

**Willamette Action Team for Ecosystem Restoration (WATER)
Steering Team Meeting**

May 1, 2018

http://www.nwd-wc.usace.army.mil/tmt/documents/FPOM/2010/Willamette_Coordination/

FINAL Facilitator's Summary

ACTION	By Whom	By When
Circulate a Guidelines Evaluation Form to Steering Team	DS Consulting	Before June 5, 2018 Steering Team Meeting
Complete Guidelines Evaluation Form	Steering Team Members	Before June 5, 2018 Steering Team Meeting
Follow up with Marc Liverman regarding any additional information needs regarding status of in-stream collectors in the North Fork of the Middle Fork.	Diana	June 5, 2018 Steering Team Meeting
Distribute the Executive Summary of the 2010 LOP HOR 90% Alternatives Report to the Steering Team.	Dan	ASAP
Review and provide comments on the draft FY19 RM&E Planning Tables	Steering Team Members	May 24, 2018 RM&E Team
Prepare a 1-page summary on the Piped Bypass concept and share it with the Steering Team.	Jeff and Kelly	Before May Steering Team Meeting
Contact Toby Cook, Melissa Jundt and Keith Kirkendall regarding presentations on High Head Passage facilities at the June 7, 2018 Managers Forum.	Donna (Toby), Marc (NMFS folks)	Before May Steering Team Meeting

Participants in the Room: Leslie Bach (NPCC), Ian Chane (USACE), Diana Dishman (NMFS), Brad Eppard (USACE), Marc Liverman (NMFS), Tammy Mackey (USACE), Kelly Reis (ODFW), Dan Spear (BPA), Karl Weist (NPCC), Jeff Ziller (ODFW),

Participants on the Phone: Anne Mullan (NMFS).

Facilitator: Donna Silverberg, **Summary:** Nancy Pionk, DS Consulting

Review of Meeting Summaries

Steering Team members approved the April 3, 2018 Steering Team meeting summary with edits. Per NMFS' suggestion, references to FDRWG will be changed to WFFDWG and DS Consulting will add the following Facilitator's Note above the table in the summary: [**Facilitator's Note:** *Rather than provide edits to this table, NMFS provided their own FY19 summary RM&E needs table, attached as a separate document to this summary*]. The team agreed that the March 22, 2018 Joint RM&E/Steering Team Summary would be approved by the teams via email. Nancy will send the teams a revised summary that incorporates changes recommended by team members for approval by email.

Update on Federal approach to BiOp and overall process

Marc reported there is no real clarity at this point regarding re-initiation of the BiOp. Currently, the Federal Agencies are having internal conversations and the agencies are waiting for more information from the Department of Justice. As such, the agencies are only able to share limited information at this time.

Marc noted questions and topics that he considers to be under consideration:

- Will it be a jeopardy or no-jeopardy opinion?
- Will there be a joint opinion with USFWS?
- What time frame will be used? Marc noted that the time period for the last BiOp was 15 years. One possibility for the future is to build an opinion that continues indefinitely.
- New information will also need to be considered regarding climate, species status and cumulative effects.

Marc also highlighted substantive areas that he considers to be under consideration:

- Access to habitat for spring Chinook and steelhead including habitat above Hills Creek, Dexter and Green Peter;
- Improvement of adult release sites;
- Adult and juvenile passage at Green Peter, Hills Creek and Lookout Point and possibly the Willamette Falls fish ladder;
- Exploring whether there are other sources of funding for restoration actions (e.g. similar to funding for Oaks Park restoration);
- Water Quality: TDG at Detroit and Big Cliff;
- Temperature control at Green Peter and Hills Creek;
- Flow control and instream flows enforcement (making sure gauges are in place);
- Habitat: actions regarding revetments/carrying out HGMPs;
- Coordination including the Water Guidelines;
- Funding criteria;
- Specific RM&E study needs and funding for monitoring.

Ian reported that the Corps is in active settlement discussions with the plaintiffs. This is likely to include agreement to undertake a comprehensive NEPA process, including a Biological Assessment, a new EIS, and BiOp.

