

RM&E Team Meeting
March 7, 2023
Meeting Summary

[Edits provided by Corps, ODFW]

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

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

Participants - Leslie Bach (NPCC), Amy Gibbons (Corps), Fenton Khan (Corps), Christine Peterson (BPA), Kelly Reis (ODFW), Lawrence Schwabe (CTGR), David Trachtenbarg (Corps), Jeff Ziller (ODFW).

2/7/23 Meeting Summary - The RM&E Team approved the February 7, 2023, meeting summary with no additional edits.

Team Member Updates

- **NPCC:** Leslie noted that the Independent Scientific Advisory Board (ISAB) has completed its [review](#) of the models used by the Action Agencies to assess potential responses to the Willamette EIS Alternatives. NPCC's [Strategy Performance Indicators](#) for the Fish and Wildlife program are now available on the NPCC website. NPCC worked over the last two years to compile multiple regional data sources, including existing data from the Fish Passage Center, DART, the Corps and the Tribes. Leslie plans to retire in 2023, however she will continue to participate in the WATER RM&E Team for the near future.
- There were no reports from **BPA, CTGR or ODFW**. The **Corps** updates are below.

Study Updates - Fenton noted that the Foster night-time spill operation is ongoing and PNNL has released active -tagged fish in connection with the study. Concerning the Green Peter study, Fenton noted that Green Peter is behind the refill schedule. According to the rule curve, Green Peter reservoir should be filled to the spillway crest by March 1; however, currently, it is more than 10 feet below the spillway crest. The Corps is expecting that the study will be implemented when the reservoir is a few feet above spillway crest which is anticipated in late March.

Screwtrapping Update - Fenton noted that a new RM&E contract was recently awarded to Cramer Fish Sciences (Cramer), which was the initial screwtrapping contractor for the Willamette screwtrapping sites in 2021. Cramer is now working on sampling permits for their work, which will take up to two months. The current contractor, EAS will continue to work the currently deployed screwtraps and complete its contract in the fall; there will be no stoppage of screwtrapping between the two contractors. Additionally, EAS will be a subcontractor to Cramer for some of the screwtrapping work.

David Trachtenbarg (Corps) provided an overview of where the screwtraps will be installed and duration of operations (see table below). He noted that there will be 15 sites with 20 screwtraps. Additionally, the Corps is working with U.S. BLM to get access and permits in place for a screwtrap at the Quartzville Creek site above Green Peter Dam (which has a Wild and Scenic River designation). Cramer will be conducting reservoir distribution studies at Lookout Point and Green Peter; these will begin as soon as permits and staff are in place and weekly sampling will occur through November, and then February through November next year. Cramer will also be doing bulk marking and releases of juvenile Chinook in all the sub-basins, elastomer tagging of fry, and PIT-tagging sub-yearlings and yearlings throughout the course of the year. The Corps will continue to provide biweekly update reports to WATER partners. The locations and timing of operations are outlined in the following table:

| Screwtrap Location | Timing of Operations |
|---|--|
| North Santiam | |
| Above Detroit (Breitenbush and North Santiam at same sites previously used by ODFW) | February to November (or as soon as screwtraps can be installed this year) |
| Below Big Cliff | This trap will continue to operate year-round |
| South Santiam | |
| Below Green Peter – 1 trap | |
| Above Foster – 1 trap | February to November |
| Above Green Peter - Middle Santiam and Quartzville | Will be installed as soon as permits/access in place. Middle Santiam will be prioritized first as it is a novel site for outplanting and screwtrap is expected to be operating by mid-to-late April through November. Next year, sampling will occur in February - November. Quartzville Creek sampling is dependent on resolving permit and access issues with BLM. |
| McKenzie | |
| Below Cougar - Continue to have 3 Traps in the tailrace | Year-round |
| Above Cougar | February to November |
| Middle Fork | |
| Below Dexter | Year-round through 2024 |
| Below Lookout Point | Going to year-round through 2024 |
| Above Lookout Point (below the North Fork/Middle Fork) | Year round through 2024 |
| Below Hills Creek (two traps) | 15 September 2022– June 2023; and 15 September 2023 – 30 June 2024 fall/spring) |
| Above Hills Creek (prior ODFW site) | Will be installed once new screwtrap is delivered; target of 01 February to 30 June |

Surrogate Program Updates - Fenton noted that the Surrogate Program continues to move along; there are no changes from the last report.

