

# Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island HCP Tributary Committees Notes 8 May 2014

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

**Others Present:** Becky Gallaher (Tributary Project Coordinator).

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The Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island Hydroelectric Projects Habitat Conservation Plans Tributary Committees met in the Chelan PUD Auditorium in Wenatchee, Washington, on Thursday, 8 May 2014 from 10:00 am to 12:30 pm.

## **I. Review and Adopt Agenda**

Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the meeting and the Committees adopted the proposed agenda with the following addition:

- Methow Valley Irrigation District (MVID) Instream Flow Improvement Project.

## **II. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes**

The Committees reviewed and approved the 10 April 2014 meeting notes.

## **III. Monthly Update on Ongoing Projects**

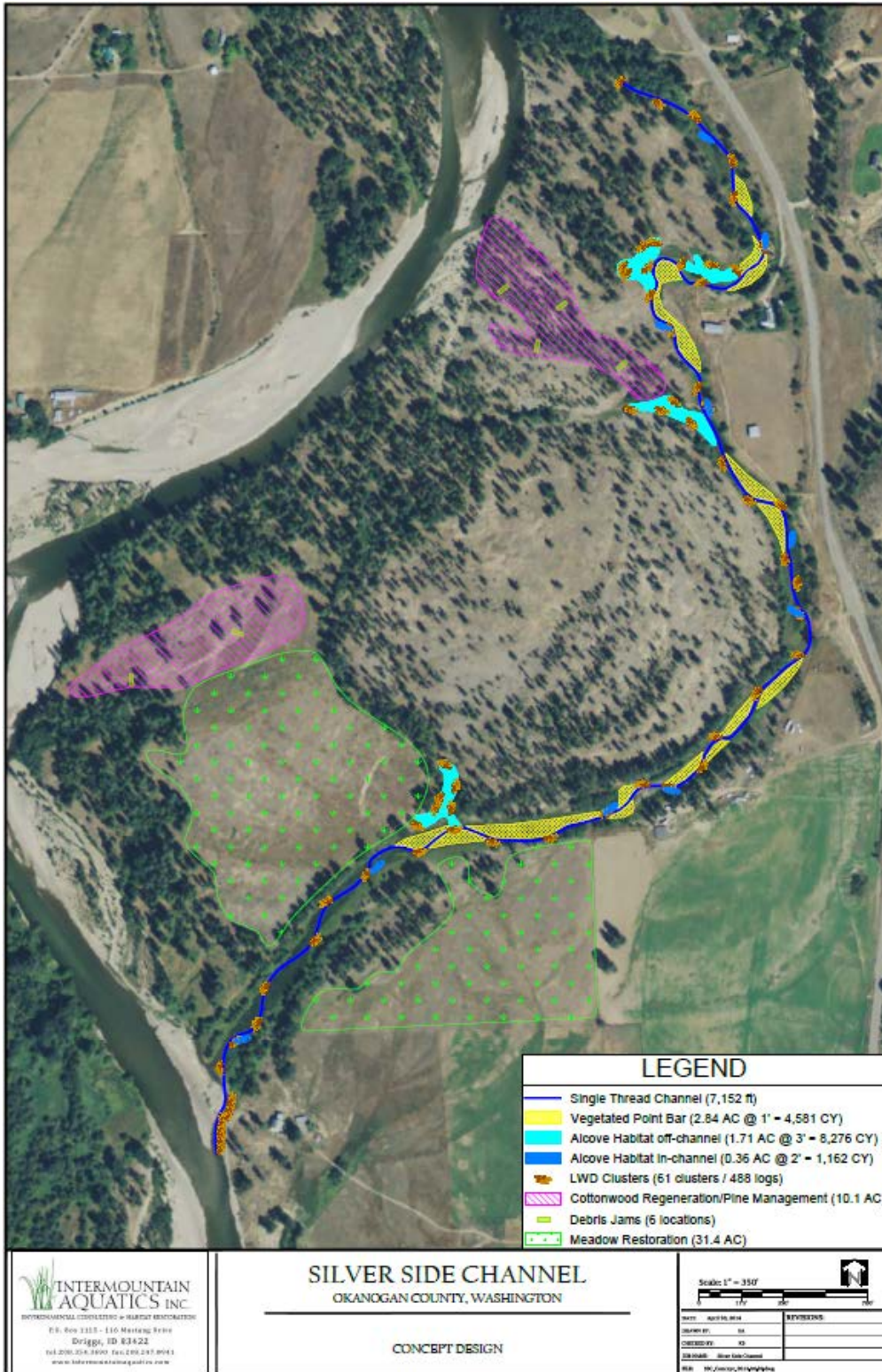
Becky Gallaher gave an update on funded projects. Most are progressing well or had no salient activity in the past month.

