

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

September 26, 2019 Meeting

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

**FINAL Facilitator’s Summary**

[Edits by Corps, BPA]

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>BY WHOM?</b>	<b>BY WHEN?</b>
Follow-up with RM&E Team members regarding approval of meeting summaries.	DS Consulting	ASAP
Follow-up with Brad regarding FY20 study prioritization for 10/1/19 Steering Team meeting.	Fenton	ASAP
Send initial drafts of Manager’s Forum Update materials to DS Consulting by COB October 7.	Fenton, Anne, Rachel	10/7/19
Distribute initial drafts of Update materials to the RM&E Team.	DS Consulting	10/7/19
Provide input regarding Update materials to the RM&E Team/DS Consulting.	RM&E Team members	10/9/19
Compile final draft and distribute to Managers	DS Consulting	10/11/19

**Participants (in person or on the phone):** Eric Andersen (BPA), Leslie Bach (NPCC), Dave Jepsen (ODFW), Fenton Kahn (Corps), Mike Hudson (USFWS), Anne Mullan (NMFS), Dan Spear (BPA), Kelly Reis (ODFW);

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

**Welcome and Housekeeping**

Emily welcomed the group and conducted a round of introductions. Eric Anderson (BPA) introduced himself to the group. Eric previously worked with the South Santiam Watershed Council and the Nature Conservancy. The group approved 8/22/19 RM&E Team Conference Call summary and the 8/6 Joint RM&E/Steering Team meeting.

→ **Action:** DS Consulting will circle back to agency representatives that were not in attendance to confirm approval of the summaries.

**Team Updates**

**Update on the Foster fish weir and plans for fish passage this fall:** Fenton shared that the PDT is still working on design improvements and the Corps has removed the weir (it was not operated this year). The Corp has proposed to implement the temporary spill operation again (previously implemented last spring), from 10/15/19 through 12/15/19, to coincide with the outmigration of sub-yearling Chinook. During the operation, the regular spillbay will be operated from 7 PM to 7 AM (most fish are expected to pass during the night). There will be limited generation to provide electricity for station service; Fenton noted that past studies have indicated that operating the turbines at low generation does not attract fish. During the day, there will be full generation and no spill (except as necessary during rain events to spill excess water).

**Update on FY20 Budget and Concepts:** Fenton noted that Congress has not passed an FY20 Budget to-date. It is expected that there will be a continuing resolution with limited funds to keep the government running until a budget is approved. The Corps has not requested FY20 proposals due to the uncertainty

regarding funding. Fenton noted that there are no studies that have pressing field work for this fall. If the Corps receives any updated funding information prior to the October RM&E meeting, Fenton will share that with the team. Emily noted that Brad Eppard committed to providing a prioritized list of FY 20 studies for the October 1 2019 Steering Team meeting. Fenton will follow-up with Brad regarding study prioritization.

FY19 Studies that have been funded or are expected to be funded include the High Head Bypass study, the Foster outplanting assessment, and the genetic pedigree study as well as the Middle Fork workshops. Fenton noted that with regard to the HH Bypass study, the Corps checked in with Amy Reed, ODFW Chief Pathologist, regarding whether there were any concerns regarding fish with copepods being handled in the South Santiam system. Amy confirmed that there were no concerns as copepods are already in the system.

→ **Action:** Fenton will follow-up with Brad to determine what information can be provided to the Steering Team regarding study prioritization.

### *Team Updates*

- **ODFW:** Kelly reported there have been no pinnipeds observed at Willamette Falls so far this season.
- **USFWS:** Mike reported that the contract for bull-trout/Oregon chum monitoring by ODFW is expected to be awarded.
- **BPA:** Eric reported that the Habitat Group Tech Team recently selected habitat projects for funding by BPA, OWEB and Meyer Trust.
- **NMFS:** Anne reported that fall Chinook are at 50% of the 10-year average at Willamette Falls and the South Santiam is seeing historic lows. The NORs however, seem to be slightly up compared to 2018.

### **Discussion and Next Steps for FY19 Middle Fork Check-in**

RM&E Team members discussed the 9/24 Middle Fork Structured Decision Making Workshop and next steps for the FY19 Middle Fork Check-in. The workshop included an initial discussion of short and long-term objectives to set the stage for future workshops. Rachel is compiling a summary of the meeting and will be seeking input from attendees on the report ahead of the October 18, 2019 Managers Forum.

The team discussed what was needed to prepare for the FY19 Middle Fork Check-in. Team members noted that the FY19 Check-in had been deferred until October to allow time for the RM&E team to participate in the Middle Fork workshops. Further, the team was going to use the workshops to work through some of the questions needing to be answered for the FY19 Check-in. However, due to delays in getting the contract awarded, the first workshop did not take place until this week. As a result, RM&E Team members felt that it was premature to conduct the FY19 Check-in at the October 18 Managers Forum. Instead, the RM&E team suggested providing an update that focuses on the following questions:

1. What information do we have? (I.e. provide a list of studies with one-sentence description of how the study informs decision making.)
2. What have we learned? (I.e. provide a list of key lessons learned thus far, as well as a list of potential data gaps; also include the initial Middle Fork workshop summary.)
3. What's next? (Next steps regarding additional Middle Fork workshops, refinement of data gaps, additional studies needed, schedule for Middle Fork Check-In.)

The team also noted two policy questions for the Steering Team to consider:

1. How does the delay regarding the Check-in affect the 2021 decision?
2. What happens if funding does not come through?

As part of this discussion, the team identified the following list of information that is available concerning the Middle Fork:

- Downstream passage data (migration, behavior, timing, route of passage, size, fry survival, copepods, predation (includes studies by ODFW/PNNL/USGS));
- Adult upstream – DEX outplanting, trap operations, counts ;
- HOR Collection Feasibility Report;
- Initial Middle Fork Workshop summary;
- Pre-spawn mortality work - (Check-in on Jim Peterson's (OSU) work);
- Recruits per spawner – (Check with Greg Taylor).

The team also noted other system information that could help inform decisions regarding the Middle Fork that could be provided to the Managers for situational awareness including:

- Fall Creek draw down
- Fall Creek adult facility
- Middle Fork restoration update: specifically, juvenile rearing improvements downstream of DEX.
- USGS/SWIFT work regarding flow.

→ **Action and Next Steps:** Team members agreed to take the following steps to prepare the update for the Managers Forum:

1. What information do we have? Fenton will create an initial draft of list of studies;
2. What have we learned? Anne will do an initial draft of what has been learned including potential data gaps. Rachel will draft a summary of the Middle Fork workshop.
3. What's next? Fenton will take lead on compiling information regarding what's next.
4. Team members will provide these initial drafts to DS Consulting by COB October 7; DS Consulting will distribute the drafts to the RM&E Team.
5. Team members will provide input on the drafts to the RM&E Team/DS Consulting by COB October 9, 2019. DS Consulting will help to compile final draft to be distributed to Managers by October 11, 2019.

### **Next Steps and Closing**

The group discussed agenda items for the October 24, 2019 meeting, which will include an update on budget/FY20 concepts (if any). The group also noted that the November meeting falls on Thanksgiving and the December meeting is on December 26 and suggested that these be rescheduled, possibly to the third Thursday.

→ **Action:** Nancy will work with the RM&E Team to reschedule the dates for the November and December team meetings.

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

*This summary is respectfully submitted by the DS Consulting Facilitation Team; suggested edits are welcome and can be sent to Nancy Pionk (nancy@dsconsult.co).*