

Lower Deschutes IIT Meeting Minutes

October 16th, 2020

10:05 AM In attendance: Jeff Kitchens (BLM); Brad Houslet (CTWS); Rod French (ODFW); Steve Memminger (OPRD); David Spangler (OPRD); Jen Graham (CTWS); Scott Hege (Local Government); Kyle Hensley (BLM); Brad Staples (Steelhead Guide); Sara-Anne Kichenmaster (Peak 7 Outfitters); Silas Lewis (Allstar Outfitters); Rob Miles (Imperial); Ron Walp (City of Maupin); Emily Cunningham (Sun Country).

10:13 Review of agenda/ additions to agenda/ Approval of minutes from August 7, 2020

Clarification in August minutes regarding discussion of scat machine at Heritage, Ron Walp brought to everyone's attention the need for cleaning the potty's at Mack's Canyon.

Scott made motion to approve the minutes, Rod 2nd – motion passed.

10:15 Old Business

- Follow up of who is posting on website: Steve M with OPRD is responsible for posting on website. Concerns about how website address is in bedded in their website and difficult to find. Dave S will follow and see if there is a way to make it more clear. Here is the website address:
 - Lower Deschutes OPRD website
 - <https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/bwt/pages/bwt-ldrms.aspx>
- Jeff shared with group that BLM has organized minutes from all meetings and they are available digitally. They have created a complete volume of information from the late 1990's to current. Asked if OPRD website can handle these. David not sure if they have the capacity but will explore and will report out next time.
- COVID discussion to be included in round table discussions.

10:27 New Business

- Discussion regarding surfing and paddle board situations on the river. Last couple of years have seen an increase in the use of surf and paddle boards, which is a new facet of water craft use. A small segment of people go in the water and surf in one spot and then come off. Managers group has talked about this briefly. This would be considered untethered use and so a boater pass has been required. Need to have clarification on this subject. Is this the way to go? What kind of information and signage are needed and in looking at all access use, what does additional access look

like? Question raised if IIT sees a need for a focus group to address this issue or what clarification needs to go out to the public.

Brad brought up question regarding if anyone has seen any issues of hazards regarding boats and rapids with paddle users in the rapid? He added there needs to be more education around this issue.

Jeff says he has dealt with users being frustrated with having to get a boaters pass.

Brad H brought up another concern regarding how we view counting those people as user of the river and if it affects the management plan. What about the user impact (concentration) on riparian and the river.

Brad Staples mentioned that years ago if people were floating down the river in life jackets they were required to have a boater pass like everyone else.

Rod brought up that we had the same issues years ago with kayaks.

Issues were at Colorado Rapid with power boats and kayaks.

Steve raised the concern regarding safety and floating through rapids.

These users tend to stay in same rapid and could have an issues with dominating a specific location.

Brad brought up that Oregon State Law says that when jet boats are going through a rapid, such as Moody, kayaks can't be there, same with rafts.

Jeff brought how the rules reads which is that anytime a craft is floating untethered from shore, you are required to have a boater pass. It's pretty clear and black and white. This use still requires a boater pass and the group might need to look into signage where we see use or potential use.

Scott brought up question regarding swimming in the river without a boater pass.

Jeff also shared that inflated tubes, animals, etc. all need boater pass, no need to differentiate. If conflicts or safety concerns arise than look at signage/education. David and Steve agree. Will follow up and send out to managing agencies if they see issues to report back.

Scott asked if there could be use in the City of Maupin and possible waivers. Inquired about local government boundaries. Jeff said can't tease out what you can do in one area of the river and not on other areas of the river. Scott thought maybe with the question of Wild and Scenic River that the City of Maupin is excluded. Jeff clarified that the Wild and Scenic River corridor is 100 miles and Seg. 2 is considered recreational as far as its values. Jeff will look back at maps to see if there are any exceptions and will report back. Warm Springs to Mecca could have some boundary concerns regarding use.

- New chairs for 2021: IIT Chair goes to OPRD (David S) and Managers Chair is ODFW (Rod and Mike will tag team)
- OPRD – transfer of roles with Chris P departure from OPRD. Steve is now District Manager and is filling in for Chris' place. He will attend managers

meetings and David will attend IIT. Chris' position is temporary at this time but will be filled. Steve will be the website person.

- ZOOM meetings – Discussion regarding on line use for IIT and Manager Meetings. Do we believe ZOOM has worked for us and public engagement? Scott shared that ZOOM works and pretty sure it is secure. Steve shared he has done several different platforms and open to anything. Microsoft teams was mentioned. Jeff using teams but it takes more bandwidth and can bog down, it can be a challenge. ZOOM seems to work smoother. Teams is better for presentations. Brad H shared that ZOOM presentations are limited but face to face is better as well as bandwidth. Rod has used Skype but ZOOM seems better for these types of meetings. Jeff shared that Skype can be a challenge and it is a struggle with the Go-To meeting and WebEx. Scott shared that for now he has a ZOOM account and that until he no longer has it is willing to host the meetings. Scott will work with Mary to get this info out to everyone.

