



MEETING OF THE BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

Wednesday, April 21, 2021 – 12:15 p.m.

Via teleconference

Executive Orders from the Office of the Governor require that the governing body of a public agency hold public meetings and hearings in compliance with social distancing and face covering requirements. This meeting is being conducted by virtual means in compliance with the Governor's Orders. To attend, click on the following link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_xZcNx-EwQg-6odJzFXdliw

The meeting passcode is 272211.

Online participants will be able to view presentation material and submit questions or comments.

You can also join by dialing in with your phone; call (669) 900-6833.

The meeting ID number is 869 3849 6693, and the meeting passcode is 272211.

AGENDA

11:30 a.m. STUDY SESSION – SDCs/CLAs/Fees (Shawn Koorn, HDR
& Interim Engineering Supervisor Brian Runyen)

12:15 p.m. BOARD MEETING (*Shall Begin at the Conclusion of the Study Session*)

1. Roll Call

2. Comments from the Audience

Comments will be limited to 4 minutes per individual, group, or organization; please state your name and organization (if applicable) when prompted via teleconference.

3. Approval or Correction of the Minutes of the Last Regular Meeting of April 7, 2021

4. Butte Falls Community Forest Support

5. HB2616 Update

6. Review of Vouchers

7. Management Reports

7.1 Engineering Report (Capital & Special Projects Coordinator Andy Huffman)

7.2 Operations Report (Water Meters & Controls Supervisor Ken Johnson)

7.3 Water Treatment/Quality Report (Water Treatment/Quality Director Ben Klayman)

7.4 Finance Report (Finance & Administration Services Director Tessa DeLine)

7.5 I.T. Report (Information Technology Manager Kris Stitt)

7.6 HR Report (Human Resources Manager Tanya Haakinson)

7.7 General Manager's Report (General Manager Brad Taylor)

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Meeting locations are generally accessible to persons with disabilities. To request interpreters for hearing impaired or other accommodations for persons with disabilities, please contact our office at (541) 774-2440 or water@medfordwater.org at least three business days prior to the meeting to ensure availability. For TTY, dial 711 or (800) 735-2900.

8. Propositions and Remarks from the Commissioners

9. Adjourn

DATES TO REMEMBER*						
DATE	DAY	TYPE OF MEETING	STUDY SESSION TIME & TOPIC	REGULAR MEETING	LOCATION	
05/05/21	Wed	Board Meeting	11:45am – 20-21 Annual Budget Preview	12:15 p.m.	TBD	
05/19/21	Wed	Board Meeting	11:45am – 20-21 Annual Budget Approval	12:15 p.m.	TBD	
<i>Monday, May 31, 2021 – Memorial Day – Offices closed</i>						
06/02/21	Wed	Board Meeting	11:45am – Regulations	12:15 p.m.	TBD	

**Meeting dates, times, and locations are subject to change due to COVID-19 precautions and by Executive Order of Governor Brown.*



Memorandum

TO: Commissioners Jason Anderson, Bob Strosser, Mike Smith, John Dailey, and Daniel Bunn
FROM: Craig Harper, Watershed Administrator
DATE: Tuesday, April 13, 2021
SUBJECT: Item 4, Butte Falls Community Forest Support
OBJECTIVE: Board Approval

Issue

In 2017, the City of Butte Falls (City) began discussions with Weyerhaeuser to purchase 430 acres of forested land surrounding Butte Falls, including the historic mill site on Big Butte Creek. Weyerhaeuser recently sold the land to Chinook Forest Partners, who have continued the discussion with the City. The Governor's Office and Oregon Solutions are working with the City to help find a way to purchase the land, and the Oregon Solutions Team has asked for MWC support.

Discussion

The project would be helpful to the City in many ways. It would help reduce fire risk by allowing the City and its supporters to manage the forest more actively and conduct ecological thinning around the perimeter of the City. Butte Falls is ranked third in the state by ODF for communities at risk to wildfire, and the South Obenchain fire came very close to the community in 2020. The project would help preserve and enhance the historic mill site by improving access to the site. The city could also generate revenue from timber sales through selective thinning of the 300 acres. Butte Falls has asked for a letter of support from MWC, as well as a cash match contribution to the purchase. MWC has always maintained a good neighbor relationship with Butte Falls, and support for this project would enhance that relationship.

Financial Impact

The City is trying to raise over \$1.1 million dollars to purchase the land and has an option to purchase that ends on December 31, 2021. So far, they have raised \$400,000 from the US Forest Service and hope to obtain the rest from state grants, private foundations, and individual donors. In addition, they have asked MWC and PacifiCorp to contribute \$0.06 per sq foot for their utility easements that cross through the project area. The MWC BBS pipelines stretch nearly 2,000 feet through the area. $\$0.06/\text{sq foot} \times 2,000 \text{ feet} \times 50\text{-foot-wide easement} = \$6,000$.

Requested Board Action

Staff recommends approval of Item 4, authorizing the General Manager to submit a letter of support to the City of Butte Falls for the Community Forest project, along with a contribution of \$6,000 from MWC toward the project.



Butte Falls, Oregon, Community Forest Project

Building a future through the forest and local collaboration

Against the historical backdrop of Oregon's heated timber wars, the tiny town of Butte Falls, in Jackson County, Oregon, is grabbing hold of their future through collaboration. In an effort designated by Governor Brown as an Oregon Solutions project, the town is seeking to buy 430 acres of adjacent privately-owned timberland that includes a historic mill site and the town's namesake, the falls of Big Butte Creek. The community will manage the land locally to mitigate wildfire; preserve and protect drinking water, fish, and wildlife; and to promote economic development, recreation, tourism, and natural resources education. The community forest hopes to serve as a model of resilience and adaptation for other small Oregon communities.

