

**Willamette Action Team for Ecosystem Restoration (WATER)
Joint Steering & RM&E Team Meeting
February 23, 2017**

http://www.nwd-wc.usace.army.mil/tmt/documents/FPOM/2010/Willamette_Coordination/

Facilitator's Summary

Action	By Whom?	By When?
Review January RM&E meeting summaries & provide edits to Emily.	Stephanie	3/13
Incorporate suggested edits to the draft Critical Path and share with Marc Liverman.	Dan & Chuck	Meeting Took Place on 3/7
Meet to add additional technical detail to the Critical Path.	Sub-group	ASAP
Provide revised draft of Critical Path to RM&E team for additional review.	Sub-group	April RM&E meeting.
Re-craft the WATER Guidelines and provide to Steering Team for review.	DSC	3/10
Reschedule the Managers' Forum to spring (May 12?)	DSC	ASAP
Discuss options to address TDG (specifically below Big Cliff); report back to the Steering Team.	Joyce & Ian	ASAP
Discuss NS passage needs and performance criteria.	RM& Team	March/April meetings
Finalize wild fish reintroduction plans.	Fish Managers	ASAP
Explore options internally and with managers for funding long-term data collection needs.	All	Ongoing
Provide written response to elevated issues	Corps	ASAP
Provide edits to the NMFS memo on GreenPeter	Corps	3/1
Discuss needs for GreenPeter research	NMFS & Corps	ongoing

In the room: Leslie Bach (NPCC), Stephanie Burchfield (NMFS), Joyce Casey (USACE), Ian Chane (USACE), Diana Dishman (NMFS), Eric Hein (USFWS), Mike Hudson (USFWS), Fenton Khan (USACE), Keith Kirkendall (NMFS), Christine Petersen (BPA), Rich Piaskowski (USACE), Dan Spear (BPA), Riccardo Walker (USACE), Karl Weist (NPCC);

Participants on the Phone: Nancy Gramlich (ODEQ), Chuck Peven (BPA Contractor), Lawrence Schwabe (Grand Ronde), Greg Taylor (USACE);

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

Review of Meeting Summaries

Steering Team members present approved the January 26th meeting summary.

RM&E meeting summaries from January 5, 19, and 26th were approved by all RM&E members present except Stephanie Burchfield, NMFS, who will review the meeting summaries before the next RM&E meeting and indicate approval or concern.

→ **ACTION:** Stephanie will provide any suggested edits to the RM&E meeting summaries from 1/5, 1/19, and 1/26 to Emily by the close of business Monday, March 13, 2017. If no additional edits are provided the summaries will be considered final and approved.

Middle Fork RM&E Plan: Critical Path

Dan Spear, BPA, and Chuck Peven, BPA Contractor, presented an initial first draft of the Middle Fork RM&E Plan Critical Path: they explained that they used the draft Sub-basin RM&E Plan as guidance. They asked for feedback from the group about the general approach and format, to make sure that it meets the regions' needs. Chuck emphasized that this draft focuses on biological evaluation and does not incorporate aspects of technical feasibility or cost effectiveness. He continued that he used a logic model that starts with reservoir survival, progresses to problem-solve issues regarding reservoir survival, then shifts to other alternatives.

The Steering and RM&E Teams reviewed the draft, asked clarifying questions and provided some general suggestions for the next draft:

- Make note of the complexities of decision points;
- The lack of performance targets makes the path forward complex to ascertain;
- Clarify how the life-cycle model is being used to design performance targets; also, will the life-cycle model be used in Objective 3 and 4?
- The chart appears to be linear rather than concurrent - find a way to signal that the "three pronged approach" (HOR, opps, at dam) will be explored simultaneously.
- The ability to concentrate fish in a collectible area is important for at-dam options – finding a way to measure or express this could help with a “go” for those steps.
- Clarify the purpose of Objective 6: it serves as a step to figure out how to loop back into the process when an alternative is determined to be infeasible.
- Check and state the assumptions incorporated into the chart - for instance, the draft path assumed that the Corps wanted to pursue structural options without a draw-down; however, Rich noted that this may not be the case.
- Create a row (or other visual cue) that shows 'test prototype' as a factor that applies to all alternatives.
- Add the operational alternatives generated by the RM&E Team.

