

Willamette Action Team for Ecosystem Restoration (WATER)

Steering Team & RM&E Team Meetings

February 1, 2022

Meeting Summary

http://pweb.crohms.org/tmt/documents/FPOM/2010/Willamette_Coordination/Steering_team/WST.html

http://pweb.crohms.org/tmt/documents/FPOM/2010/Willamette_Coordination/Willamette_RME/RME.html

Facilitation Team: Emily Stranz & Nancy Pionk, DS Consulting.

[Edits provided by Corps, ODFW]

Steering Team Session

Participants: Eric Andersen (BPA), Brett Blundon (USFS), Ian Chane (Corps), Brad Eppard (Corps), Nancy Gramlich (ODEQ), Mike Hudson (USFWS), Fenton Khan (Corps), Cathy Kellon (NPCC), Kelly Reis (ODFW), Lawrence Schwabe (CTGR), Dan Spear (BPA), Kate Wells (NOAA).

12/7 Joint Meeting Summary: The team approved the summary with additional edits from CTGR.

Corps Budget Update: Ian Chane reported that the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act funding has been clarified. A total of \$36M was allocated to CRFM for the Columbia and Willamette Rivers. The funding came with budgetary guidance stating that the funds need to be used for Willamette injunction requirements. The Corps is still working through the details of how to prioritize the funding, but one project that is likely top priority is the DEX adult fish facility. The FY22 PBUD is \$3.5M, which is drastically below the capability (of \$40+ Million) expressed for FY22, and the capability was calculated before litigation, so did not include those costs. There is also a chance that the Corps will still be under continuing resolution in FY22.

Updates/Coordination on Ad Hoc Process: The federal family ad hoc team did not meet in January. ODFW and CTGR have been invited to participate in future meetings as an initial step toward involving regional partners. The idea is to bring in other partners on an intentional basis as discussions progress; the process is not intended to be exclusive.

Next Steering Team Session: April 5, 2022 at 2:00 PM

Joint Steering & RM&E Session

Participants: Eric Andersen (BPA), Leslie Bach (NPCC), Brett Blundon (USFS), Ian Chane (Corps), Nancy Gramlich (ODEQ), Mike Hudson (USFWS), Cathy Kellon (NPCC), Fenton Khan (Corps), Rachel Laird (Corps), Anne Mullan (NOAA), Christine Peterson (BPA), Kelly Reis (ODFW), Lawrence Schwabe (CTGR), Dan Spear (BPA), Kate Wells (NOAA), Luke Whitman (ODFW), Jeff Ziller (ODFW).

Screwtrapping Update: Emily reviewed the requests made at the 1/4/2021 RM&E team meeting that 1) the screwtrapping contract be modified to include additional locations, specifically sites above Cougar and Green Peter (for when fish are outplanted); and 2) Expanding the timing of screwtrap operations to year-round operations.

Adding additional locations: Fenton noted that the Corps is working to modify the screwtrapping contract to include screwtraps below Green Peter and above Cougar for this spring, and screw trap above Green Peter in spring 2023

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Expanding the timing of screwtrap operations to year-round operations: Fenton noted that the current plan is to operate screwtraps on a seasonal basis when fish are expected to be out-migrating and asked for more information on what is meant by “year-round” operation, and what information is desired. Kelly noted that the data would provide an opportunity to observe potential changes in fish behavior given changes in operations and basin conditions. The group discussed that “year-round” means *during the times when fish are moving* which can differ, depending on location. Luke noted that criteria for when screwtraps are operated could include high or low flow conditions, and whether fish have been caught within a certain number of days. Lawrence noted that important timing for trap operation is autumn through spring, when most fish are moving in the system. Fenton shared a summary of the planned screwtrap locations and timing of operations (see Table below); he will provide a final schedule when it is available.

