



Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island HCP Tributary Committees Notes 8 April 2021

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

Members Absent: Catherine Willard (Chelan PUD)¹ and Becky Gallaher (Tributary Project Coordinator).

The Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island Hydroelectric Projects Habitat Conservation Plans Tributary Committees held a conference call on Thursday, 8 April 2021 from 9:00 am to 11:30 pm.

I. Review and Adopt April Agenda

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

- The budget amendment from Cascade Fisheries was removed because the project sponsor did not submit the amendment request before the meeting.
- A time extension request from Trout Unlimited was added to the agenda.
- Review of the 30% design for the Peshastin Creek RM 4.3 project was added to the agenda.

II. Review and Approval of the February and March Meeting Minutes

The draft 11 February 2021 and 1 March 2021 meeting notes were reviewed and approved by the Tributary Committees.

III. General Salmon Habitat Program Pre-Proposals

The Committees received 14 General Salmon Habitat Program pre-proposals. The Committees reviewed each pre-proposal and selected those they believe warranted a final proposal. Projects 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 (not cost effective). The Committees assigned pre-proposals to one of two categories: “Fundable” (would like to see a final application) and “Not Fundable” (would not like to see a final application). It is important to note that these are ratings of pre-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 pre-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.

¹ Catherine provided her votes on decision items before the meeting.

Thirteen Fish Passage Designs for Lower Chiwawa Tributaries Project (Fundable)

The Committees recommend that the project sponsor (Cascade Fisheries) address the following comments/suggestions as they develop the full proposal:

- Need to focus efforts on streams that do not have passage issues downstream from the culverts. For example, Gate and Grouse creeks may have limited or no fish access at their mouths.
- The Committees are concerned the projects will provide low benefits to HCP Plan Species and therefore the benefits may not justify the cost.
- Need to address the questions and comments that were provided by the RTT and Committees following the presentations.

Restore Lower Peshastin Creek Project (Not Fundable)

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

- Several members believe the project is out of sequence, as stream flows need to be addressed in Peshastin Creek. In addition, more wood is needed in the project area to increase instream diversity.
- The Committees questioned why BPA is not funding the implementation of this project.

Entiat Prioritization Data Collection Project (Fundable)

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

- Need to address the comments provided by the Regional Technical Team and Tributary Committees following the presentations.

Wenatchee-Entiat Beaver-Powered Restoration Project (Fundable)

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

- The Committees are not interested in funding a beaver relocation project because there is too much uncertainty associated with whether relocated beavers will remain in a translocated area. If beaver do not remain in translocation areas, there will be no benefit to HCP Plan Species. However, the Committees are interested in BDA and PAL projects, as these carry more certainty of success and are reasonably inexpensive. Accordingly, the Committees would like to see the proposal focus on BDA and PAL projects.
- The full application should include more discussion on how streams will be selected for BDA and PAL projects.
- Need to address the questions and comments that were provided by the RTT and Committees following the presentations.

Lower Little Bridge Creek Restoration Project (Fundable)

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

- Need to address the comments provided by the Regional Technical Team and Tributary Committees following the presentations.

Mystery and War Creek Reach Aquatic Restoration Project (Fundable)

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

- Need to address the comments provided by the Regional Technical Team and Tributary Committees following the presentations.

Twisp Horseshoe Habitat Enhancement Project (Fundable)

The Committees recommend that the project sponsor (Yakama Nation) address the following comments/suggestions as they develop the full proposal:

- Need to provide information on how the NEPA process will or could affect the implementation of this project.
- Need to address the questions and comments that were provided by the RTT and Committees following the presentations.

Fox Creek and Silver Falls Project Areas Habitat Restoration Project (Not Fundable)

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

- The Committees do not support the excavation of the side channel at the Fox Creek site.
- The Committees believe excavation will disturb or degrade existing good habitat.

Mazama Bridge Habitat Acquisition Project (Not Fundable)

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

- Because of the small size of the parcel, the Committees believe development on the site will likely have a small negative effect on biological benefit.
- The cost of this project, for 0.37-0.75 acres, appears excessive. Accordingly, the Committees do not believe the biological benefit maintained under existing conditions justifies the cost of the project.

