



## Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island HCP Tributary Committees Notes 23 May 2018

---

**Members Present:** Chris Fisher (Colville Tribes), Tom Kahler (Douglas PUD), Kate Terrell (USFWS), Catherine Willard (Chelan PUD), Justin Yeager (NOAA Fisheries), and Tracy Hillman (Committees Chair).

**Members Absent:** Lee Carlson (Yakama Nation) and Jeremy Cram (WDFW).<sup>1</sup>

**Others Present:** Becky Gallaher (Tributary Project Coordinator). Denny Rohr (PRCC Habitat Subcommittee Facilitator) and Dave Duvall (Grant PUD) joined the meeting for the Icicle-Peshastin Irrigation District and City of Leavenworth Fish Screens discussion.

---

The Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island Hydroelectric Projects Habitat Conservation Plans Tributary Committees met at Grant PUD in Wenatchee, Washington, on Wednesday, 23 May 2018 from 8:30 am to 1:40 pm.

### I. Review and Adopt Agenda

Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the meeting and the Committees adopted the proposed agenda.

### II. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

The Committees reviewed and approved the 6 March 2018 meeting notes.

### III. Monthly Update on Ongoing Projects

Becky Gallaher gave an update on funded projects. Most are progressing well or had no salient activity in the past month.

- Clear Creek Fish Passage and Instream Flow Project – The sponsor (Trout Unlimited; TU) reported that construction with lighter equipment near the well and treatment building is scheduled to begin the week of 14 May. Heavy equipment will be brought in a few weeks later after the seasonal weight restrictions on Chiwawa Loop Road are lifted.
- Barkley Irrigation – Under Pressure Project – The sponsor (TU) has been working on final design review and final modifications to the plans. They also have been working on securing an easement near the diversion. The easement should be secured by mid-May.
- Icicle Boulder Field Project – The sponsor (TU) continues working on permits for both passage and waterline replacement. They expect to submit permits in May. Design is complete on the boulder field. They are close to finishing the design on the City of Leavenworth waterline.

---

<sup>1</sup> Both Lee and Jeremy provided their votes on decision items following the meeting.

- Peshastin Creek RM 10.5 PIT-Tag Detection Site Project – By 31 December 2018, the sponsor (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; WDFW) will submit the third-year monitoring report on work conducted in 2018.
- Permitting Nutrient Enhancement Project – The sponsor (Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group; CCFEG) is currently working on issues raised by the USFWS (see Information Updates below).
- Burns-Garrity Design Project – The sponsor (CCFEG) reported the contractor has completed the 30% design. The contractor and Bureau of Reclamation collected topographic data on the relic channel, which is being proposed as a perennial side channel.
- Beaver Fever Project – The sponsor (TU) reported that there is no new activity on this project.
- Wenatchee Sleepy Hollow Floodplain Acquisition Project – The sponsor (Chelan-Douglas Land Trust; CDLT) did not provide an update this month. However, they did request a time extension on the project (see Time Extensions below).
- M2 Mid-Sugar Acquisition Project – The sponsor (Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation; MSRF) completed their review of the appraisal. The Purchase and Sale Agreement was delivered to the landowner for review.
- Methow Basin Barrier Diversion Assessment Project – The sponsor (CCFEG) reported they have been coordinating with the Forest Service to gather data on roads and other known barriers. They will also coordinate with other agencies who may have information that can be used to inform survey logistics.
- Derby Creek Fish Passage Project – The sponsor (CCFEG) did not provide an update on this project.

