matters to them
  - Look at everything in the watershed
- OWEB share monitoring programs and design agency data on one hosting platform – not enough money to monitor all
  - Acceptability of data/sharing
  - Improve fish and wildlife; resident aquatic wildlife habitat
  - Social and community engagement

**Question 2: What tools and programs should OWEB have in its toolbox to help you achieve your goals?**

- Consistent, reliable restoration funding for diverse restoration projects
- Continuity of partnerships and participation with other state agencies
  - Regular communication, e.g. Oregon Plan Implementation Teams as model – with follow up!
- Restoration (statewide and by watershed) informed by research and monitoring
- Education and outreach funding to connect with difficult to reach landowners to do restoration
- Predictable, long term funding for watershed council staff – via maintaining good relationship with the Network of Watershed Councils and OACD.
  - Provide funding with general parameters, but don't prescribe use of money.
- Continue and/or expand small grant program – more money in the pot – to help get new landowners 'in the door'
- Re: Weed Control Program
  - Work with other agencies to play an active role to address this problem and expand the weed control program

- Now that OWEB oversees funding for Oregon State Weed Board, how will actual on the ground funding be impacted? Concern that there will be a reduction
- OWEB supports watershed councils to work with public lands – balanced with their ongoing support for private lands – and helping make linkages between the two
- Develop a tool for reporting private and public land restoration work
- Focus on in-stream flows by doing more monitoring and management of the resource
- Take a whole watershed approach – see that the landscape around the streams is just as important to in-stream health!

**Question 3: What does OWEB need to do differently to achieve the benefits (ecological, social/community, and/or economic) that are important to you?**

Big Picture/Priorities

- Ensure ecological benefits are primary objective, while recognizing economic and community benefits
- Recognize that economic value to landowner and community benefit for the landowner may drive ecological outcomes \*
- Recognize unique nature of OWEB regions and the type of projects that provide benefit (irrigation vs. fish passage, for example)
- OWEB should review priorities; maybe consider regional priorities (not always salmon)
- Prioritize restoration funding over land moving out of private ownership (tax base)
- Keep working to make ecological benefits economically viable.

Application process:

- OWEB application and review process should recognize that ecological projects achieve economic outcomes
- Ensure local selection process remains a priority combined with local/diverse values \*
- Enable process where review team can ask questions of applicants
- Avoid adding new complexity to grant process and keep same application for more than one cycle
- If application changes, need to know why
- Accept electronic proposals!
- Application process should recognize importance of project throughout watershed not just riparian
- Applications should provide ability to apply for funding on public lands as a part of a watershed effort/approach
- OWEB process should recognize difficulty of getting landowner match if project isn't economically beneficial as well

Work with Partner Agencies

- Invest in work with regulatory agencies to streamline permitting for OWEB projects (support, advocate)
- Re-educate state agencies who have stopped programs, which then harm OWEB's investments
  - For example, ODOT's weed cutbacks having impact on OWEB's prior investments in weed control

## Monitoring

- Projects need to be monitored for as long as the landowner is required to maintain project
- Need to have funding
- Monitor projects after major climatic events
- Need standards that show the ‘the good’ that comes from projects.
  - Need a comparison across parameters such as water quality, weeds, etc.
  - OWEB should develop a clear ‘unit of good’ to help distinguish projects and programs that deliver success
- In measuring, include costs associated with projects and outcomes
  - What are the economic costs to the community as an ecological benefit is being sought?
- Need strong performance measures or legislative funding will disappear

## Public Outreach/Information

- Provide more opportunities to share results of successful projects between partners—make information available in a useable format by others in the community
- Need better public relations—tell them about ‘the good’
  - Context, “sense of place” must be part of the message to reach people
    - Total acres, acres improved and so what?
    - Hard data and simple pictures speaks volumes
  - Messages must target metro areas if they are going to be successful (Portland, Salem and Eugene)
  - Consider engaging Ducks Unlimited in a campaign about successful work being done as a result of OWEB funding/partnership

## New Initiatives/Changes to Initiatives

- Would like to see Whole Watershed Initiative that is NOT fish driven
- Weeds
  - More money
  - Regulations to support reductions
  - Successful weed reduction programs highlighted as teaching opportunities
- Livestock fencing/riparian area

