

Lower Deschutes River Managers & IIT Meeting minutes

**November 17th, 2023
10 AM – 1:30 PM**

**BLM – Prineville
3050 NE 3rd St.
Prineville, Or. 97754**

**ZOOM: 885 3675 7925
Password: 345954**

CHAIR: Jason Seals (ODFW)

10:00 AM **Welcome and introductions:** Lisa Clark (BLM); Beth Hartwood (BLM); Dorothy Diehl (OSMB); Steve Rodgers (Wasco Co. Sheriff); Brad Houslet (CTWS); Brenda

Bremer (BIA); Scott Green (OPRD); Corey Heath (ODFW); Jason Seals (ODFW); Scott Hege (Local Govt.); Brian Cunninghame (Former LDRM member); Chase

Brown (ODFW); Lane Magill (Sheriff Dept.); Katy Kosick (BLM); Mary Fleischmann (Facilitator)

PUBLIC: Russ Peterson, Outfitter from Sun Country Tours, and two gentlemen from Youth Dynamics Outfitters.

Review/ Additions to agenda/ approval of agenda

- No additions to the agenda and group agreed to agenda.

Approval of meeting minutes from IIT May 5th meeting

- Motion made by Jason to approve minutes from IIT May meeting, second by Brad – **MOTION PASSED**

Approval of meeting minutes from Managers May 15th meeting

- Motion made by Scott to approve minutes from Managers May meeting, second by Corey – **MOTION PASSED**

Old Business

- **Review of Charter** – Group reviewed Charter Draft with discussions and clarifications. Brian was instrumental in sharing some of the history of the Management plan and how the various agencies have come to some of the conclusions they have through the year. There was clarification of how decisions are made and process for when consensus can't be reached, with that being the main goal. It was shared that only once in the history of the plan has there not been consensus it was sent to the Review Board who in turn returned the issue to the Managers. Question brought up regarding the need for the Review Board, which if there are contentious issues it might have to go to the Review Board for a decision. Discussion regarding IIT's role and how often they need to meet. Group is looking at additional language regarding the IIT meeting as needed when they are given specific tasks identified by the Managers Group. Discussion of developing a project list in the fall for the IIT. Again Brian added historical information of the kinds of things that the IIT has worked on in the past, limited entry implementation, the supplemental plan and the issues on Segment 3 which divided it into Seg. 3 A and Seg. 3 B. It was suggested that those who participate on the IIT have a good knowledge of the plan so that when proposals are made to the Managers everyone knows that is feasible and can be done. **Everyone was asked to again look over the charter and if they have corrections, additions or clarification concerns to send those comments to Lisa by January 15th.** Lisa will compile and send out to group for final decision at February meeting. There was also discussion about the annual Law Enforcement meeting generally in the early part of April for all IIT and Managers to attend for overall discussion of enforcement on the river. These meetings are not about policy or too specific but more nuts and bolts about how things will be enforced. Guides and outfitters are invited for the second half of the meetings to address any concerns they have.
- **Follow up of field trip to the PGE Selective Water Withdrawal Tower** – Scott shared that the field trip was very informative and fit in nicely with the previous field trip last year for the fish trap on the lower river. It was great to learn how the fish move up and down the

river. It was a good turn-out. Discussion of how valuable the field trips are for boots on the ground.

- **Use of Tribal ID as boater pass.** There was an incident on the river that Steve ran into with someone refusing to get or show a boater pass as he told Steve he had tribal rights and so didn't need that. Steve was unclear of any kind of policy that covered this and concerns that this could become more of a problem in the future. As best as Steve could tell, this was not a tribal member of the CTWS, in fact he was from Umatilla and he had passengers who clearly were not tribal members. Need some direction from the Managers group. Brian shared that this had come up in the past and that it was agreed upon with the agencies that if CTWS tribal member is at launch, they need to show their ID and they do not need a boater pass. Tribal commercial guides need to have their SRP's to float the river off reservation waters, which CTWS will assist them with this process. All other tribal members are treated just like everyone else and are required to have a boater pass. Not sure that this has been actually made as a motion as prior to having a recorder. Brad will look into this on the Tribal front and will come to the next meeting with a motion for the Managers group to move on so that it is in the records. This issue has also come up from time to time with hunting and fishing as well.
- **All user pass- process for moving forward.** At this time this subject has been tabled until next Managers meeting.

New Business

- **Update on potential rule revision for property owners for boat passes along Lower Deschutes** –Scott has been working with the State Commission about this issue as it would mean a change in some language change in the administrative rule. The issue at hand is that currently you have to reside in the property or have your name on the deed if you live on the river to get free boater passes, which cannot be transferred to family members who do not live in said property. Scott's suggestion is to change the language to be more inclusive of families and to give them a certain number of free nontransferable boater passes. There would not be permanent boater passes, as that issue also came up with a property owner who did not want to reply every year. They would not necessarily have access from their property and would need to launch at closest launch point. Katy shared that in 2023 BLM gave out 6 landowner passes. They look at the name on the deed as

verification. Discussion regarding passes being nontransferable and specific name be on passes. **MOTION** made by Scott and second by Brad for OPRD to move forward with working on language change be made which could be adapted to what language ODFW uses which is specific to allowing family members to get up to five free boater passes. (The language is: a landowner's spouse, children, father, mother, brother, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, sister, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, stepchildren and grandchildren). These passes would have specific names, are nontransferable and they would have to report annually how often they were used in past year. **MOTION PASSED.** Lisa brought up that property owners they deal with are given an access only pass to reach their property, it is not for recreation. **MOTION** made by Lisa and seconded by Brad that no annual passes are not perpetuate. **MOTION PASSED.**