#### IV. Time Extensions

##### Wenatchee Sleepy Hollow Floodplain Acquisition Project

The Rock Island Tributary Committee received a time extension request from CDLT on the Wenatchee Sleepy Hollow Floodplain Acquisition Project. The sponsor asked the Committee to extend the completion date from 31 December 2017 to 30 June 2019. The extension is needed because of a late start due to the failure by the State legislatures to pass the capital budget in early 2018 (which was needed for the SRFB cost share). After review and discussion, *the Rock Island Tributary Committee agreed to extend the contract to 30 June 2019.*

##### Burns-Garrity Restoration Design Project

The Rocky Reach Tributary Committee received a time extension request from CCFEG on the Burns-Garrity Restoration Design Project. Because a change in landownership delayed the project five months, CCFEG asked to extend the completion date from 1 May 2018 to 1 December 2018. After review and discussion, *the Rocky Reach Tributary Committee agreed to extend the contract to 1 December 2018.*

#### V. General Salmon Habitat Program Draft Proposals

The Committees received 19 General Salmon Habitat Program draft proposals. They dismissed one draft proposal because it addressed bull trout, which is not a Plan Species. The Committees reviewed each draft proposal and selected those they believe warranted a final proposal. Projects the Committees dismissed were either inconsistent with the intent of the Tributary Fund, did not have strong technical merit, or had low benefits per cost (not cost effective). The Committees assigned draft proposals to one of two categories: Fundable and Not Fundable. It is important to note that these are ratings of draft proposals and

do not reflect ratings of final proposals. The Committees directed Tracy Hillman to notify sponsors with appropriate projects to submit a final proposal, with a discussion of the questions/comments identified for each draft proposal listed below. Tracy will also notify sponsors with projects that have no chance or a low likelihood of receiving funding from the Tributary Committees.

**Monitor Side Channel Design and Construction Project (Fundable)**

The Committees recommend that the project sponsor (Chelan County Natural Resources Department) address the following comments/suggestions as they develop the full proposal:

- Identify how the log jams will be anchored to the channel.
- Include a safety plan for recreational river users (boaters, rafters, swimmers, etc.).
- Describe how the pools will be maintained over time.
- Describe why riparian vegetation planting is critical to the success of this project.

**Chumstick Creek Fish Passage Barrier Replacement – Motteler Road Project (Not Fundable)**

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by Chelan County Natural Resources Department, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reasons:

- The Committees believe the project will provide little biological benefit given the structure is 67% passable.
- It is also unclear if the culvert is at risk of failure due to watershed processes.
- As a final suggestion, the Committees recommend that Chelan County vacate the road.

**Wenatchee EDT Model Development Project (Not Fundable)**

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by Chelan County Natural Resources Department, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reasons:

- The Committees want to see how well the tool works in the Methow before implementing it in the Wenatchee.
- They also question who will fund the maintenance of the model, will the model be available publicly, and what will this tool provide that the current Wenatchee life-cycle model does not?

**Lower Entiat Tributaries – Aquatic Habitat Assessments Project (Fundable)**

The Committees recommend that the project sponsor (Cascadia Conservation District) address the following comments/suggestions as they develop the full proposal:

- Describe what information is currently available from the Forest Service (or other entities) and what additional information will be collected by the Forest Service as part of their pre-NEPA work.
- Identify what information the proposed assessment will provide that is not already covered under #1 above.
- Indicate whether the assessment covers both public and private lands or only public lands.
- Based on existing information, describe possible opportunities for habitat enhancement in the two streams. The Committees understand that important factors limiting fish production have largely been addressed in the two streams.

**Sand Creek Fish Passage Improvement Project (Not Fundable)**

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by Chelan County Natural Resources Department, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reason:

- This project is a low priority for the Committees and they believe it will have low benefit for Plan Species.

**Mill Creek Fish Passage Project (Fundable)**

The Committees recommend that the project sponsor (Chelan County Natural Resources Department) address the following comments/suggestions as they develop the full proposal:

- Although the project should have biological benefit, it is currently not cost effective. After discussing fish passage projects similar to this one with a contractor, the Committees believe the project can be completed for less than \$300,000. The sponsor needs to find ways to reduce the total budget to \$300,000 or less.
- The Committees question whether a temporary bridge is necessary. It may be less expensive to place a firetruck on site and provide hotel rooms for residents for a couple of days.

