

WATER Steering Team Meeting

January 30th, 2018

Office of DS Consulting

Facilitator's Summary

ACTION	By Whom	By When
Request that a decision on the LOP deep drawdown authority is provided from Kevin and Kieran by February 12th.	Joyce	Make request ASAP for 2/12 decision.
Schedule a meeting for the Federal Family prior to the February 20 th Steering Team meeting.	DS Consulting	ASAP; meeting to be scheduled before 2/20
Meet to discuss BiOp RPA requirements and next steps for funding; as well as <i>FMWQ-18-01 (Revetments)</i> ; <i>JPL-18-01 (Detroit winter steelhead residualism)</i> ; <i>JPL-18-02-SYS (latent mortality)</i> ; and <i>JPL-14-01-SYS (Predator population in DEX)</i> .	BPA, Corps, NMFS,USFWS; DSC will schedule	ASAP; meeting to take place before 2/20/18
Gather updates from the technical teams and report back to the Steering Team meeting in preparation for the Managers Forum.	Ian	For February 20 th meeting
Check internally regarding an update on the Mercury TMDLs in preparation for the Managers Forum.	Nancy	February
Discuss next steps for LOP RM&E in preparation for the March 2 nd Managers Forum.	Steering & RM&E Teams	February 20 th (1:30-4:00)
Connect with regional managers on the meeting agenda.	Donna	February 23 rd
Discuss FMWQ-18-02 (" <i>SWIFT</i> " and " <i>Mainstem fish habitat</i> " concepts) internally and circle back to Diana to clarify funding eligibility.	Ian/ Rich	ASAP
Send Steering Team a summary of State support actions for the BiOp.	Bernadette	[completed 2/1/18]
Provide an updated budget spreadsheet with CRFM eligible concepts listed in the appropriate table (<i>JPL-18-01 (steelhead residualism)</i> ; <i>FMWQ-18-01 (revetments and habitat)</i> ; <i>FMWQ-18-02 (juvenile habitat use)</i> ; <i>JPL-18-02-SYS (latent mortality)</i> ; <i>JPL-14-01-SYS (Dexter predator populations)</i>).	Ian	ASAP
Pull together any CRFM guiding documents and provide them to the region.	Joyce/Ian	ASAP
Connect with Fenton regarding the Foster study and tag needs for FY18.	Ian	ASAP
Provide the Steering Team with more detail on potential information gaps in the BiOp that the RM&E and Reintroduction Plans could address.	Joyce	ASAP

Participants in the room: Leslie Bach (NPCC, Joyce Casey (Corps), Ian Chane (Corps), Diana Dishman (NMFS), Bernadette Graham Hudson (ODFW), Mike Hudson (USFWS), Marc Liverman (NMFS), Tammy Mackey (Corps), Kelly Reis (ODFW), Dan Spear (BPA);

Participants on the phone: Brad Eppard (Corps), Nancy Gramlich (ODEQ), Lawrence Schwabe (Grand Ronde);

Facilitator: Donna Silverberg; Summary: Emily Stranz, Nancy Pionk, DS Consulting.

Welcome, introductions, & housekeeping

Donna welcomed the group to the WATER Steering Team meeting. The group reviewed the 11/7 and 12/5 meeting summaries and approved both, pending clarification of a statement from Steve Gagnon on the 11/7 meeting and inclusion of more details regarding the meaning of RM&E studies noted on page 1 (e.g. using plain English instead of/in addition to numerical references to the studies).

Process Check-in

The group reviewed the 12/5 meeting action items; all action items were complete with the exception of a few that are detailed in the summary below.

Donna shared that her team is in the process of conducting individual conversations with the RM&E and Steering Team members regarding process needs in preparation and response to staffing and representation changes. She noted that Nancy will be stepping in to facilitate the RM&E team while Emily is on maternity leave, and ODFW and NMFS have both had recent changes in their WATER representation.

Marc reminded the group that according to the WATER Guidelines, they will revisit the Guidelines in April; and on that note, Ian provided the team with a copy of the draft Columbia River Systems Configuration Team guidelines from 1995.

