

**Steering Team Meeting**  
**June 6, 2023**  
**Facilitator's Summary**  
**[Edits provided by Corps, ODFW]**

[http://pweb.crohms.org/tmt/documents/FPOM/2010/Willamette\\_Coordination/Steering\\_team/WST.html](http://pweb.crohms.org/tmt/documents/FPOM/2010/Willamette_Coordination/Steering_team/WST.html)  
[https://pweb.crohms.org/tmt/documents/FPOM/2010/Willamette\\_Coordination/Willamette%20RME/RME.html](https://pweb.crohms.org/tmt/documents/FPOM/2010/Willamette_Coordination/Willamette%20RME/RME.html)

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

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**Steering Team Meeting**

**Participants for all or part of the meeting:** Brad Eppard (Corps), Mike Hudson (USFWS), Jason Karnezis (BPA), Fenton Khan (Corps), Cathy Kellon (NPCC), Jim Myers (NOAA), Anne Mullan (NOAA), Alyssa Mucken (OWRD), Christine Peterson (BPA), Kelly Reis (ODFW), Ida Royer (Corps), Kate Self (NPCC), Lawrence Schwabe (CTGR), Dan Spear (BPA), Greg Taylor (Corps), Josie Thompson (NOAA), Dave Trachtenbarg (Corps), Kate Wells (NOAA), Bob Wertheimer (Corps).

**4-4-23 Meeting Summary:** The Steering Team approved the June meeting summary with no additional edits.

**Budget Updates:** Ida shared an Excel spreadsheet that outlined the details of the CRFM Budget. The Corps' FY25 budget request has been submitted; the next iteration of the FY25 budget will be the President's budget (PBUD) anticipated for release in February 2024. For FY24, which begins October 1, 2023, the FY24 PBUD fully funds the program for \$66.6 Million; however, the PBUD is not the final appropriation. Congress will make the final determination on the budget. If Congress does not pass a budget on October 1, it is anticipated that there will be a continuing resolution. In that case, the Corps will receive guidance on funding levels once the continuing resolution is passed. In past years, the guidance has been to utilize the PBUD or the previous year' budget, whichever is less. Ida noted that the PBUD is across the entire CRFM program. For FY23, the budget of \$47.4 Million which includes workplan amounts, is being executed now; these funds cover everything the Corps believes can be accomplished this year.

**The next Steering Team Session is on August 1, 2023**

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**Steering & RM&E Joint Session**

**Participants for all or part of the meeting:** Brad Eppard (Corps), Mike Hudson (USFWS), Jason Karnezis (BPA), Fenton Khan (Corps), Cathy Kellon (NPCC), Jim Myers (NOAA), Anne Mullan (NOAA), Alyssa Mucken (OWRD), Christine Peterson (BPA), Kelly Reis (ODFW), Ida Royer (Corps), Kate Self (NPCC), Lawrence Schwabe (CTGR), Dan Spear (BPA), Greg Taylor (Corps), Josie Thompson (NOAA), Dave Trachtenbarg (Corps), Kate Wells (NOAA), Bob Wertheimer (Corps).

**WATER Partner Updates**

- **ODFW:** Kelly noted that ODFW has hired and trained staff to operate the Leaburg fish sorter and is waiting to see the proportion of marked versus unmarked fish before activating it. She reported that unfortunately, passage of spring Chinook over Willamette Falls has been very low this year so far. Additionally, Kelly reported that the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program is conducting technical reviews of the proposed projects for FY25 acquisitions.

