

McKenzie River Focus Watershed Coordination

**Annual Report
2001 - 2002**



DOE/BP-00004117-3

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McKenzie River Focus Watershed Coordination

Year-End Report

To The Bonneville Power Administration

Fiscal Year 2002

Project No. 199607000



The mission of the McKenzie Watershed Council is to foster better stewardship of the McKenzie Watershed resources through voluntary partnerships and collaboration.

Title of Project: McKenzie River Focus Watershed Coordination

BPA Project Number: 199607000

Business acronym: MWC

Business name of organization: McKenzie Watershed Council. Fiscal Agent - Cascade Pacific Resource Conservation and Development, Inc.

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Province: Lower Columbia

Subbasin: Willamette

Short Description: BPA funding, in conjunction with contributions from numerous partners organizations and grant funds supports the McKenzie Watershed Council's (MWC) efforts to coordinate restoration and monitoring programs of federal, state, local government, and residents within the watershed. Primary goals of the MWC are to improve resource stewardship and conserve fish, wildlife, and water quality resources. Underpinning the goals is the MWC's baseline program centered on relationship building and information sharing. Objectives for FY02 included: 1) Continue to coordinate McKenzie Watershed activities among diverse groups to restore fish and wildlife habitat in the watershed, with a focus on the middle to lower McKenzie, including private lands and the McKenzie-Willamette confluence area; 2) Influence behavior of watershed residents to benefit watershed function through an outreach and education program, utilizing (BPA funded) Assessment and Conservation Strategy information to provide a context for prioritized action; 3) Continue to maintain and sustain a highly functional watershed council; 4) Maintain and improve water quality concerns through the continuation of Council-sponsored monitoring and evaluation programs; and 5) Continue to secure other funding for watershed restoration and protection projects and Council operations.

McKenzie Watershed Council Partner Organizations: City of Eugene, City of Springfield, Army Corps. of Engineers, Eugene Water and Electric Board, Springfield Utility Board, Hynix Semiconductor, Division of State Lands, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Lane County, McKenzie Flyfishers, McKenzie Residents Association, McKenzie River Guides, East Lane SWCD, McKenzie River Trust, Mohawk Community Council, and Weyerhaeuser Company.



Operation and Maintenance Accomplishments

Funding from the Bonneville Power Administration and McKenzie Watershed Council partner organizations allowed for continued administration of the McKenzie Focus Watershed Council (MWC). As per previous years, there continues to be a “full plate” of activities and demands that occupy the McKenzie Watershed Council. Besides the annual work plan demands the Council places upon itself each year, there always is the periodic watershed crises that the watershed council is asked to trouble-shoot. Fiscal year 2002 was no exception with several major issues occupying the Council’s time (see below). The Council’s FY02 work plan was focused primarily toward community involvement and implementing restoration projects. Of the 30 plus major tasks in the work plan, Council Staff and Partner organizations accomplished most of them. For FY02, Council Staff was comprised of a full-time Coordinator, half-time education manager, quarter time outreach manager and quarter-time McKenzie-Willamette Confluence project manager.

To support the Council’s efforts, Council Staff successfully acquired grants from Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (2), National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, Eugene Water and Electric Board Partners (2), Environmental Protection Agency, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Bonneville Environmental Foundation and several private foundations.

The McKenzie Watershed Council’s Executive Committee, comprised of 5 Council Partner organizations, continued to regularly meet. The role Executive Committee is to supervise Council Staff, set the Council’s agenda and assist in handling the administrative tasks of the Council.

From this, 11 monthly meetings of the McKenzie Watershed Council were held at various locations in the McKenzie watershed. One of these meetings was an executive session of the Council, also known as the Council retreat. It is at the retreat that the Council develops and adopts by consensus its annual work plan. During monthly Council meetings, the primary focus is information sharing and education. Guest speakers provided updates on a host issues, these included:

Senate Bill 1010 Agriculture Plans, students involved in the Council’s water quality monitoring program, development concerns of the McKenzie floodplain, Cougar Reservoir temperature control project, Willamette Basin Futures, and EWEB’s relicensing of Walterville and Leaburg hydropower facilities. In addition, the Council worked into its monthly agendas were discussions on the McKenzie River turbidity issue as a result of the Cougar Reservoir project and floodplain development/bank erosion issues in the Cedar Creek/Thurston area. These were huge topics of conversation by watershed residents and the local media. The Council was asked in both cases, to assist with problem solving this issues (more below).



