

UPPER COLUMBIA REGIONAL TECHNICAL TEAM MEETING NOTES FOR 10 JANUARY 2007

RTT Members Present: Baldwin, Woodsmith, Peven, Lange, Kelly, Arterburn, Cates, Murdoch, Terrell, Ward, Andonaegui, (Rose, on phone) and Bugert

Others Present: Carolyn Pearson (ECOaim), Julie Morgan (UCSRB), Mary Jo Sanborn (Chelan County), Mark Cookson (WDFW), Sarah Walker (CCCD), Greg Knott (BOR), Steve Kolk (BOR)

1. Review and adopt proposed agenda

The group reviewed and adopted the proposed agenda.

2. Review and adopt November meeting notes

The RTT members reviewed and adopted the draft notes from the November and December meetings, with revisions suggested by Chuck Peven and Mike Ward on the November notes. Bob will work with Derek van Marter on getting all RTT notes and products on the newly established UCSRB web site.

3. UCSRB Update

Julie Morgan gave an update on activities of the Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board. The UCSRB held a retreat in December to discuss implementation roles and responsibilities. Of note was the discussion related to the function of the Regional Technical Team. The UCSRB saw three main needs from RTT: 1) development of ESU-level biological priorities, 2) coordination and oversight of monitoring and evaluation efforts, and 3) technical review of project proposals. The group agreed that these responsibilities were appropriate for the RTT.

4. Refinement of Upper Columbia Biological Strategy

The group discussed the approach that could be used to revise and update the biological strategy. Keely, Casey, Bob Rose, Chuck, Kate with Casey will form an *ad hoc* committee to work on this. The intent is to make it more streamlined, and will provide better linkage with project review criteria. To develop ESU-level biological priorities, they will consider the major and minor spawning areas and the viable salmonid population parameters. The *ad hoc* committee will include considerations about unlisted versus listed species in the strategy. The revision should have a preamble that states the purpose of the document, the assumptions used, its limitations, and how the recommendations should be interpreted. The committee will provide its initial draft by the 14 March RTT meeting for initial review (with comments due 30 March) and a tentative approval at the April RTT meeting.

The RTT asked for points-of-contact for each watershed to ensure close coordination in linking the regional-level work with the watershed-specific implementation schedules. Mary Jo Sanborn, Sarah Walker, and Mark Cookson agreed to serve as the points, and identified Jenny Molesworth and Nick Christoph as contact persons for the Methow and Okanogan, respectively.

The group discussed the need to coordinate this work with the expectations of the FCRPS BiOp remand, which is focused on development of actions that are 1) reasonably certain to occur and 2) are making reasonable progress. The refined biological strategy (and the resultant implementation schedule) could provide a higher level of certainty that specific actions can be accomplished within an appropriate time frame.

5. Entiat Milne Diversion Project

Sarah Walker distributed copies of a proposed project to build four instream structures on the lower Entiat River and asked for a preliminary review by the RTT. The banks and thalweg are fairly stable within this reach. Key considerations are the need to maintain a push-up irrigation diversion and the need to retain the instream habitat structures proximal to this proposed area. The intent is to try a different suite of treatments to evaluate the effectiveness and longevity of different structures. There will also be some work to upgrade the existing irrigation diversion. Steve Kolk said that an interdisciplinary team (IDT) is exploring different options for eliminating the push up dam. The target is to have the necessary plans and specifications for submission to permitting agencies in February. Steve requested that members of the IDT formally present to the RTT on this project and selected projects in the Wenatchee Subbasin. The group agreed to meet with the IDT on 22 February (3:00 to 5:00) to provide a preliminary review of these projects, as well as some preliminary designs for projects on the Wenatchee.

The group discussed the need to identify the roles and responsibilities of monitoring the effectiveness of these projects. There needs to be some clarification on this prior to development of project proposals; this could be done at the 26 February project debriefing workshop.

6. Stillwater Geomorphic Assessment

Steve Kolk reviewed the proposal to develop a baseline investigation of the geologic and geomorphic processes affecting the Stillwater Reach of the Entiat River, which will provide guidance for restoration projects. Rick Woodsmith said the scope of the initial bank restoration project has broadened to address other issues in a holistic manner. He suggested that a reference reach be established to compare with the eroded reaches of the Stillwater, this would probably be outside the subbasin (Chiwawa and White rivers are options). He suggests that an initial assessment of geomorphic processes be done to allow development of appropriate projects in the long term. The group recognized the need to have a better understanding of the assessments (and their methods) funded by the BOR on the Wenatchee, Entiat and Methow. This would help the BOR in developing priorities for projects.

7. Update on Pre-Season Monitoring Coordination Meeting

Keely Murdoch said that the Chelan Fire Hall is booked for the annual monitoring pre-season coordination meeting, set for 15 February (9:00 to 4:30). She distributed a draft agenda.

8. Data Steward Position

Mike Ward described the work to develop the position for a data steward for the ISEMP work and other monitoring efforts in the Upper Columbia Region. Mike distributed a basic job description and anticipates this as a full-time job to serve the entire region. The RTT supported the approach that Mike presented, and recommended that this work be discussed with the PUD HCP Committees and other forums, as it will likely be necessary to fund this from multiple sources. Mike will expand this position into a proposal for a ten-year position that ties into the need. Chuck will coordinate this effort among the PUDs, and Bob Bugert agreed to discuss this with the Tributary Committees. John Arterburn will introduce this concept in the PNAMP process and Bob Rose will coordinate with the BiOp Remand Process.

9. Next Steps

The next regular RTT meeting is on Wednesday, 14 February.