## Creative Tools

- Consider grazing as a tool for weed reduction
- Consider using OWEB dollars to improve publicly held lands if the impact will have higher benefit for neighboring private landowners (e.g. weed control on federal lands that if ignored, would negatively impact private landowners)
- CREP (OWEB is really connecting well with landowners through this program)
  - Concerned about re-invasion of weeds; Spraying concerns in riparian management area threatens the heart/soul of CREP
  - Many areas are in jeopardy due to re-invasion
  - Current CREP contract/program doesn’t allow adequate flexibility, money, etc.
  - Needs ongoing funding for “incentives for on-going management”

## Education and Advocacy for Resource Protection

- Public education needed regarding weeds:
  - Landowners
  - Wildlife interests
  - Users
  - Hunters
  - Tourists
  - Recreationists
- Have a person dedicated to weed education (as Wallowa County did—was very successful)

### **Question 4: If you were in charge of designing OWEB’s investment strategy, how would you design it to be specific and focused, while allowing opportunities to support new and creative ideas to achieve restoration outcomes?**

- Ideas need to grow out of local users
- Public lands component should be better utilized. Are there places on public land where we can explore creative approaches that would pose less risk than if applied on other lands.
- Remember that the east side is not the west side.
- Grant approvals are too salmon-centric. Eastern Oregon should be focused on water quality.
- Need more baseline data, prioritize projects accordingly, demonstrate improvements, and resurvey periodically.
- Be open to new technical information and new ideas. Example - use of diversion structures.
- Stay in tune with the fact that all watershed councils or other groups do not have the same capacity in terms of expertise or even number of people to do the job. Make room for and help those with more limited capacity.
- SIP is a good tool. Keep it although recognize that it causes conflict with those who don’t have a SIP.
- Eastern Oregon – big land bases smaller populations pose challenges that OWEB should recognize.
- Creativity – use old methods in new ways. Example Border Irrigation.
- Maintain flexibility in OWEB budget allocations. E.g. - If in a particular year an interesting approach is proposed – maintain budget flexibility to fund the project even if it would exceed that years proposed budget percentage.
- Use funds from other agencies/sources for acquisitions and free up more money for restoration.
- Land acquisition – how will we know if projects meet goals. Is the money better spent on public lands.
- Too much money is going to acquisitions. State Parks is acquiring. Keep money for grant funds.
- Using “unique” high quality watershed as demonstration might be used to help develop creative ideas.
- Concerned about diluting OWEB funds if spent on public lands.

- Emphasize on connecting with youth organizations such as 4H and FFA – to get them thinking about where clean water comes from
- Capitalize on energy project development and conveyances mitigation funds. Could be a source of funding grant proposals.
- Small grant programs – great source for creativity.
- Looking at watersheds approximating 6<sup>th</sup> field HUCs – What are the gaps going on there. Foster interaction among partners and others. Encourage creative conversations and learn from other’s mistakes.
- Promote GIS to add clarity and accountability to projects.
- Focus on salmon elsewhere – here it limits our ability to get creative ideas approved. Need distinction for Eastern Oregon.
- Malheur Priority Area is a good example of many partners and it works well to promote thinking about a range of approaches.
- Focus on getting the “ecosystems” working so we can use money better. Different ecosystems may require different approaches and uniquely creative trials.
- Continue to fund Technical Assistance Grants.
- Need more interaction between OWEB and grant writers – to promote deeper understanding.
- Support grants that cross jurisdictional boundaries and with multiple partners. A focus on singular ownership usually results in fewer benefits.
- Poll the regional review committees – Ask what creative ideas were not approved?
- Assign a percent of the budget to “creative ideas”.
- Not sure that “new and creative” has meaning. We should apply what we know from watershed science.
- When applying “new and creative” do so at scales which balance the risk.
- Current focus on fish doesn’t lend itself to creativity on the uplands.

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## **Baker City – May 7, 2012 Written Comments**

### **Question 1: Looking 10 years into the future, what outcomes should OWEB achieve through its investments and how will we know we have achieved them?**

- How will we know? Implementing a well thought out and rigorous monitoring program. What outcomes? Significant progress made in solving water quality, habitat and upland improvements carried out by well-funded and effective SWCD’s & WSC’s.
- Continue putting funding towards restoration projects with known benefits. Supporting the SWCD’s and councils is money well spent. Success is indicated by the number of projects implemented.
- Riparian area improvement – sufficient to support beaver re-introduction.
- Ecological outcomes – determined and measured through monitoring, preferably in partnership with other state and federal agencies and tribes. Community engagement – this data is already being gathered in council support and project reporting. Economic

Benefit – measureable in jobs reporting and ecological services created (tough to capture this one).