Status Reports

Authority issues re: LOP Deep Drawdown Decision: Joyce reported that Division and District Corps attorneys met to discuss the Corps' authority for a deep drawdown (below the power pool) operation at Lookout Point. They also discussed the authority with BPA attorneys. At this point they have not arrived at a definitive answer, however, are trending towards the belief that they do not have authority to cut power generation to the degree needed for the study. The conversation has now moved to Kevin Brice (Corps) and Kieran Connolly (BPA), to determine how the agencies are going to move forward. Steering Team members requested to be informed about the rationale for Kevin and Kieran's decision, including a statement about the authority they rely on and copies of relevant authorizing documents and memos from counsel and others guiding their interpretation, so that all can understand what went into the decision. Also, the specific bounds for the authority would be helpful for the RM&E team to know as they work to clarify potential study options moving forward.

Joyce noted that this conversation is happening in a broader context of the Columbia River Systems Operations BiOp process, which includes exploring the removal of the Snake River Dams and adds to the agencies' sensitivity around project authorities and proposed changes to operations. It was noted that a decision is needed by March if some form of the drawdown is to happen in 2018.

The Steering Team requested that Joyce strongly encourage Kevin and Kieran to provide a decision to the Steering Team by February 12th, so that the Steering Team can discuss next steps at their February 20th meeting. The Steering Team will then provide their suggested path forward to the managers at the March 2nd Managers Forum meeting.

- **Action: Joyce will request a decision on the deep drawdown authority from Kevin and Kieran by February 12th. The Steering Team will discuss next steps at their February 20th (1:30-4:00) meeting in preparation for the March 2nd Managers Forum.**

In their conversation on February 20th, the Steering Team will take into consideration the following:

- Corps authority for a deep drawdown.
- Preliminary 2017 baseline study results, which will be presented at the Willamette Science Review. [Note: only pilot study results from Fall 2016 were presented at the Science review; results from the Fall 2017 study will not be available until the summer]
- Middle Fork Sub-basin RM&E Plan: what action does the plan call for and are there any changes that need to be made as a result of the decision?

Notice of Intent from Advocates for the West: Joyce shared that the Corps has yet to receive a formal complaint from the Advocates for the West regarding the Willamette BiOp, however, they are expecting one. The Department of Justice and federal agency attorneys met and sent a letter to the potential plaintiffs; although the letter did not propose a conversation, it was an opportunity for connection. Attorneys and staff plan to continue their internal discussions on next steps and options.

Summer Steelhead Litigation: Joyce also updated the Steering Team on the complaint from Willamette River Keeper and Western Environmental Law Center. She noted that, typically, summer steelhead are released mid-March to April. The Corps is working under the assumption that the plaintiffs will likely try to stop these releases by filing an injunction.

Currently, ODFW and the Corps are working together on the summer steelhead HGMP. ODFW has provided the Corps with a draft HGMP, which proposes program changes. The Corps, NMFS, and ODFW plan to meet on February 15th to continue discussions.

Joyce noted that the Corps is interested in revisiting their mitigation responsibilities in the future as long-term passage and temperature control measures comes online. They are interested in working with ODFW to re-think what alternatives might look like for the hatchery mitigation program. At this point, the Corps is doing staff work aimed at recapping the background and history of the program; Joyce does not want to surprise the region and so is providing a “heads up”. She noted that this is an important topic to the Corps and that they set it aside during the Chinook HGMP process in order to make short term progress. Ideally, the Corps would like to have a regional plan to take to constituents here and in D.C. that shows a decreasing mitigation program. Bernadette Graham-Hudson noted that the region also will need to consider how to determine when to implement changes, as it will take time for stocks to return after passage is reinstated and reductions in mitigation production can only occur after recovery of natural populations.

