

RM&E Team Meeting
November 1, 2022
Meeting Summary

https://pweb.crohms.org/tmt/documents/FPOM/2010/Willamette_Coordination/Willamette%20RME/RME.html

[Edits provided: Corps, ODFW]

Facilitation Team: Emily Stranz & Nancy Pionk, DS Consulting.

Participants: Fenton Khan (Corps), Mike Hudson (USFWS), Anne Mullan (NMFS), Jim Myers (NMFS), Christine Peterson (BPA), Kelly Reis (ODFW), Lawrence Schwabe (CTGR), Greg Taylor (Corps), Luke Whitman (ODFW), Jeff Ziller (ODFW).

10/4/22 Meeting Summary: The RM&E Team approved the October meeting summary with no additional edits.

Team Member Updates:

- **ODFW:** Luke noted that ODFW has completed spawning ground surveys for spring Chinook in all known habitat of the McKenzie Basin. He noted that there is a fair amount of spawning below the Leaburg Hatchery. Luke noted very little surveying of habitat in the North Santiam and above Minto, because of reduced funding and difficulty boating the reach above Minto. The North Santiam counting station (upper and lower Bennett dams) counted 6,324 hatchery Chinook salmon and 968 wild Chinook salmon. Jeff noted that ODFW has tagged 2,800 juvenile Chinook salmon at Smith Farm; the tagged fish will be released upstream of Cougar Dam and some will potentially be used for screwtrap evaluations downstream of Cougar Dam.

Jeff also shared data regarding the fish sorted at the Leaburg Dam in 2022. He noted that ODFW operated the sorter 7 days a week in June–August, and then operated the left bank ladder trap in September. ODFW also installed an exclusion grate to allow lamprey to pass; the lamprey count of 244 was the highest observed at the Leaburg Dam. The PHOS percentage was 3%, which is the first time it has been below 10% since they have been tracking.

In response to an inquiry, Luke noted that the Cougar Dam powerhouse/tailrace channel antenna has been damaged and staff are reassessing options for the antenna. About a third of the channel is still covered by a functioning antenna. The regulating outlet antenna is operational across the entire channel. Data from both antennae need to be manually downloaded, which slows down data sharing. Luke and his staff are working with the Corps to establish a data connection to provide data in real-time. Anne noted that is helpful to have both antennas operating at Cougar Dam to assess which routes fish will choose and there may be opportunity to fix the antenna during the court ordered drawdown this fall.

- **USFWS:** Mike noted that the Lamprey Summit and 6th Annual Lamprey Information Exchange will take place December 13-14, 2022 at the World Forestry Center in Portland: <https://www.pacificlamprey.org/>. Also, the final draft of the North Santiam Bull Trout Reintroduction Feasibility Assessment is near completion. The next steps following completion of the assessment will be to meet with partners and discuss the convening of a managers group to consider whether to reintroduce bull trout in the North

Santiam. Mike noted that whether reintroduction is an action in the EIS, or as terms and conditions under the BiOp, will be determined through consultation. Formal consultation on reintroduction would happen later and is likely some years out.

- **NMFS:** Anne noted that NMFS is considering how best to staff consultation of multiple projects arising out of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Legislation funding; some of the projects will require individual consultation rather than programmatic consultations.
- **Corps:** Greg provided an update on injunction operations.
 - **Detroit:** The Corps is on the verge of using the lower RO and will be using the upper RO for the night-time spill operation. Water temperatures are much improved this year downstream of Detroit Dam.
 - **South Santiam:** Fall spill operation at Foster Dam is being implemented. Drawdown at Green Peter Dam will take place next year.
 - **McKenzie** –Drawdown of Cougar Dam below minimum conservation pool to allow exclusive use of RO’s.
 - **Middle Fork:** The Corps completed implementation of a drawdown at Fall Creek Dam and will do a 6-week injunction drawdown in December. The Corps will implement a deep drawdown of Lookout Point Dam next year.
 - **Screwtraps Locations:** Greg noted that there is now a screwtrap above Cougar Dam and by spring 2023, there should be screwtraps in all sites including above Detroit, Green Peter, Fall Creek, and Lookout Point Dams.
- There were no reports from **BPA** or **CTGR**.

Study Updates

Fenton noted that the Corps is currently implementing the Foster Dam night-time spill operation. The night-time spill operation started on October 1 and will end on December 15. PNNL has released two groups of radio tagged fish in connection with the fish passage study at Foster and will be doing another release in mid-November and the final release in early December. The study fish are also tagged with PIT tags.

Surrogate Program Updates

Fenton noted that the surrogate program had a surplus of fish due to the active tag studies in the North Santiam and at Cougar Dam that did not take place. These surplus fish were repurposed to test for screw trap efficiencies and ODFW also PIT-tagged 2, 800 fish for releases at Cougar dam (see Jeff Ziller’s update above).

The surrogate program continues to rear fish for studies scheduled for 2023 including the deep drawdown at Green Peter and Lookout Point Dams, which will both be active tag studies. Anne noted that the Detroit Dam operation is a novel operation, and it would be helpful, if there are surplus fish, to release tagged fish near the upper RO. Fenton noted that there are plans to place a screwtrap above Detroit Dam next year and to release hundreds of thousands of marked fish in the North Santiam in spring and summer 2023. This release will be hatchery fish and include bulk mark fry with Elastomer tags and PIT-tagged sub-yearlings.

PIT Antenna Status and Availability of Data

Team members discussed the status and availability of data from PIT antenna systems at the following locations:

- **Lebanon Dam:** Fenton reported that the Lebanon Dam PIT antenna system is installed and is operational. The contractor is currently fine-tuning and optimizing the system which is the world’s largest PIT antenna system.

- **Willamette Falls:** Luke noted that the Willamette Falls antennas are not currently uploading to PTAGIS, due to challenges in meeting PTAGIS data standards. These antennae have been offline at times in the last couple years and are not tuned properly. ODFW has submitted a request for support with the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission. In the meantime, Luke will consider kind of support ODFW can provide for researchers seeking data from the system. Luke also noted the PIT antennas are not fully functional because they are outdated and in need of replacement.
- **Gerren Island:** Luke noted the system is operating consistently and the goal is to run year-round and upload data to PTAGIS consistently.
- **Cougar Dam:** ODFW's goal is to upload data to PTAGIS once a data connection is established. ODFW would like to run a separate internet cable at Cougar Dam to the PIT readers. Greg suggested Luke contact Chad Helms and/or Doug Garletts at the Corps to discuss this request.

WATER Managers Forum: The next WATER Managers Forum is Wednesday, November 30th from 12:00-1:00PT.

The next RM&E Team meeting is on December 6, 2022 at 2 PM, following the Steering Team meeting and joint team session.

*The DS Consulting Facilitation Team drafts RME Team meeting summaries; suggested edits are welcome.
Please send suggested edits to Nancy Pionk at nancy@dsconsult.co*