

John Day Session Overview – May 8, 2012

Note: the following information is offered for the Board to consider as it develops its Long Term Investment Strategy.

Long Term Investment Strategy Comments

John Day participant comments reflected a perception of a clear link between ecological, social and economic benefits that result from watershed work. They encouraged OWEB to support a healthy environment that is compatible with a working landscape. Many comments suggested OWEB take a holistic watershed approach that encompasses the full ‘ridge top to ridge top’ landscape. They supported setting longer-term priorities and goals that maintain flexibility for local and regional groups to achieve them. Given the unique needs and ecological, social and economic conditions across the state, many participants noted that one size does not fit all. Many encouraged OWEB to continue incentivizing and educating landowners to practice good stewardship ethics. OWEB is seen as a catalyst for coordinating local, state and federal partners to: collect and share data; educate each other and the public; work together on projects; and articulate lessons learned for future generations. This catalyst role was seen to be particularly beneficial in the areas of monitoring and public outreach and education.

Additional Advice

In addition to investment strategy level comments, many suggestions were made about ways to: improve the small grants program (e.g. expand this funding mechanism and make higher caps); invest a small percentage in innovative efforts (this comment is linked to the investment strategy suggestion to retain flexibility for regions in meeting priorities set by OWEB); and finally, to include economic indicators as an outcome measure.

Wrap-Up

Tom and Board member Alan Henning reflected that they heard encouragement to take a whole watershed approach; that one size does not fit all; and that OWEB should support monitoring efforts to enable an outcomes approach to restoration (and monitoring is transferable to other projects and basins). They also heard there needs to be better coordination among state and federal agencies around permitting and monitoring. And they heard encouragement to support innovation (e.g. innovative green projects). They also heard OWEB should play an important role in telling the west side the east side’s story.