The group felt good about the general framework and noted that it was a great step forward and helpful tool for conversations. Steering Team members expressed that the one-page summary is good for discussion and identifies criteria that the group needs to talk about. Additionally, having a clear flowchart that illustrates the complexity will be helpful to show during budget conversations. RM&E Team members felt that there needs to be more detail added. Stephanie, Rich, and Mike agreed to work with Dan and Chuck to add more of the technical details.

→ **ACTION: Process for moving forward:**

1. Chuck will make changes from feedback received to date.
2. Dan and Chuck will connect with Marc to get his feedback regarding the chart and general approach.
3. Rich, Stephanie, Mike, Dan, and Chuck will work together to add more specific details. They will identify any policy or technical “sticking points” and provide another draft to the RM&E Team for review.
4. The RM&E Team will consider the revised draft, provide input, and when ready provide a near-final draft to the Steering Team for approval.

Draft Guidelines

Donna reported that DS Consulting has received edits from agencies, including some as recently as this week. Due to the timing of edits, the DS Consulting Team was not able to put together a revised draft for the group, however, Donna noted general themes identified, including:

- Clarify the purpose and overall scope;
- Clarify/update organizations' involvement, team structure, and roles;

- Clarify the elevation process;
- Consider how to incorporate/reflect the COP.

Overall, agencies suggested consolidating language describing the organization and getting rid of redundancies. Several agencies suggested limiting the information regarding technical teams and including these details in auxiliary documents. People liked the idea of sharing leadership through a rotating chair of technical teams. Finally, there is a desire to clarify the difference between recommendations, input and consensus.

DS Consulting suggested that they take the input provided by each agency/organization, including the roles chart, and recraft the guidelines to incorporate everyone's needs and input, however, in a simpler document. The teams agreed with this approach. Stephanie requested that DS Consulting take care not to create more work for the technical teams by requiring additional charters for each team.

Additionally, a question was raised about how to get ODFW's input and involvement with the Guidelines, being as they are not currently at the table. The group agreed that if ODFW does not return to the process, the group will have the conversation about how that decision impacts the Guidelines at the March 17th meeting.

→ **ACTION:** DS Consulting will provide the Steering Team with a re-crafted version of the Guidelines by March 10th. The Steering Team will review the draft prior to their meeting on March 17th.

Manager's Forum Session

The group discussed whether to keep the Manager's Forum session scheduled for March 17th considering the lack of ODFW voices at the table and the unfinished draft Guidelines. Donna checked in with the group regarding their preference for the meeting, recognizing that in the past, concern has been voiced about cancelling Managers' Forum meetings. The group discussed that they would like the Managers' Forum to be a forum where challenging decisions are discussed and decided on. It is also important to the Steering and RM&E Teams that the Managers' Forum members meet, stay engaged and build relationships, even if they do not have big decisions to make. There was a concern that this meeting not be pushed out to the summer, however, the teams agreed that it should be postponed until spring.

The Steering Team agreed that they will take advantage of the timeslot originally reserved for the Managers, and meet to further discuss the Guidelines and other issues on March 17th.

→ **ACTION:** DS Consulting will reschedule the Managers' Forum meeting for May 12, 2017 [Facilitator's Note: Due to Managers' schedules, this date may need to be adjusted]. The Steering Team will meet on March 17th from 1:00-5:00.

Group Strategy Session: FY 18 Priorities and Sub-basin Planning

The Steering and RM&E Team members worked together to fill in RPA action charts for each sub-basin. These charts begin to identify the information needed and questions to address in order to fulfill RPA measures, specifically in FY18. Additional details are provided in the draft charts (provided in separate document).

In doing so, the group discussed the impact of total dissolved gas (TDG) at Big Cliff, Cougar and other sites, noting that it is a continuing problem that needs to be addressed. It was noted that below Big Cliff is a wild fish sanctuary and home to resident fish as well. Due to turbine limitations, spill will continue to create high TDG. Both ODEQ and NMFS expressed that it is not adequate to postpone addressing the issue. Joyce and Ian acknowledged the Corps' responsibility to comply with the Clean Water Act and agreed to discuss internally how to meet those requirements given the budgetary constraints of the CFRM funds.