**Entiat Basin Fish Passage and Screening Assessment Project (Fundable)**

The Committees recommend that the project sponsor (Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group) address the following comments/suggestions as they develop the full proposal:

- Given the limited number of streams and possible barriers in the anadromous portion of the Entiat (Plan Species Account Funds can only be used in anadromous zones), the cost of the project seems too high. The sponsor needs to evaluate ways to reduce the cost of the project.
- Identify any known barriers that do not need to be evaluated. The Committees suggest the sponsor discuss this with local experts (e.g., Phil Archibald).
- Describe what is included in the physical habitat surveys.

**Twisp River Floodplain Left Bank Spring-fed Alcove Restoration Project (Fundable)**

The Committees recommend that the project sponsor (Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation) address the following comment/suggestion as they develop the full proposal:

- Consider replacing the undersized culvert with a ford.

**Burns-Garrity Perennial Side-Channel Project (Fundable)**

The Committees recommend that the project sponsor (Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group) address the following comments/suggestions as they develop the full proposal:

- The Committees question whether there is enough water in the Chewuch River during low flows to support perennial side channels on both sides of the river. The Committees do not want to dewater existing perennial side channels.
- Given #1, the sponsor should consider developing a seasonal channel that is active at 1.5-2.0-year flow events.
- The project is too expensive. The sponsor needs to find ways to reduce the cost.

**Methow Watershed Riparian Stewardship Program II Project (Not Fundable)**

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reason:

- The Committees believe the project has limited or questionable biological benefit at the scale of the proposed action and therefore it is not cost effective.

**Methow Beaver Project – Beaver and Anadromy Project (Not Fundable)**

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reasons:

- The Committees believe the project is too expensive and the Plan Species Account Funds would go primarily to fund program capacity<sup>2</sup>, without much certainty regarding biological benefit.
- In addition, it is unclear how long the project will last.

**Peshastin Creek Barrier Removal Project (Not Fundable)**

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by Chelan County Natural Resources Department, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reason:

- Given that fish can pass through the culvert at most flows, the Committees believe the project will have little biological benefit to Plan Species.

**Cottonwood Flats Floodplain Restoration Entiat River (RM 17.65) Project (Fundable)**

The Committees recommend that the project sponsor (Chelan County Natural Resources Department) submit a full proposal. The Committees had no comments on this project.

**Methow River Watershed LiDAR Acquisition Project (Fundable)**

The Committees recommend that the project sponsor (Trout Unlimited) address the following comments/suggestions as they develop the full proposal:

- Explain why the Department of Natural Resources is not funding the entire project.
- Remove the wilderness area from the assessment.
- Consider evaluating only high priority watersheds identified in the Regional Technical Team Biological Strategy.
- The sponsor should ask for no more than \$30,000 from the Committees. In addition, the sponsor needs to review the detailed budget carefully. There appear to be errors in the budget.

**Upper Methow Goat Creek Acquisition Project (Not Fundable)**

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by the Methow Conservancy, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reason:

- The Committees are not interested in funding a conservation easement. Rather, they would be interested in funding a fee simple acquisition.

**Merritt Oxbow Design Project (Not Fundable)**

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reasons:

- The Committees believe the side channel should remain a high-flow channel.

---

<sup>2</sup> Here, the Committees use “capacity” to mean that they would not fund salaries for a team of people knowing that the project will not necessarily result in \$500,000 worth of biological benefit. Since 2014, the Committees have elected to fund tangible components of similar projects, such as installing BDAs. They are not interested in funding the existence of beaver restoration programs.

- The Committees are concerned that a perennial channel will become disconnected in the near future (questionable longevity) and they wonder how a perennial channel will be maintained over time.
- The Committees question whether the transmission towers will be an issue.
- Finally, the sponsor needs to make sure all landowners are on board with the project (need signed landowner agreements).

**Goodwin Side Channel Design Project (Not Fundable)**

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reasons:

- The Committees would like to see the channel remain as a high-flow channel. Because this channel is functioning as a high-quality, high-flow side channel, transforming it into a perennial channel may reduce or destroy the existing high-quality habitat.
- The Committees believe the cost of the project is too high.