- Nason Creek Upper White Pine Reconnection – The 30% design has been completed for the restoration project and the sponsor (Chelan County Natural Resources Department; CCNRD) is working with stakeholders to obtain review comments that will be incorporated into the 60% design. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation will fund the remainder of the power-line design and will also fund the final design for the restoration project. The U.S. Forest Service is proceeding with NEPA, which should be completed by the end of 2014. The sponsor has secured \$780,000 from Ecology to help with construction. Becky noted that representatives from BPA will tour the project site on Monday, 12 May. Kate Terrell indicated that there are concerns that potential benefits of the project will not justify the cost as the project is currently designed. Copies of the following documents are available upon request: PUD transmission line relocation Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), preliminary 30% design drawings, and 30% design discussion items and updated construction costs memo. The Rock Island Tributary Committee asked to see the MOU. Tracy Hillman will forward the MOU to the Committee.
- Chewuch River Instream Flow Project – The project is complete and the sponsor (Trout Unlimited) will submit a final report soon.
- Nutrient Enhancement Assessment Project – PACE Engineering has completed a draft report on the Nutrient Enhancement Assessment. CWU has also completed a draft Executive Summary on

macroinvertebrate work. Based on recent communications with Ecology, the sponsor (Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group; CCFEG) plans to discuss the Chiwawa proposal with Ecology's "fish heads group" in mid-June and program managers this fall. The draft report is available upon request. The Rock Island Tributary Committee asked to see the draft report from PACE Engineering. Tracy Hillman will forward the draft report to the Committee.

- Large Wood Atonement Project – The Sponsor (CCFEG) received the exemption letter from Chelan County on 24 April. They now have most of the permits they need to move forward with the project. They are still waiting on a waiver from the Sherriff for the non-motorized law on the White River and an Aquatic Lease permit from Department of Natural Resources. Updated preliminary designs will be available next month.
- Silver Protection Project – Jeremy Cram reported that WDFW is currently waiting for the completion of the appraisal, which should be completed and reviewed by 23 May. After the appraisal is complete, WDFW will present it to the landowner and negotiate public access and limited grazing. Committee members voiced their concern about grazing and noted that they may want to pursue an acquisition rather than a conservation easement. Acquisition would require a change in the sponsor, because WDFW is unable to acquire lands in Okanogan County. Jeremy said he will provide an update during the next meeting.
- Coulter Creek Barrier Replacement Project – The project sponsor (CCNRD) provided no new update on this project.
- Wenatchee Levee Removal and Riparian Restoration Project – The project is complete and the sponsor (CCNRD) will submit a final report soon.
- Upper Beaver Habitat Improvement Channel Restoration Project – The project sponsor (Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation; MSRF) indicated that although snowmelt in March was more rapid than in prior months, it did not result in significantly elevated flows. Minor scour and erosion was apparent in the area where work was limited to avoid archaeological concerns. Visual monitoring efforts were expanded to include timed-camera installations at three locations. The cameras will document spring melt and any adverse effects that may occur. The sponsor reinitiated coordination with WDFW to schedule installation of the paddle-wheel screen and for removal of decommissioned equipment from the old ditch. This work was to be completed in advance of system turn-on (15 April).
- Shingle Creek Fish Passage Project – Chris Fisher reported that construction is scheduled to begin 15 July. Re-vegetation work will occur during autumn 2014. He also noted that their engineer may be taking another position, which could affect the implementation schedule. However, the engineer will try to see the project through to avoid delays.
- Methow/Chewuch Shallow Groundwater Monitoring Project – The sponsor (CCFEG) downloaded monitoring data from all three sites in March. Data loggers were left in place to continue collecting data. Aspect started analyzing the data collected from the Burns-Garrity site. Next steps include QA/QC of Lewisia Floodplain data. These data will then be given to MSRF. The Wells Tributary Committee directed Tracy Hillman to invite CCFEG (Matt Shales) to the June meeting to discuss their monitoring data and to present the concept design for the Silver Side Channel Design Project.
- MVID Instream Flow Improvement Project – No new update from the project sponsor (TU).
- Silver Side Channel Design Project – On 15 April, the sponsor (CCFEG) met with representatives from WDFW to discuss details of the conservation easement, conceptual design, and restoration goals. The issue of grazing was discussed, and apparently the landowner was trying to include "light grazing" on portions of the site. CCFEG and WDFW explained the consequences of