The Council also spent time on the river on several occasions, with one being the Council's annual float trip. In FY02, the council explored the confluence of the McKenzie with the Willamette River: an important area for maintaining bio-diversity in the watershed, where the Council is facilitating conservation opportunities with the myriad of stakeholders in this area.

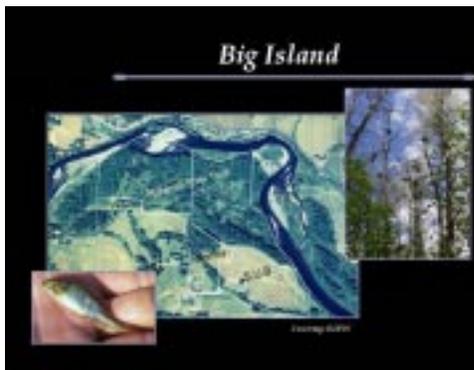


A significant role is also played by the McKenzie Watershed Council in coordination with other Willamette Basin Councils. For example, the MWC is the lead council on several collaborative efforts among Upper Willamette Basin Councils. Here, the MWC leads a fish passage team for the area as well as working with a public outreach consultant to get the "watershed message" out to watershed residents, enlisting their energy and support for watershed restoration and education.

The use of e-mail as a tool for sharing information continues to grow, and the Council maintains a large mailing list that distributes information several times per month (*McKenzie Watershed Electronic News*). The Council's newsletter, distributed 3 times/year, continues to be popular and a major outreach tool for the Council.

Support of the flourishing Mohawk Watershed Partnership continued by the MWC. The Council continued to provide coordination funds to the MWP, enabled this group to continue its communication, education and restoration work in this important tributary to the McKenzie River. This work helped leverage grant funds from the Bonneville Environmental Foundation where substantial restoration planning is now occurring in 3 subbasins of the Mohawk.

The Council's partnership with the McKenzie River Trust, a local land conservancy, continues to grow. The Council serves on a committee that looks at potential properties to either obtain or develop conservation agreements for. This collaboration has helped in the acquisition of several large properties; discussions with more landowners are occurring and look promising. MRT focus is to acquire and protect "special places" based on the biological priorities established in the Council's (BPA funded) Conservation Strategy. Post acquisition, MRT and MWC work in partnership to restore and maintain these special places.



MWC spent a considerable amount of time working at larger scales, such as the Willamette Basin. By serving on the Willamette Restoration Initiative Board, MWC continued to represent the valley's watershed Councils. Staff also served on the American Heritage River Steering committee and on the Willamette Province Advisory Committee.

After almost a year of exploring the pro and cons of re-organizing into a 501c3 entity, the Council adopted by consensus to make this a reality. In early FY03 and in consultation with a local non-profit attorney, the MWC will begin the process becoming non-profit, expecting this status by the end of FY03.

Planning and Design Accomplishments

With the restoration grant funds received by the MWC and Coordination funds provided by BPA, the MWC increased its focus on the Council's Vision of the watershed. This vision lead the Council to formally adopt by consensus a vision statement and Benchmarks for the McKenzie Watershed. After considerable work and discussion by Council Partners, the following vision statement was adopted:

"The McKenzie River Watershed supports exceptional water quality and habitats in balance with human economic livelihood and quality of life."

