



RTT Meeting Notes for 11 July 2007 BLM Office, Wenatchee

RTT Members Present: Casey Baldwin, Tracy Hillman, Chuck Peven, Kate Terrell, Cameron Thomas, John Arterburn, Steve Hays

Others Present: Pamela Nelle, Julie Morgan, Derek Van Marter, Rick Woodsmith, and Steve Rentmeester (via phone)

1. Review and Adopt Agenda

No additions, agenda approved.

2. Update on UCSRB Activities and Implementation Team

Julie Morgan provided updates to the RTT on UCSRB activities. She said that a subgroup of the Implementation Team is working on an adaptive management framework for the salmon recovery plan.

Chuck asked if there is a summary of the events that the RTT could see. He is not interested in a formal RTT review, rather just to have an opportunity to provide input. Julie said that there will be a narrative component of the adaptive management framework. The subgroup suggested Julie speak with either Pamela Nelle or Tracy Hillman for the purpose of writing the narrative to the adaptive management framework. Kate Terrell is planning to attend the next Implementation Team workgroup meeting on August 7 to provide input. Both Casey and Kate will be involved with the Implementation Team and September is the intended date for the draft adaptive management plan to be presented to the full Implementation Team.

Tracy asked if the Board is now interested in having triggers for this process. Julie said that the proposal at this point is to identify facilitators for each of the various activities of adaptive management.

Cameron asked for some specific information with respect to triggers. He asked whether a trigger will result in a change in the plan, triggers for who owns the land, or to switch to different actions. Tracy suggested it would be good to have triggers related to VSP parameters, but his guess is that it would be triggers for implementation activities.

Julie moved on to asking for input from the RTT on the Data Steward position description. She handed out a draft of the announcement and asked for input on:

- Content (*the group provided input and Kate suggested that a more formal and detailed set of KSA's needs developed to compliment the position description*)
- Long-term funding agreements
- Salary range (*the group generally agreed on the range presented*)
- Volunteers for the interview panel: John Arterburn, Casey Baldwin, Kate Terrell, Steve Rentmeester

Suggestions were made on where to circulate the announcement including the American Fisheries Society, University of Washington, Utah State University. Julie said she might need someone with an AFS membership to post the announcement (*Casey is an AFS member and could work with Julie on it*).

3. Monitoring Subcommittee Update

Chuck Peven provided an update on the PNAMP data management summary. Julie said that PNAMP is convening an Executive Summit in October focused on data management. The organizers asked for a business case synopsis from the Upper Columbia describing scale and cost justifications in describing the need for comprehensive data management. Chuck asked the RTT to specifically provide input on the cost justification section of the draft summary. He said that after he and Julie work on the draft a little more, he will distribute it for comment to the RTT.

Steve R. added that the purpose of the summit is to develop a Memorandum of Understanding among all the signatories of PNAMP for data sharing. Kate asked if the PUDs were a part of the PNAMP effort, and if not, whether they should be. To date, PNAMP has been federal, state and tribal organizations. The PUD's have chosen to focus in the region with respect to data collection and sharing. Chuck suggested that the most efficient way for the PUD's to participate might be through the data steward who could work on links between the Upper Columbia database and the larger regional databases if/when they develop.

John suggested that the draft business case also be sent to Jennifer Bayer, who is the PNAMP lead for this topic.

4. NOAA Request on Shiraz Modeling

Casey handed out the Shiraz scenario development and described the request from NOAA of ensuring that they made acceptable assumptions in describing landscape change. He suggested that the biggest issue that he sees with the scenario is that it is not tied to the implementation schedule. The scenarios might be a good subset to evaluate, but would not represent the whole set of recovery actions and therefore would under estimate the potential biological response to habitat recovery actions.

Tracy asked whether this was different from what the TRT had proposed, particularly with regard to density-dependence. He would like to see assumptions of fish densities per kilometer for abundance. Casey said it was part of the TRT process, but that no formal results had been presented to the TRT and that there is no TRT product associated with the Shiraz modeling thus far.

Chuck asked Casey for some background on why the RTT is reviewing this draft product. The RTT reviewed the purpose for developing these model scenarios and their future use with the developers of the product from NOAA. Chuck proposed that the RTT review the document and funnel questions on the draft to Casey that he will relay to NOAA.