Update on FY23 Concept Paper - “Capture efficiency of spring Chinook fry in the North Santiam River”

Kelly provided a report from Luke on this study, as he was not able to attend the meeting. She noted that Luke was planning to release the fish in two groups today, March 7, 2023, at Mongold State Park and Mehama Boat Ramp. Luke coordinated with the EAS crew below Big Cliff so they are aware of the fish in case they show up in the traps. The screwtrap at Stayton was expected to be back online on March 6. The plan is to monitor daily catch of fry marked with Bismark brown dye at both sites for two weeks. Preliminary data should be available for the April RM&E Team meeting.

Fenton noted that a question raised at the February meeting was whether these fish would be adipose fin clipped, which is a requirement by ODFW for all fish, including fry, released by the Corps screw trap contractor for trap efficiency testing. Kelly explained that the ODFW released fish were 30-40 millimeters in length and it was anticipated that clipping would result in high mortality and require significant staff resources due to the number of fish being released. Fenton asked for ODFW to reconsider whether the Corps contractor needs to clip the fry it will be releasing in April for trap efficiency testing. David noted that the Corps contractor is planning on releasing 15,000 fry in North Santiam in mid-April; the current plan is to clip adipose-fins and tag with visible implant

elastomer (VIE) tags, unless ODFW changes the requirement regarding fin clipping for these fish. The Corps has been VIE-marking run-of-river fish only. He noted that the fry will be larger due to timing of contracting and permitting; however, next year they will likely be smaller as an earlier release is targeted (the North Santiam study is more focused on the timing of the releases than the size of fish).

Kelly thought that it is likely that survival from fin clipping would increase as the fish get larger. Jeff noted that when ODFW releases unfed fry from the STEP Classroom Incubator Program, it does not clip the tiny fry; this is permitted in correspondence from NMFS. In a previous project on the Deschutes River, ODFW has adipose fin clipped juvenile Chinook salmon in the 40-80 millimeter range and has observed that the fish are better able to withstand the clipping as they get larger (in the 45-50 mm range). Jeff noted that a hybrid approach to marking that considers the size of the fry might be appropriate. Fenton noted that the contractor is currently working to submit the permits for this year (which are issued on an annual basis), and guidance from ODFW on fin-clipping requirements would be helpful.

→ **ACTION:** As next steps, Kelly and Jeff will discuss requirements for adipose fin clipping of fry internally within ODFW. David will let ODFW know what size the fry will be at the time of release in April. Kelly will follow-up with Fenton and David.

The Corps also requested that ODFW coordinate directly with David and Fenton regarding any requests or data needed from EAS, the screwtrap contractor, as EAS is contractually- obligated to the Corps. The Corps will also inform the contractor to direct any requests back to the Corps. While field communications can be helpful, it is important that the Corps is kept in the loop regarding any requests of their contractor. Emily encouraged WATER partners to communicate directly with each other about concerns they may have.

Cougar Dam PIT Antenna Status and Availability of Data - David inquired about the status and availability of data from the new PIT antenna system installed by ODFW at Cougar Dam tailrace. Jeff noted that the system does not have a power supply to allow data to be downloaded and sent to PTAGIS. ODFW is working with local Corps staff to try to get a power source for the system. In the interim, the data must be manually downloaded. The long-term intent is that the data will be uploaded to PTAGIS. The Corps can coordinate with Luke and Derek Faber to request the data that has not yet been uploaded to PTAGIS.

PIT Tag Infrastructure Needs at Willamette Falls – Check-in on Letter of Support/Coordination Needs - Christine understood that Anne had been in contact with Brady Allen who is the POC regarding PIT Tag contracts for the Columbia and Snake Rivers; however, Brady indicated that the Willamette is not within those contract's purview, as the Willamette is the Corps' research responsibility. Christine will follow-up with Brady to find out who might be the appropriate POC to speak with regarding the Willamette. As neither Anne nor Luke was able to attend today's meeting, this topic will be carried forward to the April meeting.

Reminder: The Willamette Fisheries Science Review will take place in-person on April 5 and 6 at Oregon State University; an option to participate via WebEx will also be available.

The next RM&E Team meeting is on April 4, 2023, 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