

Lower Deschutes River Managers Meeting Minutes

**May 8th
10 AM -1:00 PM**

**ODFW Office
3561 Klindt Dr.
The Dalles, Or 97058**

**ZOOM: 848 1296 0965
Password: 184349**

CHAIR: Sara Gregory/ ODFW

10:00 AM In attendance:

Scott Green (OPRD); Matt Davey (OPRD); Scott Hege (Local Govt.); Sara Gregory (ODFW); Jason Seal (ODFW); Phil Brady (Local Govt.); Tim Schwartz (OSP); Mary Fleischmann (Facilitator)
On-line: Mike Millay (BLM); Kevin Weldon (BLM); Jen Graham (CTWS); Alan Hanson (OSMB); Robert Compton (BIA); Lane Magill (Wasco Co. Sheriff);

Review/Additions to Agenda/ approval of Agenda: (Motion needed for reviews or additions to the agenda. Motion is needed for approval of agenda. MOTION made by Scott Hege to approve agenda for Managers meeting, Scott G second. MOTION passed to approve agenda.

Approval of meeting minutes from Managers Meeting on February 6, 2026; Review minutes from IIT April 2026 meeting.

MOTION made by Scott Green to approve Managers meeting minutes from Feb. 6th, Second by Scott H. MOTION passed to approve minutes.

Discussion regarding approval of IIT minutes. The IIT is not scheduled to meet again at this time, and IIT members need to approve those minutes. Mary will send out an email to IIT members to review, make motions and approve the April minutes from the IIT meeting.

Old Business:

- Updates on River Guide and release dates. Mike Millay shared that the boater guide is ready for publishing and is going to look great. Gabriel Rousseau (BLM Cartographer) worked on this. Some challenges are with the QR Code as well as with the Avenza app. They both create some unknowns. BLM is getting ready to order x number of guides thru the State Office, which contracts either internal or external for publishing. They are not sure how to disperse guides at this time; this guide will be similar in cost as the John Day Guide. Scott H wants to make sure that shops in Maupin for boaters. Looking at a PDF form, which might be able to be put on the BLM website. Mike shared that he wants people to have the information with boating season around the corner. He shared that shops can purchase and sell the guides, Gearfix in Bend has already been requesting guides. BLM will send out an email to outfitters/guides of how to purchase. They want a digital copy to be free and Mike will follow up. Jason Seals asked when boaters buy passes that maybe information could be put on the pass. Possibly have a link to a PDF? Have it be more standout on boater pass receipt? Mike shared that there are some restrictions with Rec. Gov, but will look at what they can do.
- Updates on meeting announcements on Rec.Gov. Mike shared that BLM does have access but not sure what link to put in. He will follow up with Beth who has been working on this. The link that OPRD has is good – maybe add a message like “link can be found here” with message from Beth. Currently minutes, meeting agendas and locations are posted on OPRD website. It was

brought to Mary's attention that there needs to be an update of Board members, as list is outdated. Mary will follow up.

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New Business:

- New fire restrictions this year? Close fires earlier? What are counties time frames. Folks are concerned about fires this year and not a favorite subject but discussed. EMS meeting happened with Gilliam, Sherman County and folks in John Day corridor. Fire restrictions go into effect June 1st which is stated in the Wild and Scenic corridor information. BLM's restrictions are June 1st to October 15th. Question raised due to conditions if those dates would change and have restrictions sooner vs later. Mike shared that he could get a message to change those dates – or find out if State office is looking at that. He also shared that they are now technically called the “Wildlife Fire Service” as of this year, BLM is now part of that organization for wildfire. Currently campfire closures are still in place for June 1st. Oregon Dept. of Forestry imposed fire restrictions May 8th; Wasco Co. is on full fire ban. OPRD is okay going to May 8th restrictions- all of this makes things confusing to the public. OPRD makes call not County in Wasco County. (Lane has a contract with OPRD)
- Plans for fall float on Segment 4 for field trip. Who is interested? One day or overnight? Who will coordinate? This was discussed earlier in the year and Scott H wanted to discuss if it can happen and the importance of these field trips. Currently BLM is short staffed but could facilitate in the fall with shuttle, gear, etc. Looking at potential of October. Mike shared that they will have 2 river rangers on board once they get background checks and that September would be a challenge and it would be better mid to end of October. Scott H. shared that the group keeps talking about Segment 4 and the work being done in that segment. It would be good to see it. Jason Seals shared that he can help organize and BLM suggested to work directly with Katie. OPRD

shared that they also have a raft. Discussion around back-up dates. Jason will send out a doodle poll to see who is interested and dates that work for folks. This would be a 2-day float with one overnight.