Annual Review of Water Guidelines: process and timing

The group discussed how best to proceed regarding the Annual Review of the Water Guidelines, in light of the update regarding re-initiation and the litigation. Federal Family members noted that their instructions are to continue working on RPA actions, as the timeframe for other work is not yet determined. Consequently, the group agreed that the team should move forward with review of the Water Guidelines at the June 5, 2018 Steering Team Meeting. Donna will send out an evaluation form, similar to last year's review, and the group could start with a review of those metrics and discuss any areas for improvement in the Guidelines that have been observed.

The Steering Team suggested the following goals for the Guideline Review:

- Review for consistency with the RPA process;
- Clarify decision-making process (Consensus-based or consultative?);
 - Note: Marc observed that the RPA process is not a consensus-based process; the RPA requires that actions meet NMFS' satisfaction. Others noted that the RPA was designed as a consensus-based process; however, it is more geared toward Action Agency interaction and focusing the Guidelines solely on the RPA may limit other participatory

roles (such as NPCC). Other members noted that a collaborative group cannot change how the Corps must operate the system under federal law (e.g. compliance with funding rules).

- Clarify and identify tangible participatory role for other partners (e.g. under current guidelines NPCC cannot vote on RM&E study concepts, yet they are very engaged in the overall process);
 - Clear Prioritization Process for decisions on RM&E concepts;
 - If decisions are not made by consensus, clarify how decisions GET made/determined and transmitted to WATER partners;
 - Simplify wherever possible.
- **ACTION:** DS Consulting will circulate a Guidelines Evaluation Form to be filled out by the Steering Team prior to the June 5, 2018 Steering Team meeting.

West Fir/ODFW perspective

Steering Team members sought to clarify: what has been evaluated regarding HOR alternatives at the North Fork of the Middle Fork? What is no longer being considered? What possibilities need further review? In particular, the group discussed whether in-stream collection at the North Fork of the Middle Fork was a possibility and whether any of the suggestions for limited collection devices (e.g. a temporary, or removable collector, or a partial block within a season) have been vetted? Diana noted that NMFS raised this concern to ensure that as much information as possible is collected before passage decisions are made. Diana also noted the importance of fully considering instream collectors as part of the Head of Reservoir (HOR) prong of the concurrent three-pronged approach to evaluating downstream passage alternatives in the Middle Fork (i.e., At-dam collection, HOR collection, and operational passage).

Dan reviewed the history regarding the review of HOR alternatives at the North Fork and noted that there is a 2010 Alternatives Report. He shared that the North Fork is designated as a Wild and Scenic River, USFS land around it has spotted owl habitat and is managed under the NW Forest Plan, consequently the cost to acquire the land to construct a collector has been estimated from \$200-400 Million in the 2010 Alternatives Report. Additionally, ODFW had previously stated that it is against blocking the river with a barrier, particularly after a dam had been removed from the same area.

Team members noted that there are other options for collection such as screwtraps or a Merwin trap; however, a concern is that these devices would collect just a small sample of fish and not be significant enough to function as a long-term solution. Diana explained that NMFS wanted to confirm other ideas (specifically those which did not require purchasing land, or building a permanent structure, such as temporary/removable devices) had been fully explored and vetted. Ian noted that the Corps is still exploring options/feasibility for HOR passage. He noted that the biological feasibility of the downstream habitat (i.e. whether small fry will survive downstream after collection) also needs to be evaluated. It was suggested that the reservoir survival study would help inform this question.

Brad confirmed that research on both collection and downstream habitat is occurring simultaneously. A check-in on the path forward regarding research is scheduled for 2019. Team members questioned whether the RM&E team should revise the Middle Fork RM&E plan, based on a review of what RM&E has occurred on this issue to date.

- **ACTION:** Diana will follow up with Marc regarding any additional information needs. Dan will distribute the Executive Summary of the 2010 Report to the Steering Team.

Review of revised Joint RM&E/Steering Team FY19 RM&E Planning Tables

Steering Team members reviewed the draft FY19 RM&E Planning Tables that were revised by the small group of Kelly, Leslie and Rich. Leslie walked the group through the changes in format, noting that the small group revised the questions identified at the Joint Meeting into columns that identified:

- 1) Planned or Ongoing Actions/Issues; 2) the Decision Needed; 3) a summary of the Current Information that is known relating to the action/decision; 4) any Information Gaps that have been identified; and 5) FY19 concept paper notes.