grazing and the negative effects on project success. Next steps include development of preliminary designs. The conceptual design is shown below.



- Twisp to Carlton Reach Assessment Project – The contractor, Cardno Entrix, began gathering background information on the project. Next steps include a kickoff meeting, completing the compilation of background information, and identification of data gaps.
- Similkameen RM 3.8 Project – Chris Fisher reported that the Okanogan Conservation District selected Cardno Entrix to do the design work. They are currently working on a contract with Cardno Entrix and designs should be available for review by September or October.
- Remove Collapsed Bridge from Shingle Creek Project – The sponsor (Okanagan Nation Alliance) signed and returned the Tributary Committee/Sponsor Agreement.
- Entiat Stillwaters Gray Reach Acquisition – Appraisals have been completed on three of the four properties. The sponsor (Chelan Douglas Land Trust; CDLT) met with each of the three landowners and provided the following information:

*Bockoven South: As you know, Cascade Chelan Appraisal completed the primary appraisal with a value of \$30,000. I met last week with Dr. and Mrs. Bockoven and their realtor to review the appraisal. The realtor called this morning to advise that they are willing to accept that number, despite their previous indication of a \$45,000 minimum price. We had estimated \$40,000, so are pleased that the appraised value came in \$10,000 less, and that the landowners are agreeable. Accordingly, we will move ahead with the SRFB-required review appraisal, and the environmental assessment that is due by the end of May.*

*We previously prepared a stewardship contribution calculation for all 4 parcels (Bockoven North, Bockoven South, Crone and Price). The 4 parcels total 77+ acres and the stewardship estimate was \$36,000 for all 4 parcels treated as a unit. Bockoven South constitutes 32% by acreage, and the allocable portion for this property was \$11,520 – a rather large chunk of the \$30,000 purchase price. The landowner is baulking at making the contribution. Given that the appraisal came in \$10,000 less than budgeted, I am wondering if the Tributary Committees would be willing to allocate the difference – or some part of it - to stewardship.*

*Price: The appraised value of this property is only \$25,000, since the landowner was not able to show right of access to the property that was assumed in the \$150,000 estimate. I sent the appraisal to Mrs. Price's realtor; however, we recently learned that she had passed away in Arizona. I am waiting to hear from the realtor, but this may result in a delay until the estate is sorted out.*

*As a note on both of these parcels, we will have to get approval from SRFB to acquire these two pieces without a physical access from across the Entiat River. Practical access will be from the north – by walking over our existing bridge on the Cottonwood property and through the Forest Service property.*

