

Willamette Action Team for Ecosystem Restoration (WATER)

WATER Steering Team

February 6, 2024

Facilitator's Summary

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

**** The Steering and RM&E Team met following the Steering Team meeting to provide updates and coordination opportunities; please see notes from that portion of the meeting below. ****

Participants for all or part of the meeting: Gordon Axel (NOAA), Gabriel Brooks (NOAA), Brad Eppard (Corps), Grace Goldrich-Middaugh (ODEQ), Mike Hudson (USFWS), Fenton Khan (Corps), Alyssa Mucken (OWRD), Anne Mullan (NOAA), Christine Peterson (BPA), Kelly Reis (ODFW), Lawrence Schwabe (CTGR), Josie Thompson (NOAA), David Trachtenbarg (Corps), Kate Wells (NOAA), Alan Whiting (BPA) and Luke Whitman (ODFW). **Facilitation Team:** Emily Stranz & Nancy Pionk, DS Consulting.

Welcome and Introductions: Emily welcomed the group and conducted a round of introductions.

12-5-24 Meeting Summary: The Steering Team approved the December meeting summary with no additional edits.

Budget Updates: There were no new budget updates. Congress has extended the Continuing Resolution through March 1, 2024. Ida is on a detail for the next several months. John Rerechich is the Acting CRFM Manager while Ida is on detail.

Steering & RM&E Joint Session

WATER Partner Updates

- **ODFW:** Kelly noted that Shaun Clements has returned to his position as Deputy Administrator. Luke noted that steelhead counts at Willamette Falls are off to a decent start for the year.
- **BPA:** Alan noted that BPA has selected the HTT projects for funding and is in the contracting process. He will be scheduling the next HTT meeting shortly.
- **NOAA:** Kate noted that NOAA continues to work on the Willamette BiOp and also reviewing documents in connection with the injunction.
- **USFWS:** Mike recently presented at the "Salmon and Climate Initiative Workshop" sponsored by Long Live the Kings and the Pacific Salmon Foundation. Mike presented on how USFWS uses the Resist-Accept-Direct framework in its climate efforts and how the framework could be applied to salmon recovery. Next month, Mike is going to National Conservation Training Center to participate in a nature-based solutions workshop. Steering Team members were interested in having Mike present on both topics at a future Steering Committee meeting in the joint Steering/RM&E session.
- **ODEQ:** Grace noted that the [Willamette Subbasins portion of the Temperature TMDL](#) is currently out for public notice. The public hearing is 2/16.
- **OWRD:** Alyssa noted that OWRD is meeting with ODFW and NMFS regarding the Minimum Perennial Stream Flow and the intersection of BiOp flow objectives. In the North Santiam Basin, partners are kicking-off efforts to update drought plans and were meeting today to discuss drought monitoring indicators and how drought is communicated at different stages. Alyssa noted that outflows from DET came up as a potential indicator. The Council of Water Leaders is meeting on 2/23; Rose Walsh, USGS is providing an update on their Willamette Integrated Science Program; the presentation is

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open to the public. Also, the State is hiring a Water Planning Coordinator through ODFW; this position would work with OWRD and ODEQ regarding water planning and closes 2/19/24.

Alyssa shared that the lead researcher for the Corps Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations (FIRO) reached out to OWRD last fall to gauge interest in co-chairing a committee on the effort in the Willamette. Acting OWRD Director, Doug Woodcock, will serve as the co-chair. The project is looking at reservoir operations and how to use forecasts to inform operations and better manage water supply.

- **NPCC:** Cathy Kellon has taken a different position outside of NPCC and Mark Fritch is currently supporting Cathy's old position. Emily will reach out to Mark regarding WATER Steering Team representation.
- There were no updates from **CTGR or USFS**.
- **Flow Team:** Anne noted that the Flow Team has not started meeting yet this year and will likely meet in March. She noted that with the heavy downfall conditions, most of reservoirs are currently above rule curve.
- **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/>.

The next Steering Team Session is on April 2, 2024

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.