

**Willamette Action Team for Ecosystem Restoration (WATER)  
Research, Monitoring and Evaluation (RM&E)  
June 22, 2017 Meeting**

[http://www.nwdwc.usace.army.mil/tmt/documents/FPOM/2010/Willamette\\_Coordination/Willamette%20RME/RME.html](http://www.nwdwc.usace.army.mil/tmt/documents/FPOM/2010/Willamette_Coordination/Willamette%20RME/RME.html)

**Facilitator's Summary**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>BY WHOM?</b>	<b>BY WHEN?</b>
Incorporate edits to the 5/26 meeting summary.	Emily	ASAP
Provide comments on Proposal for implementing adaptive instream flow management in the Willamette River Basin	All	6/23
Send RM&E Team note of the extended timeline to comment on the draft Middle Fork RM&E Plan.	Rich	ASAP
Provide comments on the draft Middle Fork RM&E Plan.	All	7/7
Revise concept paper summary table and provide to Emily for the Steering Team meeting.	NMFS/Corps	6/26

**Participants in the room:** Leslie Bach (NPCC), Stephanie Burchfield (NMFS), Diana Dishman (NMFS), Mike Hudson (USFWS), Rich Piaskowski (USACE), Ricardo Walker (USACE);

**Participants on the phone:** Lawrence Schwabe (Grand Ronde), Jim Peterson (Oregon State University), Tyrell DeWeber (Oregon State University);

**Facilitation Team:** Emily Stranz, Nancy Pionk, and Alyssa Bonini (DS Consulting).

**Welcome and Introductions**

Emily Stranz, DS Consulting Facilitator, welcomed the group with a round of introductions.

The group reviewed the 5/25/17 draft Facilitator's summary. The following additions were provided:

- In the section regarding the discussion on FY18 concept papers, it was noted that the chart that was elaborated on during the session and as an attachment to the meeting summary provided only partial comments and questions from the group. It was suggested that the summary reference the formal comments received on the concept papers. The formal comments are more thorough and include all of the comments received, not just what was mentioned in the meeting.
- In the section regarding next steps and process, the intent of working with the Steering Team to clarify FY18 priorities was expanded on to clarify that the RM&E team is seeking guidance from the Steering Team on what decisions need to be made to address the RPA, what information is needed to do so, and the time frame.

Pending the edits stated above, the RM&E Team approved the summary. DS Consulting will incorporate the edits and send a final summary to the group.

**Review of Willamette River Instream Ecological Flow Science Review and Analyses Prioritization**

Jim Peterson and Tyrell DeWeber, Oregon State University, presented an overview of the study proposal focused on an initial decision support model for adaptive instream flow management in the Willamette River Basin. The

researchers provided a PowerPoint presentation to the RM&E Team as a separate document entitled: *Proposal Overview: Implementing adaptive instream flow management in the Willamette River Basin*. The presentation was emailed to the RM&E Team prior to the meeting.

The intent of the proposal is to work with SWIFT team and partner agencies to draft an adaptive management plan that can be used in conjunction with the annual Flow Management Team process to inform management flow decisions by FY19.

The overarching questions that the decision support model seeks to address include:

- 1) How can flows be managed to best benefit spring-run Chinook salmon and winter-run steelhead; and
- 2) How does flow affect other ecosystem objectives?

The question was asked whether improving the detection rate estimate relative to flow would help the study? The researchers expected that they would be able to identify a sufficient estimate of detection efficiency, using the data available in the model and do not need a field study. [NOTE: During editing NMFS noted that although ODFW is co-author of the proposal this statement was not verified by ODFW field biologists, who have long worked with PTAGIS data and first developed the current calibration for detection efficiency. NMFS would like ODFW's opinion of whether this can be achieved with the available data to be shared with the RM&E team.] They will examine all the data that is available regarding marked fish including adult returns, all PIT tag records wherever they occur and the limited Steelhead tagging done above Foster Dam.

The proposal will estimate ecological responses as a result of changing flow targets in the mainstem Willamette (i.e., Salem) and tributaries, and will help evaluate flow objectives for tributaries [Note: During editing NMFS clarified that tributary targets have already been established and are now being evaluated]. It was noted that tributaries may be even more important for the objectives of Chinook and steelhead and the researchers want to look at how the different flow releases in the Santiam affect juvenile rearing habitat, juvenile survival and adult spawning.

