WRIA 13 Project Updates

For December 16, 2020 WREC Meeting

The WRIA 13 project workgroup met on December 9, 2020. The topics covered include Schneider’s Prairie revised analysis, MAR project package, water rights assessment, offset benefits for projects, habitat benefit projects, and project descriptions. This update provides a summary of the workgroup discussions and recommendations coming from the workgroup to the committee. Information included in this update is based on notes taken by Angela Johnson during the December 9, 2020 meeting and are open to review/correction by workgroup members.

We will need Committee feedback by our December 16, 2020 Committee meeting in order to determine revisions to Chapter 5 and the project inventory in the Appendix. It will be important that we can reach agreement on these recommendations at this meeting so that we can stay on track for plan finalization.

Committee members should be reviewing all [project descriptions](https://app.box.com/s/4sdn0rps0b7u1vw2rm3auoj7n6smp6s5) to be prepared to make decisions at the upcoming December 16 meeting.

1. [Schneider’s Prairie](https://app.box.com/s/vmcr9cenz14x62f10ih76vd513gluplu)
   1. HDR provided a revised project description and supplemental data.
   2. Current estimates of potential offset provide a range based on year-round vs. critical flow period (May-October) benefits, and show potential offset based on modeling through 50 years.
   3. **Recommendation: Consider claiming offset benefit based on “Year 5” of model analysis for the May-October benefit – resulting in 681 afy. The plan should describe the uncertainties and assumptions associated with this project as justification for selecting a more conservative estimate. The uncertainties and assumptions discussed to date include:**
      1. **Modeling does not account for evapotranspiration**
      2. **Modeling does not account for uncertainty that not all of the water will be infiltrated**
      3. **Modeling does not account for downward flow trends in Deschutes**
      4. **Modeling does not account for climate change**
      5. **Modeling does not account for potential sediment build-up**
      6. **Modeling has a number of assumptions built-in such as transmissivity, and streambed conductance.**
      7. **Modeling represents average conditions, and not dry-year conditions.**
   4. Action item:
      1. Committee members need to come to the December 16, 2020 WRIA 13 Committee meeting prepared to make a decision on claiming water offset for this project as described in the recommendation above.
      2. Committee members should consider if there are other uncertainties and assumptions that need to be captured in the project description to justify the water offset benefit.
      3. Paul Pickett has indicated he has information on evapotranspiration and flow data trends that could be used to incorporate into the project description to provide context.
2. [MAR project package](https://app.box.com/s/eavdawqkt7xmnbupps86bxj6m52d2fak)
   1. PGG has provided a [technical memo on methodology](https://app.box.com/s/fu7t8tqxkxc9vxad8bg166sh7gqzy7d9), and HDR has provided a [project description](https://app.box.com/s/cc0yjwgze5t9mjy4hxxkexwgfxsjhyob)
   2. Current estimate of ~810 af/year for five potential project locations
   3. **Recommendation: Apply a reduction factor to MAR project benefit estimates to account for uncertainties such as how many projects will be implemented, timing of benefit, instream flow rule closures, etc. The workgroup discussed options to address this:**
      1. **Count offsets only from proposed project locations not in closed basins, and claim 25-50% of the total projected offset.**
         1. **Thurston County has indicated they would be a likely project sponsor for this project package. If Thurston County can provide a commitment to implementation, then the workgroup would be comfortable recommending a higher % of the total offset to claim (i.e. 50%)**
         2. **Currently a likely range of 202-405 afy (25-50% of total projected offset)**
      2. **For proposed project locations in closed basins, include this information in the plan as a “hopeful” offset total, but do not count it toward offsets justifying NEB.**
   4. **Action item:**
      1. Committee members need to come to the December 16, 2020 WRIA 13 Committee meeting prepared to make a decision on the total offset to claim for this project package.  Please come prepared to contribute the following information:
         1. What is the appropriate reduction factor to discount the total offset?
         2. What are the most important assumptions or concerns that you feel the reduction factor would address, and help provide justification for?
            1. For example: implementation, timing/amount of infiltration, distance to stream, etc.
3. [Water Right Analysis](https://app.box.com/s/m2z8fmo8xy8w715arvifye00ltdy00dp)
   1. PGG has previously provided a [technical memo](https://app.box.com/s/z78u2s4o89owraotvke1uc6kt0yre92x) for the focused water right analysis for WRIA 13, which includes methodology and a summary of potential future water right opportunities. While the Committee has not identified any specific water rights for acquisition, the Committee has agreed to language in the draft plan that would describe and support investigating future opportunities for water rights acquisition or efficiencies.  The Committee has agreed that no identifying information on water right holders will be included in the plan or appendix due to privacy concerns, but that a more detailed list can be kept by a member of the implementation group for future use.
