



Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island HCP Tributary Committees Notes 11 August 2022

Members Present: Jeremy Cram (WDFW), Chris Fisher (CTCR), Tom Kahler (Douglas PUD), Brandon Rogers (Yakama Nation), Catherine Willard (Chelan PUD), and Tracy Hillman (Committees' Chair).

Members Absent: Kate Terrell (USFWS) and Justin Yeager (NOAA Fisheries).¹

Others Present: Becky Gallaher (Tributary Project Coordinator). Jason Lundgren (Cascade Fisheries), Aaron Rosenblum (Cascade Fisheries), and Rob Richardson (Rio ASE) joined the meeting for the Chiwaukum Creek discussion. Bryan Malone (CCNRD) joined the meeting for the Beaver Creek discussion. Chris Johnson (MSRF), Jessica Goldberg (MSRF), Luke Swan (Inter-Fluve), and Steve Kolk (BOR) joined the meeting for the Eagle Rocks discussion.

The Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island Hydroelectric Projects Habitat Conservation Plans Tributary Committees held a conference call on Thursday, 11 August 2022 from 10:00 am to 12:35 pm.

I. Review and Adopt July Agenda

Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the meeting and the Committees adopted the proposed agenda with two changes: (1) added a review of the HCP TCs Chair and (2) removed the Methow 3R Floodplain Restoration Feasibility Project discussion and replaced it with the Eagle Rocks Project discussion.

II. Review and Approval of the June Meeting Minutes

The draft 14 July 2022 meeting notes were reviewed and approved by the Tributary Committees.

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.

- Barkley Irrigation – Under Pressure Project – The sponsor (Trout Unlimited; TU) reported that Barkley has signed the Department of Transportation (DOT)/Federal Aviation Administration easements and those are back to DOT for signature. The Methow Valley Irrigation District (MVID)/DOT easements are still in review. The sponsor continues to work on the remaining easements needed for the Barkley individual wells. Both the Barkley and MVID irrigation systems are running as designed and shareholders are pleased.
- Chiwawa Nutrient Enhancement Project – This project is complete. A final report will be available soon.

¹ Kate provided her votes on decision items following the meeting.

- Johnson Creek Habitat Restoration Project – The sponsor (TU) reported they continue working on the final design and are coordinating with DOT.
- Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project – The sponsor (TU) reported they will meet with the Jones Shotwell Ditch Company (JSDC) in August to discuss next steps. They intend to get the project moving soon.
- Peshastin RM 3.4 Side Channel Project – The sponsor (Chelan County Natural Resources Department; CCNRD) did not provide an update this month.
- Beaver Creek Barrier #40016 Correction Project – The sponsor (CCNRD) reported that the final design is complete and has been shared with landowners, WDFW, Recreation and Conservation Office, and Chelan PUD for review. The sponsor also updated the Joint Aquatic Resource Permit Application (JARPA) and environmental review documentation with the final design plan information. The sponsor met with the Tributary Committees to discuss this project (see discussion below).
- Chumstick Baseflow and Riparian Enhancement Project – The sponsor (Cascadia Conservation District; CCD) reported that they continue to install beaver dam analogues (BDAs) at multiple sites.
- Nason Kahler Instream Complexity Project – The sponsor (CCNRD) did not provide an update this month.
- Big Meadow Creek Fish Passage Project – The sponsor (Cascade Fisheries; CF) did not provide an update this month.
- Lower Chiwawa River Floodplain Reconnection and Instream Enhancement Project – The sponsor (CCNRD) reported that they continue to work on preferred alternatives. They also began coordinating with the Forest Service and private landowners to set up meetings to present alternatives and solicit feedback to help with selection of preferred alternatives.
- Alder Creek Floodplain Restoration Project – The sponsor (Yakama Nation; YN) reported that the Hydraulic Project Approvals (HPA) renewal for 2022 has been received and they have hired both the construction contractor (John M. Willey Construction) and construction oversight engineer (Inter-Fluve).
- Wenatchee Entiat Beaver-Powered Restoration Project – The sponsor (TU) reported that they placed temperature loggers in Beaver Creek in late July to monitor pre-project water temperatures.
- Methow Thermal Refugia Restoration Assessment Project – The sponsor (Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation; MSRF) reported they finalized field site priorities and mapping.
- Nason Kahler Instream Complexity Project – The sponsor (CCNRD) did not provide an update this month.
- Wenatchee River Juvenile Detection PIT Barge – This project is complete. A final report will be available soon.
- Mission Wood Amendment Project – The sponsor (CF) reported that they received the signed agreement from the Forest Service and began implementing the project. They have completed all wood placement in the mainstem and West Fork of Buttermilk Creek and about a third of the wood placement in Libby Creek. So far, they have felled 71 trees and settled another 20 trees that had been perched above the channel.

