



# MEMORANDUM

EUGENE WATER & ELECTRIC BOARD

*Rely on us.*

TO: Commissioners McRae, Barofsky, Schlossberg, Brown, and Carlson  
FROM: Lisa Krentz, Electric Generation Manager; Mark Zinniker, Generation Engineering Supervisor; Jeremy Somogye, Generation Engineering Planner  
DATE: October 1, 2024  
SUBJECT: Leaburg Decommissioning Action Plan Update  
OBJECTIVE: Informational Briefing

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## **Issue**

This memo provides a summary of 2024 efforts to date toward decommissioning the Leaburg Development of the Leaburg-Waltermville Hydropower Project. It also summarizes progress implementing the Leaburg Canal near-term risk reduction measures, and the Waltermville Strategic Evaluation.

## **Background**

The Leaburg Decommissioning Action Plan (LDAP), approved by the Board on January 9, 2024, identified the activities and regulatory path to decommission the Leaburg Development. It described the regulatory process; information needs; properties and assets; financial considerations; staffing and resource planning needs; timelines, decisions, and milestones; and participant engagement.

## **Staffing and Resource Planning**

To help meet internal resourcing needs, including Leaburg Decommissioning, EWEB recently hired an additional Engineering Planner to support the project. Additional internal staffing needs will continue to be evaluated as the project progresses.

A competitive procurement process is currently underway to secure consultant services to augment internal staff, providing Program Management Support that may include strategic planning, project management, risk identification and management, programmatic oversight, and regulatory and technical support, as needed. The contract will:

- Have a duration of up to 10 years with an anticipated contract value of \$18 million.
- Include options for cancellation at milestones, or if the services are no longer required.
- Include built in flexibility to allow the consultant to self-perform technical work if it creates efficiencies and their subject matter experts are well-suited for performing the required task orders.

EWEB advertised a request for proposals (RFP) on August 26, 2024 for the consulting services described above. The advertising period ended on September 24, 2024. The proposals received

are currently being evaluated. We anticipate interviewing the two highest-ranked firms during the week of October 8, 2024, making a final selection in late-October, and bringing a contract approval request to the Board at the December 2024 meeting.

### **Leaburg Dam Transportation Alternatives Analysis**

Determining the long-term access across the McKenzie River, currently provided by Leaburg Dam, is a critical path for advancing the Leaburg decommissioning project. EWEB is not a transportation agency and does not make transportation decisions. However, EWEB is committed to coordinating with Lane County Public Works and the Oregon Department of Transportation in resolving access issues resulting from dam removal. To understand the long-term impacts to the local transportation system and short-term impacts during decommissioning construction activities, EWEB, in coordination with Lane County Public Works, is currently evaluating river crossing alternatives.

After a competitive RFP process, DOWL was selected to perform the Leaburg Transportation Alternatives Analysis. DOWL is a multi-disciplined engineering firm with extensive transportation and bridge experience. DOWL is partnering with Parametrix and Good Company for the Triple Bottom Line portion of the analysis.

The Board approved the DOWL contract at the July 2024 Board meeting and the project is underway with an expected completion by Q4 2025. EWEB mailed information about the transportation analysis and Right of Entry requests in early September to the property owners where field visits are necessary to assess site constraints. EWEB also sent information about the transportation project and potential impacts to property owners located in proximity to prospective routes, notifying them of the analysis and process being developed for providing feedback.

### **Near-Term Risk Reduction**

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Division of Dam Safety and Inspections (FERC D2SI), requires EWEB to implement measures to mitigate risks associated with the Leaburg Canal conveying tributary and stormwater flows. The work is to be completed as soon as reasonably practicable and prior to completing decommissioning. Our intent is to align all near-term risk reduction measures with the ultimate decommissioning strategy.

Managing tributary flows from Johnson and Cogswell Creeks, which are intercepted by the canal, remains a primary goal of the near-term risk reduction strategy. In January 2024, EWEB completed a major risk reduction measure to address wet weather periods when tributary creek and stormwater flows into the canal are high. The project has greatly increased the low-level discharge capacity of the Leaburg forebay by routing additional flows through the Leaburg Powerhouse. This improvement will significantly relieve hydraulic loading of the canal embankments during storms. Although the upgraded low-level outlet does not fully mitigate FERC's concerns about hydraulic loading of the canal embankments during potential extreme weather events, it does provide an important mechanism to help manage the stormwater and tributary flows during the more typical wet weather seasons.