**MC Hancock Springs Restoration Phase 4 Project (Not Fundable)**

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by the Methow Conservancy, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reason:

- The cost of the project is too high given the possible benefits identified in the draft proposal (i.e., the project is not cost effective).

**VI. Information Updates**

The following information updates were provided during the meeting.

1. Approved Payment Requests from March to May:

Rock Island Plan Species Account:

- \$87.50 to Clifton Larson Allen for Rock Island financial administration in March 2018.
- \$117.50 to Clifton Larson Allen for Rock Island financial administration in April 2018.
- \$591.65 to Chelan County PUD for project coordination and administration during the first quarter of 2018.
- \$6,500.00 to Cascade Chelan Appraisal for the appraisal of the Wenatchee Sleepy Hollow Floodplain Acquisition Project.

Rocky Reach Plan Species Account:

- \$87.50 to Clifton Larson Allen for Rocky Reach financial administration in March 2018.
- \$117.50 to Clifton Larson Allen for Rocky Reach financial administration in April 2018.
- \$591.20 to Chelan County PUD for project coordination and administration during the first quarter of 2018.
- \$13,090.00 to Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group for the Burns-Garrity Restoration Design Project.

## Wells Plan Species Account:

- \$395.23 to Chelan County PUD for project coordination and administration during the first quarter of 2018.
  - \$600.00 to Cascade Chelan Appraisal for preparation and meeting with the Tributary Committees to discuss the M2-Mid Sugar Acquisition Project.
  - \$720.49 to Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group for the Methow Basin Barrier and Diversion Assessment Project.
2. Tracy Hillman reported that he received an email from Jason Lundgren (CCFEG) asking the Committees for direction on how to proceed with the Chiwawa Nutrient Enhancement Project. In his email, Jason indicated that he received an email from the Forest Service (Kathy McMillan) stating that Judy Neibauer (USFWS) does not support the project and has raised enough concerns that the Forest Service is unwilling to move forward with the project. In her email to the Forest Service, Judy stated, *“Adverse effects to bull trout would likely occur with the current treatment sites directly in the spawning habitat...There are likely other higher priority areas we should think about for first, like Nason Creek or the Little Wenatchee, where we know numbers of salmon and bull trout are really low...If you are still thinking of this as a pilot project, prior to completing a larger feasibility assessment, my suggestion is to complete this somewhere where there are no adverse effects to bull trout.”* Jason is very concerned that Judy’s comments have derailed a proposed project, which is based on solid scientific information and a large investment in time and money (the Rock Island Committee has invested about \$90,000 into this project).

Catherine Willard noted that the USFWS completed a Biological Opinion on hatchery programs within the Wenatchee River basin. In that Opinion, the USFWS evaluated the effects of nutrient enhancement on bull trout. In the Opinion, the USFWS states, *“Our analysis of Project effects in the enclosed biological opinion leads us to conclude that implementation of the proposed Project will not jeopardize the continued existence of the bull trout, nor will it destroy or adversely modify designated critical habitat for the bull trout.”* In short, as long as the reasonable and prudent measures are followed, there is no jeopardy. Thus, what Judy is saying appears to be in contrast to the USFWS Biological Opinion for the PUD hatchery programs in the Wenatchee River basin.

After further discussion, the Committees recommended that Jason elevate this issue to the Regional Director in Lacey, WA. In addition, Justin Yeager will set up a conference call with Jason Lundgren, Emily Johnson (USFS), and Catherine Willard to discuss ways to move the project forward.

3. Tracy Hillman reminded the Committees that project sponsors will give presentations on 13 and 14 June. Final proposals are due on Friday, 29 June. The Committees will evaluate final proposals and make funding decisions on Thursday, 12 July.

