



# MEMORANDUM

EUGENE WATER & ELECTRIC BOARD

*Rely on us.*

TO: Commissioners Brown, Mital, Helgeson, Manning and Simpson  
FROM: Lance Robertson, Public Affairs Manager  
DATE: August 22, 2014  
SUBJECT: McKenzie River meeting topics and format  
OBJECTIVE: Inform the Board about the format and topics for the Sept. 9 meeting

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## **Issue**

Each year, the Board of Commissioners holds a meeting in the McKenzie River area that is served by the utility, to inform customers about EWEB issues of importance to them, and to provide an opportunity for upriver customers to engage the board with questions or comments. The upriver meeting this year is scheduled for Tuesday, Sept. 9, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., at the McKenzie Fire & Rescue Training Center in Leaburg.

## **Background**

In previous years, the meetings have been a combination of formal presentations and some informal elements. Last year, the Board held a more formal meeting primarily to present information about a potential service territory swap with Lane Electric Cooperative (which is no longer being pursued by either utility). Previous annual upriver meetings also focused on one or two singular topics of high interest to McKenzie River residents.

This year, EWEB staff has created a much more informal approach to the meeting in an attempt to generate more dialogue with interested customers who attend the meeting. There is no overriding issue or project that might generate high interest this year at the same level as the potential service territory transfer. There remains a need to engage upriver customers once per year with a Board meeting, and it continues to serve as one of many ways we communicate with our upriver customers and create partnerships with them and various interest groups in the McKenzie River Valley. This year's more informal approach still will provide customers with a forum by which they can comment on any EWEB issue or ask questions about projects, initiatives or activities they might be interested in.

## **Discussion**

The Sept. 9 meeting format will include a short "welcome" session in which customers can engage commissioners and staff individually. Staff will set up four subject-specific displays with information about various activities or projects. The formal session will begin around 5:15 p.m. and will include a brief overview from EWEB staff about the information customers can find at each table, followed by an "open forum" session in which customers can ask questions or make comments to the Board. It is recommended that the Board president alter the normal protocol for "public input"

and allow staff to immediately respond to questions or comments from customers, if appropriate, to create more of a dialogue and in keeping with the informal intent of the meeting. Following the forum and comment period, President Brown will adjourn the regular meeting and allow customers to visit with staff at the four special topic tables in the room.

The four tables will focus on the following general topics:

- Water quality protection efforts and EWEB's new "Voluntary Incentive Program," which will be rolled out as a pilot project to some landowners this fall and potential full roll out in 2015.
- Activities and projects associated with the Leaburg-Waltermville Hydroelectric Project. This includes updates and information on the roll gate repair.
- The latest information about relicensing our Carmen-Smith Hydroelectric Project. This includes information on plans to upgrade the substation and powerhouse in the next few years.
- Upcoming changes to EWEB's electric distribution system in the McKenzie River Valley. This includes information on plans to reconfigure the "A/B" transmission line and potentially eliminate a lengthy span of the transmission line.

Maps, photos, fact sheets, brochures and other information will be available at the various tables.

### **Communications**

Public Affairs is taking the following steps to ensure the McKenzie River community is aware of the meeting and the topics available for discussion:

- Paid advertisements in the River Reflections (Aug. 28 and Sept. 4 issues).
- A news release sent to River Reflections.
- Flyers for hand-distribution at appropriate locations in Vida, Leaburg and Waltermville.
- An email to our "interested parties" list for upriver issues (approximately 110 people) and Leaburg Dam Road closures (35 customers).
- Use of special interest groups, such as the Clearwater Coalition and Watershed Council, to help promote the meeting.
- Regular announcement on web site and through social media.

### **Recommendation and Requested Board Action**

None. This is informational only.