

Lower Deschutes River IIT Meeting Minutes

May 3rd, 2024

10 AM – ?

Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
3561 Klindt Dr
The Dalles, Or. 97058

ZOOM – Meeting ID:

Password:

Chair – CTWS – Brad Houslet

*** Note to public participates. If you could please refrain from asking questions or comments until the public comment period, unless the IIT or Managers request input from you prior to making a decision on something. This would be most useful/helpful for the process of the meeting as well as useful for the note taker. Also, when you do comment, if you would please state your name and any affiliations. Please mute your phone or video to avoid disruptions with background noise. Thank you. Mary/facilitator.

10:00 AM **Welcome and introductions:** Brad Houslet (CTWS); Jason Seals (ODFW); Chase Brown (ODFW); Sunny Hope (BLM); Katie Gossess (BLM); Nate LeFevre (BIA); Scott Green (OPRD); Scott Hege (Local Govt.); Mike Millay (BLM); Alan Harmon (OSMB); Mary Fleischmann (Facilitator). PUBLIC: Keith Christianson

Review /Additions to agenda/ Approval of agenda: No additions to the agenda. Group approved agenda.

Approval of meeting minutes from IIT Meeting of February 16, 2024:
No additions or questions from February 26th meeting. Group approved the Feb. minutes as written.

Old Business:

- Group reviewed Charter document, specifically as to responsibilities of the IIT. Brad explained that primarily the roles of IIT would be to be a working group, boots on the ground. Questions about some of the changes and it was explained that what the charter states is what the IIT role was intended to be. Somehow the roles got lost the past couple of years and so time to get it back on track. Further discussion was the necessity to develop a 2 year plan of projects or priorities. Today the group would be just working on 2024 projects and in October expand the list for 2025-2026. In the future February meetings would be the time to look at upcoming projects to be addressed.
- Group discussed where the charter states budget process and IIT's involvement in that. It would be helpful if the IIT had some kind of report out of agencies budgets to have a better idea of their recommendations. Mike M shared that he was able to get some significant dollars from the Beautiful America funds which gives him more room to address some projects. Scott Green also shared that OPRD works on a 2 year biennium. That being shared, the group was informed that if agencies know what projects IIT would like to see done, if they come up with additional dollars they can see how they can take on such projects, although there might be some restrictions as to how certain funds are used. So while the IIT might have certain priorities, there still needs to be flexibility.
- It was further discussed that it is good idea to have a list with priorities so that agencies can justify/demonstrate the need for funds, especially when random funds come up. IIT also would be looking at compliance of projects.
- Mike brought up that boater fees and contracts eat up most of the fees with the larger projects such as the replacement of compost toilets. There are larger proposals day to day. Some projects will simply have to be chipped away at.
- Discussion regarding annual summary and w2025 2hat that would look like how it works. Brad shared that it is simply looking at the proposed project list and then in October summarizing the work that has been done, whether completed or partially completed. Group again shared they would like to see where the dollars are going, what budgets look like and what boater pass dollars are. Katie shared that end of year management reports would help IIT to look at upcoming season and that would help give IIT a bigger picture of what might be needed.
- Again clarity was made to the group that IIT does the work to bring to Managers. Managers are the decision making board. There was a question regarding who else might be added to IIT. It is helpful to

see the data, use field observations and knowing about boater pass numbers and dollars would guide in preparing a 2 year work plan.

New Business:

***A few questions for the Managers regarding the Charter – The Charter doesn't state that the Charter should be reviewed every couple of years. That would be important to have in the Charter. The group also thought it would be a good idea to state that the Management Plan should be reviewed every couple of years. Some folks may not be familiar with the plan and just assume they know the plan. As far as the Charter and the Plan, agencies have turnover of staff so this would be helpful for agency staff.

*** One suggestion for language in the Charter: Page 4 number 2 on IIT responsibilities – add language regarding “utilizing data and information from the Managers Fall/November meeting to assist to prepare the work plan.

*** Question regarding status of OMSB and OSP's role with IIT. The charter states that they “participate to the extent available and appropriate”.

That being said, it makes no sense for either of them to be on rotation with chairing IIT meetings. With that change the following rotation would be put in place:

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|------------------------------|------------------|
| • 2024 Managers/ BLM | IIT/ Tribes |
| • 2025 Managers/ OPRD | IIT/ Local Govt. |
| • 2026 Managers/ODFW | IIT/ BIA |
| • 2027 Managers/ Tribes | IIT/ BLM |
| • 2028 Managers/ Local Govt. | IIT/ OPRD |
| • 2029 Managers/ BIA | IIT/ ODFW |
| • 2030 Managers/BLM | IIT/ Tribes |
| • 2031 Managers/ OPRD | IIT/Local Govt. |
| • 2032 Managers/ ODFW | IIT/ BLM |
| • 2033 Managers/ Tribes | IIT/ OPRD |

- **Projects**

- Task one is how to get public more involved, automated, Rec.Gov. Banner. (The OPRD website is not very friendly in how to let the public know about IIT or Manager meetings. Turn-out past several years has been down and input from public is they do not know how to find out about the meetings and minutes.
- All user fees/pass. While the survey is in limbo, the group shared that what could be done currently would be to look at cleaning up campsites, locating additional campsites that could be developed and letting folks know there are more available than what is currently on the river guide. Question is who is going to do this specifically on Segment 4. There are not designated sites, dispersed sites and there could be more clean up and removal of blackberries which could help. See where conflicts are happening on Segment 4.
- Potential to look at the need for NEPA or EA on Segment 4 with the trail and impacts of hiking/biking/camping
- Segment 1 and biggest issues with crowding. Again, looking at more campsites- how to improve conflicts.
- Segment 2 and 3, more ROK's going in
- Trout Creek- clearing blackberries
- Road work & vault toilets – replace dumpster.
- Want to make sure that all newly developed, cleared or identified campgrounds get put into the new boater guide.

Agency Updates – Things currently important

- Report of cows in segment 4 that ODFW has identified.
- Discussion regarding how complex it is going to be with the all user fee. Hunters and fishermen already pay permits to enter public lands for their sports, is it fair for them to pay an additional fee? Enforcement and compliance is going to be an issue. How will collected fee's be dispersed (survey may give idea of where folks are camping).
- Campsite at Locket and Harris. Potential for additional campsites but would need a cultural clearance at this time. Would like to improve the campsites and put carsonite signs but again need cultural clearance or DNA (determination that an action is adequately analyzed in an existing NEPA document and conforms to the approved land use plan).

- Discussion of number of possible camps in these zones of conflict – ODFW land, 3 or 4; BLM lands 1 or 2.
- Further discussion of not only how to get survey done on Segment 4 but the purpose/goal. What information is BLM trying to get. Basically as Mike M described it is that it would be like a visitor survey to find out what folks experience was like, what improvements they might suggest, where are they staying as well as what are they doing. Camping, biking or day hiking.

Public Comment

Keith shared that this was a much more interesting meeting than others he has been too. He also shared how difficult it is for the general public to find out about these meetings. This one was very informative. He still is interested in how landowners and families can get permits to float the river.

Final Discussion, Follow Up, Action Items

- **Recommendations for Managers: Comments made in New Business.**

Next Meetings

- **Managers:** May 17th – Warm Springs Power and Water Enterprises
 - November 8th – Prineville / BLM office
- **IIT :**
 - October 25th – Maupin/ City Hall

Meeting adjourned. 1:00 PM