- **ACTION:** Ian and Joyce will discuss options for addressing TDG internally and provide an update the group.

There was discussion around the need to develop performance criteria, as well as a request to the Fish Managers to finalize the wild fish reintroduction plans as soon as possible. As well as a need to clarify in the North Santiam if the goal is to pass fry. Rich noted that this decision will influence design and so needs to be discussed soon.

- **ACTION:** The RM&E Teams will continue discussions regarding performance criteria and passage needs. The Fish Managers will work to finalize the wild fish reintroduction plans.

The group briefly discussed other components impacting runs on the Willamette, including harvest. It was noted that the run forecast is very low and that harvest plays in to this on a near-term basis. However, harvest is not an RPA requirement and cannot be discussed without ODFW at the table. Additionally, the group thought that harvest concerns should be discussed at the management level.

RM&E Elevated Issues 2 & 3:

The Teams continued their discussion on the RM&E elevated issues.

Issue 2: At the 1/26 meeting, The Grand Ronde, ODEQ, ODFW, NMFS, NPCC, and USFWS all agreed that this study provides important interim information for fisheries management and encouraged the Corps to fund it. The Corps agreed to revisit the topic internally and reported out that this type of project (long-term datasets) is not fundable with CRFM funds. On the Columbia BPA Fish and Wildlife funds are used, however, those funds are accounted for on the Columbia and are only an option for the Willamette if Oregon is willing to reallocate its current F&W Program funding from FCRPS to Willamette activities. Dan noted that there are other employees at BPA that are regularly involved in the F&W Program and can better speak to its nuances. Dan declared that he would be happy to connect people with BPA representatives that work closely with the F&W Program, if desired. It was noted that ODFW is trying to find funding for some of the work and it was suggested that others look to their agencies/organizations to see if there are any funds available. It was also noted that the spawning surveys would be eligible for O&M funds; however, the HGMPs would have to be finalized first and the spawning surveys would be one of several activities that could be funded through O&M.

- **ACTION:** Agencies/organizations will explore opportunities internally for funding these projects. The Corps will continue to look internally for funding. BPA, NMFS and Corps staff will suggest that their managers discuss funding needs and priorities.
- **ACTION:** Per 2/24/17 email correspondence the Corps will provide a written statement of their decision and the rationale for the decision to the Steering Team.

Issue 3: At the 1/26 meeting, NMFS shared a memo stating that research for passage at GreenPeter is necessary as part of the BiOp and encouraged the Corps to start the process to research passage at GreenPeter. Joyce reported back, noting that the NMFS memo lays out rationale for why studying fish passage at GreenPeter is necessary. She continued that the Corps sees the memo as triggering coordination on the project at the Steering Team. However, she noted that there are some suggestions that the Corps would like to make in order to clarify the rationale for this research as part of the current BiOp.

- **ACTION:** Joyce and Ian will provide edits to the memo to clarify the rationale for the research under the current BiOp. They will provide the edits to NMFS by March 1st. NMFS will then finalize the memo for the record. NMFS and the Corps will continue discussions on how to move the issue forward.

→ **ACTION:** Per 2/24/17 email correspondence, once the discussion between NMFS and the Corps is concluded, the Corps will provide a written statement of their decision and the rationale for the decision to the Steering Team.

Next Steps

DS Consulting will revise the WATER Guidelines and provide a draft to the Steering Team prior to their March 17th meeting. They will also reschedule the Managers' Forum meeting for spring 2017. The Critical Path sub-group will continue work on the draft path and provide it to the RM&E Team for review. The RM&E Team will continued efforts to flesh-out the RPA charts, specifically the Middle Fork and Basin-wide charts that the group did not get to. The Corps will provide the teams with written response to the RM&E issues raised so that the teams have a clear record of the decisions made and can adjust plans accordingly. The Corps will also meet internally to discuss the regions' TDG concerns and funding issues.

The next Steering Team meeting is March 17th from 1:00-4:00 at the DS Consulting Office.

The next RM&E Team meeting is March 23rd from 9:00-1:00 at the DS Consulting Office.

This meeting summary was drafted and submitted by the impartial facilitation team from DS Consulting. Please send questions, concerns or suggested edits to Emily Stranz at emily@dsconsult.co.