At the April 26, 2018 RM&E Team meeting, the RM&E team reviewed the draft FY19 Planning Table for North Santiam, focusing on #3 and #4, and made recommendations on concept papers for FY19.

The Steering Team liked the format and agreed with the revised table. In reviewing the table for North Santiam, it was noted that on page 4, #7 should state: "Evaluate post-construction effectiveness of Minto AFF for adult Chinook and steelhead." Additionally, the Steering Team suggested that, when a concept paper is not recommended, the RM&E team should include the rationale for why not.

The RM&E Team will continue to work through these tables at their next meeting on May 24, 2018. The small group and the RM&E team welcome input from the Steering Team on the tables before their next meeting and, specifically, with regard to #1: Planned or Ongoing Actions/Issues and #2: the Decision Needed.

- **ACTION:** Steering Team members will review the draft FY19 RM&E Planning Tables before the next RM&E Team meeting on May 24, 2018. They will provide any editorial comments to Rich for revision and share substantive comments on the tables' content with each other for further discussion.

Team Updates

Ian provided a handout with Project Delivery Team (PDT) updates and project photos. Ian highlighted the following from the handout:

- **Foster Fish Weir:** The weir is installed and undergoing testing. Future discussions will include how to operate the facility
- **Fall Creek Adult Fish Facility:** Commissioning has been completed. He reported that Winter Steelhead and trout moved into the ladder immediately after it was watered up.
- **High Head Bypass:** A PDT will be looking at High Head Bypass to assess criteria for use in design and investigating engineering feasibility. Future considerations also include copepod research, how the PDT would inform decisions related to Cougar and Detroit, and whether High Head Bypass that is outside NMFS criteria can be done.
- **Minto and Foster Adult Fish Facility:** The last year of CRFM funding has been completed for this facility. Some issues have been identified at Foster that may impact the budget. The Corps is looking at all the CRFM projects to determine what might be done within the FY18 budget. The PDT has been delayed until 2019.
- **Cougar Downstream Passage PDT:** A naval architect is now on board. The 90% DDR will occur in September.

Steelhead Hybridization Study

Ian reported that the Steelhead Hybridization study conducted by the University of Idaho (and discussed at the last Steering Team meeting) was accepted into an academic journal. The authors prefer not to share the peer reviewer comments (which are provided on an anonymous basis) with Steering Team members. Instead, the authors will respond to WATER member comments. This could be an agenda item for a future meeting, if there is interest in further discussion.

Some Steering Team members noted that the submission of the study to a journal prior to obtaining responses from WATER members is outside the standard practice for research studies in the WATER process. The authors missed opportunities to get feedback and additional data from WATER members that could have made the research paper more robust. Brad affirmed that the standard practice usually takes the following steps: 1) the Corp receives the report; 2) WATER members review and provide comments; 3) the researchers provide a response; and 4) the report is finalized for submittal to the Corps. He noted that, while the Corps cannot control the submission of research papers, it does outline the process for review in the research contracts and can strongly suggest the researchers share the report with the agencies first.

Lookout Point Update

Ian will follow up regarding the status of the Corps' Lookout Point Authority Draft Decision. Leslie reported that the RM&E Team held a worksession on alternative options for Lookout Point. The team determined that the 'fall drawdown with reduced turbine entrainment' option was unlikely to be of benefit to fish because fish are unlikely to sound 90 feet to the regulating outlets. The RM&E Team also is considering the option of delayed refill with spring/summer spill. The team determined that this option has potential, however, its value as a long-term solution is limited, due to the inability to predict whether spill will happen every year. One desired outcome is to be prepared with a suite of operations the Corps could implement, depending on the type of water year. Rich is preparing a concept paper for ResSim modeling runs that would consider the long-term possibilities for spill, including how often spill could occur. RM&E will continue discussions and bring back for the Steering Team to review.

High Head Bypass - Cougar

The Steering Team discussed Jeff Ziller's (ODFW) presentation at the Willamette Fish Facility Design Workgroup (WFFDWG) meeting regarding the concept of piped bypass at Cougar. As noted at previous Steering Team meetings, the path for passage at Cougar has been focused on Trap and Haul. Jeff noted concerns that fish might not survive handling and holding with Trap and Haul. In contrast, piped bypass would minimize handling and holding. The consensus among WFFDWG members was that the piped bypass concept indeed was worth pursuing. Steering Team members also agreed that the concept should be pursued further. The next step is to get the managers' support for this concept and their commitment for additional resources to incorporate the design of this element into the Trap and Haul project design process. An initial question is whether it would be feasible from an engineering standpoint.

