

WATER Steering Team Meeting

Tuesday, June 2, 2020

Via WebEx/Phone Conference

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

Final Facilitator's Summary [Edits provided from: ODFW]

ACTION	BY WHOM?	BY WHEN?
Donna will distribute the two documents Ian provided to the Steering Team prior to the 6/3 Manager's Forum meeting.	Donna	End of Day
Update the RM&E Team on the Steering Team Active Leadership meeting between the cooperating agencies regarding the Willamette EIS process and budget.	Ian	June 25, 2020

Participants on the phone: Karl Weist (NPCC), Brad Eppard (Corps), Mike Hudson (USFWS), Eric Anderson (BPA), Marc Liverman (NOAA), Kelly Reis (ODFW), Dan Spear (BPA), Ian Chane (Corps), Nancy Gramlich (DEQ), Anne Mullan (NOAA),

Facilitator & Notetaker: Donna Silverberg & Colby Mills, DS Consulting.

Welcome, Introductions and Housekeeping

Facilitator, Donna Silverberg, welcomed the group to the meeting and conducted a round of introductions. She reviewed the agenda and noted that the main purpose of the meeting was to review project and budget reports, COVID-19 updates, and WATER Team updates including an update on tomorrow's Manager's Forum meeting.

The May 5 Steering Team meeting summary was approved by consensus of all Steering Team members present. In response to a comment from Marc Liverman, NOAA, Anne Mullan, NOAA, confirmed that fish passage collection at the Foster Fish Weir was discussed at the recent RM&E Team meeting, and was added to the agenda for their next meeting.

Ian Chane, Corps, is still waiting on approval from the Corps for the April and October Manager's Forum summaries.

FY20 Project & Budget Updates

Ian provided updates to the FY20 projects and budgets, focusing on recent changes to the program, which are in part due to the Foster Fish Weir contract at the Obermeyer weir not going forward this year. The scheduled \$3 million for that contract will be reallocated throughout the CRFM program, including the Willamette and FCRPS. There also was a \$500,000 reduction in the Columbia River Systems Operations (CRSO) EIS and around \$1 million in obligated funding came back from prior years' contracts which, combined, has shifted funding around the NW division program. Ian met with the division office to go over fund reallocations based on the assessed needs, some of which are specific to the Willamette.

Highlights include:

1. **Detroit Downstream Fish Passage Project:** the project is functioning on FY19 funding due to funding restrictions. It is fully funded for this year and did not receive FY20 funds.

2. **Foster Fish Weir EDT:** funding has been reduced, and the contract is not moving forward. Funding has been spent this year on design efforts leading up to the DDR. The project is working with a combined number of \$420,000, with more work to be done.
3. **Foster Adult Fish Facility:** the project has a \$1 million budget this year and continues ongoing design work for a water temperature deficiency issue that is affecting adult fish passage. This work is slated to continue this year and next year.
4. **Cougar Downstream Fish Passage:** Due to funding restrictions, the project can only use FY19 funding and not FY20 funds. This is focused on the floating structure/structural passing project, and will be wrapped up this year with no funding for next year.
5. **Cougar 2.0 - Downstream Passage Alternative:** the budget has increased substantially for this fiscal year to refine alternative passage routes and re-evaluation. It also reflects a schedule change going through the fall. Dam safety aspects and feasibility are also being looked at.
6. **Fall Creek Adult Fish Facility:** with \$400,000 in funds this year for lining work, the project is still on track, with work bumped to the fall when it will be fully funded and completed.
7. **High Head Bypass Prototype Study:** this work will be completed at Green Peter this fall with ongoing studies on potential volitional passage, using FY20 funding.
8. **CRFM Funding for Willamette EIS:** funds will be used to complete biological modeling needed for the NEPA process, and for moving forward with the Section 7 re-initiation with NMFS. Kelly noted that ODFW did not support the high head bypass study as proposed, as recently discussed in a letter through the RM&E process, and expressed concerns for how the study will adequately inform successful high head downstream fish passage moving forward. The Corps is aware of this concern and at this point the path has not shifted.

Ian clarified that biological modeling will involve preferred alternatives, with res simulation analysis, similar to developing the COP and what is used for the CRSO. The EIS team will develop the modeling details.

Marc questioned how CRFM funds were being used for this since they haven't been allowed for other similar work when requested by RM&E. Ian explained that when the Corps had been implementing actions previously, CFRM can pay directly for the NEPA aspects related to those facilities, as they will do for the EIS effort.

9. **Systemwide RM&E:** originally this had \$3.3 million identified for this year and was increased to \$4.026 million. The Corps was able to increase funds by \$250,000 for Willamette RM&E. These funds will be applied to additional research this fiscal year for contracts feasible for implementing the near term, as discussed at the RM&E team.
10. **Program Coordination:** This item encompasses all behind the scenes work.

FY21 Budget Updates

Ian noted that the incoming FY21 President's budget is expressed by line item totaling \$3.7 million, instead of the \$52.9 million for which the Corps has capability. The overall program budget for all CRFM \$15.377 million, and \$3.7 million allocated for the Willamette. Only 2 line items received funding: the Foster adult fish facility and system-wide RM&E.

Capabilities for FY21 include:

- **Detroit Downstream Fish Passage Project:** Still have ongoing design needs at Detroit for FY21; there will be some slight budget carry over.

