

Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island HCP Tributary Committees Notes 12 May 2016

Members Present: Lee Carlson (Yakama Nation), Jeremy Cram (WDFW), Steve Hays (Chelan PUD), Tom Kahler (Douglas PUD), Kate Terrell (USFWS), Justin Yeager (NOAA Fisheries), and Tracy Hillman (Committees Chair).

Members Absent: Chris Fisher (Colville Tribes).¹

Others Present: Becky Gallaher (Tributary Project Coordinator).

The Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island Hydroelectric Projects Habitat Conservation Plans Tributary Committees met at Grant PUD in Wenatchee, Washington, on Thursday, 12 May 2016 from 10:00 am to 12:20 pm.

I. Review and Adopt Agenda

Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the meeting and the Committees adopted the proposed agenda.

II. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

The Committees reviewed and approved the 14 April 2016 meeting notes with edits.

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.

- MVID Instream Flow Improvement Project – The project sponsor (Trout Unlimited; TU) reported on the phases of the project that are still active. With regard to production wells, punch list items have been completed and startup and commission of the pump station was performed on 18 April. The pump station performed as engineered. The E2-E5 laterals are up and running and working as designed. The only item left to complete on the E2-E5 laterals is pressure testing, which will be conducted by Lloyd Logging. The Westside piping punch list items have been completed and a pressure test of the Westside pipe was conducted. All sections passed the pressure test and the system started operating on 18 April. Westside tree removal is complete; brush cleanup is ongoing. Only two individual wells are left to be drilled. On one site, they have drilled three wells and have not yet found enough water to fill the landowner's water right. On another parcel, power is over a mile away from the proposed well site. The sponsor is looking at other alternatives.
- Twisp-to-Carlton Reach Assessment Project – This project is complete. The sponsor (Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group; CCFEG) will submit a final report soon.
- Entiat Stillwaters Gray Reach Acquisition – The sponsor (Chelan-Douglas Land Trust; CDLT) asked the Rocky Reach Tributary Committee for a time extension on this project. In order to

¹ Chris provided his votes on decision items before the meeting.

continue working with two property owners, the sponsor asked to extend the project to 31 March 2017. *The Rocky Reach Tributary Committee approved the time extension.*

- Clear Creek Fish Passage and Instream Flow Project – In April, the sponsor (TU) continued evaluating secondary well locations. Several sites were evaluated and one was selected for ground penetrating radar (GPR) analysis, which was conducted on 27 April. A full hydrogeological/GPR report is expected by mid-May.
- Barkley Irrigation – Under Pressure Project – In April, the sponsor (TU) worked on the 30% design and reinitiated permits that were submitted last May but needed to be changed because of the relocation of the point of diversion. The sponsor is working with Okanogan County on the SEPA determination and anticipates DNS the first week of May. Cultural Resources is currently under review and the water rights processing is ongoing. The sponsor is also working with several funders to try and secure money for remaining construction needs.
- Methow Watershed Beaver Reintroduction Project – The sponsor (Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation; MSRF) began 2016 work on 20 April.
- Similkameen RM 3.8 Project – The project sponsor (Okanogan Conservation District) did not provide an update on this project.
- White River Floodplain (RM 3.4) Connection Project – The sponsor (CCFEG) did not provide an update on this project.
- M2 Sugar Acquisition Project – The sponsor (MSRF) reported that the appraisal has been reviewed. The project will close on 13 May.
- Icicle Boulder Field Project – The sponsor (TU) and their consultant identified a preferred design option and will send it to the Technical Advisory Committee in early May as part of the final design report review. The Tributary Committees/Sponsor Agreement is ready for Tributary Committee signature.
- Peshastin Creek RM 10.5 PIT-Tag Detection Site Project – The sponsor (WDFW) did not provide an update on this project. The Tributary Committees/Sponsor Agreement is ready for Tributary Committee signature. The Rock Island Tributary Committee agreed that WDFW will submit annual reports to the Committee each year by 31 December.
- Permitting Nutrient Enhancement Project – The sponsor (CCFEG) did not provide an update on this project.