11:00 AM

Round Table

- Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs – Currently closed and they are enforcing reservation closures. All properties under closer for access. He hopes it changes but campgrounds on the Lower Deschutes are closed. It is not a priority for the Council right now, will see what happens in the winter months. BLM is monitoring sites due to easements and inform folks they are on tribal lands. They are unable to use gates, glad to have boating access and will continue to maintain facilities that are on tribal sites.
- ODFW – Nothing new. Due to COVID offices remain closed to public access but can make an appointment to meet. Increased activity of fish returns and fishing is better this year specifically past few weeks. Glacial activity coming down White River due to activity higher on mountain.
- OPRD – River patrols going well and seeing good compliance. Compost toilets should be replaced by end of November and operational for 2021. It was over the season with full campgrounds. Able to order two composting toilets. Question regarding BLM and OPRD going in together to purchase scat machine replacements. OPRD can't collaborate with BLM. Costs for scat machines are \$70,000 apiece.
- OSMB – not present
- OSP – not available
- Local Government – Wasco Co. is in stage 2 openings, things have been good but last 3 weeks had some concerns. Had 50 cases of COVID at a nursing home in The Dalles. Things are stabilizing. FUP (frequent user pass) focus group, Scott wants to try and get it

going in the off season as far as a first meeting. Hunt Park was used a lot for the White River fires. Law enforcement is fully staffed. Jeff thanked Wasco Co. for the use of Hunt Park.

- BLM – Wanted to acknowledge folks on the ground, seasonal staff took on a difficult season. There was lots of work keeping facilities up to par. Hands were pretty full. At next Managers meeting will provide number of boater use, summary of use for summer. June – July there was an 80 to 120 % increase in campsites use. Boating is hard to track, difficulties with how traditionally no show rates were gathered. Cancellations when river was closed down and then folks who cancelled due to change in travel plans. Did see significant use by boaters and commercial outfitters saw lots of cancellations. COVID did not scare people from camping, anywhere they could. SRP's – wanted to thank the guides and outfitters as there was lots of communication and lots of closures in the beginning of the season. Oct. 30th deadline for prospectus and able to have 4 new guides this year. Last couple of years not a lot of applicants. Important that those interested provide complete application. There have been concerns. In the next two weeks there will be grading of roads which they do in the spring and fall when there is moisture, get better results. BLM has limited funds and resources each year and there have been lots of washouts and rock falls but these are being taken care of. The White River Fire- the White River Wilderness did bur and it was more of a mosaic burn. In the river corridor it did not burn too hot but if we get heavy rain it will impact the river with erosion concerns. Awesome road crew will be working the roads from Maupin to Locked Gate and down to Mack's Canyon. Two men make up the road crew and engineering but have others who help with grading, borrow graders. The cost is high but do coordinate with other counties, landowners and ranch owners. There was a question about the handicap ramp at Blue Hole – the floating fishing dock is taken out at winter but did not return this year, the issue had to do with the trailer used for this was red tagged. Jeff will look into this.

11:45 AM Public Comment

- Brad Staples – Inquired about the constructed compost toilets. Advised will be done by end of October or first part of November. November 20-21 and 23rd toilet techs will do final install. Advised that Urine diversion system requires a leach field which may delay opening. Asked about costs for these- \$26,000 apiece. Asked about how they are different and advised they are cheaper and had been tested at Smith Rock State Park to test out as previous

system was not as good. Talked about people not wearing life jackets and jumping into the river, which there was a drowning last year. OPRD is making larger signs at Heritage of what is okay and what is not. Brad also brought up issue from previous meeting of someone reporting jet boat guides going fast. He has not seen anyone guiding illegally and if he did would call law enforcement. Jet boat guides are a tight group and would report any issues they see if they are concerned. They are also not seeing anyone driving too fast. Jeff shared that BLM did follow up and no evidence was found regarding this report and there are no concerns at this time.

- Rob Miles –Shared that he thought it is important that Harpham campground and White River campground to be opened. The river corridor was at capacity due to closures of designated campsites. Shared that it is hard to explain to the public why these areas are closed and it is a burden on the Maupin area. Brad H. shared that he can do what he can do but it is totally up to the council.
- Silas Lewis- Echo's what Rob said, all the campgrounds were full all summer, especially in the city limits. He would like our meetings to be recorded. It has been a challenging year and wanted to give a shout out to the Wasco Co. Sheriff's. Question regarding why we have an expensive law enforcement contract, could this money be spent in better ways? Wondering the uses and what are we getting from law enforcement? Silas also brought up the goat head problem in campgrounds and would like that to be a bigger priority for BLM. Jeff will look into the City limits issue and the calls they take regarding law enforcement support and eyes on the ground. Jeff shared that the public gets 10 times what agencies put into those contracts. There are 1 ½ million acres and 4 rangers which limits the requests for help, thus why law enforcement is important. Brad Staples shared that Wasco Co and OSP do a very good job with response which is important part of their success...they have done a tremendous job.
- Jeff with BLM are aware of the goat heads and other weed problems but BLM needs more folks certified for pesticides. They are doing the best they can and will see if they can get on it earlier.

11:53 AM Final Discussion, Follow Up's Action Items

- Jeff will have summary of boater passes/use and activity on the river for the season.
- David will follow up on capacity of website to have archives of minutes from Managers and IIT meetings.

- Report of rotation for meetings
- All use numbers – Scott to follow up with meeting schedules.
- Limited entry revisited.
- Follow up with ZOOM or upcoming meetings in 2021, Scott has volunteered but back up plan if that is not feasible.
- Recommendations to Managers regarding surfing and paddleboards need for boater pass – next steps regarding signage/education.
- Scheduling for 2021 Manager Meetings.