

Consortium Technical Committee Meeting Summary



SEPTEMBER 2, 2020 CALLED TO ORDER: 1:30 PM ADJOURNED: 3:31 PM

QUORUM PRESENT - YES - 15 MEMBERS

MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM/VIDEOCONFERENCE

Approval of June 17, 2020 Meeting Summary

Brian Stahl made a motion to approve the June 17, 2020 Consortium Technical Committee (CTC) meeting summary. Andrew Degner seconded the motion. The CTC unanimously approved the June 17, 2020 CTC meeting summary as presented. (15:0:0)

Election of Officers

Rebecca Geisen, Consortium Managing Director mentioned that Andrew Degner and Carrie Pak have completed their first year as Consortium Technical Committee Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. Each is eligible to serve for an additional year. CTC By-laws state that the CTC Chair and Vice-Chair shall be elected for a period of one year with a possible one-year succession.

Nominations for Consortium Technical Committee (CTC) Chair were opened. Todd Heidgerken made a motion to nominate Andrew Degner for CTC Chair. Mike Grimm seconded the motion. There were no other nominations. The CTC unanimously approved Andrew Degner as CTC Chair. (15:0:0)

Nominations for Consortium Technical Committee Vice-Chair were open. Mike Grimm nominated Carrie Pak for CTC Vice-Chair. Todd Heidgerken seconded the motion. There were no other nominations. The CTC unanimously approved Carrie Pak as CTC Vice-Chair. (15:0:0)

Natural Resources Conservation Services Presentation

Amanda Moore, State Resource Conservationist from the Oregon National Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) joined the Consortium Technical Committee meeting to give a presentation on source water protection highlights from the 2018 Farm Bill. Section 1244 of the bill - Source Water Protection Through Targeting of Agricultural Practices - mandates that NRCS encourage the protection of

drinking water sources by identifying local priority areas for drinking water protection in each state; providing increased incentives for practices that relate to water quality and quantity and protect drinking water sources while also benefitting producers; and dedicating at least 10% of the total funds available for conservation programs (with the exception of the Conservation Reserve Program), each year beginning in FY 2019 through FY 2023, to be used for source water protection.

Amanda advised that Oregon NRCS is collaborating with the Department of Environmental Quality to identify and delineate source water protection (SWP) priority areas for NRCS program delivery and outlined how through a phased approach those areas are prioritized.

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) promotes coordination of NRCS conservation activities with partners that offer value-added contributions to expand their collective ability to address on-farm, watershed, and regional natural resource concerns. Through RCPP, NRCS seeks to co-invest with partners to implement projects that demonstrate innovative solutions to conservation challenges and provide measurable improvements and outcomes tied to the resource concerns they seek to address. The RCPP is now a standalone program with its own funding - \$300 million annually. The RCPP application period is now open through November 4, 2020. The National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) source water protection component can provide funding for specific projects. NWQI funding can be separated into 4 general categories - funding to write a plan for drinking water source protection; funding for on-the-ground conservation practices to improve drinking water source watersheds; funding to write a plan for water quality impaired watersheds, not necessarily used for drinking water; and funding for on-the ground practices to improve water quality in impaired streams. Amanda shared information on the FY2019 and FY2020 NWQI SWP planning phase projects. As part of the FY2020 project work, NRCS is currently working with Clackamas River Water Providers and the Joint Water Commission to develop NWQI planning phase source water assessments.

Amanda thanked CTC members for the opportunity to share information about NRCS and noted that they are always looking for input from partners to help shape their conservation programs to ensure they are addressing the important resource concerns in a given area. Amanda provided Oregon NRCS staff contact information.

CTC members thanked Amanda for the presentation. Rebecca advised that she would send out the PowerPoint presentation slides to CTC members.

Director Report

Rebecca advised that at their meeting in August, the City of Wilsonville City Council approved rejoining the Regional Water Providers Consortium and has signed the Consortium Intergovernmental Agreement. The Consortium Board will be asked to approve their membership at the October Board meeting. The CTC recommended Board approval of the request from the City of Wilsonville to rejoin the Consortium.

Rebecca mentioned that the UASI-funded Provision of Drinking Water Framework Plan proposals are currently being reviewed and evaluated. Rebecca noted that they hope to have a consultant on board in the next couple of months. Five proposals were received.

On September 15, 2020 as part of the Emergency Planning Committee meeting, the Regional Water Providers Consortium is hosting a panel of Consortium member representatives to talk about their entity's experience preparing risk assessments and response plans as required by the America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA), including lessons learned and resources. Panel participants include Donn Bunyard from Clackamas River Water; Kari Duncan from City of Lake Oswego; Robert Whitham from Tualatin Valley Water District; and Kim Anderson from the Portland Water Bureau. All are welcome to attend. A meeting invite will be sent out soon.