Nason Creek RM 1.5 Complexity 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 habitat complexity is less impaired at this site than are fine sediment and temperature.
- There is also a concern that efforts to add more wood will disturb existing, high-quality, riparian habitat at this site.

Nason Kahler Instream Complexity Project (Fundable)

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

- Need to address the comments provided by the Regional Technical Team and Tributary Committees following the presentations.

Nason Creek RM 12 Floodplain Reconnection Project (Fundable)

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

- Need to address the comments provided by the Regional Technical Team and Tributary Committees following the presentations.

Upper Wenatchee RM 41.4-43.0 Design 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 there are too many constraints at this site to implement a cost-effective project.
- As suggested by the RTT and Committees following the presentation, the sponsor should sketch out several potential enhancement alternatives for this site and discuss those with the landowners. Based on their feedback, the sponsor can then determine what can or cannot be supported by the stakeholders and pursue an option that is supported and will result in a measurable biological benefit.

Beaver Coexistence and Mimicry for Salmonid Benefits Project (Not Fundable)

The Committees recommend that this project, sponsored by the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation, should not be submitted as a full proposal to the Tributary Committees for the following reasons:

- The Committees are not interested in funding a beaver relocation project.
- There is too much uncertainty associated with whether relocated beavers will remain in a translocated area. If beaver do not remain in translocation areas, there will be no benefit to HCP Plan Species.
- Some members of the Committees have concerns with adding plumbing to regulate pond size and depth. They do not believe this restores natural processes. In general, they believe management of beaver activities may be too heavy handed.

IV. Time Extension Request

City of Leavenworth Fish Screen Project

The Rock Island Tributary Committee received a time extension request from Trout Unlimited on the City of Leavenworth Fish Screen Project. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the sponsor has been unable to complete a few tasks associated with the project. As a result, they requested a time extension from 30 November 2020 to 30 June 2021. The Rock Island Tributary Committee approved the time extension.

V. Peshastin Creek RM 4.3 Project Design Review

The Rock Island Tributary Committee received the 30% designs for the Peshastin Creek RM 4.3 Project from Chelan County Natural Resources Department. Because the designs were received the day before the meeting, members did not have time to review them. They agreed to review the designs and provide comments and questions to Tracy Hillman by Friday, 23 April 2021. Tracy will compile the comments/questions and share those with the project sponsor. The Committee also agreed to invite the sponsor to the May meeting to present the designs and respond to questions.

VI. General Salmon Habitat Program Application

Cascade Orchards Icicle Creek Flow Restoration Project

The Committees received a General Salmon Habitat Program application from Washington Water Trust titled, Cascade Orchards Icicle Creek Flow Restoration Project. The purpose of the project is to add 11.9 cfs and 4,012.6 acre-feet of flow to Icicle Creek by removing the Cascade Orchards Irrigation Company diversion at Icicle Creek RM 4.5 and installing an automated on-demand pump station at RM 1.9. The instream flow right will be permanently protected in the Washington State Trust Water Rights Program. The total cost of the project was \$5,350,000. The sponsor requested \$500,000 from HCP Plan Species Account Funds. The *Rock Island Tributary Committee elected to contribute \$500,000 to the project.*

VII. Information Updates

1. Tracy Hillman reviewed the Salmon Recovery Funding Board/Tributary Committees proposed schedule for 2021. Important dates are noted below:
 - Completed Draft Applications Due: 21 April 2021
 - Virtual Site Visits: 10-12 May 2021
 - Committees Review Draft Applications: 13 May 2021
 - Final Application Due: 28 May 2021
 - Committees Review Final Applications: 10 June 2021

Tracy noted that because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, site visits will be virtual.

VIII. Next Steps

The Tributary Committees will participate with the Upper Columbia Regional Technical Team on virtual project tours on 10-12 May 2021. Their next meeting will be on 13 May 2021.

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