

**Willamette Action Team for Ecosystem Restoration (WATER)
Research, Monitoring and Evaluation (RM&E)
August 23, 2018 Meeting**

http://www.nwd-wc.usace.army.mil/tmt/documents/FPOM/2010/Willamette_Coordination/Willamette%20RME/RME.htm

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**FINAL Facilitator's Summary
Edits provided by Corps/NMFS**

ACTION	BY WHOM?	BY WHEN?
Continue conversation on Foster fish weir steelhead study. Look into potential Fall Creek stock and genetics and find out more on the take ask.	Fenton & Diana	September 27, 2018 RM&E Team meeting
Look at HTT & USGS studies to summarize relevant features as they apply to juvenile Chinook, provide input to RM&E at next meeting if concept paper needs to be developed.	Dave	September 27, 2018 RM&E Team meeting
Connect with Ann Mullan about mainstem flow targets in regard to the LOP refill operations.	Diana	September 27, 2018 RM&E Team meeting
Provide updated JPL-19-01-LOP ResSim results.	Mary Karen	September 27, 2018 RM&E Team meeting
Review USGS and ODFW reports to have informed conversation on how fish are moving and passage timing / fry distribution.	RM&E Team	September 27, 2018 RM&E Team meeting
Review ideas for information tracker and provide further input & ideas.	RM&E Team	Before September meeting
Provide updates on what FY 19 study concepts have gone to proposals and which ones are intended next.	Fenton or Rich	September 27, 2018 RM&E Team meeting

Participants on the Phone: Leslie Bach (NPCC), Diana Dishman (NMFS), Dave Jepsen (ODFW), Fenton Kahn (USACE), Kelly Reis (ODFW), Lawrence Schwabe (CTGR);

Facilitation Team: Emily Stranz and Colby Mills (DS Consulting)

Welcome, Housekeeping and Updates

Emily welcomed the group and conducted a round of introductions. The team approved the June 28 and July 26 meeting summaries, pending the need to correct spelling of Ann Mullan's name.

The group provided updates on action items from previous meetings:

Fenton Kahn (USACE) updated the team on a discussion between NMFS, ODFW & the Corps regarding the use of juvenile summer steelhead for the Foster fish weir study in 2019. In the past, the Corps has used winter steelhead and Chinook from the OSU surrogate lab, however, due to low winter adult steelhead return rates over the past few years, OSU hasn't been able to collect adults to spawn for research, resulting in a lack of juvenile winter steelhead to use for the Foster fish weir study next year. Knowing this, the Corps coordinated with NMFS and ODFW to have the PNNL researchers release 600 summer steelhead with 1,100 winter steelhead to determine out-migration similarities. The study showed

that similar to winter steelhead, only 25-30% of the summer steelhead moved out of the reservoir. There is concern about using summer steelhead in the Foster reservoir because of its wild fish sanctuary status and risk of the majority of the fish residualizing.

Fenton previously brought the issue to RM&E team, which resulted in the discussion with the Corps, NMFS and ODFW and agreement to not move forward with using summer steelhead for the study, and instead, postponing the steelhead test until there are juvenile winter steelhead available. The Corps, NMFS, and ODFW, agreed to ask the OSU surrogate lab how many wild fish would be needed to provide sufficient steelhead eggs for the 2021 study (Fenton reported that it would take two pairs of adults - 2 females and 2 males). NMFS could provide a special use permit for the take. ODFW shared concern over a lack of genetic diversity and fitness and proposed a "half squeeze" technique to collect sperm and eggs, without removing the fish completely out of the river system. Fenton will determine how many fish would need to be squeezed and report back to the RM&E Team.

The group agreed that the Chinook study will continue in FY 19, but the steelhead test will wait to use wild steelhead stock in 2021. Kelly Reis (ODFW) noted a request that the Corps' does not close the RM&E phase on the weir until the study is completed through 2021. Lawrence Schwabe (CTGR) asked the group about the potential for using winter steelhead from Fall Creek for the study. Fenton answered with a concern of out-migration behavior patterns and the genetics of the Fall Creek stock. The two populations are being managed separately, but it could be a fallback plan with more information; Fenton and Diana said that they would look into this option further.

- **ACTION:** The conversation will continue moving forward on the Foster fish weir steelhead study. Diana and Fenton will look into potential Fall Creek stock and the genetics, find out more on "half squeeze" technique needs, and provide an update to RM&E Team.