Discussion re: Reintroduction planning: Joyce asked the team to think about how the reintroduction and RM&E sub-basin plans could be integrated with the BiOps to produce a comprehensive strategy. She suggested that the plans could be used to strategically address any information gaps in the BiOp. Joyce offered to provide more detail on what gaps there may be in the BiOp. Bernadette noted that the timing of the plans may not line up perfectly, but that they will make sure to keep the team apprised of progress. Currently, ODFW is working from NMFS’

reintroduction monitoring report (Meyers) and see the HGMPs as a starting point. They plan to address RM&E needs in the Reintroduction plans. Similarly, the RM&E plans will address reintroduction actions.

→ **Action: Joyce will provide the Steering Team with more detail on potential information gaps in the BiOp that the RM&E and Reintroduction Plans could address.**

HGMP Consultation: Lance Kruzic, NMFS, reported that NMFS expects to have the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) out shortly; the EIS will cover both the Chinook and summer steelhead programs. They hope to have the four Chinook HGMPs approved by the end of June. Joyce noted that the Corps has not yet submitted a HGMP for summer steelhead; Lance said steelhead have coverage under the current BiOp but all of the comanagers want to update the steelhead HGMP and submit to NMFS.

Detroit Public Meetings: ODFW and NMFS partners shared that they assisted with two of the Corps' public meetings for the Detroit NEPA process, which went well. That said, they were not alerted to third public meeting scheduled by the Corps, which presented an issue, as they received negative feedback from members of the public for not being there. Joyce apologized for the oversight, noting that the meeting was put together quickly in response to requests from delegates. Additionally, it was noted that there is a meeting scheduled for February 13th with water users.

Planning for March 2nd Managers Forum

The group discussed content and process for determining what the Steering Team feels should be included on Managers Forum agenda. It was noted that any issues Steering Team members feel need to be addressed by managers should first be brought to the Steering Team for discussion and to determine the purpose of taking the issue to the managers. Donna encouraged Steering Team members to send any Steering Team agenda issues to DS Consulting so they can be included on future agendas.

The Steering Team discussed the March 2nd WATER Managers Forum and suggested the following items be considered for the agenda:

- WATER Managers vision for the Willamette: Managers' discussion on both individual agency/organization and common regional vision for the Willamette Basin.
- Progress updates from the Steering Team:
 - Report out on technical team's progress (Ian)
 - Update on the "Big Four" projects: where are we, impacts on overall process
 - Passage updates for Cougar and Detroit
 - Updates on any schedule changes and impacts
 - What objectives from last year weren't accomplished as planned, and what corrective actions are being taken this year
 - Detroit and Cougar public process updates
 - Lookout Point deep drawdown
 - Issues of concern to the region:
 - Winter steelhead population status update
 - Progress on Willamette Falls sea lion issues
 - Willamette Falls fish ladder
 - Litigation update
 - Mercury TMDL? (potential update from ODEQ)

Donna thanked the Steering Team for their suggestions and said she would be taking the draft agenda to Managers for input before finalizing. Ian noted that he will connect with the technical teams for updates and bring those back to the Steering Team at the February 20th meeting prior to sharing updates with the Managers. Additionally, Nancy will look into who from DEQ could provide an update on Mercury TMDLs for the Managers.

- **Action: Ian will gather updates from the technical teams and bring them to the February 20th Steering Team meeting in preparation for the Managers Forum.**
- **Action: Nancy will check internally regarding an update on the Mercury TMDLs.**
- **Action: Donna will connect with regional managers on the meeting agenda.**

The group also touched on the need to recognize the contributions of all team members to WATERS efforts, as well as agency/organization missions and associated constraints. It was noted that the group can be more productive when they are aware of and respectful of each other's agency missions.

- **Action: Bernadette will send a summary of Oregon's support actions to support species recovery as it relates to the BiOp.**

CRFM Criteria

Ian noted that he sent out the CRFM criteria to the group in advance of the meeting, which was much appreciated. There was request to have the Corps share the actual language from WRDA that states the CRFM authorization and any implementation guidance for CRFM. The group felt that this information would allow the region to have the same set of information regarding CRFM and would help encourage transparency.