To support the vision and to provide a road map for it, the Council developed and adopted Benchmarks. The Benchmarks are specific values (or targets) for an Indicator set at a particular point in the future. Indicators for fish and wildlife, water quality, education, and investments in the watershed, were set for 2010 and for 2020. Progress toward the Benchmarks will be evaluated annually, with the Council expecting to produce a State of the Watershed Report in 2010 evaluating the status of the watershed emphasizing the Benchmark system. Please see the Council's website (www.mckenziewaterhedcouncil.org) for the Benchmarks document.

To create focus for Council Partners and Staff in restoration efforts, the Council also adopted an internal working document that outlined priority areas in the watershed for restoration and protection opportunities (document on website). During the past year, landowners in the prioritized areas have been contacted for possible projects. This effort yielded interest in projects, with several implemented and more planned for FY03. The prioritization was based on results from the BPA funded McKenzie Watershed Assessment and McKenzie Watershed

Conservation Strategy. These documents shaped restoration grants the Council submitted to various organizations for project implementation.

Enlisting residents, organizations, and landowners in projects is ongoing work for the MWC. Sustaining involvement by the same folks is key to successful efforts. To help to this end, this past year the MWC implemented an outreach effort entitled McKFISH (McKenzie Friends Improving Stewardship of Habitat). McKFISH is an effort where the Council provides an



overview of the historic and current conditions of the watershed in the areas in and around watershed communities. This information exchange happened in homes, community halls and other local places. Residents from these communities were invited to comment on and develop projects that move the watershed toward the Council's vision. This effort is empowering communities to take an active and progressive role in watershed stewardship. The Council held several community meetings with local efforts being energized in the Cedar

Creek, Camp Creek and Blue River communities. The MWC plans to continue these efforts in FY03. It is a sense of place and an attachment to a place that spurs action by residents. Putting the watershed assessment results and actions people can take into a local context increases the chances of successful restoration and protection efforts.

One of the focus areas for the MWC is the McKenzie-Willamette Rivers confluence area. The MWC has helped cultivate a group of diverse stakeholders in the area to address fish and wildlife concerns as well as provide some certainty for the sand and gravel industry that occupy the banks of these two rivers. The confluence area was identified in the Council's assessment as a high priority area from both a restoration and protection stand point. That is, that high quality fish and wildlife habitat exists and should be protected and there are opportunities for restoration associated with mined out gravel pits. The Council's McKenzie-Willamette Confluence Committee was recently recognized by the Bush Administration as an outstanding example of a public-private partnership under the Oregon Agreement (Bush Administration Initiative). The Committee is still working on a long-term vision for the 11,000 acre planning area. However, in FY02, the Council received OWEB funds for implementation of several restoration projects.



With the MWC in the lead and cooperation from Lane County, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, landowners, and other watershed Councils of the Upper Willamette Basin, fish barriers in the Upper Willamette were identified. This effort is still ongoing. However, for a first step, the Fish Access Team did identify fish passage concerns for Lane County Roads. From this, priority passage areas were identified by the Team and a funding proposal was submitted to OWEB. While the proposal did receive positive comments from OWEB, unfortunately it was not funded. The Team will resubmit the proposal in FY03. 10 culverts in the McKenzie Watershed were initially selected as priorities for replacement under County roads and in the proposal.

Construction and Implementation Accomplishments

In FY02, the MWC considerably increased implementation of Council sponsored on-the-ground projects. Grant funds were applied for and utilized in project implementation. Projects occurred on private lands in the middle to lower portion of the watershed. Each project had the benefit of technical specialists (e.g., biologists, hydrologists, botanists, etc) working on team to develop the projects. Most of the projects were focused on medium-size tributaries of the McKenzie. The projects are intended to improve juvenile spring chinook rearing habitat which has been identified a major limiting factor for threatened spring chinook salmon in the McKenzie watershed. Multiple private landowners are engaged in these projects.

Over 100 volunteers along with paid contractors helped implement projects on the mainstem Mohawk River, McGowan Creek, Parsons Creek, Holden Creek, Cedar Creek, Potter Creek, Lane Creek and a couple of upland habitat areas. Most of the projects involved removing invasive plant species and planting native trees and shrubs.