- **Question regarding the ability to change launches (segment 3) if one launch is crowded on the same pass?** Discussion about how to deal with crowded launch points. Situation that someone to leave Buck Hollow and launch at Pine Tree but wasn't sure if that was allowed. As long as launch points are in same segment there are no issues. Same segment, same day.
- **Refunding passes – discussion; plan doesn't allow refunds with exception if river is closed due to fires.** BLM taking a pause on this right now, will add to next meeting agenda.
- **Question brought up regarding various problems that came up on the river this past season.** Bus limitations are vehicle size of 28 feet and 24 people total in segment 2. Group sizes apply but once they are off the road, then groups are linking together. There were very large groups this year. BLM let guide services know that when this happens tickets are given to the guides, not the business, which seems to of gotten a good response. Question was brought up about City Park in Maupin and the river corridor which is up to the bank. On all other segments of the river groups can be up to 16 but again groups looking for loop holes- which is that they follow the rules at launch and then meet up later down the river. Behavior on Segment 1 folks were grumpier than usual, folks were blocking eddies and some groups were taking over others camping sites, despite others already occupying the site. Complaints about boom boxes and parties and decimal limits. No one respecting quiet hours. There were repeat shuttle driver issues with speeding, cigarettes drugs. Steve shared that law enforcement will have radar for the coming season to deal with speed limits. Discussion about reduction of speed limits and who can control that, as well as more

signage. BLM can pull SRP's on shuttle drivers for breaking rules. Generally they first go on probation and can be terminated. Suggested to have IIT look at this discussion.

- **Spring float for IIT and Managers.** Discussion of float in the summer for field trip. One suggestion is a Cultural float on Segment 1, and another idea is possibly a float /overnight (?) on the lower section of the river. Lisa with BLM will coordinate this - looking at a June date. Maybe a Mecca to Trout Creek float.
- **Limited Entry reports.** – Segment 4 is set at 214 launches with the original launches being 325, wondering if it is time to raise it. Launches only hit 214 a total of 8 times. Other segments of the river did not hit targets this past season. Segment 4 many of the campsites are over-grown for various reasons (fires) with now only 50% of sites available. In Segment 1 has 70 campsites. There is a need to for more cultural surveys on this segment. BLM wants to decrease the crowding and look at how to move it around more. Brian suggested that might look at the files with photo points to see where additional campsites could be established. Also want to get the traffic counters back up to look into the unaccounted hiker/biker traffic which also impacts campsites. Katie is doing a “misery float” in January to look at sites on Seg. 1 and will report out in February. Possibly look at organizing work parties for clean up on creating more sites. Don't really know what the capacity is at this time but possibly ODFW can come up with some campsites on ODFW land. Looking into more dispersed campsites in Seg. 4.
- **Time to renew/or not/ Mary's contract.** Scott G. will follow up.
- **New chairs for 2024**
Managers – BLM
IIT – Tribes

Round Table Discussions and Updates

- **Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs** – Brad has been gone a lot but the Parks Dept. is revamping how permits are done at Harpham and Sandy- rather than a per person fee, possibly a per boat. It was discussed of how BLM can somehow give a check to the Tribes, a transfer of funds rather than the way things are set up currently. Possibly an MOU. More to come.
- **OSMB/ Oregon State Marine Board** – No report at this time. Josh has taken another job and so waiting to find out who will be his replacement.

- **ODFW/ Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife** –There were no fishery restrictions or closures this year; open all year. Steelhead returns are still not good, there may be more restrictions. The trap at Sherars is out at this time. They will be flying helicopters to count Fall Chinook reds.
- **Wasco Co. Sheriff Dept.** – Steve and Nick will be working on speed issues and party issues this coming season. Should have radar installed in a month or so.
- **OPRD/ Oregon Park and Recreation Departments** – New biennium. Will be replacing toilets at Davidson Flats and a user survey is in the budget so will coordinate with BLM. Looking at a new boat ramp at Starvation on the John Day River. There are more plans for toilets.
- **BLM/ Bureau of Land Management** – Mike Millay is now the recreation planner for BLM. Looking at ways to tag boat that have already been checked for compliance so they don't keep getting checked. There will more in February. Getting lots of questions regarding refunds, with some concerns being cancellations due to air quality issues. In looking at this issue the biggest concern is issues with hoarding. There are also questions regarding E-Bikes allowances on segment 4. Issue of Air Strip in segment 4 being used. Plan says that it will be closed. Brian shared some creative ways it has been dealt with in the past. Public lands day was a success with a good turn-out and work on cleaning up blackberries in some areas. They need to be pulled and burned in the winter.
- **Local Government** – Improvements at Hunts Park to improve for emergency fire camps. Bakeoven road is looking at another proposal for renewal energy on over 8,000 acres from Shell oil. Should start in 2025. This creates housing challenges as solar facilities can't create housing due to certain rules. Down on deputies currently.
- **BIA – Bureau of Indian Affairs**- Nothing to report right now.
- **OSP – Oregon State Police** – No report as everyone is out dealing with Elk season.

Public Comment:

- Public just thanked everyone for the work they are doing. Had no idea how much goes into management of this river.

Final Discussions, Follow up, Action Items:

- Follow up with Charter to finalize and set date for next review.
- Motion to be made regarding tribal members and boater passes. Brad
- Update on all user pass. – Lisa
- Update from Scott G. regarding rule revision for property owners free boater passes
- Spring float updates – date set.
- Follow up discussion regarding refunds

Next Meetings:

- **Managers meetings - February 9th, May 17th, November 8th**
- **IIT meetings – February 16th, May 5th, October 25th**

Meeting adjourned:

Adjourned at 1 PM