IV. General Salmon Habitat Program Draft Proposals

The Committees received 14 General Salmon Habitat Program draft proposals. The Committees reviewed each draft proposal and selected those that they believe warranted a final proposal. Projects that the Committees dismissed were either inconsistent with the intent of the Tributary Fund, did not have strong technical merit, or had low benefits per cost. The Committees assigned draft proposals to one of two categories: Fundable and Not Fundable. It is important to note that these are ratings of draft proposals and do not reflect ratings of final proposals. The Committees directed Tracy Hillman to notify sponsors with appropriate projects to submit a final proposal, with a discussion of the questions/comments identified for each draft proposal listed below. Tracy will also notify sponsors with projects that have no chance or a low likelihood of receiving funding from the Tributary Committees.

Silver Side Channel Acquisition Project (Fundable)

The Committees recommend that the project sponsor (Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation) address the following comment/suggestion as they develop the final proposal:

- The sponsor needs to indicate in the final proposal that the existing restoration design will be used if the property is acquired. The Committees and others have provided extensive technical input on the current design and they see no need to redesign the restoration actions for the side channel.
- Sponsor needs to include language in the proposal indicating that MSRF will return funds from the sale of the uplands to the funding entities.
- Sponsor should describe the water rights associated with the property and what they intend to do with the rights.

Twisp River Floodplain Lower Acquisition Phase II Project (Fundable)

The Committees recommend that the project sponsor (Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation) address the following comment/suggestion as they develop the final proposal:

- The Committees are only interested in supporting this project if the owner vacates the property. The Committees are not interested in a period of continued tenancy by the owner.
- The sponsor should include the relocation of the home sites as an option to recover costs of the acquisition.
- Sponsor should describe the water rights associated with the property and what they intend to do with the rights.

Burns-Garrity Floodplain Restoration Alternative Analysis and Design Project (Fundable)

The Committees recommend that the project sponsor (Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group) address the following comment/suggestion as they develop the full proposal:

- The sponsor should remove the groundwater-driven side channel concept and focus on reconnecting the channel to the mainstem.
- The Committees are concerned with the cost of the proposal. The sponsor needs to identify ways to reduce the cost. One option is to forego the alternative analysis. In this case, the Committees do not see a need for alternative analyses.

Upper Okanogan-Similkameen Floodplain Assessment Project (Not Fundable)

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by Okanogan Conservation District, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reasons:

- The Committees believe that the scope of the project is too large and that there are limited opportunities to reconnect the floodplain with the channel. The sponsor should focus their efforts on those areas that provide cost-effective restoration opportunities.

Beaver Fever – Restoring Ecosystem Function Project (Fundable)

The Committees recommend that the project sponsor (Trout Unlimited) address the following comment/suggestion as they develop the full proposal:

- The Committees believe the cost of the proposed project is excessive. The sponsor needs to find ways to reduce the total cost of the project.
- The sponsor needs to provide more information on BRAT. For example, what factors are included in the model and how much weighting is given to each factor?
- The should consider greater use of BDAs.

Upper Peshastin Flow Attenuation Project (Not Fundable)

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by Chelan County Natural Resources Department, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reasons:

- The Committees believe that the project will have limited biological benefit because of the small number of trees added over a seven-mile reach. They also question why trees cut by the Forest Service during thinning along Peshastin Creek would not be used in the project. Although the trees from Nason Creek are free, it is still expensive to handle and transport them to Peshastin Creek. Finally, the Committees believe the costs for project management, project administration, stakeholder coordination and outreach, and conceptual designs are excessive for this project and the extensive technical support from Scott Nicolai is questionable.

Thermal Refuge in the Wenatchee Basin Project (Not Fundable)

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by Chelan County Natural Resources Department, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reasons:

- Although the Committees see value in identifying thermal refuge in the upper Wenatchee River basin, they believe the approach may not be the best approach for identifying cold-water areas. Collecting FLIR imaging may be more appropriate during autumn or early winter, prior to icing. In addition, it is not clear what actions could be implemented to increase or protect thermal refuge.

Nason Creek RM 2.3 Side Channel Reconnection Design Project (Fundable)

The Committees recommend that the project sponsor (Chelan County Natural Resources Department) address the following comments/suggestions as they develop the full proposal:

- The sponsor should consider a design/build project. A design is appropriate for the upper connection; no design is needed for the lower connection.
- The Committees believe the cost of the proposed project is excessive. For example, the sum of project management, project administration, stakeholder coordination and outreach, wetland delineation, surveying, and indirect costs are excessive for this project. The Committees question why wetland delineation and stakeholder coordination and outreach are necessary. The sponsor needs to find ways to reduce the total cost of the project.

Peshastin Creek Barrier Removal Project (Not Fundable)

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by Chelan County Natural Resources Department, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reasons:

- The Committees believe the Forest Service is responsible for replacing the culvert. In addition, the culvert is not a passage barrier and therefore there is no biological benefit associated with replacing the culvert at this time.

Peshastin Irrigation District Pump Exchange Project, Conceptual Design (Not Fundable)

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by Chelan County Natural Resources Department, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reasons:

- The Committees would like to see no water diverted from Peshastin Creek. They also believe the project is too expensive for a “conceptual design” and that the pumping duration is too short. In addition, it is not clear what part of the delivery system is piped, concrete lined, or dirt lined. The Committees also asked if irrigators will pay for any of the pumping costs.

Nason Creek Lower White Pine Floodplain Acquisition Project (Not Fundable)

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by Chelan-Douglas Land Trust, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reasons:

- The Committees believe that sale of the property will be hindered because of the powerlines. In addition, there are few opportunities to restore aquatic habitat on the property.

Wenatchee Sleepy Hollow Floodplain Acquisition Project (Fundable)

The Committees recommend that the project sponsor (Chelan-Douglas Land Trust) submit a full proposal.

Native Fish Task Force Project (Not Fundable)

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reasons:

- The Committees believe that this project will provide little to no benefit to HCP Plan Species, because most of the actions will occur outside the distribution of Plan Species.

Restore Peshastin Creek Confluence Project (Not Fundable)

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reasons:

- The Committees believe that the cost of the project greatly exceeds the benefits. They believe the cost of the project could be reduced significantly if actions are take that do not require the relocation of the road and powerlines.

V. General Salmon Habitat Program Application

Leavenworth Diversion Screening Project

The Committees reviewed a General Salmon Habitat Program application from Trout Unlimited titled *Leavenworth Diversion Screening Project*. The purpose of the project is to install a NMFS-compliant fish screen on the City of Leavenworth Icicle Creek Diversion to prevent salmonid entrainment. The diversion is located at RM 5.7 on Icicle Creek upstream from the boulder field. The total cost of the project is \$161,654.28. The sponsor requested \$130,255.28 from HCP Tributary Funds. After careful consideration, the Committees were unable to reach a funding decision. The Committees were surprised that the City of Leavenworth was not contributing financially to the project and asked that the sponsor seek some level of funding (match) from the City. The Committees recommended that the City contribute up to about 25% of the total cost. The Committees will revisit the proposal after the sponsor responds to the Committees' request.

VI. Information Updates

The following information updates were provided during the meeting.

1. Approved Payment Requests in April and May:

Rock Island Plan Species Account:

- \$136.00 to Clifton Larson Allen for Rock Island financial administration in April 2016.

Rocky Reach Plan Species Account:

- \$136.00 to Clifton Larson Allen for Rocky Reach financial administration in April 2016.

Wells Plan Species Account:

- \$37,814.06 to Trout Unlimited for the MVID Instream Flow Improvement Project.
 - \$15,185.00 to the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation for the M2 Sugar Acquisition Project. This includes a \$185.00 transaction fee.
 - \$780.00 to Valbridge Property Advisors for appraisal review on the M2 Sugar Acquisition Project.
2. Tracy Hillman shared with the Committees the Upper Columbia 2016 SRFB/TC Funding Schedule. Important dates are as follows:
 - 8 June: presentations to SRFB Review Panel (members of the Tributary Committees are encouraged to attend the presentations).
 - 1 July: final proposals are due.
 - 14 July: Tributary Committees review final proposals and make funding decisions.
 - 22 July: Tributary Committees provide feedback to the project sponsors.
 3. Becky Gallaher reported that Cordell, Neher & Company began auditing the Rock Island and Rocky Reach Plan Species Accounts. The accountants have provided a list of information they need from Becky in order to complete the audit.

VII. Next Steps

If necessary, the next meeting of the Tributary Committees will be on Thursday, 9 June 2016 at Grant PUD in Wenatchee. Project presentations will occur on 8 June 2016.

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