Steering Team members noted that "time is of the essence" in terms of incorporating this concept within the current design process. They also noted that considering both alternatives fully might affect the overall schedule.

- Steering Team members agreed that a presentation on the concept should be provided at the June 7, 2018 Managers Forum. They agreed that it was important to get alignment of the managers regarding this concept and to inform managers of the importance of including it in the design process moving forward so that it could be incorporated as a future option, if feasible. Additionally, the team agreed that the presentation to the managers should include a request for a commitment of additional resources.
- **ACTION:** Jeff and Kelly will prepare a 1-page summary on the concept (intended for presentation at the Managers Forum) and share it with the Steering Team before the May 22nd Steering Team meeting. The Steering Team will review it at the May Steering Team meeting.

Managers Forum Planning

The team discussed a list of potential topics for the June 7, 2018 Managers Forum and created a draft agenda (below) that Donna will provide to the managers and get their input.

Proposed agenda for June 7th Managers Forum (8-11 am at CRITFC):

1. High Head Passage: The latest and Greatest Thinking!
 - a. Brief presentation by USGS (*if possible*) (Toby Cook - 20-30 minutes)
 - b. Information on Pacific Corps/Lewis Collector/Clackamas river data (NMFS-20 minutes)
2. Team/Project Updates (Ian's Handout) (COE - 5-10 minutes)
3. Cougar Issues:
 - a. PDT status/next steps (COE-5 minutes)
 - b. ODFW Piped Bypass suggestion (ODFW - 20 minutes)
4. Brief Updates: (COE-10 minutes)
 - a. Middle Fork RM&E update
 - b. Detroit Public Comment/input-what is the Corps hearing?
5. Federal Approach to BiOp and Litigation (Kevin Brice and Kim Kratz - 10 minutes)
6. Willamette Falls (60 minutes)
 - a. Pinnipeds -Task Force and status (Robert Anderson, NOAA and Bruce McIntosh)
 - b. Ladder - Next steps for engineering, etc. (ODFW, Bruce McIntosh)
 - c. PVA Analysis for Chinook (ODFW, Bruce McIntosh)
 - d. Lock Update (COE, Kevin Brice)

Draft Agenda Discussion Notes:

- **High Head Passage Facilities:** The team agreed that it would be helpful for the managers to hear the most current information regarding High Head Passage facilities. Dan noted that PacifiCorp recently published a report regarding the Lewis River Collector. Additionally, there is also data from facilities on the Clackamas River.
 - Marc will ask Melissa Jundt and Keith Kirkendall to update the managers regarding these facilities.
 - Donna will follow-up with Toby Cook, USGS, to see if he can give a presentation on USGS data through 2016.
- **Willamette Falls Pinnipeds:** NMFS will be convening a Pinniped-Fisheries Interaction Task Force likely in June. Tammy also noted the Bonneville Fisheries Field Unit have invited staff working with the Willamette pinnipeds issue to a meeting at Bonneville on May 24 to see how the Bonneville program is implemented and learn about the challenges of the program. In the event that a monitoring program is initiated at Willamette Falls, there is interest in ensuring that similar protocols between Bonneville and Willamette Falls are in place to support data collection. It was suggested that Bruce McIntosh could provide a technical update on the pinnipeds situation and the legislation. Robert Anderson, NOAA, could provide an update on the Pinniped Task Force
- **Willamette Falls Fish Ladder Status:** Ian noted that the Corps can potentially provide cost-sharing for engineering assessment. This is funding that is different than CRFM that allows for planning assistance with States.

Next Steps

The group agreed that a pre-Managers Forum session was needed to refine information/ideas for the June 7th session. *Scheduled for May 22nd from 1-3 pm.* The group also discussed keeping the regular meeting date of June 5, 2018 for a team check-in.

With that, Donna thanked the group and adjourned the meeting.

**The Steering Team will meet for a Managers Forum agenda check on May 22, 2018 from 1-3 pm.
The next regular Steering Team meeting will be Tuesday, June 5, 2018.**

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