*Bockoven North: The Bockoven's and their realtor were not at all happy with the \$145,000 appraisal, but we are working on bringing them to reality. We've invited them to provide additional information about the claimed development potential of the property.*

*Crone: We are still determining the potential area to be acquired based on a boundary line adjustment, so the appraisal has not yet been completed.*

#### **IV. Small Projects Program Application: Silver Reach Mining Impacts Evaluation/Feasibility Study**

In April, the Committees reviewed a Small Projects Program application from Trout Unlimited titled *Silver Mining Impacts Evaluation/Feasibility Study*. The purpose of the project was to evaluate the extent to which heavy metal contamination from local mining activities at the Red Shirt Mill (RM 39.5) and the Alder Creek confluence wetland (RM 34-34.5) may affect the feasibility of restoration actions proposed

in the Twisp to Carlton Reach on the Methow River. This work would supplement the Twisp to Carlton Reach Assessment and would provide practical application and guidance on how to minimize and reduce exposure risks to fish species while maximizing biological benefit. The total cost of the project was \$99,430. The sponsor requested \$96,355 from HCP Tributary Funds. Because of a lack of information, the Committees were unable to make a funding decision and requested additional information. Specifically, the Committees asked for responses to the following questions.

1. Did the project sponsor consider funding options under the Clean Water Act or from the Office of Columbia River? If so, why are funds from these sources not appropriate in this case?
2. Can the sponsor confirm the price of the cleanup and describe why the removal of tailings is cost prohibitive?
3. The proposal indicates that Red Shirt Mill received a hazard ranking of “1” from Ecology. If this is the highest potential threat ranking, why is Ecology not working to fix the problem?

Following the April meeting, the sponsor provided responses to the questions. In addition, Tracy Hillman reported that 39 summer Chinook redds, one spring Chinook redd, and four sockeye redds were found in the area of the Red Shirt Mill site, and 32 summer Chinook redds were observed near the Alder Creek confluence in 2013. The Committees reviewed and discussed the available information and responses and concluded that they need more time to consider the proposal. The Committees, like the sponsor, are perplexed why Ecology has not taken a larger role in this effort, given that Ecology assigned it a hazard ranking of 1. The Committees will do some investigative work, including discussing this with the USFWS toxicologist, and will reconsider the proposal during their next meeting on 12 June.

## V. MVID Instream Flow Improvement Project

Chris Fisher shared with the Committees that Trout Unlimited submitted a proposal to the Priest Rapids Coordinating Committee (PRCC) seeking funds to support a portion of the MVID Instream Flow Improvement Project. The initial funding strategy was that the PRCC’s NNI fund would cover about \$2,000,000 of the total cost. However, it appears that the PRCC is unlikely to support such a large request. Therefore, Chris asked if the Tributary Committees would be willing to support a larger part of the request, which would then reduce the amount requested from NNI funds.

Last year, the Wells Tributary Committee approved \$400,000 for this project. The total cost of the project at that time was \$9,747,000. Recall that the purpose of the project is to: (1) improve instream flows in the lower 4.5 miles of the Twisp River by eliminating the MVID irrigation diversion and returning up to 11 cfs, which will be placed in permanent trust; (2) improve instream flow in the Methow River by piping a portion of the east canal and permanently trusting the saved water; (3) improve instream flow (2 cfs) and wetland and side channel habitat by restoring the natural flow in Alder Creek and permanently trusting the water; and (4) prevent fish injury and mortality associated with MVID’s Twisp River pushup dam, fish screen operations, and the stranding of redds and juveniles in the MVID West Canal’s intake canal and fish return channel.

After discussion, *the Rock Island and Rocky Reach Tributary Committees agreed to contribute \$600,000 to the project (\$300,000 from the Rock Island Plan Species Account and \$300,000 from the Rocky Reach Plan Species Account)*. Thus, in total, the Tributary Committees will contribute \$1,000,000 to the project.

