

**Willamette Action Team for Ecosystem Restoration (WATER)  
Steering Team Meeting  
Tuesday, September 1, 2020  
Via Teleconference**

[http://pweb.crohms.org/tmt/documents/FPOM/2010/Willamette\\_Coordination/Willamette\\_RME/RME.html](http://pweb.crohms.org/tmt/documents/FPOM/2010/Willamette_Coordination/Willamette_RME/RME.html)

**FINAL Meeting Summary**  
[Edits received from NOAA, ODFW, ODEQ]

<b>Action</b>	<b>Whom</b>	<b>By When</b>
Send edited MF summary to the ST for review to consider whether any further review is needed.	DSC	9/8
Review and provide suggested edits on the 8/4 Joint and ST meeting summaries.	ST members	9/29
Provide updated FY20 and FY21 budgets to ST, including (if possible) the FY21 capability.	Ian	10/6
Provide rankings on the concepts not yet ranked.	Corps & BPA	1-2 weeks prior to the 10/6 ST meeting
Circle back with more information on the Corps' sole-source decision on the WEIS.	Brad	10/6
Add a Willamette EIS Update as a standing agenda item to the ST meeting agenda.	DSC	10/6

**Participants on the phone:** Eric Andersen (BPA), Ian Chane (Corps), Brad Eppard (Corps), Nancy Gramlich (DEQ), Dave Griffith (USACE), Mike Hudson (USFWS), Anne Mullan (NOAA), Kelly Reis (ODFW), Lawrence Schwabe (CTGR), Dan Spear (BPA), Karl Weist (NPCC).

**Facilitator & Notetaker:** Donna Silverberg & Emily Stranz, 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 purpose of the meeting was to discuss issues and seek consensus on process, substance, and outcomes for efforts affecting participants engaged in the Willamette system.

More time was needed to review the August 4<sup>th</sup> Steering Team and Joint Team meeting summaries; approval will be sought at the October meeting. Additionally, Kevin Brice (Corps) provided his approval on the April 2019 Managers Forum meeting summary, which all Managers have reviewed and approved; a final meeting summary will be sent out. Kevin also provided suggested edits on the October 2019 summary. DSC will send out Kevin's tracked edits to the Steering Team to consider if another round of review is warranted, or if the summary can be approved with the incorporation of the edits. The group discussed whether there is or should be a statute of limitations on the summaries, as it is difficult to accurately review a summary from a year ago. Donna affirmed that the intention is to have meeting summaries approved shortly after meetings; however, she noted that the Managers Forum summaries are unique in the WATER forum, as they are internal documents and not posted on the WATER website.

**Action Item Update and Progress Reports**

***FY20 projects and updated budget:*** Ian Chane, Corps, noted that the Corps is working to implement the interim measures. As part of that effort, they are creating the Willamette Operational Fish Passage PDT, which will focus on the fish passage measures. The PDT's activity will be fully coordinated through the various WATER groups, such as the Flow and RM&E team. There will also be a new Project Manager. Ian is developing a charter for the PDT. After the charter is finalized, the Corps will develop the funding structure and stand up the team, potentially within this fiscal year. Ian committed to keeping the Steering Team updated on progress and providing more information on expected interactions with WATER.

In regard to FY20 projects, Ian reported that all efforts are moving forward. The Corps is in conversation internally around what is needed to get 90% plans and specs for Cougar to a point where they can be implemented when there is the opportunity.

***Updated FY21 budget:*** Ian provided an update on the FY21 budget, noting a distribution of \$3.7M, which includes line items for Foster and RM&E/project coordination. Ian is in the process of going through the funds and projects. He expects that proposed allocations should be internally reviewed and finalized in mid-September. Ian will provide an update at the next Steering Team meeting.

In response to questions around planning for potential additional funds, Ian noted that the Corps uses their 5-year plans to show what has been accomplished and what they plan to accomplish in future years. As part of this effort, the Corps demonstrates that planned work meets the Corps requirements and is within any funding restrictions. Ian reminded the Steering Team that the FY21 distribution restricted any research leading to design. The Corps has not received any word regarding potential House mark-ups for FY21; however, the Corps will be ready with their capabilities in case funds are made available. Ian will check internally to see if he can share the FY21 capabilities with the Steering Team.

→ **ACTION:** Ian will check internally with Corps Division to see if he can share the FY21 capabilities with the Steering Team.

***Implementation of Interim Measures:*** Dan Spear, BPA, noted that the Corps and BPA have conducted preliminary ResSim and HydSim modelling. He explained that the ResSim modelling provides information on the flows and operations, and HydSim uses those outputs to translate the effect from a power generation and cost perspective. The HydSim compares the inputs to a baseline and models price-forward for operations. The price forecast used is always the same as there is not a special forecast for fish operations; however, the model does consider light and heavy load hours. Dan clarified that the "lost revenue opportunities" do not require a transfer of funds; they simply signal the loss of generation/hydropower revenue.

