

MID-COAST WATER PLANNING PARTNERSHIP



NEWSLETTER
September 2020

Partnership Launches New Website

The Partnership launched a new website in September, **Cape 2 Cape**. To support a seamless transition, the URL of the new site is the same as the original MCWPP site: www.midcoastwaterpartners.com. The purpose of the new site is to illustrate and share information from the first three steps of the planning process to develop an integrated water management plan for the Mid-Coast of Oregon. Visitors to the site can learn about the partnership and take a deeper dive into the ecology, water quantity, water quality, and infrastructure issues associated with water availability and delivery in the region. The new site also has the framework that will allow us to share information as stakeholders develop prioritized strategies for addressing, initially, 18 key issues developed by Partnership work groups, and other issues that have been discussed to date but for which there have been no clearly defined issue statements created. Stay tuned for more, and visit the website often for updates!

Planning Team Hosted Webinar 29 September 2020

The planning team hosted a webinar from 9am-10am on 29 September 2020 to wrap up step 3 of the planning process and initiate step 4 - the development of prioritized strategies to address the key issues identified by Partnership stakeholders. A total of 64 people attended the webinar, which was recorded, and is available for viewing at <https://www.midcoastwaterpartners.com/webinars-online-meetings>. The Integrated Water Management Plan Development Team shared the process it will be using to develop a balanced water plan for the Mid-Coast and described the 18 key issues developed by the work groups. They also shared the timeline for the process moving forward:

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"All the water that will ever be is, right now."
~National Geographic

Integrated Water Management Plan Development Team

Co-facilitators

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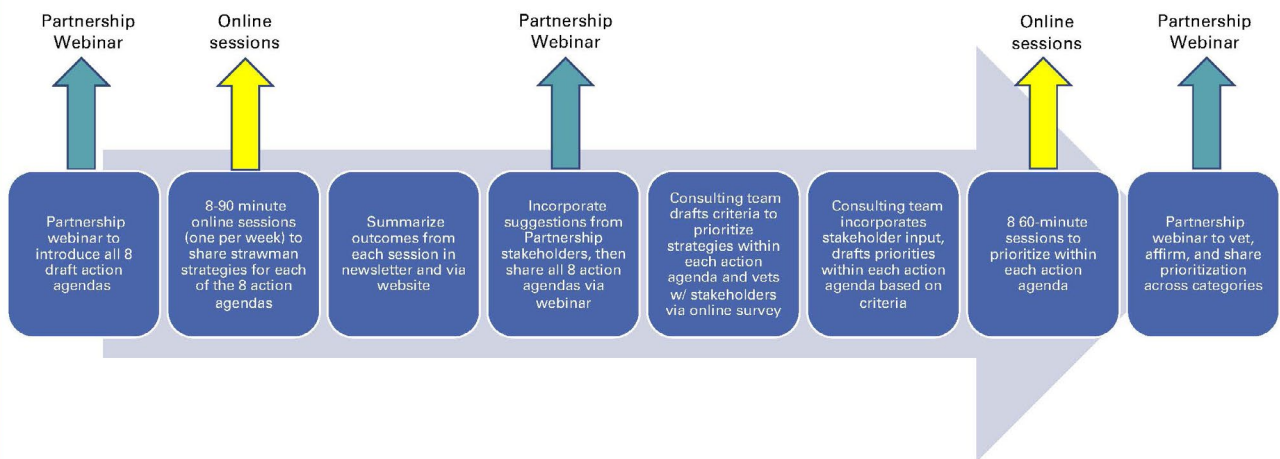
During October and November, the planning team will be reviewing all documents, information, reports, and datasets produced to date, and drafting a plan strawman consisting of 8 action agendas (one agenda to address each theme associated with the 18 key issues identified during step 3 of the planning process). The team will then work with the Coordinating Committee to review and refine the eight action agendas.

The planning team will host a webinar in early January to share the results of these efforts and introduce the strawman document. A series of eight (8) 90-minute online sessions (one per week) will be hosted by the planning team to discuss, in detail, each of the eight action agendas:

- Water Conservation
- Natural Hazards, Vulnerabilities, and Emergency Preparedness
- Climate Change Impacts
- Local Capacity and Regional Collaboration
- Water Quantity for Instream and Out-of-Stream Uses
- Watershed Health
- Water Quality for Instream and Out-of-Stream Uses
- Infrastructure

The team will summarize the outcomes of these discussions on the website and in the monthly newsletter. After all 8 online sessions have concluded, the planning team will host a partnership webinar to summarize each action agenda. The team will then draft criteria that will be used to prioritize strategies within each action agenda, and vet those criteria with stakeholders via a survey. After incorporating stakeholder input, the team will use the criteria to draft priorities within each action agenda, then host online sessions to work with stakeholders to vet and affirm priorities. A Partnership webinar will be hosted to share the outcomes and discuss prioritization across strategies. The team will then chart the course for tackling other water-related issues in the region.