## VI. General Salmon Habitat Program Draft Proposals

On Monday, the Committees received General Salmon Habitat Program and Salmon Recovery Funding Board draft proposals. Of the 12 draft proposals, nine requested funds from the Tributary Committees. Five draft proposals are for projects in the Methow River basin and four are for projects in the Wenatchee River basin. The Committees received no draft proposals for projects in the Entiat or Okanogan River

basins. During the June meeting, the Committees will identify which draft proposals will have no chance or a low likelihood of receiving funding from the Tributary Committees.

Project tours are scheduled for 15 May in the Methow River basin and 21 May in the Wenatchee River basin. Becky Gallaher and Tracy Hillman participated on the conference call to coordinate the project tours. The Committees will meet on Thursday, 12 June to conduct their final evaluation of draft proposals.

Chris Fisher noted that he had some concerns with the Burns Garrity Floodplain Enhancement Project draft proposal. He said that based on the pump tests, it is unlikely that groundwater supply will be sufficient to support the goal of the groundwater-fed side channel. He recommended that members ask questions about this during the site visit on 15 May. Chris will not be able to attend the Methow site visit.

## **VII. Information Updates**

The following information updates were provided during the meeting.

### 1. Approved Payment Requests in April and May:

Rock Island Plan Species Account:

- \$8,472.67 to the Chelan County Treasurer for the Nason Creek UWP Reconnection – Chelan PUD Powerline Relocation Project for the period October 2013 through March 2014.
- \$225.00 to Clifton Larson Allen for Rock Island financial administration during the first quarter 2014.

Rocky Reach Plan Species Account:

- \$7,000.00 to Cascade Chelan Appraisal for the Entiat Stillwaters Gray Reach Acquisitions.
- \$149.71 to the Okanogan Conservation District for the Similkameen RM 3.8 Design Project.
- \$225.00 to Clifton Larson Allen for Rocky Reach financial administration during the first quarter 2014.

### 2. Tracy Hillman and Tom Kahler gave a brief report on the sockeye salmon workshop held in Kelowna, B.C. on 29-30 April. The purpose of the workshop was to review and assess the knowledge and lessons learned after ten years of extensive work on the Skaha Experimental Sockeye Re-introduction Project. The program was designed by the Okanagan Nation Alliance, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), and Provincial fisheries managers as an adaptive management experiment that is reversible if significant negative effects are experienced by either natural Osoyoos Lake sockeye or resident Skaha Lake kokanee populations. The 12-year program is being funded by Grant and Chelan PUDs as part of their hydroelectric mitigation requirements for unavoidable sockeye losses at the Priest Rapids, Wanapum, and Rocky Reach dams on the Columbia River. Data for some of the monitoring components are co-funded by Douglas PUD and DFO as part of the ongoing Okanagan Fish/Water Management Tools program used by Douglas PUD to meet their sockeye mitigation obligations for Wells Dam.

Tracy and Tom shared with the Committees some of the results from the limnological, sockeye, and kokanee studies conducted over the past ten years. The general conclusion from the workshop was that there is plenty of capacity for sockeye juveniles within Skaha and Osoyoos lakes. Although the Provincial fisheries managers hesitate to conclude there is no negative interaction between sockeye and kokanee, the empirical data indicate no density-dependent

effects. Thus, it appears that passage will be provided at Okanagan Falls Dam. This will allow sockeye unimpeded access to Skaha Lake. As such, the Committees may see proposals seeking funds to improve the quantity and quality of sockeye spawning habitat in the Okanagan River and tributaries upstream from Skaha Lake.

**VIII. Next Steps**

The next meeting of the Tributary Committees will be on Thursday, 12 June at Chelan PUD in Wenatchee.

Meeting notes submitted by Tracy Hillman ([tracy.hillman@bioanalysts.net](mailto:tracy.hillman@bioanalysts.net)).