Rebecca commented that the City of Portland has enacted mandatory furloughs for all staff including Consortium staff. Although working reduced schedules, Consortium staff is prioritizing its time to ensure the work tasks and timelines are being met. If adjustments in the work plan need to be made as a result of the furloughs or reduced schedules, Consortium staff will come back to the CTC to discuss.

Climate Change Survey

Rebecca advised that in January 2020 the Consortium conducted a climate change survey to help staff develop a workplan to enhance member knowledge and engagement around climate change and its impacts to drinking water systems. Rebecca shared the results of the survey.

Rebecca noted that 17 Consortium members participated in the survey. Participants were asked how their agency/utility considered or assessed impacts of climate change to their water systems; what climate risks are they most concerned about; did they want to learn more about how to test the sensitivity of their water system to climate change; does their city or planning jurisdiction have a climate action plan; topics they are interested in learning more about; how they currently get information about climate change; and what they see as the Consortium role and how they would like to get information about climate change.

Rebecca advised that with regard to the Consortium's role in climate change, survey comments included being a clearinghouse for information; creating outreach opportunities and messaging to customers; developing presentations and bringing in guest speakers for the Board; putting together brown bags; integrating a climate change lens into existing working groups; taking more of a leadership role on climate change in the region and guiding water providers in planning, adaptation and implementing climate change actions; and being a venue to discuss what utilities are doing with regard to

climate change. Rebecca noted that there are many ways climate change can be incorporated into the Consortium workplan. Rebecca reminded CTC members that the Consortium Board identified climate change as important issue to address as a regional organization and that the results of this survey and guidance from the CTC is needed to help shape a workplan that is useful to members moving forward.

CTC members discussed the Consortium role in climate change. Suggestions included:

- Establish a clearinghouse for climate change information
- Develop a universal messaging for climate change – taking the things the Consortium is good at, e.g., messaging and outreach and adding a climate change layer that is relevant to customers daily lives
- Conduct table top exercises with climate change focus
- Bring in speakers, e.g., EPA
- Raise awareness, hear how other jurisdictions are responding to climate change, create avenue for information sharing
- Update content of climate change page on regionalh2o.org
- Create Consortium source water protection/climate change committee (staff that does this work from member entities much like the Communicators Network)

Rebecca advised that Consortium staff will continue to work on integrating climate change initiatives into the annual workplan that includes the themes discussed today – connecting people; acting as a clearinghouse; updating the Consortium website and identifying key talking points; and including climate change themes in messaging.

Program Updates

Bonny Cushman, Consortium Program Coordinator advised that the Consortium multi-media conservation campaign is wrapping up. The campaign delivered the same strong messaging including 17 radio and television interviews despite challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Two additional television interviews are scheduled for later this month – the first on how to incorporate waterwise plants in fall plantings, and another on how to shut down/winterize your irrigation system.

Bonny reported that this year, the Consortium increased its digital outreach by incorporating additional platforms (YouTube and Over the Top Television) to its existing efforts. These platforms, along with digital radio, are part of a strategy to conduct outreach to viewers and listeners that are not reached by traditional media campaigns.

Bonny advised that September is National Emergency Preparedness Month and the Consortium has begun its emergency preparedness campaign. The multimedia campaign included messaging in English and Spanish and is comprised of television ads and on-air interviews, TriMet bus ads, Oregonian advertorial ads, Over the Top Television, and other online messaging elements.

Bonny mentioned that Consortium staff is currently looking at how to continue the school assembly program in this new remote learning school scenario. It is unclear at this time how the programs can be adapted but Consortium staff will be working with the Consortium Conservation Committee and the program creators to develop a new approach to bringing these shows to students. This same group is also looking at how the Children's Clean Water Festival can be adapted virtually as well.

Bonny noted that Consortium Staff and a small work group developed a new "smart controllers" webpage and staff created a "2020 wildfires and your water" webpage that included talking points and links to other resources related to the wildfires for the Consortium website. In addition, new website initiatives, e.g. water by the numbers webpage, resiliency projects webpage will begin soon.

Rebecca gave a shout out to Consortium staff for all of their hard work on the summer media campaign during this challenging time of the pandemic. The campaign and other Consortium programs have gone on seamlessly throughout the past several months despite difficult working situations.

Carrie Pak from Tualatin Valley Water District (TVWD) mentioned that TVWD along with the cities of Tigard, Beaverton, and Lake Oswego have been working together to develop a small regional hydrologic model. Carrie noted that they will be excited to share information about the project as it becomes available.

FY 2020-21 Consortium Budget and Workplan Concepts Discussion

Rebecca noted that it is time to discuss budget and workplan concepts for the 2021-22 fiscal year. Rebecca reminded CTC members that the Consortium Board will discuss budget concepts for at their October Board meeting and guidance is needed from the CTC to determine what projects and program priorities should be recommended to the Executive Committee and Board for their consideration.