Tracy asked about layers that show sediment changes over time, and how hydro-geologic differences in the various sub-basins will be evaluated. It was not clear if the natural background levels for the habitat attributes (sediment) were accurately represented. John asked about the temperature change layers they were using, as well. Tracy said it would be good to see some of the results of the model that might help the RTT understand the utility of the proposed scenarios.

5. Revised RTT Operating Procedures

Casey distributed the discussion draft of the Operating Procedures and asked the RTT to review them and get comments back to him within a week. After it has been approved by the RTT, it will be posted to the web. He briefly reviewed some of the basic revisions to the document, stating that the majority of the substantive changes were what had been reviewed and discussed at the May meeting.

6. Recovery Plan Appendix P

Casey reviewed responses to date on the following questions from NOAA for the RTT regarding Appendix P:

1. Appendix P identifies a number of gaps between identified monitoring needs and existing monitoring efforts. Can the RTT confirm the gaps and provide suggestions on prioritizing which gaps should be filled? In addition, we would be interested in any specific suggestions the RTT has on strategies for filling priority gaps (e.g., funding sources, shifts in existing programs/funding, etc.)
2. Are the in-subbasin strategies or hypotheses that are in the Upper Columbia Recovery plan adequately reflected and evaluated in Appendix P's objectives and management questions? Are there effectiveness-monitoring questions that should be added to address key plan strategies?
3. Can the RTT suggest appropriate VSP and limiting factor interim performance measures to evaluate progress within an adaptive management framework?
4. Does the RTT have suggestions on how to incorporate the WA Governor's Forum sampling design for habitat monitoring into the plan?
5. Does the RTT have any additional comments/insights on data management section of appendix P?
6. Are there any additional comments that the RTT wishes to make after reviewing the Draft RM&E Plan for the Upper Columbia Salmon & Steelhead Recovery Plan?

The RTT agreed that it would send a cover letter with its recommendations to the Board explaining the breadth of monitoring described in Appendix P vis-à-vis what needs to be monitored to track progress toward recovery. The RTT also recommends binning the monitoring priorities into various tiers: primary, secondary and tertiary.

A workgroup of the RTT will complete responses to the NOAA questions in a meeting tomorrow, and will circulate those to the rest of the RTT members after the meeting. Once a completed set of responses is agreed upon, Casey will get them to NOAA and to the Board (*with the cover letter*).

7. Reflect and Comment on Project Tours

The RTT discussed some of the positive and negative aspects of the project tours. The following general points were made about the tours:

- In the future, the RTT will need to use its discretion to determine the project sites they need to see, not all projects need or are ready for a site visit. Not every project should be entitled to time during the project tours.
- Consider spreading the site visits out and seeing 2 watersheds in one week and 2 watershed in another week
- Casey said there needs to be more time between the pre-proposal presentation workshop and the site tours so that the RTT can decide what they need to visit and cross reference with projects that the Trib Fund Committee is still considering.

- The RTT needs to step up and discourage those pre-proposals that appear to have limited biological benefit or low certainty of success regarding the site location and design concepts. Specifically, additional comments were offered on several projects:
 - **Chiwawa confluence project:** Many RTT members thought that the project will have little biological benefit. Wood structures at this particular location would be very high risk and a temporary fix. This project focused on protecting private property rather than habitat restoration and would arrest natural floodplain structure and function.
 - **Nason Creek Offchannel:** Many RTT members thought this proposal lacked sufficient detail to evaluate potential biological benefit or certainty of success. Based on the discussion at the project tour it did not appear that the problem could be remedied before the deadline for the full proposal.
 - **Wannacut Creek:** Many RTT members thought that the project will have little biological benefit.
 - **Wildhorse Spring Creek:** Many RTT members thought that the project will have little biological benefit.

8. Next meeting: August 22 at the BLM office in Wenatchee, 0830-1700. That meeting's sole purpose will be to evaluate the SRFB and Trib. Fund proposals. Hard copies will be mailed or hand delivered to RTT members by August 8. RTT members will use appendix D of the revised biological strategy and Casey offered to work with any new members beforehand to get familiar with the rating system.

Adjourned at 3:09 p.m.

Meeting Notes by: Derek Van Marter and Casey Baldwin

Approved by: Tracy Hillman, Chuck Peven, Kate Terrell, and Tom Kahler