WRIA 13 Project Update

For October 28, 2020 WREC Meeting

The WRIA 13 project workgroup met on October 15, 2020. The topics covered include water rights assessment, offset benefits for projects, habitat benefit projects, project descriptions, and project inventory clean up and organization. This update provides a summary of the workgroup discussions and recommendations coming from the workgroup to the committee. The committee will continue to discuss these recommendations at the WREC and workgroup meetings over the next several weeks. Information included in this update is based on notes taken by Angela Johnson during the October 15, 2020 meeting and are open to review/correction by workgroup members.

We will seek feedback on revisions and recommendations over the next several weeks. We will need committee feedback by our project workgroup meeting on November 13, 2020 in order to determine revisions to Chapter 5 and the project inventory in the Appendix.

## Water Right Assessment

### Updates

* Angela is working with PGG to finalize the analysis of water rights provided for WRIA 13, and to develop a summary report that will include methods, results, and information for inclusion in the plan.
  + The workgroup and Committee have previously agreed that information included in the plan will not include any identifying landowner information for water rights.
* The group discussed the format of tables and maps to be included in the plan, and a general statement around water right opportunities to include in the plan.

### Recommendations

* PGG will finalize report on water right analysis, and the workgroup/Committee will indicate how this information is reflected in the body of the plan to indicate future opportunities for acquisition. If no outreach has been made to a water right holder, specific water right information will not be included.
* The workgroup recommends all tables and maps not include identifying landowner information. Chapter 5 should include a summary of water rights by subbasin, and a more detailed list and map will be included in the Appendix.
* The workgroup recommends including the following general statement in Chapter 5 to discuss water right opportunities:  
  *In addition to the projects described in this chapter, the WRIA 13 Committee supports projects and actions that achieve the following goals:*
  + *Opportunities to address irrigation efficiencies for water right holders. This may be accomplished through education, outreach, or incentive programs.*
  + *Acquisitions of water rights to increase streamflows and offset the impacts of PE wells. Water rights should be permanently and legally held by Ecology in the Trust Water Rights Program to ensure that the benefits to instream resources are permanent.*
  + *The WRIA 13 Committee acknowledges that all water rights transactions rely on willing sellers and willing buyers. The WRIA 13 Committee supports acquisition of all types of water rights, including municipal water rights. The WRIA 13 Committee recognizes the importance of water availability for farmers and the limited available water supply. The WRIA 13 Committee supports the acquisition of irrigation water rights if the properties underlying the water rights have access to an alternative water source that can be reliably supplied to the properties at a rate that is comparable to the cost of current irrigation management or is otherwise agreeable to the property owner.*
  + *The WRIA 13 Committee recommends that opportunities for the above mentioned projects and actions be addressed through future feasibility studies, water right investigations, etc.*
  + *Prioritize water right acquisition or irrigation efficiency opportunities in subbasins where the highest needs for projects exist.*

### Question for Committee

* Does the Committee agree with the general statement around water right opportunities to include in the second draft of the watershed plan?

## Offset Benefits for Projects

### Updates

* HDR is working to finalize project analysis and develop project descriptions for prioritized offset projects.
  + [Schneiders Prairie](https://app.box.com/s/qpafzkv8crutooikmjrfzirgx5qdk1m5)
    - Detailed draft project description and technical memo are complete and the workgroup provided input.
    - The workgroup raised several questions about the analysis, including the seasonality of the benefit, how to account for high flows, and a suggestion to include a monitoring component to ground-truth analysis.
    - The project analysis will be revised with HDR and Thurston County, and a new draft will be distributed.
    - By the November project meeting, the workgroup will have a final recommendation on the offset quantity to assign to this project.

* + [Lilly](https://app.box.com/s/4e0elbfgn6yb9ktme44yxi5obdbbn7ir) and [26th](https://app.box.com/s/qd6oife7tekqnq25g7afsjq3vtvuy2zh)
    - Detailed draft project description is complete and the workgroup provided input.
    - The workgroup discussed the seasonality of the benefit, and suggested using a stream depletion model to quantify.
    - The workgroup also discussed a culvert at the north end of the wetland and asked HDR to look into if this could be a component of the project or will impact the analysis.
    - HDR will finalize the analysis and a new draft will be distributed.
    - By the November project meeting, the workgroup will have a final recommendation on the offset quantity to assign to this project.
  + [Donnelly Drive Infiltration Galleries](https://app.box.com/s/24nidhdyxr0z30or1ueifvm1dnr5vidl)
    - Detailed draft project description is complete and the workgroup provided input.
    - By the November project meeting, the workgroup will have a final recommendation on the offset quantity to assign to this project.
  + [Hicks Lake](https://app.box.com/s/y060twjih0dg6qnjzwvzfh1kxa95xylf)
    - Detailed draft project description is complete and the workgroup provided input.
    - By the November project meeting, the workgroup will have a final recommendation on the offset quantity to assign to this project.
  + [Spooner’s Farm](https://app.box.com/s/ebo9cbzbe2u1pq4r5wv5x4ptnztfbgly)
    - The City of Olympia is still confirming whether or not it is appropriate to include this project in the WRIA 13 plan, dependent on the City’s plans for water use at the new City park that is under development.
    - Detailed draft project description is complete and the workgroup provided input.
    - If this project is included in the plan, the workgroup will have a final recommendation on the offset quantity to assign to this project by the November project meeting.
  + Green Cove – Marshall Middle School
    - HDR is working with Thurston CD to further develop this project, and perform any necessary analysis. A detailed project description will be developed and distributed for review.
      * HDR may delineate stormwater catchment and model infiltration, which may result in a water offset for the project in the Cooper Point subbasin.
  + Managed Aquifer Recharge
    - HDR working with PGG to finalize analysis on favorable sites for potential MAR locations. PGG will provide a write-up of the methods used, and results. HDR will provide memo to describe offset potential from proposed sites.
    - The workgroup recommends PGG suggest additional potential MAR locations for inclusion in the plan, specifically focusing on the Middle Deschutes and Johnson Point, but open to all subbasins.
    - The workgroup began discussion on how to quantify offset for the MAR project package. HDR has provided suggestions on the amount of flow diversion and the facility size to use as a general analysis. HDR will provide an analysis for the workgroup to react to.
    - Suggestion to have project description address next steps after plan development leading into implementation, and include O&M cost considerations.
    - Suggestion that the plan should include
      * An entity to pursue these projects in the future
      * A project sponsor for a specific location if appropriate
      * A focus on Middle Deschutes or subbasins that are lacking projects, where higher growth is estimated