Rebecca advised that it is the goal of Consortium Staff to keep the budget flat or lower to accommodate our members who may be experiencing reduced budgets. Rebecca advised that it should be easy to achieve this due to an anticipated carryover of \$127,000 resulting from furloughs, reduced work schedules, unspent contingency, savings from reduced travel and other programs due to COVID-19.

Consortium staff has discussed some potential new work tasks with a focus on equity and preparedness for CTC consideration. A budget concepts memorandum was included in the meeting materials packet. Rebecca advised that potential work tasks/concepts have been organized by Strategic Plan initiatives. Rebecca reviewed the work task as outlined in the memo.

Focus Area – Meeting Water Needs

- Identify 2-3 outreach messages to focus on for the year (build resources/webpage/social media) FY20/21 we focused on gray water, smart controllers, info for landscape contractors

- Update PSU Population Research Center IGA and current and historic population and housing/household estimates with new census data – this will have budget impact estimated at \$30,000
- Russian radio ad (conservation/emergency preparedness)
- Translate Drinking Water Advisory Tool
- Translation of other outreach messaging or materials

Focus Area: Emergency Preparedness

- Provide project management for UASI funded reproduction of Consortium’s three emergency preparedness videos in up to 15 safe harbor languages using native speakers – UASI funding dependent
- Update Emergency Water Treatment and Distribution Plan/Manual (discuss need)
- Table top exercise and sector specific training
- Project management for RDPO/UASI funded Provision of Emergency Drinking Water Supply Framework

Focus Area: Strengthening Regional Partnerships

- Translate Drinking Water Advisory Tool
- Develop member to member/peer to peer “welcome” program for new Consortium members and staff

CTC members discussed the FY 2020-21 budget and workplan concepts and supported the direction and initiatives proposed by staff. It was suggested that lessons learned from working during a pandemic on how the Consortium can do things differently, offer different, e.g., remote/virtual programming should be considered, and thought should be given to resources needed to help do things differently.

Rebecca noted that the Conservation and Emergency Preparedness committees will be meeting in the coming weeks and they may have additional feedback or ideas. The Consortium Executive Committee will meet next week to discuss the FY 2020-21 budget and workplan concepts as well.

October Consortium Board Meeting Draft Agenda

Rebecca pointed out that included in the meeting materials that were sent out was the October Consortium Board meeting draft agenda. Agenda items include approval of Board meeting minutes, approval of the City of Wilsonville membership, approval of the ORWARN membership, director and committee reports, a FY 2020-21 budget and workplan concepts discussion, and a placeholder discussion. Potential topics for the placeholder included a legislative update and priorities discussion and/or ideas for breakout sessions or polling to make meeting more interactive. Rebecca noted the draft agenda will be discussed at the Executive Committee meeting next week as well. It was suggested action items be called out or more prominently displayed on the agenda.

Member Updates/Summer Supply

Clackamas River – Fish on the Run campaign was launched at the end of August. River flows have dipped a little below median. September 15 is important date as target flows go up. So far, so good. Challenging period is late September into October.

Trask/Tualatin – Scoggins reservoir dead on median, 58.7 % full. Barney reservoir pretty average, currently 62% full. Finish JWC treatment plant expansion; tracer study approved by OHA. Hillsboro, TVWD and Portland approved an emergency interconnection agreement. Agreement runs through 2026.

Bull Run – Updated supply graphs will be available tomorrow. Rebecca will send out link when available. Approximately six to seven billion gallons still in storage in Bull Run. No issues with supply.

City of Beaverton – Fairly average demand, peak not out of ordinary. ASR filling approximately 20% of demand.

City of Gresham – For those work groups that are currently working in City Hall, employees are being sent home daily at 4:00 p.m. for safety reasons due to evening protests.

Meeting Attendees:

David Winship – City of Beaverton

Todd Heidgerken – Clackamas River Water

Greg Robertson – City of Forest Grove

Andrew Degner – City of Gresham

Niki Iverson – City of Hillsboro

Kari Duncan – City of Lake Oswego

Sarah Jo Chaplen – Oak Lodge Water Services

Edward Campbell and Sara Petrocine – City of Portland

Brian Stahl – Rockwood Water PUD

Craig Sheldon – City of Sherwood

Tim Janssen – Sunrise Water Authority

John Goodrich – City of Tigard

Jeff Fuchs – City of Tualatin

Carrie Pak – Tualatin Valley Water District

Mike Grimm – West Slope Water District

Christine Walter – Willamette Water Supply Program

Amanda Moore – Natural Resources Conservation Services

Rebecca Geisen, Bonny Cushman, Riley Berger and Patty Burk – RWPC Staff

Next CTC Meeting: Wednesday, November 4, 2020 via *Zoom/videoconference*.