

RM&E Team Meeting
September 14, 2023
Meeting Summary
[Edits provided by Corps, ODFW]

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

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

Participants - *Fenton Khan (Corps), Anne Mullan (NOAA), Jim Myers (NOAA), Christine Peterson (BPA), Kelly Reis (ODFW), Lawrence Schwabe (CTGR).*

8/1/23 Meeting Summary - The RM&E Team approved the August 1, 2023 meeting summary with no additional edits.

Study and Surrogate Program Updates – Fenton noted that the researchers are preparing for Fall Injunction studies which will include active tag studies at Lookout Point and Green Peter and bulk marking and releasing thousands of fish. The surrogate fish for the fall Green Peter deep drawdown study, the Foster fall spill operation, and Lookout Point deep drawdown study, remain healthy. The Green Peter and Lookout Point deep drawdown studies will evaluate sub-yearling Chinook salmon passage and survival through the regulating outlet. The Foster spill operation will evaluate the nighttime spill operation with sub-yearling Chinook salmon and 1.5-year-old steelhead passage and survival.

USGS released the first group of fish last week for the Lookout Point study. PNNL will release the first group of fish (sub-yearling Chinook salmon and 1.5-year-old steelhead) for the Foster study on October 1. The Corps is still drafting the Green Peter pool and the elevation is expected to reach the injunction required elevation by November 15. PNNL will release the first group of study fish before November 15 to track the fish response to the deep drawdown. There will be 3 more release groups during the operation.

Screwtrapping Updates: Fenton noted that screwtrapping and bulk marking fish releases are ongoing. The contractor will be recapturing fish with gill nets in the Green Peter and Lookout Point reservoirs to assess reservoir distribution. Fenton noted that there is a concern that the nets may catch active tagged fish, and those captured fish would need to be removed from the active tag study's survival estimates. The Corps will be monitoring whether the nets are capturing active tag fish and if needed they may hold off netting until the active tagged fish have passed. Fenton will invite David Trachtenbarg (Corps study lead for the RST and bulk marking efforts) to the October meeting to provide a more detailed update on screwtrapping and bulkmarking efforts.

Update on Lebanon PIT Detection System Repair: Fenton updated the group on the status of repairs to the Lebanon Dam Pit Detection system which was damaged earlier this year due to high river flows and debris. The Corps acknowledged the efforts of Salina Hart, from the Corps Water Management Team, NMFS and ODFW for their support to lower river flows to 1,100 cfs to allow the contractor to repair the antennas. The contractor also added power to the North side

of the dam and put in deflectors on top of the conduits to prevent damage from debris. The repairs are expected to be completed by the end of September after which time the flows will slowly ramp back. *[Facilitator's Note: In summary edits, Fenton noted that the antenna repair work was completed on September 22 and all antennas are functional. Corps Water Management team increased the river flows back to 1500 cfs.]*

PIT Tag Infrastructure Needs at Willamette Falls: RM&E Team members continued their discussion regarding PIT Tag infrastructure needs at Willamette Falls and reviewed the discussion from the 8-29-23 subgroup meeting (see *8-29-23 WATER RME Team__Willamette Falls Pit Tag Monitoring Subgroup Meeting Summary*, a separate document). RM&E members discussed the importance of prioritizing improvement of the PIT Tag infrastructure at Willamette Falls in the menu of options that will be developed moving forward, as the Falls are an optimal location and improvement there may be an easier solution that could be addressed more quickly than other options. It was noted that there is some urgency to get the juvenile monitoring in place and the easiest path forward may be a partnership with PGE, however, if that is not feasible, it is helpful to have a menu of other options.

The next steps identified by the subgroup were reported out and include:

1. NOAA, ODFW, and Grand Ronde representatives will visit the Falls to explore monitoring options.
2. Luke and Anne will revise the *History and Status* document prepared by Luke to include rationale and description of need for the infrastructure improvements.
3. The RM&E Team will develop a menu of juvenile and adult passage monitoring options to review with the Steering Team.

Team Member Updates

- **NOAA:** Anne noted that NOAA is checking in with the Corps to install WiFi at the Cougar Powerhouse so that PIT Tag data can be uploaded into PTAGIS.
- **ODFW:** Kelly noted that bull trout crews are working at the Carmen Smith spawning channel at the base of Trail Bridge Dam. Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB) has installed a temporary fish collection facility there to be able to move bull trout and spring Chinook up above the dam. The temporary trap doesn't work; however, staff also angled and caught 15 bull trout in the last few weeks which were moved above the dam. This represents half of all the fish that were caught last year. EWEB's temporary trap will need to be adjusted so it collects fish next season. Anne shared an update from Jeff Ziller of fish sorted at the Leaburg Fish Facility: 1,601 NOR, 23 HOR, and 22 Unknown. Anne noted that this is only the 2nd year NOR fish were placed above Detroit Dam, with 249 NOR above Detroit Dam and 213 NOR below Big Cliff Dam. Jim noted that it might be of interest to sub-sample some of the fall run fish in the Willamette Falls count (there are over 1,000 unmarked fish) and determine whether some of those unmarked fish are spring run fish.
- There were no updates from BPA or CTGR.

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

The next RM&E Team meeting is on October 3, 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