- Prevent further degradation (requires more “before” longer duration “after” monitoring.
- OWEB should continue to improve water quality. Eastern Oregon has very important headwaters that provide habitat for salmon downstream. It is important to continue the work started. Natural resource improvements are not achieved over night. Taking land out of production to protect permanently is not the only solution.
- Outcome – overall watershed health! OWEB can gauge their successes in finding that all avenues of sustaining functioning ecological processes are in motion. Example: The wheels are all turning and there are no squeaks!
- Improved water quality. Improved salmon habitat. If we reach these two goals then we will know success.
- OWEB should invest in increasing watershed awareness with a positive public view of the program. An increase in public awareness and actual watershed benefit should be apparent in the amount of participation and ecological monitoring.
- We can have lots of BBQ’s, tours and printed material, but without the actual on the ground restoration it is pointless. The priority should be actual restoration and the funding to monitor and show improvement, provided there is an understanding that even 10 years is not long enough to have drastic improvement for issues that have taken 100 years to develop.
- Cleaner, healthier watersheds through improved agricultural management strategies. Not by entirely eliminating certain agricultural practices but by finding and implementing new ways for management and by making upgrades to older systems to make agriculture/natural resources more efficient. These can be measured through monitoring reports/SWCD feedback and getting projects on the ground.
- Outcomes should focus on strategic, measureable actions that are monitored over time. Water resources rather than individual fish species should be prioritized, looking especially at improving stream flow and the ability of basins to capture and store spring run-off in ecologically sound ways.
- Reduction in stream temperatures coming off public lands. Widespread expansion of beaver to assist with improved timing of flows, better water quality and improved flood control. Increases focus on water and less strictly on fish, especially salmon as it leaves out too many areas. East side needs its own priorities which are not water driven.
- Priorities with water would need to enhance monitoring programs with baselines established along with projects before and after. Much of what has happened in the past needs to continue. Data will show improvement in water quality, habitat and wildlife improvements.
- Cleaner water in rivers, lakes, estuaries and cooler water. More water in rivers. Increase in native fish and wildlife populations. Increase in riparian and other wildlife habitats
- Projects completed that also benefit communities and economics.

**Question 2: Picture your watershed: What tools and programs can OWEB provide in its toolbox to help you achieve your goals?**

- Money dedicated to a broad range of watershed issues – that is – just as much being spent on upland as there is in stream/riparian areas.
- Continue to fund the small grants program.....it works! Increase its funding if possible. Do not rank grant applications on the admin portion if allowed 10% it shouldn't weigh in if less is asked for on the budget.
- Tools? Programs? Much of the Powder Basin Watershed Council work will be coop projects on Wallowa-Whitman NF and Baker BLM area offices, state elk refuges, state grazing land, county mined land..... and adjacent private land. We need OWEB to feel comfortable with and support the council doing coop projects on federal and state lands especially since Baker County SWCD's are against the council doing much on private lands.
- First and foremost, a reliable long term source of restoration funding. Secondly, a consistent and reliable method of funding council capacity. Support of the Oregon Network which can then maintain an accessible tool box for all councils.
- Convince other state agencies (ODOF, ODWR et all) to participate a bit more actively in our routine business. Ten years ago they did a much better job at this.
- Funding for on-the-ground projects continues to be the biggest obstacle. Education efforts have finally paid off and landowners are becoming more aware of water quality and are willing to participate.
- Money/funding to sustain weed programs throughout the state (bordering states, along Oregon's perimeters).
- Restoration funding. Monitor funding to support the good work that is being accomplished on the ground when EPA, DEQ look at quantifying or justifying money spent.
- Continue providing on the ground cost share for projects (irrigation improvement, water management, uplands and forest health).
- Our area prides itself on the landowner involvement and contribution. We are looking for results from restoration projects. The most help we could have would be the grant funds focused on real restoration rather than acquisitions and agency backfill.
- Water management funding -> help to improve irrigation efficiency -> both economic and ecological benefit. Energy conservation funding -> there are partnering groups out there focused on energy conservation which has economic and ecological benefits.
- Stabilizing funding for the organizations that plan and implement restoration projects; creating priorities that recognize geographic differences; prioritizing areas without anadromous fish; prioritizing restoration work over the acquisition of land.
- Aerial photos. Stream temperature collected on private lands. Stream gauges. Evolving GIS map online where we can see what other projects have been funded by OWEB on private and public lands (their focus and success)
- Continued monitoring projects. Recognition that different watersheds have different issues. One size does not fit all. Weed control needs more emphasis. More partners.
- *Increased stream flow* – restoration, education, monitoring, tech assistance, small grants. *Increased groundwater levels* – restoration, education, monitoring, research, tech assist. *Increased number of steelhead, Chinook salmon, redband trout and bull trout* – restoration, education, monitoring, tech assist for habitat and passage projects. Increase