***Check in on RM&E prioritization and ST guidance to RM&E team:*** The Steering Team discussed next steps for the FY21 RM&E concepts. There was interest in exploring how to inform the process outside of the rankings, as it was not clear at the end of the August 27<sup>th</sup> meeting how the work would be prioritized by the Corps. There was interest in developing a list of prioritized projects that the region feels are needed, regardless of funding availability. This list can then be used as a tool for identifying work that can move forward when funding becomes available throughout the year. Ian noted that the Corps would like to keep these conversations

going. He acknowledged that he heard a lot of interest in monitoring, and although the Corps focused their priorities on concepts that the Corps has identified monitoring needs, they also encourage development of a proposal that identifies other agencies' views of the need for monitoring.

Kelly echoed the need for additional monitoring, noting that developing a broader monitoring concept/proposal will help the region focus on the big-picture monitoring needs.

Ian pointed out that the Corps is committed to moving forward with the screw-traps and that any other concepts should continue through the normal process. Anne noted that she appreciated Ian's suggestion; part of the request from NOAA's perspective, is to use the opportunity of fish being handled for additional information gathering. This information will help demonstrate how the operational changes are impacting fish and it may be easier to add some data gathering to the work efforts already underway.

Regarding the pedigree analysis, Brad asked for clarification on the need, noting that pedigree analysis is funded through FY20 and then every 5-years. Kelly noted that the concept outlines a different management need and focuses on genetics for near-term management of Minto fish. Lawrence agreed, noting that the concept intends to piggy-back on other work efforts to investigate new technology that could inform management of fish. Ian noted that the pedigree analysis will show survival and what fish can be moved above the dam (which is helpful data). Ian questioned how much additional data was needed.

Ian acknowledged that there is a lot of uncertainty now and it is not easy to predict what will happen from year to year. He appreciated everyone's patience and recognized that it is frustrating at times. The Steering Team will continue discussions around prioritization of the concepts and will work to clarify the sub-set of concepts that need to be moved towards full proposals. BPA and the Corps will provide their rankings on the 3 concepts that they have not yet ranked. They will share their rankings ahead of the next Steering Team meeting to allow for productive discussion. Anne offered to discuss the Interim Measure Passage and Survival concept in more detail with the Corps and BPA if they have questions while they are developing their rankings.

→ **ACTION:** The Corps and BPA will provide their rankings on the concepts they have not yet ranked. They will provide rankings 1-2 weeks prior to the October 6 Steering Team meeting.

### **Regional Updates**

- **HTT:** Eric Anderson, BPA, reported that the HTT Technical Committee has a meeting to review projects later in September, during which they will decide funding. The batch of project applications was received earlier this summer; they plan to announce decisions to the HTT by October 1.
- **Flow Team** - Anne noted that as of today, the tributary target flows have changed to spawning flows, meeting the spawning target of 1,500cfs below Big Cliff, as noted in the RPA. Water temperature are in the 55-57F range during the last week in August, dropping after a request from ODFW.
- **Willamette Mitigation funding update** - Kelly noted that ODFW sent a letter to BPA with the FY22 project recommendations and hopes to have a response within 4-6 weeks.

One FY21 project fell out and may create an opportunity for some FY22 projects to close early using FY21 funds. Kelly will provide updates to the team as things progress; however, this topic does not need to be a standing agenda item.

- **Willamette EIS** - The Corps reported that the EIS process is on track and the team is trying to maintain the current schedule; however, the ROD may be delayed. There was interest in understanding why the Corps is going to a sole-source contract with ICF Inc. for the Willamette EIS. Additionally, there was interest in whether the Corps will incorporate the EDT that was previously conducted around 2004. The Corps representatives on the phone were not certain and will circle back with more information. The group suggested that an update on the Willamette EIS be added as a standing agenda item for the Steering Team.  
→ **ACTION:** Brad will circle back with more information on the Corps' sole-source decision. DSC will add a Willamette EIS Update as a standing agenda item to the ST meeting agenda.

### **Partner Updates**

- **FWS:** Mike shared that as of October, Rollie White will be stepping down as Assistant Regional Director to take a USFWS position in Palm Springs, CA. It is unclear at this point who will replace him at the Managers Forum. Mike shared some advice that Rollie offered to his staff, as Mike felt it was good messaging for this group:
  1. Don't be afraid to think outside the box, and,
  2. This should be fun!
- **BPA:** Dan shared that Elliot Mainzer's last day as BPA's Administrator was yesterday, John Hairston is now Acting Administrator.
- **ODFW:** Kelly noted that the current work-at-home allowances at ODFW due to COVID-19 will be extended through the end of the year (previously it had been October 2020).
- **COE** - Ian shared that the Corps is also still on tele-commute status. Also, Portland District has a new Commander. Colonel Dorf has moved on and Commander Michael Helton has stepped into the role. He is being briefed on work in the region.
- CTGR, NPCC, NOAA, and ODEQ did not have any additional updates.

### **Next Steps**

Donna noted that for the next Steering Team meeting, DSC will set up a WebEx so that the group can connect via video for part of the session. She thanked the team for their efforts and conversation, and with that, the meeting was adjourned.

**The next Steering Team meeting will be on October 6, 2020 at 12:30.**

*This summary is respectfully submitted by the impartial facilitation team at DS Consulting. Suggested edits are welcome and can be sent to [emily@dsconsult.co](mailto:emily@dsconsult.co).*