

**Willamette Action Team for Ecosystem Restoration (WATER)
Research, Monitoring and Evaluation (RM&E)
January 28, 2021
CONFERENCE CALL/WEBEX
[Edits Provided by Corps, ODFW]**

http://pweb.crohms.org/tmt/documents/FPOM/2010/Willamette_Coordination/Willamette_RME/RME.html

FINAL Facilitator’s Summary

ACTION	BY WHOM?	BY WHEN?
Follow-up on the process and timing for modifications to the screw-trap contract.	Fenton	ASAP
Consider options for use of excess winter steelhead in North or South Santiam this spring.	RM&E Team members	2/25/21 RM&E meeting
Provide updates regarding the surrogate fish program and excess fish at future RM&E Team meetings.	Fenton	Ongoing
Send out most recent sub-basin planning spreadsheets.	DS Consulting	2/4/21
Review sub-basin planning spreadsheets and send comments to DS Consulting.	RM&E Team members	2/17/2021
Consolidate everyone’s comments into sub-basin planning spreadsheet and send out to the team.	DS Consulting	2/18/2021
Review the consolidated document and bring input for further discussion to the February 25, 2021 RM&E team meeting	RM&E Team members	2/25/21 RM&E meeting

Present for all or part of the meeting: Brad Eppard (COE), Fenton Kahn (COE), Michael Hudson (USFWS), Dave Jepsen (ODFW), Rachel Laird (COE), Anne Mullan (NMFS), Christine Petersen (BPA), Kelly Reis (ODFW), Dan Spear (BPA), Lawrence Schwabe (CTGR), David Trachtenberg (COE);

Facilitation Team: Emily Stranz and Nancy Pionk (DS Consulting).

Welcome and Housekeeping

Emily welcomed the group and conducted a round of introductions. Team members agreed to review the December 14, 2021 RM&E meeting summary and indicate any concerns by COB 1/28/21; if there are no additional edits, the summary will be considered approved. Fenton reminded the group that the RM&E Team’s role is technical, and it should not be discussing funding or budget issues. It is the Steering Team’s role to discuss policy and funding/budget issues. Other RM&E Team members noted that to be consistent with expected team roles, and Mike added that potential funding constraints should not impact the scope of the team’s conversations around RM&E needs.

Update on Pedigree Analysis and Screw-trapping Contract

Fenton reported that the paperwork on the pedigree contract is still in process. The contract should be awarded soon. Also, the screw-trap contract has been awarded to Cramer Fish Sciences. The contractor is developing a workplan which will include the number/location of screw-traps; the workplan will be shared with the team when it is finalized. There may be a need to use hatchery fish to calibrate the screw-traps and test efficiencies. Cramer is in the process of applying for take permits from NOAA and ODFW. Fenton noted that the Corps anticipates that they will need to coordinate with ODFW hatchery managers to see if hatchery fish are available for particular basins for use to obtain screw trap efficiencies. This will depend on timing/fish that are available. Kelly noted that the Leaburg Hatchery released next spring’s expected release early due to the fall wildfires.

The team discussed potential options to get more information from the current screw-trap contract. Fenton noted that PIT tagging is not in the current contract except as needed to determine trap efficiency. Anne made a formal request on behalf of NOAA for the Corps to modify the screw-trap contract to add PIT tagging of the fish handled below Cougar. Other team members indicated support for this modification. Fenton noted that the Corps can look into what is needed and timing for a potential contract modification. If the PIT tags are put in place at Cougar, it must still be determined how and who will manage the data. Anne was willing to take on the task of data mining and indicated that it might be possible to partner with USFS who has PIT arrays downstream. As next steps, the Corps will look into process and timing for a contract modification.

→ **Action:** Fenton will follow-up on the process and timing for a potential contract modification.

Wild Fish Surrogate program

Fenton reported that the Wild Fish Surrogate Program has 2000 two-year-old wild winter steelhead from the North Santiam basin available for study purposes. He noted that these fish were intended to be used for the Foster Weir study in 2021, which did not go forward. He asked the group to consider opportunities to repurpose these fish for another study in either N. or S. Santiam basins. OSU and ODFW can keep the fish until March/April after which, we will have to coordinate releasing the fish below Minto in the N. Santiam if a study with the fish is not identified. [Facilitator's Note: In summary edits, Fenton noted that OSU and ODFW will coordinate on releasing any excess surrogate fish in their respective sub basins.]

