



Prineville City Council Meeting September 11, 2007

Issue Summary

Topic: Salmon and Steelhead Re-introduction

Department: Administration

Staff: Robb Corbett, City Manager

Overview

In March of this year, representatives of NOAA, US Fish and Wildlife, and Oregon DEQ met with the Prineville City Council to explain the re-introduction efforts that will be occurring over the next few years. Staff explained to the council that we were working with Crook County and local irrigation districts to explore opportunities to mitigate potential liability from practices that may harm this effort.

On July 17, city and county staff were invited to attend a meeting with local irrigation districts outlining a proposal, offered by National Marine Fisheries, allowing legal protection from current, potentially harmful practices, in exchange for a commitment to complete a *Habit Conservation Plan* (HCP). The HCP is a planning effort that analyzes current uses and identifies long term improvements in the use of the water system that will help the re-introduction effort.

The City is currently permitted to discharge sewer effluent into the Crooked River. Additionally, we work with state and federal agencies to irrigate effluent, regulate development and manage storm runoff adjacent to impacted streams. Prineville is also closely tied to the economics of agriculture, representing another potential impact on our community.

As a result of the July meeting, the county met with regional governments to inform them of our efforts, and the possible opportunity to join with the irrigation districts in the HCP development. Council was invited to attend this informational meeting, and Councilor Roppe attended. Another regional government meeting to discuss this effort has been scheduled on Tuesday, September 11, as per the August 30, 2007 letter from Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council (COIC) forwarded to you last Thursday.

The city and the county have been formally invited to join with the irrigations districts in this planning effort. The City Council is asked to decide whether or not you would like staff to continue to explore the opportunity with the irrigations districts, leading to a formal proposal for your consideration.

City Options

Staff has identified two options. Because of our permitted discharge of effluent and other impacts on the river system, we will be required to conform to changing any practice that currently has negative impacts on the re-introduction effort. The ability to work with federal and state agencies to pro-actively identify impacts and address them may make sense.

The alternative would be to continue our current practices, waiting for the permitting process to identify negative impacts, then address mitigating these impacts.

Budgetary Considerations

At this time, the financial impacts are unknown. It is anticipated that financial impacts would be identified as a part of a formal agreement that would be brought back before the Council.