

**Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council Meeting**  
**June 19, 2023**  
**Meeting Minutes (draft)**

**Attendees:**

**Board Members:**

John Zerba, Kevin Scribner, Vern Rodighiero, Clark Lampson, Malcolm Millar, and Steve Irving

**Staff:**

Troy Baker, Emily Tilden, Brandyn Chaney, Luke Adams, and Eric Hoverson

**Zoom Attendance:**

Ralph Perkins, Ed Chesnut, Larry Widner

**Guests:**

**(0:03:17) The Meeting was called to order by John Zerba at 7:00 pm.** Observed there are enough members to constitute a quorum.

**(0:03:47) Minutes from May 15, 2023:** No additions or corrections; they will stand approved.

**(0:03:58)- Flow and Snowpack Report by Luke Adams**

Quick update for the 5/17/2023 – 6/16/2023 window.

The flows (medians: measured data and date and \*notes where applicable) on Friday, 6/16/23 the flows were as follows:

- NFWWR near confluence @ 15 cfs (34.7 cfs median: 21.8 cfs measured 6/6/23)
- SFWWR near confluence @ 134 cfs (174 cfs median: 160 cfs measured 6/5/23 \*a root wad was interfering with sensor, was repositioned after visit, adjusted rating curve due to undercutting that was occurring)
- Couse Creek @ ~2.6 cfs (3.5 cfs median: 3.5 cfs measured 6/1/23)
- WWR at 15<sup>th</sup> Ave Bridge (Grove) @ 141 cfs (OWRD) (281 cfs median: OWRD did two measurements, earlier at just below 600 cfs and later at just above 200 cfs)
- Little Walla Walla Diversion @ 111 cfs (OWRD)
- Nursery Bridge had equipment installed recently, but a rating curve hasn't been finalized yet, so there is no data for this meeting.
- WWR below Tum-A-Lum @ 6.5 cfs (87.4 cfs median: 16.8 cfs measured on 6/12/23)
- Pine Creek @ Schubert Rd. is dry. (0 cfs median: 0.02 cfs (9 gpm) measured 5/31/23)

10-year median data for WWR at 15<sup>th</sup> Ave (Grove) Bridge:

- May finished with a higher monthly median flow (585 cfs) against the 10-year data (363 cfs).
- So far, the first half of June is continuing this elevated trend, with June 2023 at 193 cfs compared to 177 cfs 10-year-avg.
- The volume in acre-feet for 2023 is 150,000 acre-feet approx. which is 124% of the median volume for the 10-year average. This has largely occurred in May as well as the last half of April and is due to late snow melt.

June 7 was the first date of no snow, according to the NRCS data. While we accumulated more snow this year, once it started to decline, it disappeared much quicker this year than last year, as in 2022, snow was measured up until June 26. Dates of no-snow reporting from stations are as follows: High Rise, May 28; Milk Shakes, June 7; Sourdough Gulch, April 11; Spruce Springs, May 6; Touchet, May 22.

NOAA/NWS update- Central OR, parts of ID, and MT have seen improvements, but degradation (D1) has expanded across Wallowa County—D0 has been issued for the foothills of northern Blue Mountains and into the lower Columbia basin. Over the next 3-4 weeks, we will likely see higher temperatures and more precipitation than typical. The outlook for July through September indicates higher temperatures and less precipitation than typical.

-Kevin suggests including data from Mill Creek.

## **(0:19:49) Updates:**

### Projects

**-Couse Creek RM4:** Anabranch is scheduled to install structures on August 24 for five days (over a weekend).

**-Mill Creek spring inventory:** Training day collaboration with forest serves, and tribes went well; we went over the process for inventorying springs and laid the foundation for our collaboration over the summer. Troy and Brandyn plan to scout the area with a hike through next Tuesday. We were looking to get started in July. (plan to gps springs on a hike through and document approx. % of the flow of tributaries to guide where to focus summer work)

**-North Fork:** For first reach: 5 permits have been returned as approved; 3 are outstanding, but we have contacted them and are expected to arrive within 7-10 business days. One of the best restoration construction teams under contract to start July 1—anxious about fires, so we want to get in and get the work done (also to prevent being stopped by heat). Next reach design is progressing.

**-Monitoring:** Luke has been making a surface-site-round visit to all the monitoring sites; he has a few days left to wrap that up. He has also been taking measurements. Brandyn has been helping with QA/QC and deploying loggers on the main stem, but due to the water drop, Luke will be making a round to ensure the loggers are still in a good position.

**-Outreach:** On June 7, Graham, Brandyn, and Emily participated in a field day with MF 5<sup>th</sup> graders up to the hatchery and Harris Park; networking with Sheila Hagar wrote up an excellent article that was shared online. Earth Day Oregon is giving out mini-grants to all organizations; after all, we will be getting \$250 due to our budget level. All linden trees are alive and well. Troy and Emily met with some PFO members last week to discuss possibly combining W2050 outreach with WWBWC outreach.

**-Education:** Athena-Weston 6<sup>th</sup> graders received a lesson on Salmon, habitat, and ecosystems on May 23.

### Grants/ Reviews

Tomorrow, June 20: \*first review round lead for Brandyn, Emily, and Luke

**-Big and Little Meadow Canyon Creek Assessment:** presenting to perform an assessment that will lead to an action plan to move forward with the area. North Fork restoration leads right to where these creeks meet the North Fork and the only creeks on the North Fork that are listed as potential salmonid habitats (Steelhead, bull, redband)

**-Workshops:** While they previously had a lot of favorable things to say about the proposal, they had concerns as well. We are aiming to address those concerns.

**-Hydro Trend Monitoring:** Same one that's been applied for the past few years 25 surface flow, 29 water temp, 63 well/alluvial groundwater monitoring sites.

Friday, June 23: Troy will lead the Strategic Action Plan and Dry Creek Assessment\* proposals.

\*Troy submitted a DEQ 319 proposal for this as well.

Walla Walla Water2050- Had a BAC meeting on May 24 and a PFO meeting on May 25. BAC was short and went over priority projects—everyone compiled their priority list to fund, then the BAC assembled a final list essentially without discussion or voting. In the future, when looking at allocating the level of these funds, it was discussed that there should be more of a group consensus/buy-in on these issues. The priorities are all assigned projects in Washington state. Looking to combine efforts with Walla Walla County Conservation District and receive funding to perform some outreach, so we are putting together something like a scope of work to present to them.

**(1:08:16) Announcements:**

- June photo contest- wildlife.
- The next WW Water2050 BAC meeting is July 13<sup>th</sup> from 1-4p.
- The next WW Water 2050 PFO meeting is August 9 from 9-11a.
- The next board meeting is July 17<sup>th</sup>, 7- 8:30p.

Ralph shared that there was a very nice article from Capital Press

[https://www.capitalpress.com/specialsections/orchard/lampson-blueberries-unique-spot-for-crop/article\\_ae658bc8-be1c-11ed-8713-5707468515b2.html](https://www.capitalpress.com/specialsections/orchard/lampson-blueberries-unique-spot-for-crop/article_ae658bc8-be1c-11ed-8713-5707468515b2.html)

**(1:11:19) Meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm.**

The entire meeting is recorded and posted on the website, and the times before each heading are the meter times on the video recording for each topic.