- Thirteen Fish Passage Designs Project – The sponsor (CF) did not provide a project update this month.
- Nason RM 12 Floodplain Reconnection Project – The sponsor (CCNRD) reported that the consultants continued preparing the existing conditions hydraulic model and identifying potential restoration actions.
- Methow Horseshoe Habitat Enhancement Project – The sponsor (YN) reported that log jam construction is underway and will be completed in August.
- Lower Little Bridge Creek Restoration Project – The sponsor (YN) reported that this project is complete. Revegetation of the staging area will be completed in October.
- Mystery and War Creek Reach Large Wood Restoration Project – The sponsor (YN) reported that this project is complete. Revegetation of the staging area will be completed in October.
- Methow 3R Floodplain Restoration Feasibility Study Project – The sponsor (MSRF) reported they had a site visit with Wolf Water Resources to document surface water sites. They also provided Methow Conservancy with written documentation of landowner acknowledgment for feasibility planning.
- Salmon Creek Channel Realignment Project – The sponsor (City of Okanogan and MSRF) did not provide an update this month.
- Peshastin Creek RM 2.5 Project – The sponsor (CF) reported that the landowners asked CF to consider pushing Peshastin Creek toward their property away from the Department of Transportation right of way. This will give them more room to eventually build a new bridge to replace the current bridge. The sponsor indicated that they would only consider those actions if it resulted in a net gain for the stream and habitat. They also noted that it would be difficult to propose a new bridge within the restored area.
- Level II Surveys in Priority Reaches Project – The Tributary Committee/Sponsor Agreement has been executed.

IV. Budget Amendment

Chumstick Baseflow and Riparian Enhancement Project

In late July, the Rocky Reach Tributary Committee received a budget amendment request from Cascadia Conservation District (CCD) on the Chumstick Baseflow and Riparian Enhancement Project. The sponsor indicated that they would like to increase Salaries and Benefits by \$11,401.40, decrease Professional Services by \$13,090.90, increase Travel by \$90.90, and increase Indirect by \$1,598.60. These changes are requested because WCC crews will not be available to help with construction and therefore the sponsor will need to use CCD staff, increasing travel expenses, and much lower engineering costs for permitting. The budget amendment reflects changes in line-item expenses and does not change the overall budget for the project. After review, the Rocky Reach Tributary Committee approved the budget amendment.

V. Scope Change

Chiwawa Nutrient Enhancement Project

In late July, the Rock Island Tributary Committee received a request from Cascade Fisheries for a scope change on the Chiwawa Nutrient Enhancement Project. The sponsor asked to use remaining funds (~\$12,647) to assist the US Fish and Wildlife Service in distributing surplus Chinook Salmon carcasses in the Entiat River. After review, the Rock Island Tributary Committee concluded that they do not support

the use of the remaining funds to be used to help distribute surplus carcasses in the Entiat River. Thus, they denied the scope change.

VI. Restore Chiwaukum Creek Project Discussion

Jason Lundgren (CF), Aaron Rosenblum (CF), and Rob Richardson (Rio ASE) joined the meeting to provide an update on the status of the Chiwaukum Creek Project (see Attachment 1). Jason began by providing an overview of the project and he described the importance of Chiwaukum Creek as an important cold-water refuge for salmonids. He talked about thermal imaging work, which shows the temperature regimes in Chiwaukum Creek, in the Wenatchee River, and at the confluence of Chiwaukum Creek. Using aerial photos, he described how Chiwaukum Creek has changed over time.

Jason noted that the Upper Columbia Recovery Plan and the Biological Strategy identify this area is a major spawning area for spring Chinook and steelhead, and indicated it is an important rearing area for bull trout. Jason said it is also a stronghold for summer Chinook. He described the locations of spring Chinook and summer Chinook redds in the project area. Jason stated that the Recovery Plan and Biological Strategy indicate that natural processes need to be restored in this area. This can be accomplished by removing structures that limit floodplain connectivity and channel migration. He noted that habitat in both Chiwaukum Creek and the Wenatchee River has been altered due to historical log drives. More recent impacts include wildfires and camp sites. The proposed action is to remove or relocate some of the camp sites that affect habitat conditions in Chiwaukum Creek.

Jason summarized the geomorphic assessment, hydraulic modeling results, and the restoration design concepts. He said the lower portion of Chiwaukum Creek is primarily a plane-bed channel flowing over an alluvial fan. The channel is heavily armored and has an overall gradient of 2.4%. The reach lacks pools and large wood and in general has poor overall habitat quality. Upstream, the stream is a multi-thread channel with pools and large wood. Thus, the habitat upstream from the project reach is in relatively good shape. Jason said the alluvial fan was formed by episodic debris flows. Long-term winnowing of finer materials has resulted in an incised and heavily armored channel, which has been exacerbated by manmade features. Indeed, human activities have reduced floodplain access.

