

**Willamette Action Team for Ecosystem Restoration (WATER)
Joint Steering and RM&E Teams' Meeting
April 6, 2021**

**Meeting Summary
[Edits/Review by: ODFW, NPCC]**

ACTION	WHOM?	BY WHEN?
Circle back to DSC regarding any Manager Forum representative updates.	Steering Team members	ASAP
Provide a “heads up” to the Managers on 4/29 regarding the pending basin-wide monitoring conversation that will be on a summer Managers Forum meeting agenda.	Donna	4/29 Managers meeting
Meet to clarify the issue statement and information needs for a productive Managers Forum discussion around basin-wide monitoring needs.	Steering and RM&E Team members	End of May/beginning of June
Continue refining and revising the Cougar concept for ranking for FY22 funding, assuming NEPA process will be complete and funding will be available.	Anne/RME team	ongoing

Participants on the phone or WebEx video (for all or part of the meeting): Eric Anderson (BPA), Leslie Bach (NPCC), Ian Chane (Corps), Brad Eppard (Corps), Nancy Gramlich (ODEQ), Mike Hudson (USFWS), David Jepson (ODFW), Fenton Khan (Corps), Jim Meyers (NOAA), Anne Mullan (NOAA), Rachel Neuenhoff (Corps), Kelly Reis (ODFW), Ida Royer (Corps), Dan Spear (BPA), Lawrence Schwabe (Grand Ronde), Karl Weist (NPCC), Kate Wells (NOAA);

Facilitation Team: Nancy Pionk, Donna Silverberg and Emily Stranz, DS Consulting.

Welcome, Introductions, & Housekeeping

Facilitator, Nancy Pionk welcomed the group to the meeting and conducted a round of introductions. She reviewed the agenda, noting that the primary purpose of the meeting is to review and discuss WATER member’s prioritization of FY22 information needs. Final concept papers were sent to the group prior to the meeting.

Coordination and Agenda for April 29th Managers Forum Meeting - Donna Silverberg, DS Consulting, reviewed the April 29th Managers Forum meeting agenda with the group. She noted that this would be Chair, Kevin Brice’s last meeting and the agenda would focus on Kevin’s reflections on the WATER forum process, including areas of success and areas to improve. There will be opportunity for other managers to ask questions. The following Managers Forum meeting will be an introductory meeting for the newer managers.

Steering Team members provided updates on their agency representation at the Managers Forum:

- BPA - Glen Smith will be representing BPA at the Manager Forum.
- Corps- Liza Wells will take over for Kevin as lead for the Corps Portland District.

- Grand Ronde - Lawrence will provide the contact information for the new Natural Resource Division manager.
- ODFW - Shaun Clements is the new ODFW Administrator hired on behind Bruce McIntosh. Kelly will check in to see if Shaun or Bernadette will be representing ODFW at the Managers Forum.
- USFWS - Janine Castro and Paul Henson will be representing USFWS at the Managers Forum.

Donna noted that as needed, more frequent meetings can be scheduled for the Managers. She anticipated the next session will be in June 2021.

The group discussed the need for the Managers to discuss basin-wide monitoring and infrastructure needs. This conversation has been circling around the RM&E and Steering Team for years and gets stuck as a result of funding constraints. Ian noted that CRFM funding is not available for long-term monitoring and that O&M funding would be needed. However, CRFM funding criteria does have some grey area and it would be beneficial for the managers to explore the conversation and needs together.

Mike observed that the agencies are 13 years into implementing the BiOp and now the IMs will be implemented for an unknown period. Basin-wide PIT infrastructure would have provided valuable information in the past and can during IM implementation. Mike noted that this infrastructure is funded in the mainstem Columbia and Managers should consider the same for the Willamette River Basin.

The group was aligned in Donna providing a brief description of the issue to the Managers at the April 29th meeting, to let them know that the issue of long-term monitoring infrastructure and funding will be addressed at the next Managers meeting. In the meantime, Steering Team members will connect with their Managers to prepare them for the conversation and the Steering and RM&E teams will reconvene to further clarify the issue statement and conversation needs.

→ **ACTION:** Donna will give the Managers a “heads up” that the monitoring issue will be on a summer Managers Forum meeting agenda. Steering and RM&E Team members will meet to clarify the issue statement and information needs for a productive Managers Forum discussion.

