



**ONE WILLAMETTE RIVER COALITION
For The Willamette Falls Locks**

TEAM MEETING

**Oregon City, Oregon
September 4, 2008**

Participants

Verne Duncan, Oregon Solutions Convener
Linda Bell, Clackamas County Tourism
Dave Bernert, Wilsonville Concrete
Kathleen Bernert, Wilsonville Concrete
Eric Burnette, Port of Portland
Sandy Carter, Will. Falls Heritage Foundation
Debbie Chenoweth, Chenoweth Consulting
Dwayne Foley, Long Term Operations chair
Norman King, City of West Linn
Alan Lewis, WFH Foundation
Damon Mabee, City of Oregon City

Kristin Meira, PNWA
Rick Mogren, Synergy Northwest
Stephen Poyser, SHPO/OPRD
Sunny Radcliffe, PGE
Glen Vanselow, PNWA
Richard Walkoski, Oregon State Parks
Jeremy Weber, US Army Corps of Engineers

Oregon Solutions staff

Steve Greenwood
Margaret Van Vliet
Kristen Earl

A. Introductions and Announcements – Verne Duncan

Convener Duncan called the meeting to order and announced that he would have to leave part way through the meeting and that Dwayne Foley will serve in his absence. Team introductions followed.

B. Capital Committee – Status of HSS Inspection

Jeremy Weber from USACE reported that Congress has now given permission to reprogram the \$511,000 in funds for the HSS Inspection. (After indications at the last meeting that this reprogramming would not occur) Steve Greenwood of Oregon Solutions congratulated the Coalition and expressed his thanks to the Oregon Congressional Delegation for their help in making this happen.

The USACE will open bids on September 9. Work will most likely begin at the end of October and be completed by the end of December 2008. Jeremy cautioned that the inspection may or may not provide funds for repairs, depending on the price of the accepted bid.

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The only mandatory item in the bid contract is Gate 3, which is assumed to be most in need of repair. Jeremy added that all gates must be inspected for the Locks to open. The HSS Inspection will be documented for future use and Civil Engineering students may have the opportunity to observe the Inspection.

Sunny Radcliffe reported that the Capital Improvement Committee is meeting soon with the Corps and ODOT to work through how the \$130,000 in Transportation Enhancement Funds will be transferred to the Corps for repair work. In addition, they will work out how far to go with inspection and repairs, e.g. when you open a gate, do you just do the necessary repairs and move on to the next gate, or do you do all repairs?

C. Long Term Committee Report

Report from CEDER (*Note: *the CEDER Draft Report can be found at* <http://www.pnwa.net/ceder/W%20Falls%20Locks%20Draft%20Report%202008%2009%2004.pdf>)

Glen Vanslow from Pacific Northwest Waterways Association gave a brief history of PNWA's working relationship with the Corps and introduced Rick Mogren and Debbie Chenowith, who outlined the contents of the draft CEDER report.

The report is a 125-page analysis of issues that the Coalition should address as it pursues transfer of the Locks from the Corps to a local entity. The report utilized three case studies of where Corps' lock systems have been transferred in the past. It was paid for by the Coalition, with several Coalition members contributing funds. Some of the key conclusions of the Report:

- According to the Report, there are several key factors of success in transferring property from the Corps to a local entity:
 1. A clearly articulated vision of what we want the locks to do
 2. Getting stakeholder support
 3. Identifying a source of dedicated funding
 4. Doing your homework – developing a business plan for operating/financing the locks

- Glen mentioned several “cautions” to the group
 1. State-ownership was the most successful model found
 2. Public subsidy is essential
 3. Transfer will likely be a minimum 10-year process – need to sustain the effort for the long haul.

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- Other conclusions:
 - Need to conduct a feasibility study for locks operation
 - Need a long-range plan of 40-50 years for locks operation
 - Need to address interim operations during the 10-year transfer period
- U.S. Corps of Engineers Process
 1. A good working relationship with the Corps is a plus, and can save time
 2. If the locks are not transferred to the State, will likely need to follow a more cumbersome GSA Transfer process
 3. The Corps will need to first receive Authority to transfer, then will need Appropriations.

Update On Pilot Project For Schnitzer Steel

Dave Bernert from Wilsonville Concrete discussed commercial uses of the Locks. Dave has been working on developing a barge transport option for Schnitzer Steel, from Portland to Yamhill County. He stressed that the biggest barrier to commercial use of the Locks is their current availability. The Locks have to be open and kept open and supply can not be interrupted in order for barging to be a viable commercial transport option.

Use of the Locks is feasible from an economic perspective, but it will require a heavy investment in capital. Even with the upfront costs, the Locks will save money in over land transportation. Additionally, the “green factor” can be monetized. The homework has been done about the viability of the Locks for commercial use; the next step is a pilot project.

Eric Burnette from the Port of Portland noted that the element of commercial viability increases the interest that the Port has in the Locks. He also said that the Port would like to support the pilot project however it can

D. Draft Declaration of Cooperation

Steve Greenwood suggested that parts of the CEDER report should be incorporated in the Declaration of Cooperation and that the Declaration needs to include on going operations.

Dwayne Foley of the Long Term Operations Committee discussed the role of a Steering Committee to keep the group moving forward and focused after the Declaration of Cooperation is signed and Oregon Solutions formal role in the process is completed. A Steering Committee is recommended because it will share the responsibility and resources for the project. Additionally, no one will be identified as the presumptive new “owner” of the Locks. Two models for the Steering Committee were identified.

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In the first model, the Committee would compose two to three people representing local governments and public entities. The second model is larger, consisting of six to seven entities representing local governments, transportation, historic, recreation interests and more.

Dwayne stressed that this is a work in progress. The role and authority of the Steering Committee was discussed. The idea of asking the Governor to create a commission as well as using the Declaration of Cooperation to empower the Steering Committee with authority was debated. The idea of incorporating the One Willamette River Coalition into a non profit entity was discussed. Jeremy noted that from a federal perspective, it is hard to partner with local non profits.

E. Status of Congressional FY 2009 Funding

Both the House and Senate Committees in Congress have included a minimum of \$200k for the draft of the FY 2009 budget. The budget may not be passed until after the election in November or as late as March 2009. The other possibility is that that Congress will pass a continuing resolution which will keep the funding the same as the prior fiscal year. The funds are designated for caretaking of the Locks and not operation. Senator Smith's office is working to give the Corps flexible use of the money.

F. Lockfest

Lockfest is September 13, 2008. Convener Duncan will serve as emcee of the event. The Oregon Congressional Delegation has been invited along with two county commissioners, the mayors and a representative from the Corps. Sandy Carter asked if there can be a one-page informational flyer about the current status of the locks at Lockfest. Steve Greenwood offered to work with Linda Bell to have something there.

G. PR Committee

Travel Oregon will no longer be providing financial support for Maxwell PR. The PR Committee will be partnering with the Corps on media surrounding the HSS Inspection. Steve and Linda will meet to discuss the PR Plan in the near future.