   2. Angela raised to the project workgroup an option for consideration in the plan to claim partial water offset from this prioritized list. The total of potentially available water for future opportunities based on the information from PGG is 3,082 afy. The Committee could consider claiming a portion of that, for example 5-10% (154-308 afy) for inclusion as water offset in the plan.
   3. Thurston County indicated that they could potentially be a project sponsor for this future action, in coordination with an implementation group.
   4. **Recommendation: Consider including language in the plan that describes that a future action of a project sponsor (i.e. Thurston County) in coordination with an implementation group could prioritize outreach to water right holders on the focused water right list provided by PGG.  The Committee could consider claiming a percentage of that total, such as 5-10% (Angela indicated this is an example from other WREC groups), which would result in a total of 154-308 afy water offset that could be claimed in the plan – distributed among each of the subbasins relative to the current distribution.**
      1. **The project workgroup indicated that if Thurston County is able to provide a commitment to future feasibility studies, project sponsorship, etc. they could potentially support inclusion of this project package as a water offset project in the plan.**
   5. Action item:
      1. Committee members should review all of the available water right information if they have not already done so and come to the December 16, 2020 WRIA 13 Committee meeting prepared to make a decision on the proposed recommendations above.  Namely, does the Committee support claiming a percentage of a “target” list of water rights as water offset?
      2. Thurston County will provide information at that meeting as to their possible commitment on project sponsorship.
4. [Lilly and 26th](https://app.box.com/s/hf2yc84oupw21fp6n4ahevcxvq0xgvby)
   1. The project description is complete and available on Box for review.
   2. The current estimate from HDR and the City of Olympia indicates a potential total benefit of 120 afy. The estimate during the critical flow period (May-October) is 60 afy, using the assumption agreed upon by the Committee at the November meeting that this could be determined by assuming 50% of the year-round project benefits.
   3. The workgroup discussed some of the ongoing uncertainties with this project (implementation may be dependent on classification of wetland), and discussed the pros and cons of including this project with an associated offset quantity. Given the project uncertainties, most workgroup members felt more comfortable applying an additional discount to the total projected offset assuming only 50% of the projected benefit during the critical flow period.
   4. **Recommendation: Consider inclusion of this project as a water offset project in the plan, with an assumed offset of 30 afy (50% of total offset during the critical flow period).**
   5. Action item:
      1. Committee members need to come to the December 16, 2020 WRIA 13 Committee meeting prepared to make a decision on claiming water offset for this project as described in the recommendation above.
5. [Hicks Lake](https://app.box.com/s/y060twjih0dg6qnjzwvzfh1kxa95xylf)
   1. The project description is complete and available on Box for review.
   2. The project workgroup discussed an ongoing issue of year-round vs. critical flow period offset benefits. Some workgroup members are comfortable claiming year-round benefits for this project; however, WDFW has expressed their position that they would prefer to claim offsets only during the critical flow period but would consider claiming year-round benefits if the Committee agreed to do so, under the condition that the project information in the plan (descriptions, tables) explicitly states what the estimate is during the critical flow period.
   3. The current year-round benefit estimate is 296 afy. The estimate during the critical flow period (May-October) is 148 afy, using the assumption agreed upon by the Committee at the November meeting that this could be determined by assuming 50% of the year-round project benefits.
   4. **Recommendation:**
      1. **The workgroup discussed two potential options to move forward:**
         1. **Claim a year-round benefit of 296 afy and include in the project information in the plan (descriptions, tables) that the estimate during the critical flow period is 148 afy.**
         2. **Claim only offsets during the critical flow period of 148 afy.**
   5. Action item:
      1. Committee members need to come to the December 16, 2020 WRIA 13 Committee meeting prepared to make a decision on claiming water offset for this project as described in the recommendation options above.
6. [Donnelly Drive Infiltration Galleries](https://app.box.com/s/24nidhdyxr0z30or1ueifvm1dnr5vidl)
   1. The project description is complete and available on Box for review.
   2. The project workgroup discussed an ongoing issue of year-round vs. critical flow period offset benefits. Some workgroup members are comfortable claiming year-round benefits for this project; however, WDFW has expressed their position that they would prefer to claim offsets only during the critical flow period but would consider claiming year-round benefits if the Committee agreed to do so, under the condition that the project information in the plan (descriptions, tables) explicitly states what the estimate is during the critical flow period.