Managing wildfire risk

Surrounded by mixed-conifer forests with steep topography, Butte Falls is in significant danger of wildfires. In 2020, the Oregon Department of Forestry ranked Jackson County third in the state for communities at-risk of wildfire. That same year, the South Obenchain fire burned close to the town's boundary, although some peripheral damage occurred. Long before the Obenchain Fire, the city had already envisioned reducing its risk to wildfire. It continues to see the acquisition of the community forest as a way to directly manage that risk.

Preservation and growth

Forest management will be guided by goals outlined from the community, prioritizing ecological health and providing economic benefit. Merchantable timber remains on the property, and select harvest over the long-term will support the cost of forest restoration and management. The community will expand recreation trails that will also serve as fuel breaks. In addition, the local public schools will use the forestland for natural resource education, research, and to expand academic partnerships throughout the region.

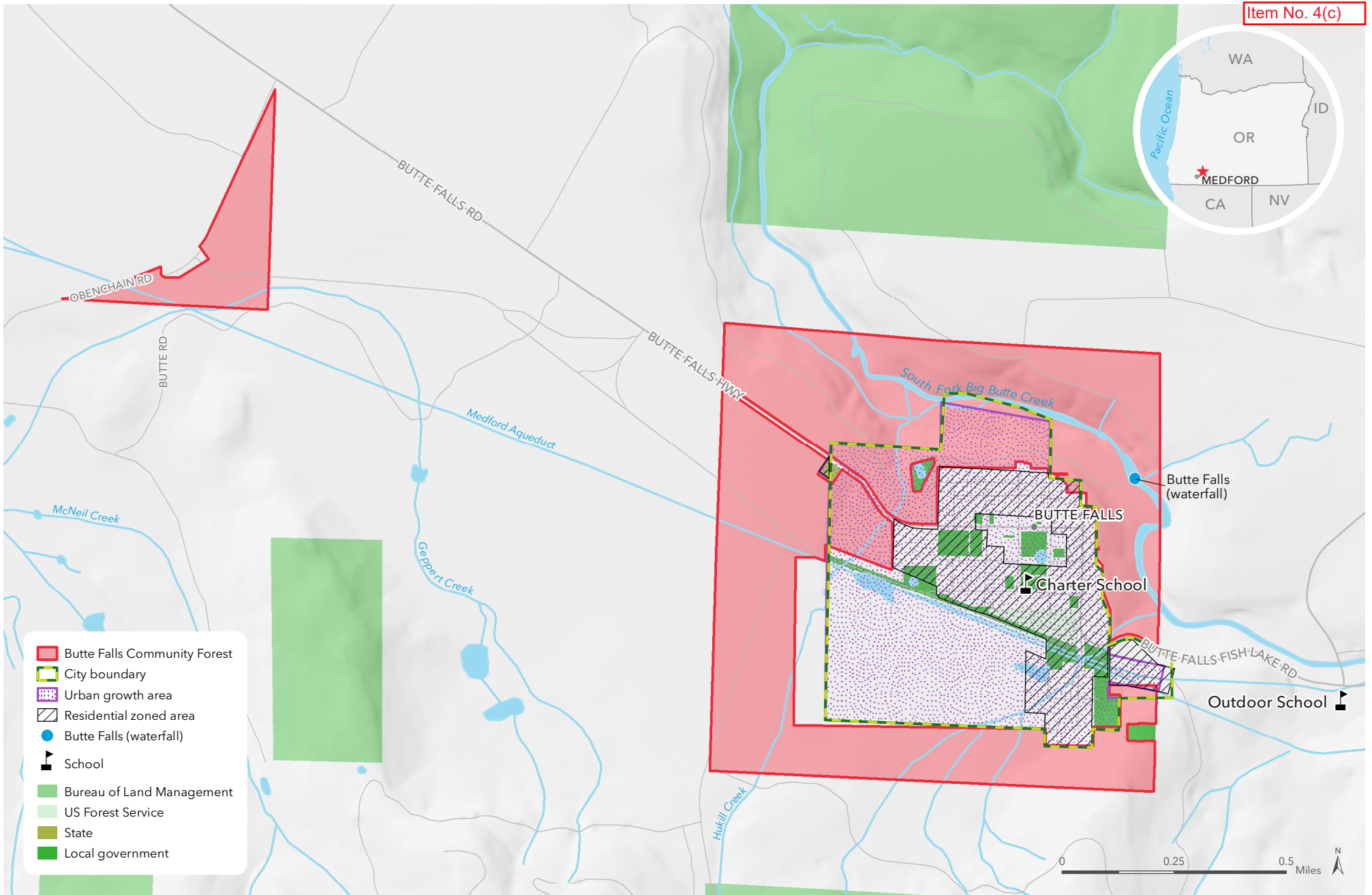
Small town—big solutions

Visionary projects are not new to the town of Butte Falls. With fewer than 500 residents, the smallest incorporated town in Jackson County has brought to fruition museums, a library, a community center, an educational natural resource center, and more. The town has a track record of envisioning and seizing opportunities to survive and thrive through local commitment and collaboration.

Cost of acquisition

Butte Falls is partnering with the Trust for Public Lands to purchase the forest property. To date, the community has raised almost half of the purchase price through a US Forest Service Community Forest Program grant. They hope to raise the remaining balance of the \$1,105,000 purchase price through public grants, private foundations, and individual donations.

To learn more or to contribute to the Butte Falls Community Forest Project, contact Karmen Fore, Oregon Solutions Director, kfore@pdx.edu (503) 725-9077.



Butte Falls Community Forest

JACKSON COUNTY, OREGON

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