Updates on Dexter Data Gap Discussions and Next Steps

Rich Piaskowski (USACE) reported via email that the "SWIFT" working group will be further analyzing flow and habitat conditions downstream; they met August 14th to outline the analysis approach. Results will be available in fall 2019 and will inform questions about habitat conditions for juvenile Chinook below DEX. Kelly relayed to the group that Jeff Ziller (ODFW) advocated for conducting a survival study for fry released into the Middle Fork Willamette below Dexter prior to developing a downstream migrant strategy for spring Chinook from above Lookout Point Dam. It is his understanding that this information does not currently exist.

Dave Jepsen (ODFW) clarified that there is not a specific monitoring effort to determine if the fry are surviving in the reach below Dexter to the confluence of the Willamette. There are current and pending HTT & USGS studies, but none are specific to juvenile Chinook. Dave noted that with thermal stratification Chinook are found in cooler water, but the Middle Fork Willamette in summer is hotter than the juvenile Chinook can tolerate. The issue is that the physical habitat is there, but high water temperatures in the summer limit availability of that habitat in the mainstem for juvenile Chinook. Additionally, more information on Chinook fry survival is needed to tell where fish could be released and under what conditions.

There are a number of studies that may help inform this conversation and the decision of whether more information is needed. Dave agreed to review the studies and provide a summary of relevant information on juvenile Chinook, as well as provide input on if a concept needs to be developed.

- **ACTION:** Dave will look at USGS studies and summarize relevant features of those studies as they apply to juvenile Chinook, he will provide input to RM&E at next meeting if concept paper needs to be developed.

LOP Reservoir Operations

JPL-19-02-LOP: (*evaluation of delaying refill and spring surface spill operations at LOP for improving juvenile spring Chinook passage*). The group agreed that the conversation should continue at the RM&E level before heading to Steering Team. Diana Dishman (NMFS) reported on the continuing conversation internally at NMFS regarding mainstem flow targets. She noted that more information is needed to determine the level of risk that delaying refill in spring could have on downstream targets for the rest of the year. Diana is working to get an idea of how many times an “abundant” year was predicted, but ended up being a “deficit” year, as a way to help characterize the risk. There was consensus from the group on better characterizing the risks and a more complete update is needed for the next meeting.

It was also noted that Mary Karen Scullion (USACE) will provide updated JPL-19-01-LOP ResSim results at the September meeting.

- **ACTION:** Diana will connect with Anne Mullan about in-stream flows and bring input back to the conversation at the next RM&E meeting.
- **ACTION:** RM&E Team members will look at the USGS and ODFW reports, to allow for an informed conversation on how fish are moving and passage timing / fry distribution for next meeting.

Information Tracking Ideas

Diana shared initial ideas that she and Rachel Neuenhoff (USACE) put together on an information spreadsheet for issue tracking. She asked for feedback and other ideas that the RM&E team might have for better usability and noted that she will discuss with Rachel how to better flesh out the meta data.

- **ACTION:** RM&E Team members will look at updates on Diana and Rachel’s information tracker and provide input before the next meeting if possible. Diana will bring an updated version for further input at the next meeting.

FY 19 Concepts

Emily summarized that the Steering Team had agreed to move almost all concepts into proposals, with the exception of: JPL-18-02-SYS (*Willamette Project Dam Passage Latent Mortality*) and APH-19-04 (*Evaluate interim management strategies for adult UWR Chinook Salmon at Big Cliff and Detroit dams: optimizing above-dam spawner distribution*). The Corps noted a need for more conversation before proposals are solicited for these concepts. Also, it was noted that a proposal is not necessary for FMWQ-18-01 (*Evaluation of habitat benefits associated with USACE revetment modification, including potential cold-water refuge enhancement*) as the Steering Team has identified an alternate path forward. Fenton added that the Corps will move forward with soliciting proposals on all concepts that the Steering team agreed to, and will keep the RM&E Team in the loop to provide further input.

- **ACTION:** Fenton or Rich will bring an update to the next meeting detailing what concepts have gone to proposals and which ones are intended next.

Emily thanked the group and adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting: The RM&E Team will meet on September 27, 2018 from 9am – 1pm.

This summary is respectfully submitted by DS Consulting. Suggested edits are welcome and can be sent to colby@dconsult.co.