   3. The current year-round benefit estimate is 14 afy. The estimate during the critical flow period (May-October) is 7 afy, using the assumption agreed upon by the Committee at the November meeting that this could be determined by assuming 50% of the year-round project benefits.
   4. **Recommendation:**
      1. **The workgroup discussed two potential options to move forward:**
         1. **Claim a year-round benefit of 14 afy and include in the project information in the plan (descriptions, tables) that the estimate during the critical flow period is 7 afy.**
         2. **Claim only offsets during the critical flow period of 7 afy.**
   5. Action item:
      1. Committee members need to come to the December 16, 2020 WRIA 13 Committee meeting prepared to make a decision on claiming water offset for this project as described in the recommendation options above.
7. Raingarden Retrofit
   1. **Recommendation: Consider including project in the plan without an associated water offset. Thurston Conservation District has expressed a strong interest in this project concept and will work with HDR on the project description.**
   2. Action item:
      1. HDR and Thurston CD to provide project description.
      2. Committee members needs to come to the December 16, 2020 WRIA 13 Committee meeting prepared to raise any red flags on inclusion of this project in the next draft of the plan.
8. Other project updates
   1. Habitat projects descriptions available or pending
      1. [Woodard Creek](https://app.box.com/s/1690x22gnpbfvoulot7j6ebsgzioz6kv)
      2. [Chambers Creek](https://app.box.com/s/m27ggvkl2ls5xn4gxktv4qjna0vpk24h)
      3. [Spurgeon Creek](https://app.box.com/s/gahokvsrefrr903zbymkegfuxvgtibon)
      4. McLane Creek – pending, Thurston County
      5. Green Cove Creek – pending, Thurston County
   2. Categorical projects available
      1. [Floodplain restoration](https://app.box.com/s/lxc7i2wx7z7e4g00l30g90q92u6l6htc)
      2. [Water Rights](https://app.box.com/s/m2z8fmo8xy8w715arvifye00ltdy00dp)
   3. **Recommendation: Project descriptions will be used to develop Chapter 5 in the WRE Plan. All other projects previously discussed by the Committee that are not included in Chapter 5 will be included in the** [**longer project inventory**](https://app.box.com/s/0vi8ec33utwo3qgmsnisz7yy4wfdyxa0) **in the plan appendix.**
   4. **Action item:** Committee members should review all available project descriptions and provide any red flags ahead of the December 16, 2020 WRIA 13 Committee meeting.
9. Projects still under consideration
   1. Evergreen/Green Cove
      1. Thurston County to provide project description, potential inclusion in the next draft of the plan. Water offset potential is possible for the project but will not be estimated.
   2. Green Cove – Marshall Middle School
      1. HDR and Thurston CD to provide project description, potential inclusion in the next draft of the plan. Water offset potential is possible for the project but will not be estimated.
10. Consideration for Format of Project Table in WRE Plan: The workgroup discussed formatting tables in the WRE Plan to indicate the total potential offset from projects, along with the offset during the critical flow period, and the offset that the Committee is claiming toward NEB. Example below for discussion purposes only, does not indicate final decisions on project quantification.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Name** | **Project Short Description** | **Subbasin** | **Total Potential Estimated Water Offset Benefits (afy)** | **Timing of Benefit** | **Estimated Water Offset Benefits During Critical Flow Period (afy) (May – October)\*** | **Offset Claimed in Plan by WRIA 13 Committee for NEB (afy)** |
| **Schneiders Prairie** | **Off-channel reconnection and infiltration** | **Lower Deschutes** | **1380** | **May-October** | **681** | **681** |
|
| **MAR** | **Managed Aquifer Recharge project package – multiple proposed sites** | **Multiple** | **810** | **Year-round** | **405** | **202-405** (25-50% of total estimate) |
| **Lilly/26th** | **Re-direct excess stormwater seepage from Mill Pond neighborhood to wetland to the NW.** | **Boston Harbor** | **120** | **Year-round** | **60** | **30** (50% of CFP) |
|
| **Hicks Lake** | **Stormwater infiltration in series with existing stormwater treatment** | **Woodland** | **296** | **Year-round** | **148** | **296** |
|
| **Donnelly Drive** | **Improve neighborhood stormwater infiltration, avoiding surcharge and runoff to Chambers ditch.** | **Lower Deschutes** | **14** | **Year-round** | **7** | **14** |
|
| **Water Right Opportunities** | **Prioritized water right opportunities for future acquisition or efficiency projects** | **Multiple** |  |  |  | **154** (Placeholder – 5% of total – TBD by Committee) |
| **TOTAL** |  |  | **2620** |  | **1301** | **1223-1426** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

\*Critical flow period benefits are shown for year-round projects to emphasize the availability of water that is seasonally critical for fish. If detailed modeling information was not available, this estimate is based on 50% of the total potential estimated water offset benefits.