The development of additional actions for managing flows requires detail on subsurface conditions and geotechnical considerations. A Drilling Program Plan (DPP) was submitted to

the FERC-D2SI in March 2023 for their review and approval. In response to FERC D2SI review comments received in May 2024, EWEB submitted a revised DPP in mid-August 2024. EWEB awaits their approval so drilling can commence as soon as possible, as this has delayed the planning and design of measures to repatriate Johnson and Cogswell Creeks. In the interim, Generation Division staff met with a key property owner along the former path of Johnson Creek, and plan to engage Lane County Planning and the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD).

### **Walterville Strategic Evaluation**

Board Resolution 2302 to decommission the Leaburg Development also calls for a strategic evaluation and triple bottom line analysis of the Walterville Development to guide decisions related to relicensing or decommissioning this facility at the end of the current license term (2040). Although the Walterville strategic evaluation work will be a separate and parallel effort, staff are prepared to adjust the LDAP regulatory path in accordance with the outcome of the analysis. Concurrent efforts to progress the decommissioning of Leaburg will remain valid and applicable to any modified regulatory path regardless of the long-term decision for Walterville.

As described in the October 2024 “Walterville Canal Forebay Repair” Board Correspondence detailing the excessive seepage conditions and recommended liner improvements at the Walterville Canal forebay, FERC D2SI has made it clear they will need to review seismic stability results for the forebay structures before they can determine the acceptability of the proposed repair plan that focuses solely on the excessive seepage conditions.

In addition to determining the necessary scope for the Walterville forebay leak repairs, the seismic stability results will be foundational information for the Walterville strategic evaluation. As such, EWEB plans to initiate the Walterville Strategic Evaluation once FERC’s review of the seismic stability analysis is complete. EWEB expects to complete the Walterville Strategic Evaluation by mid-2026.

### **Community Outreach**

EWEB is committed to frequent community outreach throughout decommissioning planning and implementation. The outreach events described below have occurred since the last formal Board update in January.

The McKenzie Valley Customer Appreciation Dinner was held on May 23 at the Walterville Community Center. The theme of the spring event was “Communicating through the changes to come,” and a new, round-table format allowed EWEB Commissioners and staff to listen to guests, discuss how to stay connected through emergencies, and how to work together through the decommissioning process. More than 100 people attended and, at the end of the event, EWEB Commissioners and staff reported out what they heard at their tables and identified points for follow-up with community members.

EWEB staff also attended the Walterville Fair on September 7<sup>th</sup>, hosting an information table to provide updates and hear concerns. Most of the interest was focused on the Walterville Canal outage, which will continue into summer 2025. An update about the duration of the Walterville Canal outage was also sent to the McKenzie River Reflections newspaper and to upriver email newsletters.

### **Grant Funding**

It is too early in the decommissioning process to be competing for most grant funding, which typically requires plans to be developed beyond what is feasible at this time. However, given the plans for near-term risk reduction measures are more advanced, EWEB recently submitted a pre-application for the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) hazard mitigation assistance program for those projects.

The BRIC program is administered by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) in collaboration with the Oregon Department of Emergency Management (OEM). If the pre-application is selected, EWEB will have the opportunity to submit a formal, comprehensive application for consideration. It is expected that the status of the pre-application be communicated to EWEB by the end of this year.

The Transportation Alternatives Analysis described above will also evaluate the grant funding potential of the proposed alternatives to inform the decision-making process. EWEB will continue to coordinate with the local transportation agencies during the analysis and supports potential partnerships for joint grant applications and opportunities to achieve shared interests.

### **Progress Reporting**

EWEB staff will provide periodic progress reports to the Board on Leaburg Decommissioning, the inter-related near-term risk reduction measures, and the Walterville Strategic Evaluation. These will include the Strategic and Operational Quarterly Report, annual Capital Improvement Plan and Operations and Maintenance budget updates, and Board presentations or workshops, as needed.

### **Requested Board Action**

No Board action is requested at this time. With the Leaburg Decommissioning Program Support contract approval request expected to be in December 2024, staff welcome questions and feedback from the Board regarding the forthcoming Contract as well as any other topics and updates discussed herein.