FY22 RM&E Concepts

Description of Corps’ approach to focus RM&E on Interim Measures - Ian Chane, Corps, reported that the Corps is focused on implementing and monitoring the Interim Measures (IMs), as well as continuing associated efforts such as the fish surrogate program. As a result of funding restrictions and limitations, there will not be any RM&E for design or PDT for design. Instead, the Corps will focus efforts on gaining a better understanding of the benefit or modifications needed for the IMs to be beneficial to fish.

The group reviewed, asked clarifying questions, and provided ranks for two of the three concepts provided thus far for FY22.

FY21 JPL-XX-21 - Detroit Dam Juvenile Fish Passage Interim Operations - This concept aims to evaluate survival from Detroit Dam to confluence with the mainstem Willamette. The methodology of the study will inform how long study is conducted and will aim to monitor fall sub-yearling Chinook and spring yearling Chinook.

Kelly noted that ultimately, ODFW would like to see passage that provides for a range of life histories and it was noted that if fry are found in the screwtraps, it will be important to talk about how to study passage for all stages in future. Fenton noted that previous studies have not shown sub-yearlings moving out in the spring, however, the study could be modified if they are found in the screwtraps. Jim reported that in the mainstem there are sub-yearlings migrating in the spring and the lack of downstream migration at Detroit could be a result of how the project is operated. Additionally, Anne noted that spill starting earlier in the spring could influence what life-stages are caught in the trap.

It was noted that the forebay needs to be described in this concept. Brad reported that in the past the forebay has been defined as the log-boom to base of the dam - the boat restricted area.

Overall, this concept was ranked at 4.2. Please see the FY22 Concept Ranking spreadsheet for agency specific rankings and rationale.

FY21 JPL-XX-XX-FOS - Foster Dam Juvenile Passage Spill Operations - This IM was developed based on observed weir issues and is not intended to be a long-term solution. The IM is intended to provide some benefit to fish. The study will evaluate if there is a benefit, if not, it will look at tweaking operations to provide some benefit. Metrics to be measured focus on passage distribution, downstream survival to confluence with mainstem and forebay behavior/timing. It will monitor fall sub-yearling Chinook and spring yearling Chinook, as well as 2-year-old steelhead.

Overall, this concept was ranked at 3.6. Please see the FY22 Concept Ranking spreadsheet for agency specific rankings and rationale.

FY20-xx - Enhanced interim Measure Evaluation of Operational Passage in South Fork McKenzie - Unlike the other concepts, this one does not require planning ahead for surrogates, instead, it is looking at fish that pass the dam, and determining their fate downstream. It seeks to address different life history stages and how they may or may not be affected by the project operations. The intention will be to learn about dam passage efficiency and measure how the fish do after they leave the dam.

Kelly noted that the Detroit concept metrics could translate well into this concept and Anne and Kelly will continue exploring those concepts. Anne noted that she will also work to address the comments provided by the Corps.

This year, the IM will not be implemented at Cougar (see note regarding NEPA needs above), so this concept will not be ranked at this point. Ian suggested that the team continue to develop this concept in preparation for ranking and potential funding in FY22.

→ **ACTION:** Anne and the RM&E Team will continue refining and revising the Cougar concept for ranking for FY22 funding, assuming NEPA process will be complete, and funding will be available.

Fenton clarified that this is the first round of FY22 concepts and that as more IMs are implemented this year, there are likely going to be more concepts to review and rank. One

potential concept will be around Green Peter passage: although the IM does not call for an operation, it could lead to an action once the RM&E is designed. Anne noted that it could be helpful to look at the fate of fish coming from Foster.

Team Updates

Fenton reported that due to NEPA requirements, the interim measures will not be implemented at Cougar this spring, however, screw-traps and permits are in place and the RM&E team was interested in running the traps to collect data on the operations this spring. The Corps met internally to discuss and agreed to operate the Cougar traps this year. The Contractor started operating last weekend. They are also working on implementing traps in other sub-basins for upcoming IM operations.

Additionally, Fenton reported that the Corps, ODFW, and NOAA met to coordinate release of the 2,000 extra surrogate wild winter steelhead surrogates. Thanks to NOAA and ODFW, the fish will be PIT tagged prior to release in the North Santiam. ODFW will tag the fish and track them.

The Willamette Basin Fisheries Science Review will take place virtually the mornings of April 28-29th.

Next Steps

Nancy noted that the RM&E team will continue tracking and discussing concept needs for FY22 and bring forward any concepts for ranking. Additionally, the teams will work to prepare for a regional conversation on basin-wide monitoring needs.

With that, Nancy thanked the group for their efforts and the meeting was adjourned.

*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.*