## **VII. Icicle Fish Screening Projects (Joint Discussion with the PRCC Habitat Subcommittee)**

Tracy Hillman said he and Denny Rohr (PRCC HSC Facilitator) received an email from Mike Kaputa (CCNRD) on 15 May asking the Committees to consider a revised approach for funding the Icicle Irrigation District (IID) and City of Leavenworth screens in Icicle Creek. Tracy shared the email with the Committees on 17 May and reviewed it with the Committees during the meeting.

In his email, Mike indicated that the Icicle Work Group has \$372,000 from the Office of the Columbia River (OCR), an undisclosed amount from the City of Leavenworth, and an anticipated \$100,000 from IID. Mike stated further that the Work Group would like to use the funds from OCR, combined with the

City of Leavenworth cost share, to bring the City of Leavenworth fish screen into compliance. Thus, no HCP Plan Species Account Funds would be used for the City of Leavenworth screen. The anticipated \$100,000 from IID would be the cost share on the IID screening project. In his email, Mike asked if the Committees' requirement of a 25% cost share would be satisfied under this proposed strategy (i.e., fully funding City of Leavenworth screen with OCR and City funds, and an anticipated \$100,000 from IID for their screen).

After a lengthy discussion, the Committees concluded that the proposed strategy does not meet their 25% cost-share requirement. The Committees view the fish screens as two separate projects, not as a single project. This is because there are two separate diversions owned by two different entities (IID and City of Leavenworth) and potentially funded by different Committees. Therefore, both diversions need a 25% cost share if funding is requested from the Committees. This does not mean the Work Group cannot use the OCR funds to fully fund the City of Leavenworth screen. If that happens, IID will still need a 25% cost share if the Work Group intends to seek funding from the Committees. The Committees recommend that the Work Group use the OCR funds to help cover the cost share on both screening projects. Any shortage in the 25% cost share per project will need to be made up by the owners of the diversions or other funds.<sup>3</sup>

The Committees also offered the following comments/requirements:

1. It is not clear if CCNRD is helping WDFW with their proposal or if CCNRD is considering submitting their own proposal to address screens in Icicle Creek. In January, the Committees determined that the Icicle screening proposal from WDFW was incomplete and the Committees requested additional information. Because WDFW has not withdrawn their proposal (and the Committees did not reject it), CCNRD needs to work with WDFW on updating the WDFW proposal. If WDFW decides to withdraw their proposal, CCNRD can submit a new proposal.
2. The HCP Tributary Committees will not contribute funds to the screening project(s) unless there is written permission from both the City of Leavenworth and IID to allow implementation of the fish passage project at the boulder field. Indeed, without fish passage at the boulder field, there will be little benefit to HCP Plan Species in the vicinity of the intake structures. These projects are not cost effective if very few steelhead benefit from the screening efforts. Fish passage at the boulder field is a requirement in order to secure funding from HCP Plan Species Account Funds.
3. Related to #2 above, there can be no strings attached to the funding and implementation of the fish passage and screening projects. That is, in their letter of support for fish passage, IID stated: *"This agreement would have to have an incidental take permit and hold harmless agreement to cover our continued diversion with our current screens until our new screens are constructed at no cost to the Districts"* (from the WDFW proposal). This is unacceptable and for the Committees to consider funding the screening project, they would need a letter from IID stating that the fish passage and screening projects are not contingent on any other agreements

The Committees directed Tracy to share this information with Mike.

## VIII. Next Steps

The Committees will not meet officially in June. Rather, they will attend the presentations by project sponsor on 13 and 14 June. The next meeting of the Tributary Committees will be on Thursday, 12 July 2018 at Grant PUD in Wenatchee. At that time, they will evaluate final proposals.

---

<sup>3</sup> Based on the proposal received from WDFW, the cost of the IID screen is \$1,645,000 and the cost for the City of Leavenworth screen is \$476,000. A 25% cost share for each would equate to \$411,250 for the IID screen and 119,000 for the City of Leavenworth screen. Given that the Work Group has secured about \$472,000, the cost share is short by about \$58,250.

Meeting notes submitted by Tracy Hillman ([tracy.hillman@bioanalysts.net](mailto:tracy.hillman@bioanalysts.net)).