Jason then described the proposed enhancement actions, which include removal of some camping sites and roads, removal of culverts, and removal of buildings on the floodplain. He talked about the placement of large wood that would be used to help reactivate side channels (pilot channels) and the floodplain. He also described the wood structures that would be used to enhance cold-water habitat at the confluence of the stream and along the right bank of the Wenatchee River just downstream from the confluence of Chiwaukum Creek. Jason concluded by stating that they would be looking for funding to implement the project in the near future.

Catherine asked for additional details on the plans for dealing with camp sites in the riparian area. Jason said he would provide those designs to the Committee. [Jason provided the designs after the meeting.]

The Committees thanked Cascade Fisheries and Rio ASE for the discussion.

VII. Beaver Creek Barrier Replacement Project Discussion

Bryan Malone (CCNRD) joined the meeting to discuss the final designs for the Beaver Creek Barrier Replacement Project (final designs were provided to the Rocky Reach Tributary Committee before the meeting). Bryan began by describing the location of the project and showed photos of the existing site, vegetation, and existing culvert. He then walked the Committee through the final designs. The existing culvert will be replaced with a precast, concrete, split-box (bottomless) culvert that will accommodate higher flows. Because of the height of the concrete structure, the approach to the structure will change (the rise will be 2.5-3.0 feet). Thus, riprap will be placed at the abutments for grading transitions. Because

of the approach rise, they will need to provide a new paved parking area. Previously, parking was along the road near the culvert. Finally, they will need to relocate a power pole.

Chris Fisher asked about the passability of the existing culvert. Bryan indicated that it was identified as a velocity barrier and is currently 67% passable.

Bryan indicated that because of inflation and the additional cost to relocate the power pole, they will need an additional \$250,000 to implement the project. The original estimate was \$240,000, which means the total cost to implement the project will be about \$500,000. Tracy Hillman and Becky Gallaher indicated that CCNRD will need to submit a budget amendment request if they intend to seek additional funding from the Tributary Committees. The request will need to be specific about the additional funding needed and provide justification for the additional funding.

The Rocky Reach Tributary Committee thanked Bryan for the update on the project.

VIII. Eagle Rocks Presentation

Chris Johnson (MSRF), Jessica Goldberg (MSRF), Luke Swan (Inter-Fluve), and Steve Kolk (BOR) joined the meeting for the Eagle Rocks discussion. Chris Johnson thanked the Wells Tributary Committee for providing comments on the 30% designs. He briefly reviewed the comments from the Committee and identified the restoration elements that found favor and those did not find favor with the Committee. He then identified the goals and objectives of the Eagle Rock Project, which are:

- *GOAL 1:* Increase juvenile Chinook and steelhead habitat in the Methow mainstem during low to midrange flows by increasing instream large wood complexity.
- *Objectives:*
 - Increase instream structural complexity through large wood loading on point bars and along bank margins in the Methow mainstem to provide variability in velocity, cover, and depth, and drive geomorphic channel processes to increase habitat suitability for juvenile Chinook and steelhead during low (below 600 cfs) and/or midrange flows (about 600-3,000 cfs).
 - Increase complex cover (i.e., multiple size classes, variability of available interstitial spaces, minimum of 1 cubic meter of cover) in pool areas with a meter or greater of residual depth.
 - Structures should be designed to capture and retain mobile wood, which will increase the complexity of the created habitat.
 - Slash and native plants will be incorporated within all structural large wood elements to provide habitat variability and future sources of large wood.
- *GOAL 2:* Increase juvenile Chinook and steelhead refuge habitat along the Methow margins and in seasonal flood channels during high to midrange flows by increasing floodplain connectivity.
- *Objectives:*
 - Increase channel margin and floodplain habitat available during target annual habitat flows (Q1 - 3,200 cfs) by constructing a floodplain bench.
 - Increase floodplain habitat availability during target annual habitat flow and flood flow periods (Q-1-10,000 cfs) by enhancing relict channel flows.
 - Use wood to provide the physical structure necessary to promote the development, quality, and sustainability of peripheral and transitional habitats.

- *GOAL 3*: Improve juvenile Chinook and steelhead survival by completing habitat actions designed to improve riparian conditions.
- *Objectives*:
 - Increase cover and long-term wood loading by improving the health and abundance of native riparian plantings within the project area with an emphasis on cottonwood establishment.
 - Replant riparian plantings within reconnected floodplain areas using native species to achieve a sustainable riparian forest density, structure, and species composition.
 - Utilize best management practices to avoid new noxious weed populations (classes A-C) and prevent expansion of existing populations.