In the McKenzie-Willamette confluence area, habitat restoration projects targeting spring chinook salmon and pond-turtles were implemented using OWEB funds. One project in particular involved reconstruction of an alcove to benefit rearing spring chinook.



As you would expect, keeping track of project efforts on the ground and in-house is a time consuming affair. To help keep track of projects, the Council has developed a project database. This is a relational database that allows for comprehensive tracking of the Council's overall restoration and protection program as well as specifics by individual projects. Information on funding, in-kind contributions, who's involved, streams affected and what is being done, for

example, are just some of the fields in the database. The database also has the capability to respond to GIS mapping. Having this tool will increase the MWC's ability to quickly and efficiently report progress to funding organizations.



The MWC continued its support of the McKenzie River Cooperative Maintenance Partnership,

resulting in the continued installation of more common and attractive signage at recreation sites.

As use of the watershed continues to grow, issues related to crime and destructive behaviors continue to emerge. In response, the Council

provided a letter to Lane County Commissioners encouraging expenditure of Forest Fund dollars to increase law enforcement in the watershed. In addition, the Council reviewed Lane County Sheriff's crime reports and other data sources to analyze the magnitude of the crime at boat landings/recreation sites along the McKenzie. A summary of the data was recently presented.



From this analysis, the MWC, Federal agencies, and Lane County are exploring options of utilizing Payments to County funds to expand patrols by law enforcement to recreation sites along the McKenzie. MWC staff will continue to work on this in FY03.

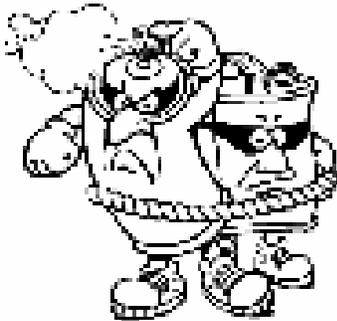
In May 2002, when people's thoughts turn to working around the yard or in the garden, the MWC hosted a workshop entitled, "Going Native in the McKenzie Watershed." The focus of the workshop was to inform residents on what native plants to use and what the wildlife the plants



attract. Over 40 folks attended the workshop and learned about naturescaping for butterflies, hummingbirds, and other neotropical birds. Many businesses donated native plants, free for the taking. The workshop also served as the unveiling for the Council's new educational brochure - "Go Native! Landscaping with Native Plants: A Landowners Guide for Using Native Plants in the McKenzie River Watershed."

This 12 page, full color brochure is very popular and continues to be requested by residents. The brochure was developed by a technical team assembled by the MWC and was funded by six different partner organizations.

With a large portion of the McKenzie Watershed being somewhat rural, there is not the availability of disposal sites that allow proper disposal of household hazardous waste. Residents have to make an appointment at the disposal site in Eugene, almost 1 hour away in some cases, to dispose of oil-based paint, old pesticides, and other items that can be harmful to the McKenzie's water quality. To alleviate this inconvenience, the MWC



collaborated with the McKenzie Fire Department and Lane County Public Works, Waste Disposal Division, to sponsor a Household Hazardous Waste Roundup day for the watershed. The planning for this has occurred and will be implemented on a Saturday in October 2002. It is anticipated that this will become an annual event for the watershed.

The MWC Conservation Strategy includes a goal to provide teachers, students, and non-formal educators with tools and training to implement education watershed-related activities. To meet this end, numerous presentations, field trips, and interactions with educators occurred in FY02. Over 300 students participated in Council related programs. Most of these students and teachers were exposed to an interactive game called the McKenzie Watershed Salmon Picnic or the newly introduced McKenzie Watershed Salmon Game. The latter is a board game the Council recently produced and teaches about the salmon life cycle as well as best management practices for our watersheds. Over 100 versions of this game are being distributed to teachers in the local schools.

The former uses props and helps articulate our connections to salmon and watersheds using the props. For example, how is a computer hard-drive connected to salmon?

