

Meeting Notes (*Internet Version*)

10 Dec 2008

Location: Douglas PUD Auditorium, 1151 Valley Mall Parkway

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RTT members present: Casey Baldwin, Chuck Peven, Tracy Hillman, Joe Lange, Joe Kelly, Steve Hays, John Arterburn, Keely Murdoch, Cameron Thomas, and Michelle McClure (via phone).

Others present: Julie Morgan, James White, Derek VanMarter

9:00-12:30 Executive session:

Request for product review (Pioneer Ditch pumpback project): Casey explained that he had been approached by Aaron Penvose who has requested input from the RTT on a project in the Wenatchee River. Casey had worked with Aaron to put together an official “request for review” that included a memo explaining the basics of the project, a map, and some modeling results from a PHABSIM model run. The group discussed the materials presented and decided that they were willing to do the review. In general, the group felt it was a worthwhile project to consider, but suggested that some of the benefits claimed by the sponsors may have been over stated. Tracy requested more information on the modeling inputs and outputs so we could better interpret the results and evaluate the potential merit of the project. For example, they should identify what parameters they included in the PHABSIM model (e.g., substrate, velocity, depth, cover, etc.) and the SI curves and their source. Additionally, the RTT would like to see the WUA curves for the entire range of flows modeled, not just percent change at 3 distinct flow levels. Other general comments: they need to justify their claim that the increased flow will decrease temperature or phosphorus. Are there TMDL modeling results to support that claim? Finally, some members of the RTT thought it would be prudent to provide more information on the link between this project and other potential pumpback / change point of diversion projects. If the project sponsors think that this project could serve as a pilot for others then it would be helpful to know where those other options are and what quantity of water might be involved. Casey agreed to request the additional information, distribute it to a workgroup, and facilitate the review. Members of the review workgroup include Joe Kelly, Joe Lange, Tracy Hillman, Cameron Thomas, and Steve Hays.

Revised Biological Strategy: This topic was a follow up item from an earlier decision to update the biological strategy. In previous meetings, there had been discussion about the need to be more detailed and prescriptive, particularly where USBR tributary and reach assessments have been conducted. Also, the update to the Implementation Schedules is nearly complete, so new or updated lists of possible actions are available.

Casey mentioned that this item tied in with the Entiat IMW discussion topic later in the agenda. A request had been made by Pamela Nelle with ISEMP to get ISEMP, the RTT, and the Entiat implementers (Entiat Habitat Subcommittee) together and work out a plan for the Entiat. The RTT agreed that this meeting was needed and updating the Biological Strategy would be premature until after the experimental design changes were accepted or declined. Chuck suggested that Julie and Derek host and facilitate the meeting, in the interest of bringing together the 3 groups and lining out a common goal and path forward for the Entiat.

Derek mentioned that another round of Implementation Schedule updates would be starting this winter. The group agreed that all of the changes to the Biological Strategy should be postponed until winter 2010. By then there will be final reach assessments for the Stillwaters Reach and Nason Creek (neither of which will be ready in time for us to incorporate them in Jan-March), 2rd revisions of the Implementation Schedules, a more detailed 3-yr workplan.

2009 RTT analysis workshop:

Casey handed out the 1 page summary of a path forward for the workshop put together by James White and Julie Morgan after the November 12th, 2008 RTT meeting. Casey added an additional outline (taken from James' summary) and asked the RTT to provide input on the purpose and objectives for the workshop. The group agreed that the purpose, as stated in the recovery plan, should remain the same.

Purpose: To provide information and data to assess the [Recovery Plan's] progress.

Objectives: 1a) Update the status assessments with most recent data.
1b) interpret information gathered from monitoring and research
2) assess deviations from targets or anticipated results (hypothesis)
3) recommend changes in policies or management actions where appropriate

From this list of objectives the group agreed that 1a should be an update to the TRT status assessments presented by Michelle M at the Nov 08 meeting. 1b should focus on status and trend of habitat conditions and project effectiveness results from each of the subbasins, per the availability of data and analyses from ISEMP, OBMEP, and USGS. Casey mentioned that meeting objective 2 might not be possible for habitat conditions since the recovery plan did not establish targets for specific indicators. Likewise, timelines and interim targets were not established for fish performance measures. Tracy mentioned that Appendix Q did provide some targets related to project implementation. The group discussed the fact that objective 3 would be part of the summary document and subsequent presentations and not be a part of the initial 2 day scientific workshop.

Building off of James' summary document, Casey presented an outline for 3 products that targeted several distinct but sometimes overlapping audiences. Julie added a 4th product.

Product 1: Workshop (2 days, Nov 2009)

Target audience: RTT, scientific colleagues, technical staff from WATs

Product 2: Workshop summary document (March 2010)

Primary target audience: RTT, scientific colleagues, technical staff from WATs

Secondary target audience: Policy makers, fish and land co-managers, public participants on WATs, project sponsors

Product 3: Workshop Phase II (1 day, March 2010)

Target audience: WATs, public, policy makers, fish and land co-managers, project sponsors

Product 4: Adaptive management workshops (summer/fall 2010; 1 per subbasin)

Target audience: WATs, public, policy makers, project sponsors, fish and land co-managers

Casey provided a general outline for the 2 day workshop (Product 1), based on the outline from the Nov 12th meeting and the discussion today.

- 1) Status of VSP for each population and the ESU (1/2 day)
- 2) Implementation of habitat actions (summaries of what has been completed in each subbasin over the last 10 years)
- 3) Habitat Status and Trend
 - a. Wenatchee ISEMP
 - b. OBMEP
 - c. Methow??
- 4) Habitat action effectiveness (level 1-3)
 - a. Wenatchee? SRFB/tetra tech
 - b. Entiat (level 3-probably not available)
 - c. Methow (lower Methow, USGS)
 - d. Okanogan (barrier removals, other?)
- 5) Limiting Factors and Threats (we will need NOAA fisheries input),
 - a. We could look at what has been implemented, how those actions have changed the environment, then decide if that limiting factor is no longer limiting. Cam pointed out that the best we could probably do is say it is less limiting.
- 6) Data Gaps and research needs

The group generally agreed that this was a good outline for the workshop. Casey then asked for volunteers for a workgroup to continue developing the content and organization of the workshop. Julie pointed out that an early focus needed to be asking ISEMP for particular analyses so that they will have time to fulfill the request. Volunteers for the workgroup included Casey, Julie, James, Steve H., Cameron, and Michelle. An anonymous person also volunteered Kate Terrell.

Casey suggested that the workgroup should meet regularly in between RTT meetings then report back to the full RTT for guidance and updates. The group agreed to meet on January 7th from 9-11. Casey will find a meeting room and let people know where.

2009 workplan: Casey handed out a copy of the 2008 workplan and pointed out that the RTT accomplished nearly everything on the list. The group then began modifying the list, but ran out of time to finish it. Casey will finish putting together the 2009 workplan and distribute it for further discussion at the next RTT meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:35