fiscal admin % on projects to create better projects. Offer all types of OWEB projects 2 times a year (education, monitoring, tech assistance)

**Question 3: What does OWEB need to do differently to achieve the benefits (ecological, social/community, and/or economic) that are important to you?**

- Focus on restoring ecological processes that accelerate stream/riparian corridor restoration of function and not so much on listed fish. Require private landowners who receive a grant from OWEB to share results of their project. Fund projects in watersheds that build on each other. More integration.
- Monitoring efforts should include an evaluation of landowner compliance; for instance, insuring that fish screens remains in place.
- Streamline permitting process to ensure projects get on the ground in a timely manner. Realize that each area within a region is unique.
- Understand the unique characteristics of the different regions. There has been some issue with misunderstanding our unique irrigation systems. Although the aspects have been explained, there are still some key people who continue to apply parameters that don't work and have expectations that aren't possible.
- Overall, the current structure works, but avoid unnecessarily increasing complexity that can discourage good projects. Encourage management of the resource.
- Working with groups that put projects on the ground. Spending money on projects and not becoming investors of the water and land.
- While OWEB focuses on water quality it is also important to acknowledge an increase in agricultural production as a result of some of these projects which keep the economy going and benefits the community.
- Work more closely with OSU extension service and other state entities.
- If it isn't broke, don't fix it. OWEB does a great job and should be looking for refinement, maybe not big change. Continuing to facilitate the engagement of community as the foundation of the future.
- Ability to hold money for follow-up on certain grant projects. E.g. juniper follow up.
- OWEB needs to keep federal agency review team reps to a minimum. Too often a federal perspective is put on a state program. Make sure ag type projects get a fair shake – too often I hear from west side friends they won't ever apply to OWEB with an ag project.
- Increase education/outreach, monitoring, tech assist, research so we can do more strategic restoration in the best locations and get the best outcomes.

**Question 4: If you were in charge of designing OWEB's investment strategy, how would you design it to be specific and focused while allowing opportunities to support new and creative ideas to achieve restoration outcomes?**

- Focus on water. Better identify how projects within a watershed on public and private lands are linked so we can encourage better cooperation between groups and a willingness of private landowners to work with public land management agencies and share their data. Ecological processes.
- Projects need to grow out of the needs and ecology of the local watersheds rather than a prescription from Salem.

- Make sure to keep small grant funding available. These are of the most benefit by putting a lot of projects on the ground and making a big impact. Keep 2 grant cycles per year. With monitoring in mind, provide partners grant funding to purchase monitoring equipment i.e. portable water measurement devices for water temperature.
- Less acquisitions! Research on the ultimate outcomes and benefits of restoration through acquisitions as opposed to private land activities.
- Continue to support opportunities to utilize new ideas and technology to achieve watershed improvement goals.
- The same as OWEB is doing now. Going out and getting feedback from partners. BLM – better partner. Government applying for OWEB funding is not okay because it is not an equal playing field. It is okay if they are working with watershed or SWCDs. They have stable funding for employees.
- Prioritize by what programs are making the strongest difference in overall watershed health.
- Keep the goals and objectives specific. If it is water quality and salmon then keep it that way. A lot of work can be done to address both issues which are one in the same.
- More watershed related focus on programs in local schools (4-H, FFA, etc.).
- Seek the participation of RRT's in developing a restoration atlas to be used in prioritizing work.
- The technical assistance portion of the funding may need to become a larger share of the pie.
- Do what you are doing now – get input from the locals – not some top down from Salem. Plan and prioritization.
- Design framework with some flexibility. Establish feedback funds each bi-annum for larger projects.