As this proposal seeks to develop a tool that can be used into the future, it was noted that as additional fish passage solutions are implemented, it will be important to account for such changes within the model and plan for incorporation of new data relating to the added passage solutions. The researchers did not think that it would be too difficult to account for these changes in the model. It was also noted that the adaptive framework developed should be designed to work with the current in-season flow management process, which involves several in-season discussions, decision points, and adjustments rather than a single plan selected for a given year.

Rich reminded the group that this proposal was sent out in early June for RM&E Team review and comments are due by June 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Corps is seeking comments on the technical aspects of proposal. Additionally, Rich explained that the Corps intends to fund it out of CRFM in FY17 to meet the RPA measure regarding instream flow. He noted that the proposal is not part of the current RM&E cycle, as it was originated through the SWIFT process; however, this is the last proposal that is "out of sync" with the RM&E process; and explained all studies in FY18 will be part of the normal RM&E Team review and ranking process. [Note: During editing NMFS noted that they believe this project should be included in the FY18 prioritization process. While it is out of sync in the review cycle, it will use funding in FY18 from the same source being used to support the FY18 studies currently under review.]

NMFS, Grand Ronde and USFWS indicated general support for proceeding with funding the proposal in FY17; NPCC needed time to review the proposal further. The next step is for RM&E members to review the proposal and submit comments by June 23.

→ **Action:** RM&E members will provide Rich their technical comments on the proposal by June 23, 2017.

## **Update on Middle Fork Sub-Basin RM&E Plan Review and Next Steps**

The group reviewed the status of the Middle Fork RM&E plan. Rich and Stephanie noted that they have not yet received any edits to the draft and asked whether team members planned to provide any. Mike noted that he has taken a look and has some edits and has found no fatal flaws, he will provide his edits to Rich. The group was asked to provide any comments by July 7. Rich agreed to directly reach out to ODFW to request comments. NPCC noted that they have no comments at this time.

After comments have been received, Rich and Stephanie will review comments with the intent to have a final plan by early August. The RM&E team will then develop a list of questions that identify the guidance sought from the Independent Science Review Panel (ISRP). The intent is to provide those questions to ISRP no later than October, 2017.

→ **Action:** Rich will email the RM&E team requesting comments on the draft Middle Fork Sub-basin Plan by July 7, 2017. The group will check in on progress at their next meeting.

It was noted that this plan could ultimately serve as a template for other sub-basin plans and that the tables developed with the Steering Team are a starting point. It was suggested that following joint RM&E and Steering Team FY18 prioritization meeting, the RM&E Team will have a better idea of which sub-basin should be next in line for plan development. The intention is to eventually develop plans for all of the Willamette sub-basins.

### **Review FY 18 Concept Chart and Prepare for All Friends Session**

The group reviewed the FY18 concept paper summary chart that they drafted for the Steering Team. It was noted that the purpose of the chart is to provide the Steering Team with information on the concepts so that they can provide guidance to the RM&E Team on FY18 RM&E priorities and to help inform Steering Team decisions and information needs. The group discussed the “big picture” request of the Steering Team, which is for them to establish sideboards for the RM&E Team to work within as they develop the annual RM&E efforts. They noted a desire for a more efficient process, some expressed frustration from putting time and energy into developing concepts that are not likely to be funded. They discussed whether the process of determining RM&E priorities should be a top-down, bottom-up, or combination of the two. The RM&E Team coalesced around the idea of a combination, noting that both the managers and technical experts are needed in the conversation and that strategically planned joint meetings with the Steering and RM&E Teams would be helpful. The RM&E Team stressed that they need the Steering Team and Managers Forum to resolve ongoing RME issue disputes and make decisions as to what direction they need the RM&E to go in order to support the necessary decisions. It was also noted that as the process progresses and sub-basin plans are developed, there will likely not be as big of a need for issue resolution as the region will have already determined the general direction of the RM&E.

The team outlined a year of WATER meetings that from their perspective would help clarify the process moving forward. Please see the attached calendar for details.

In regards to the FY18 concept paper summary table that the RM&E Team is drafting for the Steering Team to consider at their June 26<sup>th</sup> meeting, the group reviewed and discussed the level of detail needed. Generally, they thought that the “purpose” column should hone in on specific management questions and decisions to be made: what will the information from this study be used for? It was suggested that the “purpose” column identify what questions the concept is seeking to address by specifically pulling objectives and study questions from the concept papers. The group worked through several concepts and identified questions for the Steering Team’s consideration.