Fenton also raised the issue of how the additional operations would be funded. The Corps’ is obligated to fund what is required under the injunction and year-round screwtrapping operations are not required by the litigation. One option might be to have the State or another agency contract for the screwtraps outside of the Corps’ operational windows, as it can be complicated to reimburse the federal government. Brett noted that USFS is working to place screwtraps on Forest Service property. Dan noted that if O&M or CRFM funding is being considered, more information is needed concerning how the data would inform the dam operations and infrastructure. It was noted that Anne and Mike were not present for this discussion, and it would be helpful to hear their perspective. As next steps, Kate will follow-up with Anne and Emily will follow-up with Mike. Emily will then coordinate with the team outside of the regular meetings to see if there is interest in exploring this idea further.

- **Action: Kate will update Anne on the screwtrapping discussion.**
- **Action: Emily will update Mike on the screwtrapping discussion and coordinate with the team regarding further discussions.**

Screwtrap Location	Timing of Operations
Below Big Cliff	December-February. This trap will operate all year until next February. The only time it is not operating is mid-February to mid-March
Below Green Peter	Beginning of March – end of June
Above Green Perter	Outplanting Chinook salmon will commence in Spring 2022; Screw traps will begin operating in FY23 when fish begin migrating out.
Above Foster	March – end of June
Above Cougar	March – end of June
Below Cougar	Year-round
Below Dexter	March - December; and March 2023-December 2023
Below Lookout Point	March – December
Above Lookout Point	March - December; and March 2023-December 2023
Hills Creek	October– February; and September -February 2023
Above Fall Creek	January – May
Below Fall Creek	March -July

WATER Partner Updates

- **NPCC:** Cathy noted that NPCC’s Fish and Wildlife Committee Meeting on 2/15 will include a presentation by Ida Royer, Corps on progress and next steps for the Willamette BiOp. On 2/16, the Independent Scientific Advisory Board (ISAB) will be conducting an anadromous fish habitat and hatchery review. Registration link for the meeting: <https://www.nwcouncil.org/meeting/council-meeting-february-15-2022>
- **USFS:** Brett noted that the USFS regional office received funding for disaster relief relating to the 2020 and 2021 fires and they are working to prioritize the funding, which will likely include funds for rebuilding structures in Detroit. USFS is working with the Corps on a land interchange project to transfer land that was withdrawn when the dams were constructed. USFS, Corps, and BLM participated in a field trip regarding possible outplanting sites

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in Quartzville and the Middle Santiam. [*Facilitator's Note: In summary edits, ODFW indicated that ODFW staff would like to be involved in outplant site selection conversations.*]

- **Corps:** Ian appreciated Brett's support to help identify fish release sites above Green Peter. He noted that the Corps has received infrastructure funding related to navigation and jetty infrastructure. The Corps is working with the City of Portland to plan Tryon Creek restoration work. Ian noted that this is an example of how the Corps can use other authorities to implement work to improve conditions for salmon. [*Facilitator's Note: In summary edits, Ian clarified that funding specific to the Tryon Creek project is still uncertain.*]
- **ODFW:** Kelly noted that ODFW is engaged in internal discussions regarding infrastructure funding that will be available. ODFW is also monitoring the status of the *Recovering America's Wildlife Act* which could provide potential funding of up to \$25 Million per year.
- **NOAA:** Kate noted that NOAA continues to work with the Corps on the EIS and planning related to injunction measures. She noted that NOAA has not received additional funding for ESA implementation/consultation and funding constraints will continue to persist. Anne noted that NOAA is reviewing elements of the Willamette Biological Assessment with the Corps; and pulling in information from previous work efforts (for example chub) to inform the effort. NOAA is also working on reviewing permits for the screwtraps.
- **USFWS:** Mike noted that USFWS will received \$4 Million in funding from the infrastructure bill for fish passage projects in the region. USFWS will be distributing a draft of the Feasibility Assessment for Reintroduction of Bull Trout in the Santiam to regional partners. USFWS will be coordinating a meeting with partners to discuss the draft. The Lamprey technical Information Exchange is taking place via a virtual seminar series in 2022. The next seminar, "Lampreys and Climate Change" is scheduled for February 8, 2022, from 11-1 PM. Registration Link: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/937291199804074256>
USFWS is continuing to work on the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Report for the Willamette EIS; the deadline for the report has been extended.
- There were no updates from BPA, CTGR and ODEQ.