Answer: McKenzie water was used by the manufacturer in Eugene to polish the hard-drive. The water needs to be very clean to create the smooth finish. Clean water is also needed for fish to survive. Every time you turn on your computer and hear the whirl of the hard-drive - you can think of the need for clean water both for the computer and for salmon.



Additional activities sponsored by the Council included two teacher workshops, attended by 60 teachers. Workshop topics included macroinvertebrate and water quality sampling. In turn, teachers use this new found information for projects carried out by their students.

In FY02, the McKenzie Watershed was the destination for folks working under the BPA umbrella for watershed restoration. Approximately 60 watershed coordinators and BPA program managers and specialists attending the annual BPA watershed coordinators conference. Each year it is held different locations throughout the Columbia Basin, this year, the spot light was on the McKenzie. The two-day event was comprised on an indoor session on the first day. This is when attendees heard, from their peers, the trials, tribulations, and successes of watershed restoration in the Columbia. Day-two was a field tour of the lower portion of the McKenzie watershed. Here, folks were exposed to the various aspects of the McKenzie Focus watershed program, dealing with recreation, restoration, protection, and politics.

Watersheds: Why we should care? What you can do? This was the theme for a water-based tour of the McKenzie for over 30 elected officials and business leaders. The tour was cosponsored by Community Oregon and the Willamette Restoration Initiative. Tour stops included speakers from the University of Oregon, the industries of agriculture, sand and gravel, forestry, and others - all focused on the challenges facing their respective businesses and our watersheds. Participants commented on how the business climate and our watershed are dependent on each other.



The first annual McKenzie Watershed Council Natural Resources Scholarship was awarded this past June 2002. A Mohawk High School graduate was the winner, she articulated in her scholarship application, how her skills, once graduating from OSU's veterinary school, will enhance the business and watershed environment. Her goals and those of the MWC make a good fit said the scholarship selection committee.

Almost each year in the McKenzie Watershed there seems to be an issue or issues that cause an uproar by residents. These issues are usually natural resources based - and the MWC is often asked to help address the issues. In 2002, this was no exception, where two issues were hot topics of conversation.

The first issue was a mix of floodplain development and erosion concerns in the lower portion of the watershed. Herein, the MWC was asked to facilitate multiple stakeholders on the risks of development by the City of Springfield in the McKenzie-Cedar Cr floodplain. Catalyzing the situation was channel movement by the McKenzie, causing erosion to agricultural fields. The fear was the main McKenzie channel could eventually capture nearby Cedar Creek, leading to extensive flooding in Thurston/Springfield. Through a series of community, agencies and political meetings, the MWC was able to increase the City's awareness of river dynamics, floodplains and McKenzie flood events. The Council was able to help landowners toward best management practices to decrease agriculture land erosion. Agencies and the City of Springfield began an effort of collecting new data to identify flood vulnerabilities and how to address these under ESA and other requirements. This information is now available to all parties for preparation in case of a major flood event.



The second issue the Council was asked to help with was the Willamette River Temperature Control project. This project calls for installing a multiported selective withdrawal structure at Cougar Reservoir on the South Fork McKenzie River. Modification to the McKenzie River