- Annual Law Enforcement meeting highlights. Tim gave highlights, meeting was well attended. BLM had a few rangers coming on board. Lane mentioned contract with OPRD he hasn't seen yet but it seems to be good to go. The meeting folks shared what resources all the agencies had available. Doing coordinated training with new folks from Warm Springs – looking at monthly training. Priorities this year are PFD's; boater passes and fire restrictions. Will have visible enforcement over Memorial weekend. Shared that things are overall pretty quiet over July 4th, which is probably due to no fireworks allowed.
- Scott Hege will retire and introduced Paul Brady as new rep for local government. Scott is not running again for County Commission. Paul introduced himself, he has been born and raised on the Deschutes so has some first hand understanding of the river and some of the issues that come up. Robert Compton also shared that he will be leaving BIA and his replacement will be a person named Cinco Cronemeyer. (Mary will follow up getting his information). Scott Green also shared that he is retiring the end of June, this is his last meeting. A new manager will be hired. Matt Davey shared that the position will open in June and questions, etc. can be sent to him until position is filled.

Round Table:

- Confederated Tribe of Warm Springs – No new to report
- OSMB-Nothing new to report.
- ODFW- Issues with E-biking continue. Discussion about better signage and will work with OPRD. There is very obvious sign at 2 -mile mark but folks continue to ignore. It's an issue and

people simply don't care. Suggestions of signage that states that the trails are being monitored by camera's which there needs to be cameras in place. Spring Chinook going on now to May 20th compared to no season since 2018. People are excited about fishing at Moody Island. Prediction for hatchery fish is that plenty are available. There is limited opportunity this year. This summer crawlers will be back on; there will be trap operators at Scherer's Falls monitoring July 1. Status of steelhead? Question. Will decide in July 1 with daily passage but monitor over the month and watch for critical points of action. The program is in place.

- Wasco Sheriff – Back on track for regular patrols. Guide conversation regarding issues that could occur on lower river. Brad Staples is a good person to contact with there are boats broken down on Segment 4. Protocol is that OPRD is notified first, then ODFW who will escort boats out that have issues.
- OPRD – Heritage landing silt removal happened. New state park updates regarding use of drones. The policy prohibits usage and will be monitored. Concerns have been visitor conflicts, wildlife concerns, privacy and safety. If launching from private property can only monitor if enters park property which can enforce. Commercial use can happen with special permits. Administration, law enforcement, safety emergencies are able to fly. At the EMS meeting there were 23 in attendance. There were 3 fire marshals familiar with fires and emergencies so helped to have face to face. Issues addressed were communication due to canyon issues (satellite phones). OPRD is short staffed and bringing in seasonals. They will float every Friday.
- BLM – Contracting to add 2 compost toilets on segment 1 – Whiskey Dick and Lower Whitehorse. Still have to get Headquarters approval for anything that they do. Issue is that

BLM has to do front up cash and then get reimbursed. Looking at if there is a way to work with OPRD who appears to have less hoops to jump through. If OPRD purchased the toilets and then BLM could pay OPRD as a way to deal with the challenge to avoid contracting and then needing headquarters approval. Toilet Tech has a sole source contract. Is it possible to provide sole source a letter? OPRD's budget is tight but can figure out a way to work together on this project. Matt will work with Mike and look at single unit. Do need to hire contracting ... will keep OSMB in the loop. Follow up with boater guide, purchase and where on website information can be found. Mike shared that BLM received a letter from "American Outdoor Association" to look out for guides and outfitters to do business on public lands. Boater pass purchasing could be more efficient and suggested ideas such as a different portal to work on than the regular one. The complaints have to do with when they have folks signed up for trips then cancel and they new folks want to sign up.... just want it to be "more efficient". Mike shared that this went to the state office but not sure what can be done due to Rec.gov. so, working with lead office. Mary raised question regarding if this is an attempt to come in the back door to do away with first come, first serviced which is how permits are handled. Mike shared there is some concern about the \$6 transaction fee. Need to see how/if this impacts the Resource Management Plan. Scott H had a question regarding the all- access fee – where are things at? This had to do with the walk-in's, bikers on Segment 4. Mike explained that implementation of this has not happened for a number of reasons. BLM included this with their business plan to the RAC when they put into place the \$5 fee but have not moved forward. A survey needed to happen to find out exactly what the use is, how many folks are using the camp grounds, toilets, ext. BLM survey's have to be specific to justify user fees. They acknowledge that there is an issue but not worth pursuing

at the time. It's very much a capacity and funding issue. Currently they have other priorities and capacity issues. There is also right of way issues and looking at NEPA. The good news is that the \$5 flat fee is in in the business plan. It is recognized that Chase with OPRD has been doing some usage checks but this might not be the right time to pursue. Currently users are paying parking fees along with fishing fees.

- Local Government – Wasco Co. fairgrounds have expanded their facilities. There is an RV park and lots of capacity. The facility is set up for emergencies available to use such as for wildfire agencies.
- BIA – not sure about fire restrictions on Indian land.
- OSP- Nothing more to add

Public comment: No one from public in attendance

Final Discussions, Follow-up, Action Items

- Mary will send out IIT meeting minutes to get approval to add to website.
- Mary will get updated Board member information to OPRD for website
- Jason Seals will work with Katie (BLM) to set tentative dates for Segment 4 field trip float.

- Future Managers Meetings:

- November 13th, 10 am – 1pm BLM Office, Prineville

Meeting adjourned: