# Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island HCP Tributary Committees Notes 11 April 2024

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

**Members Absent:** Justin Yeager (NOAA Fisheries).[1]

**Others Present:** Becky Sadler (Tributary Project Coordinator) and Dave Duvall (Grant PUD). Tara Gregg (MSRF), Chris Johnson (MSRF), Jessica Goldberg (MSRF), Camden Shaw (MSRF), Steve Kolk (BOR), Chris Cuhaciyan (BOR), Mike Rafferty (Inter-Fluve), and Luke Swan (Inter-Fluve) joined the Eagle Rocks discussion. Jason Lundgren (Cascade Fisheries), Aaron Rosenblum (Cascade Fisheries), Steve Rodrigues (Wolf Water Resources), Glen Leverich (Wolf Water Resources), and Brooke Bennett (Wolf Water Resources) joined the Goodwin Side Channel and Peshastin RM 2.5 discussions. Deanne Pavlik-Kunkel (Grant PUD) and Nathan Buck (Wanapum) join the Peshastin RM 2.5 and Environmental Flows Conference discussions.

The Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island Hydroelectric Projects Habitat Conservation Plans Tributary Committees held a conference call on Thursday, 11 April 2024 from 9:00 am to 12:30 pm.

## I. Welcome and Introductions

Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the HCP Tributary Committees (Committees) meeting.

## II. Review and Adopt April Agenda

Members of the Committees reviewed and adopted the proposed agenda.

## III. Review and Approval of the March Meeting Minutes

The draft 14 March 2024 meeting notes were reviewed and approved by the Tributary Committees.

## IV. Monthly Update on Ongoing Projects

Becky Sadler gave an update on funded projects. Most are progressing well or had no salient activity in the past month.

- Johnson Creek Habitat Restoration Project – The sponsor (Trout Unlimited; TU) reported that fabrication began on the footings and precast box culvert. The fabricator plans to complete the culvert by mid-May. The sponsor continues to coordinate with the project team.

[1] Justin Yeager provided his votes on decision items after the meeting.

- Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project – The sponsor (TU) reported that they continue to work on the final plan set and bid documents throughout March. The bid solicitation was delayed to the second week of April due to changes to the plan set. The sponsor has also received notice that they have been selected for two additional grants and these will put them closer to the engineer's cost estimate. They will apply for another grant in April to fill the funding gap. Work continues on the Jones Shotwell Ditch Company water right change application and Record of Examination.
- Nason Kahler Instream Complexity Phase II Project – The sponsor (Chelan County Natural Resources Department; CCNRD) reported no new activity on this project. Fieldwork will begin during the in-water work window in 2024.
- Wenatchee Entiat Beaver-Powered Restoration Project – The sponsor (TU) reported no new activity on this project. They are on track for implementation in Potato Creek this summer.
- Thirteen Fish Passage Designs Project – The sponsor (Cascade Fisheries; CF) reported that the 60% design is complete.
- Peshastin Creek RM 2.5 Project – The sponsor (CF) reported that in March they met with two neighboring landowners. This was to explore the idea of creating construction access across their property. The sponsor has been coordinating with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) on the design. WSDOT has been responsive and helpful. A site visit was held with WDFW on 19 March to work through questions and design suggestions.
- Level II Surveys in Priority Reaches Project – The sponsor (CF) did not provide an update on this project.
- Goodwin Side Channel Design Project – The sponsor (CF) reported that the 30% design is complete. The design, wetland delineation report, and Basis of Design Report have been uploaded to the Extranet site.
- M2@3R Project to Advance Preferred Concepts – The sponsor (Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation; MSRF) reported that they are working on responses to the Tributary Committee's comments on the 60% design.
- Entiat Tributary Baseflow Project – The sponsor (Cascadia Conservation District; CCD) reported no new activity on this project. Stormy Creek implementation is planned for late July.
- Twisp to Carlton Reach Side Channel Project – The sponsor (CF) reported that they continue to meet with landowners and have also shared their concept with WDFW. The sponsor is waiting on additional feedback from WDFW before pursuing funding for the next phase of design.
- COIC Flow Restoration Project – The sponsor (CCNRD) did not provide an update on this project.
- East Fork Mission Creek Stream Restoration Project – The sponsor (CCNRD) reported that they are working with Natural Systems Design to develop a construction support contract.
- Lower Chiwaukum Creek Restoration Project – The sponsor (CF) did not provide an update on this project.
- Wilson Side Channel Adaptive Management Project – The sponsor (CCNRD) reported that there was no new activity on this project. Their consultant, Natural Systems Design, continues to work on digital modeling and draft conceptual designs.

- Floodplain Restoration Monitoring Project – The sponsor (Hinchinbrook, Inc.) reported that they continue operation of the PIT-tag monitoring system at the engineered log jam (ELJ) in Stormy Creek. They completed winter sampling in March. The final report will be submitted soon.
- Nason Creek RM 12 Final Design Project – The sponsor (CCNRD) reported that they secured an agreement with Chelan-Douglas Land Trust (CDLT) that defines their relationship for the upcoming work and provides a mechanism to reimburse CDLT for their participation in this phase of the project. The sponsor has also been in communication with the design engineers and initiated work on final restoration designs, floodplain permitting, wetland delineation, and reporting.
- Enloe Dam Feasibility Study Hydraulic Modeling Project – The sponsor (TU) reported that data review from the feasibility study continues with project partners including Okanogan PUD, USGS, CTCR, Ecology, and others.
- Mission Creek Protection Project – The sponsor (Chelan Douglas Land Trust; CDLT) did not provide an update on this project.
- Chewuch Acquisition RM 2.8-3.1 Project – The sponsor (MSRF) reported that the appraisal is complete and was reviewed and accepted by the seller.
- Goat Creek Fan Restoration Final Design Project – The sponsor (CF) reported that they are working on the 60% design. The cultural resource survey and wetland delineation will occur this spring.
- Salmon Creek Fish Screen Survey Project – This project is complete. The final report will be submitted soon.
- Floodplain Restoration Monitoring (Year 2) Project – Tributary Committee/Sponsor Agreement has been signed.

## V. Budget Amendment

**Wenatchee-Entiat Beaver-Powered Restoration Project**

The Rocky Reach Tributary Committee received a budget amendment request from Trout Unlimited on the Wenatchee-Entiat Beaver-Powered Restoration Project. The sponsor indicated that because they will not use all the Contract Labor funds, they would like to move $12,000 from the Contract Labor line item to Sponsor Salaries and Benefits. In addition, they would like to move $12,000 from Other Salaries and Benefits to Sponsor Salaries and Benefits. The sponsor did not request additional funds for this project. After review, the Rocky Reach Tributary Committee approved the budget amendment. The total budget for the project will not change as a result of this amendment.

## VI. Scope Change

**Entiat Tributary Baseflow Habitat Restoration Project**

The Rock Island Tributary Committee received a scope change request from Cascadia Conservation District on the Entiat Tributary Baseflow Habitat Restoration Project. The Committee understands that based on a recommendation from WDFW biologists, the sponsor would like to include the use of a griphoist to help form large wood jams. This will in part replace the use of wooden posts, which cannot be pounded into bedrock or hard-stone substrates. After review, the Rock Island Tributary Committee approved the scope change.

## VII. Eagle Rocks Project Presentation and Discussion

Tara Gregg (MSRF), Chris Johnson (MSRF), Jessica Goldberg (MSRF), Camden Shaw (MSRF), Steve Kolk (BOR), Chris Cuhaciyan (BOR), Mike Rafferty (Inter-Fluve), and Luke Swan (Inter-Fluve) joined the meeting to discuss the Eagle Rocks Project on the Methow River. The purpose of the presentation was to update the Committees on the draft final design and determine the Committees' interest in funding the construction of the project.

Tara began the presentation (Attachment 1) by describing the goal of the proposed project, which is to improve habitat conditions for juvenile Chinook Salmon and steelhead. This will be accomplished by increasing instream large wood complexity during low to midrange flows, increasing floodplain and side channel connectivity during high to midrange flows, and improving riparian conditions. Tara compared flow conditions in the Methow River with Chinook Salmon life cycle timing. She then described the proposed actions within the upper and lower worksites in the Eagle Rocks project area. At the upper worksite, based on feedback from the Committees, they propose to increase habitat complexity in the mainstem, increase refuge habitat during high to midrange flows, and improve long-term riparian conditions. At the lower worksite, based on feedback from the Committees, they propose to increase habitat complexity in the mainstem split flow channel, increase refuge habitat during high to midrange flows, and improve long-term riparian conditions. Across the two worksites, they will install 18 large wood structures, add 4.0 acres of refuge habitat, and restore 1.3 acres of riparian habitat. The total cost of the proposed work is $1.4M, which includes a 10% contingency in alignment with preliminary design cost estimate standards and 8.4% tax. Tara concluded by stating that the draft final designs address comments from the Committees on earlier designs. She then asked the Committees whether they had any questions or comments on the draft final design and whether they would be willing to fund the implementation of the project.

Members did not have any questions or comments on the draft final design. Tracy indicated that the sponsor will need to submit an application for funding construction and implementation. Steve Kolk asked the Committees whether they see any fatal flaws in the proposed project. Tracy indicated that the Committees have reviewed earlier designs and identified no fatal flaws during those reviews. Indeed, the Committees supported the advancement of the designs. Tracy reviewed the comments provided by the Committees last year on the 60% design. Concerns raised by the Committees last year appear to have been addressed. Luke indicated that the apex jam is designed to shed wood and recreationists and therefore should not plug the side channel, which was a concern raised by the Committees last year. In addition, he noted that the wood structures along the stream margins are designed to collect wood, which was a recommendation by the Committees last year. Finally, as recommended by the Committees, the sponsor is going as heavy as they can on riparian restoration work without increasing risks to landowners. With no further questions or comments, the Tributary Committees thanked MSRF and their consultants for the presentation and discussion.

Following the presentation, the Committees discussed their interest in funding the project. They agreed that there are no fatal flaws in the proposed design and indicated that the project is fundable. Based on a discussion with the Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee (PRCC) Habitat Subcommittee, the Committees recommended that the sponsor seek two-thirds of the funding from the Tributary Committees and one-third from the PRCC Habitat Subcommittee. They directed Tracy to relay this information to the sponsor.

## VIII. Goodwin Side Channel Project Presentation and Discussion

Aaron Rosenblum (Cascade Fisheries), Jason Lundgren (Cascade Fisheries), Steve Rodriguez (Wolf Water Resources), Glen Leverich (Wolf Water Resources), and Brooke Bennett (Wolf Water Resources) joined the meeting to discuss the Goodwin Side Channel Preliminary (30%) Designs. The purpose of the

presentation was to provide an update to the Rock Island Tributary Committee on the 30% designs and seek feedback from the Committees on the project.

Aaron began the presentation (Attachment 2) by briefly describing the location and purpose of the project, which is to reconnect floodplain and side-channel habitat within the lower Wenatchee River. He said this is the same presentation he gave to the Upper Columbia Regional Technical Team (UCRTT) yesterday. He noted that currently 54% of the floodplain is disconnected and there is no off-channel habitat within the reach. He also noted that summer and winter rearing habitat for Chinook Salmon and steelhead is lacking in this reach. He then identified the data that have collected at this site, including groundwater levels and temperatures; surface water levels and temperatures; topo surveys; mainstem discharge, temperatures, and water levels; fish surveys; dissolved oxygen levels; and habitat quality. Most of this work was funded by the Tributary Committee. Based on this work, he stated that the floodplain is connected at about 8,000 cfs and is connected on average about 36 days per year. He noted that the side channel is connected to groundwater, groundwater temperatures are moderated compared to surface water temperatures, and riparian vegetation is good in some areas and poor in other areas.

Aaron then identified the design goals, which are to: (1) improve rearing habitat in the side channel by increasing connection to groundwater, (2) enhance floodplain and side channel function through improved connections with the river while taking advantage of the benefits provided by groundwater inflow, (3) promote native wood vegetation cover throughout the floodplain by planting where current reed canary grass patches exist and preserving existing mature native vegetation, and (4) increase large woody material cover and habitat complexity. He described the existing conditions at the site and showed the evolution of the site over time (1949 to present) and noted that the mainstem has been locked in place for several decades. He then described the three alternatives and noted that the Committees identified the third alternative as the preferred because it is the most intensive and would have the largest biological benefit. He walked the Committees through the design elements under alternative 3 and showed the modeled effects of different flows on the side channel and floodplain. He stated that they want the side channel to be activated at the 50% exceedance flow (1,810 cfs) and want to make sure the side channel is available to fish for winter rearing.

Aaron noted that a large recreation community is active in this reach of the Wenatchee River. He identified the Turkey Shoot Play Wave located about 1,000 feet upstream from that project site that is a popular area with recreationists. He added that Inter-Fluve will evaluate recreation in this area and will determine the effects of the proposed action on recreation. He said initial feedback from Inter-Fluve is the proposed project should not be a recreational concern. Aaron said the 30% design construction cost estimate is $1,658,280. He ended his presentation by identifying the next steps. Those include: (1) hold a site visit with regulatory agencies, (2) conduct cultural resources work, (3) prepare 60% designs, (4) complete river recreation analysis and design audit, and (5) submit permits this fall. He asked whether the Committees are comfortable with the target activation flows, whether there is enough benefit per cost to keep floodplain roughness features, and whether the Committees have anything to add to improve biological benefit.

Kate Terrell asked whether Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) will require protecting the wetland, which is manmade. Aaron indicated that the wetland may not be an issue with Ecology but it could be an issue with the Army Corps of Engineers. If it is not a regulatory issue, they intend to put some of the spoils into the depression. Kate asked whether they are coordinating and communicating with WSDOT. Aaron said yes. The only issue WSDOT has identified is that large trees should not be planted next to the road. WSDOT does not want trees falling on the road. Tom Kahler asked whether there is some certainty that the proposed restoration elements can be implemented at this site and that they will remain there for a long period of time. Glen and Steve responded that they are trying to design the project to work with the river. They do not want to diminish the good habitat that currently exists and they do not want to dilute the effects of the cold groundwater. They are trying to strike a balance between maintaining current features and adding additional features that will benefit target fish species. Although this is a

difficult balance, they believe they can accomplish this goal. Referring back to the UCRTT discussion yesterday, Tracy Hillman asked about the risk of an avulsion at this site. Glen indicated that the river has been fixed at this site for several decades. Based on the proposed design, there should be little concern about an avulsion.

With no further questions, the Tributary Committee thanked Cascade Fisheries and their consultants for the presentation and discussion.

The Rock Island Tributary Committee will review the 30% designs and provide comments to Tracy by Friday, 19 April. He will then compile their comments on the 30% design. Following review and approval of the comments by the Committee, Tracy will share them with Cascade Fisheries.

## IX. Peshastin Creek RM 2.5 Project Presentation and Discussion (with PRCC HabSC)

Jason Lundgren (Cascade Fisheries) and Aaron Rosenblum (Cascade Fisheries) joined the meeting to discuss the Peshastin Creek RM 2.5 Project. The purpose of the presentation was to inform the Committees on the status of the project and solicit feedback as the sponsor advances from preliminary to final designs.

Jason began his presentation (Attachment 3) by describing the history of the project and its location on Peshastin Creek. This project is primarily located on river right upstream from the Peshastin Irrigation Diversion near RM 2.5. Existing habitat conditions are poor within the reach. Peshastin Creek is artificially confined and lacks pools and large wood in this reach. About 66% of the floodplain is disconnected and there is little riparian vegetation along the stream. Both spawning and rearing habitat are lacking in this reach. Jason showed preliminary wetland boundaries at the project site.

Jason said the goals of this project are to: (1) increase late summer holding habitat for adult spring Chinook Salmon, (2) increase summer and winter rearing habitat for juvenile steelhead and spring Chinook Salmon, (3) reduce late summer stream temperatures, and (4) improve floodplain connectivity to increase water storage and improve riparian health. He then described the three alternatives and noted that the landowners and Committees identified the third alternative as the preferred approach because it is the most intensive and would have the largest biological benefit. The landowners, like the Committees, also want to protect the existing high-quality habitat at the site. Jason walked the Committees through the proposed design elements under alternative 3 and showed the modeled effects of the two-year flow (1,170 cfs) on the side channels and floodplain. He also identified the design revisions since the last meeting with the Tributary Committees. This project will enhance about 2,000 feet of mainstem habitat, open 1,509 feet of side channel, restore 4.5 acres of floodplain habitat, install 14 log jams and associated mainstem pools, improve 2.5 acres of riparian habitat, and improve groundwater connectivity. Jason asked the Committees whether they have any questions, comments, or suggestions.

Kate Terrel asked whether WSDOT is okay with the work proposed on river left next to the highway. Jason said WSDOT is okay with the project as proposed. Kate asked about the depth of the excavated side channels. Jason responded that they will likely be about 8-feet deep. This is necessary to intercept groundwater. Brandon Rogers recommended they evaluate the level of the groundwater at this site. Tracy Hillman recalled from the UCRTT evaluation of the pre-proposal for this project that some UCRTT members questioned whether the project could be bigger. Tom Kahler asked what was meant by "bigger?" Tracy believed the suggestion was to activate a larger proportion of the floodplain. Jason indicated that it may be difficult to go bigger with this project. There are potential issues with downstream expansion and connection with Peshastin Creek. In addition, it may preclude the project from being implemented in 2025 as planned.

With no further questions, the Tributary Committees thanked Cascade Fisheries for the presentation and discussion.

The Rock Island and Rocky Reach Tributary Committees will review the preliminary designs and provide comments to Tracy by Friday, 19 April. He will then compile their comments on the preliminary design. Following review and approval of the comments by the Committees, Tracy will share them with Cascade Fisheries.

## X. Environmental Flows Conference in B.C. (with PRCC HabSC)

Chris Fisher provided a brief presentation (Attachment 4) on the Environmental Flows Conference held in Kelowna, British Columbia on 13-15 March 2024. Chris said the purpose of the conference/workshop was to address the balance needed for sustaining freshwater ecosystems. It provided an opportunity for various interest groups to understand the latest in environmental flow science, integrating perspectives across disciplines and communities for sustainable water management. Chris said the conference included presentations, collaboration sessions, and networking with water sustainability professionals. Chris shared the agenda for the conference and noted that there were presentations/discussions on policy, ecosystems, hydrology and licensing, environmental flow needs setting and methods, data collection and compliance, and land use and storage. In addition to case studies, they had breakout work sessions that included mapping trends and scenario planning. The "Trend Deck" included sessions on social, technology, environment, economic, political, and values. For example, under "Technical Trend," participants discussed the need for better data and better designs. Under "Values Trend," participants discussed future orientation (moving past the mindset of "what has always worked," into a culture of questioning, evolving, and innovating for future resilience). Participants identified future scenarios (i.e., slow evolution, transformed, constrained, or collapse) for policy, ecosystems, hydrology and licensing, environmental flow needs setting and methods, land use and storage, and data collection.

Chris shared some of the results from various studies presented during the conference that have relevance to the Tributary Committees and PRCC Habitat Subcommittee. He said the Similkameen Basin Hydrologic Model work conducted by Northwest Hydraulic Consultants is relevant to the restoration of the Similkameen River. The work shows projected changes in the hydrologic regime for the Similkameen River near Nighthawk, Washington. Over time, the projected flows during spring will dampen and flatten out, while flows during fall and winter will increase. The increased flows during fall and winter could potentially improve adult steelhead passage in the Similkameen River once the dam is removed. Chris also highlighted the work by Jeff Fryer on fish passage at Zosel Dam. Chris said this is the only dam owned by Ecology and it affects fish passage in the Okanogan River. There is no cold water at the dam and fish have a hard time finding the fishways. He said removing the dam or improving passage at the dam should improve the passage of Sockeye Salmon, Chinook Salmon, and steelhead into Canada.

Chris concluded by stating that the conference forced people to think about current and future water issues. In light of increasing land uses in the Okanagan Basin and the projected effects of climate change on water resources, there is a need to manage water among several interest groups. Considering water demands (trends) and future scenarios was a critical component of the conference.

The Committees thanked Chris for sharing information from the Environmental Flows Conference.

## XI. Information Updates

The following information updates were provided during the meeting.

1. Approved Payment Requests received in March and April 2024:

   Rock Island Plan Species Account:

   - $367.50 to Clifton Larson Allen for Rock Island financial administration in March 2024.

- $1,754.37 to Chelan PUD for Rock Island project coordination and administration during the first quarter of 2024.
- $3,545.39 to Cascadia Conservation District on the Entiat Tributary Baseflow Habitat Restoration Project.

Rocky Reach Plan Species Account:

- $367.50 to Clifton Larson Allen for Rocky Reach financial administration in March 2024.
- $1,928.39 to Chelan PUD for Rocky Reach project coordination and administration during the first quarter of 2024.
- $3,179.75 to Cascade Fisheries for work on the Peshastin Creek RM 2.5 Project.
- $6,770.30 to the Chelan County Treasurer for work on the Wilson Side Channel Adaptive Management Project.
- $15,424.59 to Hinchinbrook, Inc. for work on the Floodplain Restoration Monitoring Project.
- $7,387.46 to Trout Unlimited for work on the Wenatchee-Entiat Beaver Powered Restoration Project.

Wells Plan Species Account:

- $675.66 to Chelan PUD for Wells project coordination and administration during the first quarter of 2024.
- $23,396.25 to Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation for work on the M2@3R Proposal to Advance Preferred Concepts Project.
- $2,144.26 to Cascade Fisheries for work on the Goat Creek Fan Restoration Final Design Project.
- $7,000.00 to Pacific Appraisal Associates for the Chewuch Acquisition Project.
- $24,455.00 to Okanogan Irrigation District and RSI Resource Specialist for work on the OID Fish Screen Survey and Preliminary Design Project.

2. Tracy Hillman shared with the Tributary Committees the updated project worksheets. These worksheets now show all the applications received by the HCP Tributary Committees, including projects funded and those not funded by the Committees. In addition, the spreadsheets provide summaries of the number of projects funded relative to the number of applications received each year since 2005. In general, the proportion of applications funded has increased over time. On average, about 60% of the applications received each year were funded by the Tributary Committees (range: 0% to 93%). In addition, the Tributary Committees have received an average of 16 applications per year (range: 8 to 30). In most years, the number of applications funded by the Tributary Committees was greater than the number of proposals rejected by the Committees.

   Tracy thanked Becky Sadler for digging through all the annual reports and compiling information on all the applications received by the Tributary Committees over the years. Tracy will send the updated Project List to the Tributary Committees.

3. Tracy Hillman reviewed the Salmon Recovery Funding Board/Tributary Committees proposed schedule for 2024. Important dates are noted below:

   - Completed Draft Applications Due: 19 April 2024

- Site Visits: 6-9 May 2024
- Committees Review Draft Applications: 9 May 2024
- Final Application Due: 24 May 2024
- Committees Review Final Applications: 13 June 2024

## XII. Next Steps

The next meeting of the Tributary Committees will be on 9 May 2024. The Tributary Committees will join the Upper Columbia Regional Technical Team for site visits on 6-8 May. The Tributary Committees will meet in-person on 9 May.

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