He noted that OSU will also be renewing its permit to collect eggs for broodstock in the spring. He reminded the team that if there is a desire to get fish in the surrogate pipeline, a study must first be planned by RM&E and then ranked through the WATER team process. If there are no fish available at the time of the study, it would be postponed until surrogates are available.

Team members were also interested in what other surrogate fish might be available now or in the future that are not already allocated. Fenton noted that there will be approximately 2,000 two-year-old steelhead available in 2022 for either the N. or S. Santiam. One-year old Chinook will also be available in 2022 for anticipated South Santiam studies. It was suggested that Fenton provide a table regarding the surrogate fish that are in the pipeline, assigned studies and any anticipated excess fish as part of a regular update at RM&E meetings.

→ **Action:** RM&E Team members will consider options for use of excess winter steelhead in the North or South Santiam this spring. Fenton will provide updates regarding the surrogate fish program and excess fish at future RM&E Team meetings.

Other Updates

- **Willamette Science Review:** Fenton reminded the group that the Willamette Science Review was cancelled this year due to Covid-19. However, the Corps plans to schedule a webinar with researchers to present results from FY20 studies in the next few months and WATER team members will be invited to attend. The Corps is coordinating internally and will share more information as plans develop. Kelly noted that one advantage of virtual meetings is the ability to have broad attendance and noted that many ODFW staff would be interested. Mike encouraged the Corps to work as quickly as possible to schedule the webinars so the information is available as needed for FY22 planning.
- **Corps:** Rachel noted that the study JPL-19-01-LOP (*Estimating survival of juvenile Chinook salmon fry in LOP reservoir*), which is a desktop modeling exercise, is in the queue and the contracting process is underway.

In other updates, Ida Royer is taking on the management of the Willamette RM&E Program.

- **CTGR:** Lawrence reported that Mike Wilson, CTGR's representative for the Managers Forum has retired and they are in the process of filling that position.

Planning for FY21 Studies and Beyond

The team engaged in a discussion regarding how best to go about planning for future studies including FY21 studies. Fenton noted that at the December 2020 meeting, the group had discussed revisiting the sub-basin plans as a tool for planning. The Corps' preference is to use the interim measures plan for planning rather than the sub-basin plans, which are dated, larger and more general. He noted that there are multiple processes at play that may impact the sub-basin plans (for example: the Willamette EIS, litigation and re-consultation with an expected BiOp in 2023) and that these sub-basin plans could be revisited after completion of the next BiOp. Fenton acknowledged WATER partners' previous requests to evaluate the effectiveness of the interim measures and noted that the Corps' priority for the next year or two will be to implement and evaluate those measures. From the Corps' perspective, the next step for evaluation is to define metrics to evaluate the measures. He noted that the RM&E team or other agencies are welcome to put forward other studies to be considered during the annual ranking process with the Steering Team.

Other WATER team members noted that the sub-basin plans are important to help identify a longer-term vision for the basins, that is broader than the interim measures and they can also help identify questions from a more comprehensive perspective in contrast to considering questions relating to discrete projects. It was noted that the RPA still needs to be implemented notwithstanding the interim measures. Further, the sub-basin plans can be informative to planning the next BiOp. Team members acknowledged, however, that the Corps' involvement is integral to developing the sub-basin plans, and it did not make sense to update the plans without the Corps' involvement.

Additionally, team members expressed an expectation that the interim measures be approached with flexibility and adapted as more is learned. Brad noted that the interim measures were developed in part, in recognition of the lack of budget support/funding for new construction. The measures will need to be evaluated to determine whether there is some benefit they are providing and whether it is the benefit that was anticipated. It was suggested that when crafting specific research questions regarding the interim measures, the team consider how the research questions might also inform the long-term measures.

WATER team members agreed that the sub-basin planning spreadsheets developed over the last few years during concept planning are still a useful planning tool and should be updated as part of the concept planning process and include the interim measures.

