

# Willamette Action Team for Ecosystem Restoration (WATER)

## Steering Team Meeting February 2, 2021

### Final Meeting Summary

[ Review & Edits from: NOAA, NPCC, ODFW]

**Participants on the phone:** Eric Andersen (BPA), Brett Blundon (USFS), Ian Chane (Corps), Nancy Gramlich (DEQ), Mike Hudson (USFWS), Anne Mullan (NOAA), Kelly Reis (ODFW), Ida Royer (Corps), Lawrence Schwabe (CTGR), Dan Spear (BPA), Karl Weist (NPCC);

**Facilitator and Notes:** Nancy Pionk & Emily Stranz, DS Consulting.

Action	Who	By When
Reach out to technical leads for input on when the IM “look back” and planning session should be.	Ian	March 3
Schedule an April Managers Forum meeting.	DSC	March 3
Clarify what is needed for and timing of the FY21 Middle Fork check-in with Managers.	DSC/RM&E	March-April meetings
Consult internally about timing and process to amend the COU screw-trapping contract to allow for marking fish for monitoring purposes.	Ian	Week of February 8
Consider what is needed to amend take permit to add potential take from tagging fish.	Anne	Prior to 2/25 RME meeting
Schedule a call for the RM&E Team to clarify metrics and monitoring needs for the COU screw-trap.	DSC	Prior to 2/25 RME meeting (if needed)

### Welcome & Introductions

Nancy Pionk, DS Consulting Facilitator welcomed the group and noted that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss issues and seek consensus on process, substance and outcomes for efforts affecting participants engaged in the Willamette system. The Steering Team reviewed and approved the January 5, 2021 meeting summary.

The team welcomed Ian Chane back, Ian was previously on a detail. Ian shared that Andy Traylor, who had been sitting in for Ian, has accepted a position at BPA. Moving forward, Ian will be both the Corps’ CRFM project manager, as well as a Supervisory Project Manager. Ian mentioned that due to his workload, if you send him an email and do not get a response, give him a call! In other Corps’ staffing updates, Ida Royer is now the Willamette RM&E project manager.

### Action Items from Prior ST Meeting/Progress Reports:

**FY 21 Budget and Project** – Ian reported that there are no additional updates on the F21 budget from what was reported at the January meeting. He shared that the final FY21 workplan is in and no additional funding was provided for CRFM. This means that the budget presented at the January Steering Team meeting is the final for 2021.

The FY22 budget defense is taking place now. Ian noted that typically the budget would have been passed back from OMB in November of last year, however, OMB has not yet provided their pass-back;

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it is expected in March 2021. Ian and his team are working to brief OMB on the FY22 budget ask in the near future.

In response to a question, Ian explained that the Corps will be asking for Foster Adult Fish Facility construction funding in FY22, however, construction would not be planned until 2023. The Corps will know if funding for the effort is provided when OMB provides their budget pass-back in March 2021. Ian noted that the Corps is still moving forward with design and hopes to issue a contract in FY22 for construction in FY23.

Additionally, Ian reminded the team of past language attached to budgets that restricted what funds could be used for. It is unclear at this point whether the FY22 budget will also have restrictions.

*Update on RM&E Progress Tracking spreadsheet updates* - Nancy reported back on the RM&E progress tracking spreadsheet, which was shared at the January meeting. There was a request from the Steering Team to include active links to RM&E reports. Nancy noted that she is coordinating with the Corps to make the current reports available via the Steering Team document page on the WATER teams' website. Additionally, the Corps is in the process of updating their library (which will take some time due to logistics and accessibility needs), and once the library is updated it will be a good resource to find all reports on RM&E conducted in the Willamette as part of the WATER process.

### **2021 Planning & Process Discussion**

The team reviewed a draft 2021 WATER team workplan and provided input on the path forward. The following additions were made to the workplan:

- Add a standing agenda item to Steering Team meeting agendas to check in on the progress of implementing and monitoring the Interim Measures.
- Add an annual Interim Measure “look back” and planning session, likely for November. Ian will confirm the appropriate time for this session.
- Shift the March Managers Forum meeting to April to allow for an update on the FY22 budget.
- Shift the May Managers Forum meeting to June or July, depending on when would work best for a Middle Fork passage check-in.
- Added the HTT project process/timeline.

→ **ACTION:** DS Consulting will reach out to Managers to find a time for them to meeting in April.

→ **ACTION:** DS Consulting will start working with the RM&E Team to clarify what is needed to prepare for the 2021 Middle Fork check-in; this will help determine when additional Managers Forum meetings are needed.