WATER Team Updates

- **HTT:** Eric noted that the HTT Technical Committee will hold its bi-monthly meeting on February 3. HTT will be announcing FY23 projects this week via the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board. Representatives from USFS and the McKenzie River Trust will present a retrospective on the Finn Rock Reach Phase 1 restoration project, which was funded in part by BPA.
- **RM&E & Flow Teams:** There were no updates.
- **EIS Schedule Updates:** A virtual public meeting video is available on Youtube. The public virtual room is now live and can be accessed via: <https://gather.cdmsmith.com/v/V6zaxVGM1eZ>.
- **Injunction Updates:** It was noted that the first report regarding the injunction measures is due to the Court at the end of February. The WATER teams will be able to review the report once it is publicly available. Public information about the Willamette Valley Injunction can be accessed via: <https://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/Locations/Willamette-Valley/Injunction/>.

WATER Annual Work Calendar 2022

WATER representatives were asked to review the Annual Work Calendar for 2022 and provide Emily with suggested additions for 2022. The Work Calendar will be adjusted to include discussions relating to the injunction RM&E as information becomes publicly available.

→ **Action: WATER team members will provide Emily with any additions to the Annual Work Calendar 2022.**

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RM&E Team Session

Participants: Leslie Bach (NPCC), Ian Chane (Corps), Mike Hudson (USFWS), Fenton Khan (Corps), Rachel Laird (Corps), Anne Mullan (NOAA), Christine Peterson (BPA), Kelly Reis (ODFW), Lawrence Schwabe (CTGR), Luke Whitman (ODFW), Jeff Ziller (ODFW).

1/4 Meeting Summary: The team approved the summary with an additional edit from USFWS.

FY21/FY22 Studies: Fenton noted that the Corps will implement injunction measure studies as required by the injunction. An active tag study will be implemented in March at Foster and Green Peter, when injunction spill starts in the Spring. [Facilitator Note: In summary edits, Fenton noted that the active tag study at Foster to evaluate the interim spill operation was vetted by the RM&E Team in 2021 prior to the final injunction.] RM&E team members will have access to the study reports when they are publicly available. Fenton noted that the lab analysis for the High Head Bypass Study- studying truck transport vs bypass (*JPL-18-03-HHB*) has been delayed due to Covid. A draft report is expected in Spring.

Surrogate Program: Fenton previously emailed the RM&E team the table outlining the surrogate program for FY22. Fenton explained the difference on the table between the larger number of eggs requested compared with the number of fish reared. He noted that the larger number of eggs is required to ensure that sufficient fish are raised for the anticipated studies and a buffer amount is included to account for morbidity and other contingencies. The number of fish requested per study is an estimate based on past studies and will be updated based on what the study contractor needs. The Corps will not know if excess surrogate fish will be available until studies are implemented.

Timing of Meetings: RM&E team members agreed to change the monthly meeting start time for RM&E team members to 2 PM with the intent to conclude RM&E Team meetings by 4 PM or earlier. During months when the Steering Team also meets, RM&E team members will join the meeting at 2 PM; after the Steering team meeting concludes, the Joint RM&E/Steering Team meeting and RM&E Team meetings will immediately follow.

Reminder: The deadline for comments on the draft technical report: "*Spatiotemporal Index of Infection Severity of a Copepod, S. Californiensis, that Parasitizes Juvenile Chinook Salmon in the Willamette River Basin*" is February 19, 2022. Comments can be provided to Rachel at rachel.d.laird@usace.army.mil

The next RM&E Team session is on March 1, 2022 at 2:00 PM.