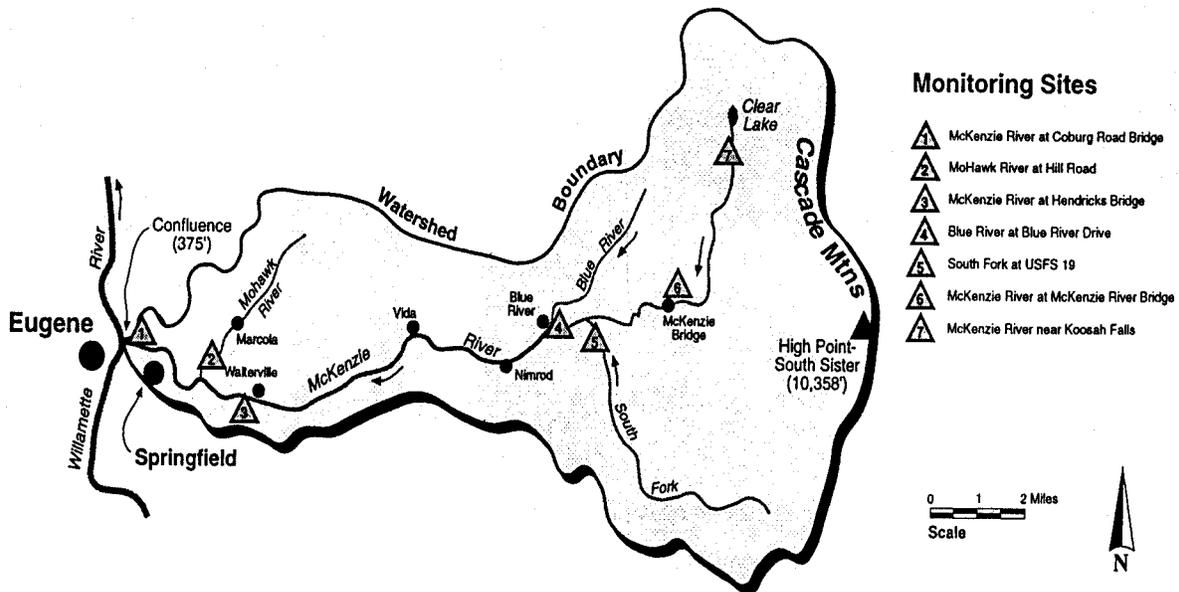


temperature regime has been cited by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife as the key limiting factor on the production of spring chinook salmon in the McKenzie. In the Spring of 2002, drawdown of Cougar Reservoir began, causing unacceptable levels of turbidity in the McKenzie River. The turbidity negatively impacted business associated with McKenzie watershed tourism, including recreation and fishing. As you would expect, the outcry from the community was tremendous, given that the drawdown coincided with trout fishing season.

The MWC entered into discussions with the Army Corps of Engineers, who are overseeing the project, on ways and the need to manage differently this multi-year project. Through these conversations and letters, the Corps was able to put measures into place so as to decrease the effects to the McKenzie, for the time-being. In addition, the Council helped coordinate a community meeting for the Corps to discuss the issues. Over 300 people attended this lively meeting. Currently, the MWC is working with the Corps on the monitoring aspects of the project and will continue to do so in the outyears.

Monitoring and Evaluation Accomplishments

In FY02 the Council continued to implement a strong water quality monitoring program. This program was comprised of an 8th year of data collection of ambient water quality, completing a fourth year of macroinvertebrate data collection, and initiating water quality sampling on an additional tributaries to the McKenzie.



In December 2001, the Council, in collaboration with DEQ, produced a report entitled, “McKenzie Watershed Water Quality Report: Water Years 1991 - 2000. This report summarized the Council’s monitoring effort on the mainstem McKenzie. Important results included: 1) water quality of the McKenzie is relatively high for a river of its size, 2) temperature is currently the major water quality issue for the watershed and that some portions of the watershed water

quality is limited in the summer for salmon rearing and bull trout - both federally listed species, 3) water quality is better in the upper portion of the watershed relative to the lower portion, and 4) in the lower portion, high levels of ammonia and nitrates were recorded at two monitoring stations.

For the past few years, the Council anticipated these findings and began education and water quality improvement efforts focused in the lower watershed. In FY03, the Council's stakeholders will work with Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) on a McKenzie Watershed Water Quality Plan. This plan will involve the various stakeholders developing bmps to address the monitoring results and temperature TMDLs.



In 2002, the Council completed its fourth year of baseline monitoring of macroinvertebrates in McKenzie tributary streams. This effort, funded by OWEB, enlisted many volunteers and partner organizations to make the sampling a success. Currently, the data is being analyzed and a comprehensive report covering the four years will be produced in the fall of 2002.