### **DSC Proposed Process Recommendation for Inter-Team Communications**

Based on input from the annual WATER team member evaluation process, DS Consulting suggested implementing an inter-team communication process that aims to help clarify communication needs between teams. The draft process, which was provided to the team ahead of the meeting, is intended to be used by the facilitation team as a discussion guide and seeks to pull out the necessary information for successful elevation or inter-team communication. The Steering Team generally approved of the suggested process and added some suggested questions

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and information needs to the document. The DS Consulting team will start using the process and the teams will update it as needed.

### WATER Team & Partner Updates

- **RM&E** - Anne shared that the RM&E Team discussed potential options to get more information out of the current round of screw-trapping, noting that NOAA would like the Corps to modify the contract to add PIT tagging of the fish handled as part of the Cougar screw-trapping. Anne asked if a contract modification is feasible from a budgetary perspective? Ian noted that the Corps is interested in monitoring the Interim Measures, however, needs more information from the RM&E team regarding what the monitoring need is and what needs to be measured, then the approach to gaining that information can be discussed. Kelly added that this conversation has happened in parts at multiple meetings and has proved difficult to navigate the path forward. Mike observed that the Corps is approaching these issues on a project-by-project basis and that the Steering Team may be able to play a role in articulating the bigger picture needs, noting that the monitoring need is not just to determine the passage route, but also reservoir survival, behavior, etc.

Multiple team members expressed interest in the Corps pursuing options to amend the contract. The group discussed timing, noting that the RM&E Team can provide more detail, however, there was concern that the opportunity to update the contract may be missed. Ian agreed to look into timing and needs for amending the contract. Similarly, Anne will consider what would be needed to make sure the take permit is flexible to cover additional take needed for tagging. DS Consulting will coordinate a RM&E conversation ahead of their regularly scheduled meeting (2/25) if it is needed to meet contracting deadlines.

It was noted that a concept paper was drafted in 2020 and can provide more detail on what the information needs are. The Corps and BPA did not provide rankings on this concept and the RM&E Team will consider whether the concept should be brought back in 2021.

→ **ACTION:** Ian and Anne will look into process and timing for contract modification and take permit coverage. DS Consulting will schedule an RM&E conversation to discuss metrics, monitoring needs, and approach if needed.

- **HTT Team** - Eric noted that the HTT solicitation announcement for funding opportunities has been sent out; he will forward it to the Steering Team. Eric reminded the team that HTT meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of every other month and all are welcome to attend. Additionally, he noted that they were able to generate BPA funds to extend the contract for greater than 12 months by a case-by-case basis, which should offer a bit more flexibility for project contractors.

### Partner updates

- **BPA** - Dan shared that Glen Smith will be taking over for Kieran as BPA's Managers Forum representative.

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- **COE** - Ian shared that Kevin Brice has announced his retirement (expected in July).
- **CTGR** - Lawrence share that Mike Wilson, the CTGR Managers Forum representative has retired and the tribes are interviewing for his replacement. Lawrence hopes to be able to provide an update next month.
- **NOAA** - Kate Wells will be the new NOAA Steering Team representative. Kate is filling in behind Marc Liverman (who recently retired) until the position is permanently filled. Additionally, Anne noted that the Oregon AFS conference is happening virtually this year and is a great learning opportunity for WATER partners.
- **ODFW** - Kelly shared that the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program will open the FY 2023 solicitation on February 1st. She also shared that ODFW released a new lamprey brochure, which can be found at:  
<https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/species/docs/lamprey/LampreyTrifold.pdf>  
In response to a request, Kelly agreed to send the Steering Team a summary of ODFW's 2020 repairs at the Willamette Falls fishway.
- **USFS** - Brett shared that Tracy Beck retired and Dave Warnack will be USFS' new representative at the Managers Forum. Duane Bishop is the new Deputy; however, he will be on detail at the Mt. Hood Ranger District for the near term. Trish Wilson will also be retiring at the end of February. Additionally, Brett shared that USFS is in the process of assessing impacts from this last season of wildfire and conducting recovery efforts.
- **DEQ, FWS, NPCC** did not have any additional updates.

### Next Steps

Nancy recapped the action items, noting that Ian will follow up with the technical leads to get input on the timing of an annual Interim Measure Steering Team look-back and planning session. Ian will also look into the process and timing of implementing a contract change on the current screw-trapping contract. Anne will similarly investigate how to best update or amend the associated take permit. Once Ian has confirmed timing needs for amending the contract, DS Consulting will schedule a call for RM&E team members to clarify metrics and monitoring needs. DS Consulting will also work to schedule an April Managers Forum meeting and work with the RM&E team to identify needs and timing for a 2021 Middle Fork check-in.

With that, Nancy thanked the team for their participation and the meeting was adjourned.

**The next Steering Team meeting will be on March 2, 2021 at 2:00.**

*This meeting summary is respectfully submitted by the DS Consulting facilitation team. Edits are welcome and can be sent to Emily Stranz (emily@dsconsult.co).*