The group requested that NMFS and the Corps revise a few of the concepts to reflect the desired information identified by the team. They will send the revised concept summaries to Emily, who will compile them into one document and provide it to the Steering Team at their meeting on June 26<sup>th</sup>. The RM&E Team requested input from the Steering Team as to if the summary is at a good level of detail/content to help the Steering Team make decisions.

→ **Action:** The Corps and NMFS will provide revised concept summaries to Emily by Monday morning. Emily will compile the summaries and provide the table to the Steering Team at their June 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **Next Steps**

The RM&E Team will provide comments on the Willamette instream flow proposal, as well as the Middle Fork Sub-basin Plan. They will revise the FY18 concept summary table in preparation for the Steering Team meeting on June 26. DS Consulting will work with the Steering Team to identify next steps for prioritization of the FY18 concepts, including a joint meeting with the RM&E team, ideally before the July 27<sup>th</sup> RM&E Team meeting.

**The next RM&E Team meeting is scheduled for July 27<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00-1:00, meeting location TBD.**

*This summary is respectfully submitted by DS Consulting. Suggested edits are welcome and can be sent to [emily@dsconsult.co](mailto:emily@dsconsult.co).*

	January	February	March	April	May	June
Topics / Agenda	<p><b><u>Managers Forum:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Steering Team:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>RM&amp;E Team:</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Managers Forum:</u></b> - Willamette Science Review.</p> <p><b><u>Steering Team:</u></b> -Willamette Science Review. - Budget check-in meeting..</p> <p><b><u>RM&amp;E Team:</u></b> - Willamette Science Review</p>	<p><b><u>Managers Forum:</u></b> No scheduled meeting in March or April.</p> <p><b><u>Joint Steering &amp; RM&amp;E Team Meetings:</u></b> - Set side boards/ guidance for RM&amp;E for next FY. -Identify decisions to be made, by when, and what information is needed? -Determine FY concept needs (based off of sub-basin plans). - Identify issues for elevation to Manager Forum. - Identify decisions needed from the Managers Forum in May.</p>		<p><b><u>Managers Forum:</u></b> - Decision meeting - Address any policy disputes elevated from ST/RME conversations. -Resolve disputes &amp; provide direction back.</p> <p><b><u>Steering Team:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>RM&amp;E Team:</u></b> - Submit and review consensus concepts.</p>	<p><b><u>Managers Forum:</u></b> No scheduled meeting in June.</p> <p><b><u>Steering Team:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>RM&amp;E Team:</u></b> - Review / refine RM&amp;E concepts.</p>
	July	August	September	October	November	December
Topics / Agenda	<p><b><u>Managers Forum:</u></b> No scheduled meeting in July.</p> <p><b><u>Joint Steering &amp; RM&amp;E Team Meeting:</u></b> - Prioritize concepts. - “back-check” concepts.</p>	<p><b><u>Managers Forum:</u></b> - Review regional progress on implementing BiOp, Recovery Plans.</p> <p><b><u>Steering Team:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>RM&amp;E Team:</u></b> - Call for proposals (Late July/early August).</p>	<p><b><u>Managers Forum:</u></b> No scheduled meeting in September.</p> <p><b><u>Steering Team:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>RM&amp;E Team:</u></b> - Technical review and presentation of proposals.</p>	<p><b><u>Managers Forum:</u></b> No scheduled meeting in October.</p> <p><b><u>Steering Team:</u></b> - Strategic research planning session. - Corps contracting for next FY projects.</p> <p><b><u>RM&amp;E Team:</u></b> - Corps contracting for next FY projects.</p>	<p><b><u>Managers Forum:</u></b> No scheduled meeting in November.</p> <p><b><u>Joint Steering &amp; RM&amp;E Team Meeting:</u></b> - Program presentation on the Willamette Program for forthcoming year (RME program of work and other things COE has budgeted for. Includes which RME studies will be funded).</p>	<p><b><u>Managers Forum:</u></b> - Strategic planning session for next year; determine what the MF plans to accomplish. - Program presentation on the Willamette Program for the forthcoming year (RME program of work and other things COE has budgeted for. Includes which RME studies will be funded).</p>