- **Action: Ian and Joyce agreed to pull together any CRFM guiding documents the Corps uses and provide them to the region.**
- **Action: Ian agreed to provide an updated budget spreadsheet with CRFM eligible concepts listed in the appropriate table (*JPL-18-01 (Winter steelhead residualism in Detroit reservoir); FMWQ-18-01- (Revetment modification and cold water refugia); FMWQ-18-02 (juvenile habitat use); JPL-18-02-SYS (latent mortality); JPL-14-01-SYS (Dexter predator populations)*).**

FY18 Budget and Planned RM&E

Sub-basin RM&E & Reintroduction Plans Schedule: There were no updates to provide regarding the schedules. Updates will be provided from the Corps and ODFW when available.

Corps internal conversations regarding FMWQ-18-02 SYS ("SWIFT" and "Mainstem fish habitat" concepts): There was no update to provide. Ian noted that he will connect with Rich for more details on the concept, with the intention of answering NMFS' question: does this qualify for CRFM funding? Ian will ask Rich to circle back to Diana once a conclusion is reached.

- **Action: Ian will follow-up with Rich to determine whether this concept qualifies for CRFM funding; he will ask Rich to circle back to Diana with a response.**

Corps, BPA, NMFS, and USFWS conversations on FMWQ-18-01 (Revetment concept); JPL-18-01 (Detroit winter steelhead residualism); JPL-18-02-SYS (latent mortality); and JPL-14-01-SYS (Predator population in DEX): There was no update to provide. The Federal Family

still needs to meet to discuss the RPA measures and how the specific studies relate to the RPAs. In this conversation, the Federal Family will seek to answer:

- Is the concept an RPA?
- Is it authorized?
- What priority is it?
- Whose priority is it?
- Clarify performance criteria needs for steelhead and whether or not JPL-18-01 (DET winter steelhead residualism concept) qualifies for CRFM.

→ **Action: DS Consulting will schedule a meeting for the Federal Family prior to the February 20th Steering Team meeting. (Scheduled for Feb 13)**

Additionally, it was noted that there needs to be another discussion with the Managers around how to deal with RPAs for which the Corps has no funding and/or authorization. It was thought that, due to imprecision around the issue and the language used to describe the issue, previous conversations have not resulted in the clarity that the region needs. (*NOTE: it was not clear who would convene, when, or how this conversation would come about*).

Updated FY18 budget and status of funding for RM&E studies: Ian reported on the updated 2018 budget. He noted that the downstream passage DDR at Cougar is going to cost more than previously expected and increased costs would likely impact the RM&E budget. He noted that there are two design processes and that they are considering the need for a physical model. Ian is looking into any aspects of the project that can be kicked to the FY19 budget. He is also trying to get funds transferred from the Columbia to the Willamette. Generally, the funding is expected to be tight this year. Diana requested that Ian follow-up with Fenton regarding the upcoming Foster study and need for tags for the winter and summer steelhead passage comparison.

→ **Action: Ian will connect with Fenton regarding the Foster study and tag needs for FY18.**

Regional Coordination and Updates from WATER Members

- BPA, Grand Ronde, NMFS, NPCC, and USFWS did not have any additional updates.
- Corps: The Corps highlighted the need for discussion in the near future regarding copepods in the Cougar reservoir. During transport from Cougar to the OSU research facility, there was 100% mortality of fish due to copepod infestation in a recent study.
- OR: ODFW noted that the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program will open solicitation at the end of February for their 2-year funding cycle. Additionally, the OWEB Focused Investment Partnership, Willamette anchor is open for solicitation for mainstem restoration and floodplain work.

Next Steps

The next Steering Team meeting will be on February 20th and will be centered on next steps for the LOP passage studies. Additionally, DS Consulting will work to schedule a joint Steering and RM&E team meeting in conjunction with the March 6th Steering Team meeting. There may be a need for separate Steering Team discussion during this session. (DSC NOTE: this date is not working for NMFS so to attend, so perhaps the two teams could join for the RM&E meeting on March 22nd?)

This summary is respectfully submitted by DS Consulting. Suggested edits are welcome and can be sent to nancy@dsconsult.co