Chris Johnson asked the Committee if they agree with and support the goals and objectives of the project. He noted that these goals and objectives were established for the original sugar reach project but have been modified slightly to be site specific and appropriately detailed for the 30% design. Members present indicated that the goals and objectives of the project are appropriate.

Chris Johnson then asked how well each of the three restoration elements (i.e., side channel, main channel elements, and left bank riparian and bank complexity) achieve the project goals and objectives. Members present agreed that the side channel and main channel elements were high priority; however, they reiterated their potential concern with the left bank riparian and bank stability element because that element may not be cost effective. That is, members present agree that the element will have some biological benefit; however, the cost of the action may not justify the biological benefit. That said, the benefit will be larger if the wood structures function at all flows. Luke noted that the structures will be connected and will function at all flows. He also noted that these structures are not needed to maintain the downstream restoration elements.

Chris Johnson asked if the Committee would support changes to the left bank riparian and bank complexity restoration element if the cost of the treatment could be reduced by eliminating point complexity wood features or if the cost of the treatment could be reduced by decreasing the size of the point complexity wood features. Members present indicated that reducing the cost of the treatment would make the element more cost effective. Steve Kolk asked if the Committee does not like the upstream (left bank riparian and bank complexity) element, would they refuse funding for the entire Eagle Rocks project. The Committee said no. The Committee may elect to fund certain elements of the restoration project. In their funding agreement with the sponsor, the Committee will make it clear which elements would be supported with Plan Species Account Funds. Currently, the Committee would like to see the sponsor move forward with at least the lower two elements (split flow elements) provided the split channels are watered at all flows. Steve reminded the Committee that developing designs for restoration elements is very expensive and they do not want to spend additional resources on elements the Committee will later decide they do not want to support.

Chris Johnson and Steve Kolk indicated they will provide the Committee with a detailed line-item budget. This will reflect the cost of each restoration element currently proposed.

Chris Johnson thanked the Committee for the additional information.

IX. Information Updates

The following information updates were provided during the meeting.

1. Approved Payment Requests received in July and August 2022:
Rock Island Plan Species Account:

- \$157.50 to Clifton Larson Allen for Rock Island financial administration in July 2022.

Rocky Reach Plan Species Account:

- \$157.50 to Clifton Larson Allen for Rocky Reach financial administration in July 2022.
- \$16,351.24 to Cascadia Conservation District for work on the Chumstick Baseflow and Riparian Enhancement Project.
- \$11,873.24 to Cascade Fisheries for work on the Peshastin RM 2.5 Project.

Wells Plan Species Account:

- \$4,289.11 to the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation for work on the Methow Thermal Refugia Restoration Project.
- \$3,297.97 to Cascade Fisheries for work on the Mission Project Wood Amendment Project.

2. Tom Kahler reported that the Committees conducted an evaluation of the Tributary Committees Chair. According to the HCPs, the Committees are required to evaluate the Chair every three years. Tom said all members provided only positive feedback and recommended that Tracy Hillman continue as Chair of the Tributary Committees for another three years. Tracy agreed to continue Chairing the Tributary Committees for another three years. He thanked the Committees for their feedback.
3. Tracy Hillman shared with the Committees that they may receive cost-share requests from sponsors submitting applications under the Salmon Recovery Funding Board Large Cap Grant Round. The Upper Columbia was given \$4,794,000 for project-ready enhancement projects. The total request must be no less than \$5M; therefore, sponsors will need to identify cost shares to qualify for the Large Cap Grant funds. During the Upper Columbia Regional Technical Team meeting yesterday, sponsors provided an overview of the four projects that will likely be submitted. The Yakama Nation will submit their Nason Creek and Re-alignment of State Route 207 Project. Chelan County will submit the Icicle and Peshastin Irrigation Districts Instream Flow Improvement Project and the Wenatchee-Chiwawa Irrigation District Instream Flow Improvement Project. Finally, the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation will submit their Sugar Reach Channel Reconnections Project. Tracy said he will forward to the Committees any applications that include the Tributary Committees as a cost share. These applications will be reviewed during the September meeting.
4. Tracy Hillman reminded the Committees that the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) has scheduled a site visit for the HCP Tributary Committees and the PRCC Habitat Subcommittee for 12-13 October 2022.

X. Next Steps

The next meeting of the Tributary Committees will be on 8 September 2022.

Meeting notes submitted by Tracy Hillman (tracy.hillman@bioanalysts.net).