Water quality monitoring in McKenzie tributaries continues to involve highly trained students from the local schools. Data acquisition follows DEQ protocols and is useable for management recommendations. In FY02, the Council



continued monitoring in Cedar Creek, this is an effort in partnership with the City of Springfield, the Cedar Creek subwatershed group, the MWC and now EWEB. A comprehensive report from this effort was released earlier this year to the stakeholders. Basically, temperature and bacteria continue to be limiting factors in this stream that flows to the McKenzie through a mixed land-use pattern. Cedar Creek is a restoration focus area for the MWC. In addition, for FY02, the Council initiated student led monitoring on Camp and Potter Creeks. Again, these are restoration focus areas for the Council. The MWC and the

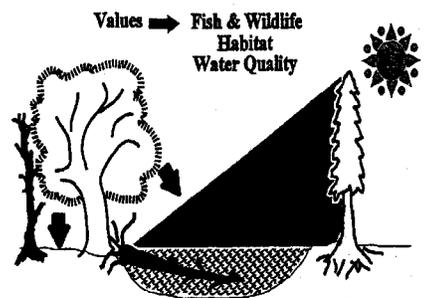
Mohawk Watershed Partnership also combined forces to acquire resources and partnerships for more comprehensive water quality sampling on the mainstem Mohawk River and several tributaries of the Mohawk.

MWC staff and student volunteers continue to monitor Gate, Deer and Cedar Creeks restoration projects. Data on survival rate of planted trees indicates considerable success, despite heavy competition with exotic weeds. Results are being incorporated into future planting.

The MWC continues to be involved in the local communities through efforts such as assisting the McKenzie Fire department in developing survey of equipment and preparedness of local agencies to address hazardous spills. MWC Staff will aid with the subsequent grant application to purchase equipment and provide for personnel training to fill in the gaps.

Coordination for the Future

It is planned for 2003, that the MWC will continue to implement a broad-based watershed program that coordinates fish, wildlife and water quality programs along with incorporating public outreach and education components through all of the Council's work. For the coming year, the Council will also continue to develop restoration and protection projects based from the Council's Conservation Strategy. For FY 2003, the MWC, through the BPA project renewal process requested additional funds from the BPA to increase the restoration program sponsored by the Council. This request was denied, however, Coordination funds to the Council from the BPA continue. The MWC will continue to use BPA funds to leverage grant funds for the Council's restoration program. The MWC efforts, through Conservation Planning, implementation and education, furthers the goals outlined in the Northwest Power Planning Council's Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program.



McKENZIE WATERSHED COUNCIL BUDGET FY02

ADMINISTRATION INFLOW	FY02 Use of Funds	FY02 \$\$
BPA	Council Support	118,900
Eugene Water and Electric Board (local match)	Council Support	24,000
City of Eugene (local match)	Council Support	10,000
City of Springfield (local match)	Council Support and Monitoring	5,000
USFS (local match)	Conservation Strat./Implementation	3,000
BLM (local match)	Conservation Strat./Implementation	3,000
TOTAL INFLOW (cash)		163,900
OTHER FUNDING SOURCES (All funding sources listed below are from grants except from SUB)		Total Cash
Springfield Utility Board (SUB)	Minutes Recording for MWC meetings	4,000
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board	Macroinvertebrate sampling, analysis and reporting	7,425
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board	McKenzie-Willamette Confluence Habitat Enhancement	103,000
NOAA	McKenzie Tributaries Habitat Enhancement	15,400
Eugene Water and Electric Board, Partners in Education (PIE)	Monitoring 2 yrs (Cedar, Potter, & Camp Creeks)	12,000
Eugene Water and Electric Board, Partners in Education (PIE)	Monitoring 2 yrs, Mohawk River	18,000
US Fish and Wildlife Service	Outreach and Education	1,500
Mancini Foundation	Outreach	5,000
Johnson Foundation	Outreach	10,000
Bonneville Environmental Foundation	Mohawk Subbasin Planning	63,000
TOTAL BUDGET FROM OTHER FUNDING SOURCES		\$233,325
TOTAL MWC BUDGET INFLOWS FOR FY02		\$397,225