- **Foster Fish Weir:** did have a capability of \$500,000 in FY21, but now that the project is not going to be constructed, oversight of the construction contract will be needed in FY21
- **Foster Adult Fish Facility:** the project has an increased need for design work, and only received \$700,000 from the President's budget.
- **Cougar Downstream Passage:** has a \$43.1 million requirement for passage in the first year of construction, as well as a need for \$105,000 for labor for the downstream passage reevaluation. There is a contract in FY20 to provide oversight and work on in FY21.
- **Fall Creek Adult Fish Facility:** Have to close out the contract and have oversight on construction work for next fiscal year; there might be some minor budge carry over.
- **High Head Bypass Prototype Study:** funded in FY20 fully, and the Corps will carry over some funding for oversight in FY21.
- **Willamette NEPA:** indicating an \$800,000 capability in FY21.
- **Systemwide RM&E:** there is an increasing need for RM&E, looking like an estimated \$4.3 million budget.
- **Program Coordination:** FY21 budget is lowered, and might have to go up if more funding is available to cover added staff.

Ian noted the significant difference between the capability in FY21 and what was received in the president's budget. The Corps may need to reallocate the \$15.377 million throughout the whole CRFM to make ends meet. FY21 is going to be a tough year for the Willamette and Columbia. Lamprey received its \$20 million in funding in the FY20 work plan that will carry through, though is only accessible for Fish Accords projects in the Columbia River. The lamprey funding was taken out of the overall FY20 funding of \$49.8 million for the whole program.

Ian reviewed for the group the detailed process that the Corps takes to request fiscal budget needs, and the following appeals process that results in final budgets appropriated for specific projects. This process starts two years in advance. He clarified that the fiscal work plan is the final budget released, the President's budget is not final.

Ian also reported from a fact sheet related to the Willamette Valley EIS, and noted that Kevin Brice will be presenting it at the 6/3 Managers' Forum meeting. He suggested having the EIS Project Manager call in to a future Steering Team meeting for an update, which Dan thought would be helpful.

- **ACTION:** Donna will distribute the two documents Ian provided to the Steering Team to the Managers Forum members following this meeting.
- **ACTION:** Ian will report to the RM&E and Steering Teams after the Cooperating Agencies leadership meeting regarding the Willamette EIS process and budget.

COVID-19 Impacts on WATER and FCRPS Efforts

- **NOAA:** is having discussions between headquarters and regional offices about reopening their offices. The current plan is to go back when a vaccine is available.
- **ODFW:** the state won't make any decisions on using state or agency reserve funds until the legislature is called back. Until all counties are on the same page, there is uncertainty around reopening offices.
- **DEQ:** will revisit reopening to the public on June 30; currently offices are open by appointment only. Staff is strongly encouraged to work from home and field visits are not allowed.

- **NPCC:** as an interstate compact, is not opening offices until after July 4, if then. It will probably be a work-from-home-if-you-can situation through the rest of the year.
- **COE:** is coming up with reopening safety plans for offices, including bringing back folks earlier who need to use high power computing power that cannot work from their homes. It could be a while until folks who are able to work from home return to the office.
- **USFWS:** has met to discuss opening for discretionary projects, central and field offices, and safety protocols; the timeline is very uncertain.
- **BPA:** has an existing pandemic response plan and won't be returning to the office soon. All office jobs are telecommuting.

Regional Updates

- **6/3 Managers Forum:** this will be a “Managers only” call to discuss the budget situation (Federal & Tribes), priorities, what can and should be expected from each other, advice for the teams, lamprey, and Covid-19 impacts. The call is scheduled for 2 hours if needed.
- **RM&E Team:** monitoring and research downstream of Foster might occur since the weir isn't being fixed and will likely need a redesign. It's unclear when a new weir could be in place and the team needs to consider RM&E with the interim operation. There is agreement that RM&E needs to discuss developing concept papers for FY21 to assess performance in the interim year. The RM&E team is working with the facilitation team to update and clarify the concept planning table; members also will archive old info and characterize where progress is being made.
- **HTT:** had their initial technical review team meeting to provide comments to project sponsors for FY21. Those comments will be addressed, and they will schedule virtual tours in mid-June or July; another round of review will happen in the fall before they make a final decision. They still don't know OWEB's budget situation, and will know more after June 10 or 11.
- **Flow:** targets are looking better than they were, with flow targets of 13 kcfs minimum, and close to 15 kcfs for the 7-day average.
 - Projects are full, with the exception of Lookout Point, which is 90%; Falls Creak 80%; and Detroit 91% (was able to initiate temperature operations starting June 1).
 - Cougar is almost full, and will be able to do temperature operations this year.
 - Green Peter is spilling to try and warm water through Foster for the adult fish ladder.
 - Foster has implemented the fish weir operations; not operating the weir for passage, but spilling.
- **FPOM:** Fall Creek Fish Facility is seeing good returns, with 375 total adult Chinook, and there is potential interest to do genetic work in the future. Minto is seeing a larger number of natural origin than hatchery origin, which could be a potential future study.
- **Hydro:** No updates.
- **Partner Updates:**
 - Willamette Wildlife Mitigation program will be conducting their technical review of 8 projects for FY22 funds. The ask is for just under \$11 million this year, and up to \$11.7 million is available if funded at 120% (base FY22 acquisition funding is \$9.7M).
 - Litigation - no update available for the BiOp litigation.
 - The Corps and USFWS received a Notice of Intent regarding summer steelhead hatchery production at Willamette hatcheries.

With that, Donna thanked the meeting participants for their focus and the meeting was adjourned.

The next Steering Team meeting is currently scheduled from 12:30p to 4:30p on July 7.th

This summary is respectfully submitted by the impartial facilitation team at DS Consulting. Suggested edits are welcome and can be sent to colby@dsconsult.co.