Action Agenda Development- Jan/Feb 2021



COMING IN OCTOBER . . .



- Begin developing strawman action agendas for each of the eight issue themes
- Meet and request relevant agency datasets to inform strategy development.
- Load additional datasets into Mid-Coast Water Planning Map Viewer beta version.
- Build Oregon Explorer Mid-Coast Water landing page mock-up.
- Vet logo ideas for Cape to Cape with partnership stakeholders via an online survey.

MCWPP

18 Issues/8 Categories

Water Conservation

- The Mid-Coast needs a coordinated water conservation initiative/strategy that focuses on reducing water use, educating stakeholders, promoting incentives, and effectively using limited water supplies, especially in times of water shortage.
- Rural residents and businesses need improved access to information, incentives, funding, and resources to help them implement water conservation measures.

Natural Hazards, Vulnerabilities, and Emergency Preparedness

- The majority of water providers need redundancy, water system interconnections, and alternative sources to ensure access to safe drinking water in case of emergencies or shortages.

Climate Change Impacts

- Climate change is having profound impacts on the ecosystem, which affects the health and well-being of coastal communities. Although we may not fully understand nor be able to accurately predict climate change effects, we can and should proactively adapt to climate change impacts at a regional scale.

Local Capacity and Regional Collaboration

- Mid-Coast water providers share the need for system resilience and reliable source water quantity and quality. Regular coordination and collaboration among water providers can improve access to resources and funding to support this need.

Water Quality for Instream and Out-of-Stream Uses

- Multiple river and stream segments consistently do not meet Oregon and federal water quality standards: high temperature and low dissolved oxygen threaten fish, and elevated turbidity affects the ability to treat and use water.
- Low stream flow and high temperatures in the summer months, and high turbidity due to winter storms, pose challenges for drinking water suppliers to meet state and federal regulations to provide safe drinking water.
- Self-supplied rural residents are increasingly concerned about drinking water quality and need adequate and timely data to determine regional, local, or site-specific water quality contamination issues that may pose a health risk.

Water Quantity for Instream and Out-of-Stream Uses

- Summer streamflows are insufficient in some areas of the Mid-Coast to meet the instream water needs of fish and wildlife. Low streamflows contribute to water quality impairments (e.g., high temperatures) that negatively affect fish and wildlife.

- Many streams in the Mid-Coast lack: 1) legal protections (e.g., instream water rights) to protect streamflows for the full range of ecological flows, and 2) streamflow targets to guide instream flow restoration efforts where there are already significant out-of-stream uses.
- Some municipal and special district water providers are currently facing water shortages late in the summer and during dry years.
- Rural residents and landowners, agricultural irrigators, and industrial water users currently experience chronic seasonal water scarcity due to limited water availability.
- Some watershed systems, such as the Siletz, have insufficient water to meet the needs of all uses (both instream and out-of-stream) leading to ecological impacts on the rivers, insecurity for water users, and the potential for conflict.

Watershed Health

- Opportunities exist in the Mid-Coast for enhancing beaver habitat and management to improve water storage, stream health, and support the recovery of key native fish species.
- Degraded riparian areas throughout the Mid-Coast negatively affect water quality, wildlife habitat, and overall watershed health. Opportunities exist to improve these areas.

Infrastructure

- The degradation of aging water infrastructure used to divert, store, treat, and convey water can lead to water loss and water quality issues, and poses a threat to the health and safety of communities.
- Infrastructure to manage water for self-supplied uses (rural residences and agricultural operations) is oftentimes undocumented, old, inefficient, and fails to meet current construction and quality standards, which negatively affects water security and source water quality throughout the region.
- Multiple sources of funding are needed to address current and legacy infrastructure issues and to design and build resilient infrastructure that can withstand natural hazards and help communities adapt to climate change.

Thank you to the
MCWPP Work
Group members for
their great work
articulating key
water issues on
behalf of
partnership
stakeholders.