- **NOAA:** Kate introduced Josie Thompson, NOAA's new senior level biologist. Josie comes from NOAA's hydropower branch and worked on the CRSO BiOp and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act report for the Willamette Valley system. Josie will help draft the Willamette BiOp, which NOAA has started drafting.
- **USFWS:** Mike reported that USFWS sent a letter to Corps requesting revision of dates for the draft and final BiOp; the new targeted dates are November 2023 for the draft BiOp and April 2024 for the final BiOp.
- **OWRD:** Alyssa reported that she will be presenting the Willamette Basin Reallocation Study Workplan to the Willamette Water Resources Commission in June. She will also be presenting a broader Willamette Basin workplan that identifies OWRD led projects and initiatives. Alyssa also shared that OWRD attended a stakeholder workshop with the Willamette Intake Facilities Commission (WIFC). The WIFC is comprised of 6 different agencies that provide drinking water supplied from the Willamette or plan to connect to the Willamette in the future. They are currently working on a source water protection plan strategy for the Willamette to secure safe drinking water and are trying to learn about other entities' watershed protection plans. Their goal is to prepare a plan this Fall for approval from their respective boards in June 2024. More information can be found [here](#). Additionally, Alyssa share that partners in the North Santiam watershed are working to update a drought contingency plan. They plan to have workgroup discussions to look at drought indicators, monitoring activities, and risk assessment and to readopt the plan in 2024.
  - **Action:** Alyssa will send the Steering Team information on the WIFC and the draft North Santiam Drought Contingency plan.
- **Corps:** Greg Taylor reported on system conditions. He noted that the system was up to 70% full and due to the wet April and spring runoff, there was a lot of water in lower Basin until the recent dry period. Currently, conditions are very dry and warm which caused the large snowpack to melt quickly. The Corps was able to store a lot of the snowpack. The Corps is implementing some unique operations as part of the mandated injunction operations, including spill, delayed refills and drawdowns. Greg outlined the operations that will be implemented:
  - Detroit Dam: Spill for water quality, temperature and downstream passage.
  - Green Peter Dam: Spill for water quality, temperature and downstream passage ended 6/5/23.
  - Fall Creek and Cougar Dams: Delayed refill operations. Instead of filling in February, the reservoir at Cougar did not fill until May. Greg noted that, as a result, very little storage was accrued and there are much reduced reservoir elevations. The Corps is receiving feedback from the public on this.
  - Fall Creek, Green Peter and Lookout Point Dams: Drawdown operations. Greg noted that Green Peter and Lookout Point reservoirs will be drawn down to levels they have not been at since the dams were constructed. The Lookout Point drawdown is ongoing now and will be 75 feet below the minimum conservation pool and Green Peter will be 140 feet below. Members of the public have raised concerns about impacts to access (via boat ramps) and impacts to resident fisheries.

Greg reiterated that the number of spring Chinook going over the Willamette Falls is disappointing, with only 11,000 fish over the falls through the end of May; run projections estimated 50,000. The Corps is also seeing low returns at the fish facilities. Greg also reported that the Corps has finalized a one-year contract with ODFW for bull trout and is working to award a multi-year contract in the future. He noted that the chub support work will be completed in September which is the end of the 9-year post-delisting

monitoring. The Corps will be conducting tours for the Assistant Secretary of the Army and NOAA next week, which is a great opportunity to raise awareness on the importance of efforts in the basin.

- There were no updates from **BPA** and **CTGR, NPCC**.

#### **WATER Team Updates**

- **HTT:** Jason Karnezis noted that the HTT reviewed 4 projects for funding at their June 1 meeting; he will be following up to get out an announcement on the HTT process soon. BPA has hired a new staff member, Alan Whiting, who will support Willamette estuary projects.
  - **Flow Team:** Salina Hart provided an update via email: The system is 70% full. Although the snowpack was abundant and continued to accumulate late into the season, early on warming caused it to melt fast resulting in inflows dropping earlier than expected. The overall precipitation for this year was below average and forecasted to remain dry and warm. All injunction operations are occurring including the delayed refills at Cougar and Fall Creek. Additionally, the spill operations at Lookout Point and Green Peter have resulted in a reduction in overall storage at those projects this year. The deep drawdowns at these projects will intentionally start in July, however, they have already started to draft to support mainstem flow requirements. Given the lack of overall system storage, mainstem flows are being managed accordingly.
  - **EIS Schedule Updates:** Updates are available here:  
<https://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/Locations/Willamette-Valley/System-Evaluation-EIS/>
  - **Injunction Updates:** Public information about the Willamette Valley Injunction is available here:  
<https://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/Locations/Willamette-Valley/Injunction/>.
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  - *The DS Consulting Facilitation Team drafts Steering and RME Team meeting summaries; suggested edits are welcome. Please send suggested edits to Nancy Pionk at [nancy@dsconsult.co](mailto:nancy@dsconsult.co).*
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