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Memorandum

To: Mike Schiewe
From: Tracy Hillman
CC: Tributary Committees
Date: 18 September 2014
Re: HCP Tributary Committees Meeting Progress Report

The Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island Hydroelectric Projects Habitat Conservation Plans Tributary Committees met at Douglas PUD in East Wenatchee, Washington, on Thursday, 11 September 2014 from 9:00 am to 12:50 pm.

Silver Protection Project

The Committees discussed the pros and cons of the proposed conservation easement for the Silver Protection Project on the Methow River. WDFW has successfully negotiated a conservation easement with the landowner; however, part of the easement will allow limited livestock grazing on a portion of the property. The Committees are concerned that fencing will not be maintained and livestock will be allowed to graze in sensitive areas that will be restored. As an alternative to the conservation easement, the Committees will explore acquisition. They will contact the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation and see if they are willing to discuss an acquisition with the landowners. If an acquisition is not possible, the Committees may include stewardship money as part of the conservation easement to help maintain the fence.

Small Projects Program Application: Post-Fire Landowner Assistance/Habitat Protection in Beaver and Frazer Creeks

In August, the Committees reviewed a Small Projects Program application from the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation titled *Post-Fire Landowner Assistance/Habitat Protection in Beaver and Frazer Creeks*. The purpose of the project was to assist landowners affected by fires in Beaver and Frazer watersheds in protecting and restoring infrastructure in a manner that will not further damage fish resources. Proposed actions include removing and relocating woody materials threatening culverts, crossings, and diversions; removing mud and debris flows affecting spawning and rearing habitat; and assessing the need for other actions in response to anticipated landowner requests for material removal, dredging, and hardening. The total cost of the project was \$100,000. The sponsor requested \$57,328 from HCP Tributary Funds. *The Rock Island Tributary Committee approved funding for this project.*

Okanagan Project Tours

The Committees will tour habitat restoration projects in Canada on 8 and 9 October. They will tour ORRI 1 and 2, Vertical Drop Structure 13, McIntyre Dam, Shuttleworth Creek, Skaha Dam, Shingle Creek Dam, the Penticton Channel, and Trout Creek. The tour will replace the Committees' October meeting.

Plan Species Account Auditing

The State Auditors have recently indicated that they have changed their position regarding off-book accounts, such as the Tributary Plan Species Accounts, because of abuse of such accounts by some entities. These accounts, although not officially under the control of the PUDs, use the PUDs Tax Identification Numbers. To that end, the State Auditors have asked Douglas PUD to bring the Wells Plan Species account into full control of the PUD so it can be audited annually. This account will be set up so funding decisions will not need to go through the PUD Board of Commissioners for approval (as in the past, board approval of the annual contributions to the account will constitute approval of the Tributary Committee's discretion in the use of the account). In addition, the account will be audited annually, which means the Wells Committee will not need to conduct independent audits every five years. The Committees will see no changes in the way the Committees do business. Because this is a new position of the State Auditor regarding these types of accounts, the auditors will ask for the same changes by Chelan PUD regarding the Rock Island and Rocky Reach accounts.

Upper White Pine Presentation

In June, Chelan County Natural Resources Department (CCNRD) asked the Committees if the County and Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) could attend the September meeting to describe the proposed approach for the Nason Creek Upper White Pine Restoration Project. The Committees agreed to invite the County and BOR to the meeting. Jennifer Hadersburger (CCNRD) and Rob Richardson (BOR) presented their proposed approach to the Committees during the September meeting.

Jennifer and Rob described project development, existing conditions, goals, restoration plan alternatives, power line alternatives, 30% design, current proposed design, biological benefits, and status, timeline, and funding. The County expects to complete the 60% design by October, and complete permits by the end of the year. They hope to construct in 2015-2016. They plan to move the power lines in 2015 and the channel in 2016. The total cost of the project is about \$2.6M; they have already secured \$780,000 from Ecology. They intend to ask the Tributary Committees and the PRCC Habitat Subcommittee for about \$1.2M. The Committees provided the County and BOR with several comments and suggestions. The County will likely submit a proposal to the Committees sometime soon.

Next Steps

The next meeting of the Tributary Committees will be on Thursday, 13 November 2014 at Grant PUD in Wenatchee.