### Recommendations

* Suggestion to include sponsor and landowner information in project descriptions.
* Overarching theme on seasonality – address is specific project descriptions as much as possible, but also include a discussion on this in the NEB chapter as a consideration.
* Emphasize projects (such as MAR) in the Middle Deschutes where there are few projects, and high growth.
* PGG to provide additional potential MAR locations, with a focus on Middle Deschutes and Johnson Point.
* The committee will need to determine the amount of offset benefit we assign to each project. This may be done project by project.
  + Based on review of technical memos – what criteria will be used to determine appropriate offset for inclusion in the plan?
    - Some projects may have a clear, technically justified offset benefit and we have high confidence that the project will move forward in the near term.
    - Other projects may require a range. The range may be based on varying technical information, when the project will be implemented, etc.
  + HDR will provide recommendations for offset quantification, and will need to be confirmed by the Committee.

## Habitat Benefit Projects

### Updates

* Habitat projects will be included to help the WRIA 13 plan meet NEB, which will continue to be defined by the WRIA 13 WREC as appropriate.
* The committee has a [long project inventory](https://app.box.com/s/gg268q09qyl82egcxmruwhv3emmkqlx5) that includes projects that provide habitat benefit and streamflow benefits that can’t be quantified.
* HDR is working to finalize project descriptions for prioritized habitat projects. These will be used to develop Chapter 5.
  + [Woodard Creek](https://app.box.com/s/1690x22gnpbfvoulot7j6ebsgzioz6kv)
    - Detailed project description is complete, available for review. Committee and workgroup members should provide review of major red flags.
  + [Chambers Creek](https://app.box.com/s/m27ggvkl2ls5xn4gxktv4qjna0vpk24h)
    - Detailed project description is complete, available for review. Committee and workgroup members should provide review of major red flags.
  + [Spurgeon Creek Remeander](https://app.box.com/s/gahokvsrefrr903zbymkegfuxvgtibon)
    - Detailed project description is complete, available for review. Committee and workgroup members should provide review of major red flags.
  + McLane Creek
    - Thurston County is the lead and will provide a project description which will be distributed to the Committee.

### Recommendations

* Angela and HDR to continue to develop project descriptions, and use those to develop Chapter 5 and appendices, or any additional project information for the plan. Committee members should review project descriptions for major red flags.

## Categorical Projects

### Updates

* HDR and PGG are working to finalize project descriptions for prioritized projects.
  + Water Rights – PGG/HDR to develop description (discussed above)
  + Floodplain Restoration
    - HDR and Committee members used mapping tool “Paleo Mapper” to identify potential locations for floodplain restoration. These sites will be included in a general WRIA-wide write-up.
    - HDR is completing the write-up and it will be distributed for review.
  + [Forest Stand Age](https://app.box.com/s/czjiywg1tryijerl9n3497939dmqmmwh)
    - Proposal from Paul Pickett will be written up as a summary for inclusion in the plan.

## **New Projects**

### Updates

* Nelson Ranch
  + Several WRIA 13 workgroup members are interested in looking into MAR and water right acquisition opportunities on a property in the Middle Deschutes subbasin called “Nelson Ranch”. Squaxin Island Tribe, Amy Hatch-Winecka, and Thurston County are looking into project opportunities and will inform the group if it is feasible to include in the plan. Any technical analysis for this work has not been allocated to HDR or PGG, and at this point can only be done once all other project work is complete if there is capacity and a need.
* Evergreen/Green Cove
  + Thurston County is interested in a project on Evergreen State University property that would potentially provide a water offset through reclaimed water infiltration, etc. Any technical analysis for this work has not been allocated to HDR or PGG, and at this point can only be done once all other project work is complete if there is capacity and a need.

## Project Inventory Clean Up and Organization

### Updates

* Angela will discussed how she will revise the [project inventory](https://app.box.com/s/gg268q09qyl82egcxmruwhv3emmkqlx5) for inclusion in the next draft of the compiled plan.
  + Angela may reach out to Committee members to clarify information that was entered.
* The NEB Guidance provides suggestions on ways to organize the project lists, but it is up to the committee.

### Recommendations

* The workgroup and Committee have discussed a general organization of projects in the plan. It is not recommended that projects be organized by tiering or sequencing, however the projects may be categorized in the following way:
  1. Projects with quantifiable offset benefits.
  2. Projects with non-quantifiable offset benefits.
  3. Projects that provide habitat benefits only.
  4. Projects that currently can’t move forward at this time and conceptual projects.
* The body of the plan will include project descriptions on prioritized projects with quantifiable benefits, and detailed habitat projects.
* The longer project inventory, including conceptual projects, and projects without detailed descriptions, will be included in the plan as an Appendix.