

Okanogan CD Drought Preparedness Plan – June Planning Meeting

July 14th, 2025 | 1:00pm – 3:00 pm

SUMMARY NOTES

Meeting started at 1:00 pm

Introductions: Attendees introduce themselves & Affiliation

Attendees:

Jordana Ellis (Okanogan CD)

Jack Owen (Okanogan CD)

Emmy Engle (Okanogan CD)

Rosalie Powell (Okanogan CD)

Lee Webster (City of Brewster)

Elianna Rosenthal (Washington Department Fish & Wildlife)

John Box (Confederated Tribe Colville Reservation)

Hannah Tomlinson (Natural Resource Conservation Service)

Cindy Fabbri (Washington State University)

Rita Stewart (Methow Watershed Council)

Tessa Reeder (Washington Water Trust)

Jonathan Yoder (Washington State University)

Lael Williams (Washington Department Fish & Wildlife)

Jacob Gates (City of Winthrop)

Celeste Acord (Natural Resource Conservation Service)

Sandra Streiby (Methow Watershed Council)

Michelle Martin (Okanogan Land Trust)

Rowena St. Pierre (Confederated Tribe Colville Reservation)

Stuart Crane (Yakama Nation)

Survey Development:

- Update on process: The group discussed the status of the surveys that will be used to gather information for the Risk Assessment.
 - The “Individual” survey is finished, feedback from previous planning session has been incorporated and currently being prepared for publishing.
 - The “Purveyor” specific survey is almost complete. Some Purveyors in the community have been asked to review and we are still waiting to see if there will be feedback that would need to be incorporated.
 - The surveys still need to go through IRB process, it is possible the surveys will be exempt which will reduce the timeframe of the review process. WSU staff will reach out to IRB for an estimate timeframe to better inform when surveys will be able to be published.

Outreach:

- The progress of performing outreach for the coming community meetings was discussed.
 - A press release has gone out to local papers and radios.
 - Flyers have been created that show either all meetings listed on one flyer or individual flyers for each meeting. OCD outreach team prefers to use the individual flyers as locations and dates could unexpectedly change. Flyers for first meeting in Winthrop on July 30th are ready to be posted to social media. Flyers identify project and goals for the meetings, as well as a link to the communications sign-up.
 - Location for the Columbia Basin public meeting is still being decided. All other dates have been secured for other meetings. It was suggested that Lee Webster (City of Brewster) be consulted on locations for a venue for Columbia basin meeting.
 - Methow Watershed Council (MWC) would like to host the meeting in Carlton and OCD will support. Discussion on dates occurred and it was suggested to keep the meeting inside the July 30th to August 27th timeframe as the press release has already stated those dates. MWC staff will get back with confirmed dates. *(Since this meeting MWC staff have confirmed the Carlton meeting will occur on August 19th).*
 - Outreach methods of informing public of meetings are newspaper, local radio interviews, posting flyers, and social media.
 - At the time of this meeting staff are still waiting to hear back about radio interview with Kroot (Methow Valley). Radio interview at KOMW in Omak will occur Friday 18th.

- It was suggested that making a Facebook event may help people remember by creating a calendar invite individuals can save as reminders.
- The meetings currently have a Teams link, but it is undecided what platform will best serve hosting the meeting virtually. OCD outreach staff will send the meeting invite to all planning team members.
- Staff will be showing up to set up at meetings one hour before meetings begin. If partners could show up 15-20 minutes early to assist with meet and greet that would be great!

Community Meeting Agenda & Activity Proposal:

- The group discussed a proposal from OCD staff for an agenda and activity for the community meetings. The proposal can be found in the Google drive [here](#). All are asked to review the proposal and offer feedback or alternative suggestions by the end of the week. It would be good to cross-reference the agenda with the survey to ensure we are aiming to gather similar information and ensure event is staying on point.
- Agenda
 - Welcome and gather – place a large hydrograph on the wall, prompt attendees as they enter and mingle to use a post-it to note historic events where they remember being impacted by drought.
 - Intro – brief presentation on drought, what the project we are doing is about, why it is needed, and what we are asking of the attendees tonight, and what we will do with the information.
 - Ice Breaker – Question – What is the first Drought you remember.
 - Discussion around this was that some may not remember an official “Drought”, but may be able to remember the times they saw snow melt off before Easter, or the first time they let cattle out to range earlier than ever, or last time they saw hill green well into or through summer. Etc.... unless there are dry wells or curtailments, no one may remember when the last drought was. People may remember good water years rather than droughts.
 - Activity – “Community Water Stories & Mapping” Workshop:
 - Break attendees into groups and have 3 prompts for discussion (experiences, risks, impacts) provide maps, or one large map to write on and note locations. Ask an individual to share group or personal findings (and possibly mitigation projects).
 - Discussion around the activity: Would this be a good or bad time to ask the public for project ideas? Concerns were raised that people will only think about ‘what are we going to do?’

which isn't the focus of the meeting. It was suggested that this prompt not be brought up until the meeting close out as we describe that we will use the information gathered to brainstorm and develop the project list and ask for suggestions or let them know there will be an opportunity to offer suggestions at a later date. How much time for breakout groups? Times are noted on the agenda page and are not set. Possibly 30 minutes.

- A "Mapping" activity was suggested where individuals map water source, area of concern or vulnerability, areas of major change.
 - Discussion around this activity: Is personal map data necessary for risk assessment? Maybe it would be better to categorize based on supply or use and ask in that context. That information is important and needs to be tied to location to identify areas where impacts are concentrating. Some felt maps are great for having people getting hands-on engaged. Closer to 30 minutes for breakout groups and give group discussion more time. People may be less inclined to give specific locations of places they see as vulnerable to drought. Maps will be large scale, focusing on the subregion.
 - Do we want people to identify town or area, or specific waterbody? How specific do we want? We also want them to write down what it was that they marked. Dots on a map will not tell us the story, they need to be prompted as to what they are marking. Do we want sub-basin specific, waterbody specific, farm specific, community specific? (We can capture locations as broad or specific as people are willing to input. We should be prepared to provide examples or categories: from recreation to health.
- The presentation was discussed. How to frame the event and introduce the ideas around what drought is and varying levels of severity. It was suggested to have visuals of past newspapers headlines of drought impacts. It may be productive to have historic headlines of curtailments or low-flow years to jog memories. It was suggested to would be good to have an introduction of the history of drought declarations and streamflow levels relative to the area or major watersheds. An overviewing the project, but also showing what

drought is, and how it may have impacted us historically. Basically the “why” for this project.

- Providing the activity to online attendees was discussed. We could do breakout rooms for remote attendees. Zoom or Teams is able to provide this. Some type of virtual whiteboard could be useful for mapping or discussion. Outreach team will look into this. Zoom may require a special subscription for these features.
- It was asked if refreshments will be served. It is the intention to have refreshments as funding allows. OCD staff are investigating if this is an eligible expense with Ecology and if it is not, if there is funding available in OCD funds.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:10pm