Review of Interim Measures for Concept Development

As next steps for concept planning, the team reviewed the interim measures plan and identified potential metrics for evaluation to be included in FY22 concepts. The group's discussion is captured in a separate Excel spreadsheet (a separate document entitled *RM&E Team Concept Planning -Interim Measures 2021*).

The group discussed the path forward for concept development. The Corps will develop concept papers based on the input provided from the review of the interim measures. The RM&E Team will review the concept papers, as they are ready, at the February and March RM&E Team meetings. Additionally, the team will begin updating the sub-basin planning spreadsheets at the February meeting, so that the updates are completed prior to the April Joint Steering/RM&E Teams meeting.

→ **Action:** The steps for revision of the subbasin planning spreadsheets are as follows:

1. DS Consulting will send out most recent sub-basin planning spreadsheets;
2. RM&E team members will review the spreadsheets and send comments to DS Consulting by February 17, 2021.

3. DS Consulting will consolidate the comments into one document and send out to the team by February 18, 2021.
4. RM&E Team members will review the consolidated document and bring input for further discussion to the February 25, 2021 RM&E team meeting.

Follow-up regarding Lebanon Dam Juvenile Monitoring Equipment

The team revisited the discussion regarding whether it might be possible to replace the Lebanon Dam Juvenile Monitoring Equipment. Fenton was looking into the possibility of including a placeholder in the removal contract language to allow for replacement, if feasible. He noted that any replacement would likely require the Corps' engineering team to design replacement in a way that avoids damage from high water events. This could take several years. [Facilitator's Note: In summary edits, Fenton noted that the Corps is still planning to remove the damaged equipment from Lebanon Dam this summer when river flows are low.

Next Steps and Closing

Emily reviewed the agenda topics for the February meeting which included: updating the sub-basin planning spreadsheets, consider options for using excess winter steelhead, and review draft concepts, if available.

With that, Emily thanked the group and adjourned the meeting.

The next RM&E meeting is February 25, 2021

This summary is provided by DS Consulting. Suggested edits are welcome and can be provided to Nancy at nancy@dsconsult.co

Document Review Tracking (Click here for [Master “tracking” Spreadsheet](#))

Document Name	Document Type	Comments Due By	Comments Provided By
DET Pedigree Analysis	Concept Paper	7/29/2020	
	Status: Ranked 8/27/20; RM&E discussed further at 9/24/20 mtg. Fish managers to provide write-up regarding information needs.		
FY19 APH-19-02-FC - Fall Creek_AFF_yr2.	Concept Paper	7/29/2020	
	Status: Ranked 8/27/20; Moving forward		
FY20 JPL-20-01 - Spatiotemporal sources of mortality in juvenile reservoir-reared Chinook salmon.	Concept Paper	7/29/2020	
	Status: Ranked 8/27/20; 2/11/21: Proposal being routed for funding.		
FY21 APH-21-01 - Rapid Genetic Sorting.	Concept Paper	7/29/2020	
	Status: Ranked 8/27/20		
FY21 JPL-XX-21 - Detroit Dam Juvenile Passage_IM#5.	Concept Paper	7/29/2020	
	Status: Ranked 8/27/20; RM&E discussed further at 9/24/20 mtg. Proposal being requested.		
FY21 WQFM-XX-21-BCL - Big Cliff TDG_IM#6.	Concept Paper	7/29/2020	
	Status: Ranked 8/27/20; RM&E discussed further at 9/24/20 mtg		
FY20 JPL-XX-SYS - Interim Passage and Delayed Mortality.	Concept Paper	7/29/2020	
	Status: Ranked 8/27/20; RM&E discussed further at 9/24/20 mtg. Revised concept provided 10/22/20.		
FY21 JPL-XX-21 - Foster Dam Juvenile Passage Spill Ops_IM#9.	Research Summary	7/29/2020	
	Status: No Ranking; RM&E to discussed further at 9/24/20 mtg		
FY21 JPL-XX-21 - Foster Dam Adult Passage Operations_TDG_IM #10.	Research Summary	7/29/2020	
	Status: No Ranking; RM&E discussed further at 9/24/20 mtg		