

# Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island HCP Tributary Committees Notes 9 July 2015

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**Members Present:** Lee Carlson (Yakama Nation), Jeremy Cram (WDFW), Chris Fisher (Colville Tribes), Kate Terrell (USFWS), and Tracy Hillman (Committees Chair).

**Members Absent:** Steve Hays (Chelan PUD), Tom Kahler (Douglas PUD), and Justin Yeager (NOAA Fisheries).<sup>1</sup>

**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 at Grant PUD in Wenatchee, Washington, on Thursday, 9 July 2015 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm.

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

Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the meeting and the Committees adopted the proposed agenda with the addition of two information updates.

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

The Committees reviewed and approved the 11 June 2015 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.

- Upper Beaver Habitat Improvement Channel Restoration Project – The project sponsor (Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation; MSRF) completed additional surveys on the reconstructed channel to evaluate function. They found minor bank erosion in the archeological area where plantings were not allowed. The erosion is not considered a threat. Visual surveys of revegetated areas continue to show good recovery. The irrigation system is working as designed.
- Okanogan Basin Stream Discharge Monitoring – The sponsor (Colville Tribes) indicated that the gauging stations continue to monitor stream flows.
- MVID Instream Flow Improvement Project – The project sponsor (Trout Unlimited; TU) reported that Tapani Construction completed the punch list items for the Eastside Piping Project. The new pipe system is running and MVID shareholders are happy with the added pressure. The E1 Lateral is up and running. Lloyd Logging is working on the remaining punch list items and those should be completed by 30 June. The pump station design has been approved. Bach drilling has one more well to develop. They are shooting for a 30 July completion date. Bianchi Construction completed about 25% of the Westside Phase 1 Piping Project. They are shooting for a 19 July completion date for Phase I and will return in the fall after the irrigation season is over to

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<sup>1</sup> These members provided their votes on decision items before the meeting.

complete Phase II. TU is on track to have all individual wells completed by the 1 July deadline, allowing for the ramp down of the Twisp River head gate. To date, 50 of the 80 wells have been installed.

- Silver Side Channel Design Project – This project is complete. The project sponsor (Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group; CCFEG) submitted the final report.
- Twisp-to-Carlton Reach Assessment Project – This project is complete. The sponsor (CCFEG) will submit the final report soon.
- Similkameen RM 3.8 Project – This project is complete. The project sponsor (Okanogan Conservation District) submitted the final report.
- Entiat Stillwaters Gray Reach Acquisition – The sponsor (Chelan-Douglas Land Trust; CDLT) provided no new update on this project.
- Post-Fire Landowner Assistance/Habitat Protection in Beaver and Frazer Creeks Project – The project sponsor (MSRF) contacted four landowners with passage barriers. The sponsor believes these passage barriers will be addressed this summer.
- Lehman Riparian Restoration Project – This project is complete. The sponsor (Methow Conservancy) submitted the final report.
- Clear Creek Fish Passage and Instream Flow Project – The sponsor (TU) continues to work on the water right change due diligence and water right change process. They visited the site with Thousand Trails corporate staff, the project engineer, and well driller to confirm and finalize the preferred well location, preliminary design, and project timeline.
- Barkley Irrigation – Under Pressure Project – The sponsor (TU) focused efforts on review and changes to the designs on the permanent pump station and pipeline. They will submit final permits the week of 29 June.
- Methow Watershed Beaver Reintroduction Project – The sponsor (MSRF) released seven beavers at four sites. They monitored 20 release sites for the presence of beavers. They found one new establishment where beavers were released earlier this season and six establishments that have grown or are still active since they were last monitored earlier this season.
- White River Floodplain (RM 3.4) Connection Project – The Tributary Committee/Sponsor Agreement is ready for signature.

#### **IV. General Salmon Habitat Program Proposals**

The Committees received six General Salmon Habitat Program proposals. Before reviewing the proposals, Becky Gallaher reported that the unallocated balances within each account were \$4,722,682 in the Rock Island Plan Species Account, \$1,759,935 in the Rocky Reach Plan Species Account, and \$1,321,590 in the Wells Plan Species Account. In addition, and consistent with the Committees' Operating Procedures, members of the Committees identified potential conflicts of interest. Kate Terrell recused herself from voting on the Icicle Creek – Boulder Field – Wild Fish to Wilderness project and Jeremy Cram recused himself from voting on the Wenatchee Basin Barrier and Diversion Assessment project.

##### **Wenatchee Basin Barrier and Diversion Assessment Project**

Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group is the sponsor of the Wenatchee Basin Barrier and Diversion Assessment Project. The purpose of this project is to complete a comprehensive fish barrier and diversion inventory throughout the Wenatchee River basin and to prioritize sites for voluntary remedies. The total cost of the project is \$361,589. The sponsor requested \$40,000 from HCP Tributary Funds.

The Committees believe that a lot of information currently exists on barriers within the Wenatchee River basin. As a result, they believe the sponsor should develop a phased approach in which they first compile existing information on all known barriers within the Wenatchee River basin and prioritize that information. Then, if necessary, identify a watershed within the basin (e.g., Icicle Creek) and conduct an intensive survey of the watershed for barriers. Based on these concerns, *the Tributary Committees elected not to fund this project.*

#### **Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Phase II Project**

Trout Unlimited – Washington Water Project is the sponsor of the Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Phase II Project. The purpose of this project is to improve stream flows (add between 7.69 and 15 cfs) in the lower Wenatchee River between RM 5 and 7. This will be accomplished by building a permanent pressurized irrigation system. The total cost of the project is \$1,760,759. The sponsor requested \$125,000 from HCP Tributary Funds. Because of the low biological benefit and high cost of the project, *the Tributary Committees elected not to fund this project.*

#### **Icicle Creek – Boulder Field – Wild Fish to Wilderness Project**

Trout Unlimited – Washington Water Project is the sponsor of the Icicle Creek – Boulder Field – Wild Fish to Wilderness Project. The purpose of this project is to enhance fish passage at the Boulder Field (RM 5.6) on Icicle Creek and thereby provide access to more than 23 miles of high quality habitat. This will be accomplished by creating a 160-foot fishway (14% slope, step-pool channel) along the left bank. This project is likely to have a large positive effect on abundance, productivity, and spatial structure of Plan Species. The total cost of the project is \$1,571,189. The sponsor requested \$250,000 from HCP Tributary Funds. *The Rock Island Committee approved funding for this project.*

#### **M2 Right Sugar Acquisition Project**

The Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation is the sponsor of the M2 Right Sugar Acquisition Project. The purpose of this project is to permanently protect floodplain function, preserve restoration options, and prevent insensitive development on about 12 acres near RM 42.2 on the Methow River. The total cost of the project is \$122,903. The sponsor requested \$18,435 from HCP Tributary Funds. *The Wells Committee approved funding for this project.*

The Wells Committee pointed out that the Committee will order and pay for the appraisal and review. Even if the sponsor elects to use their own appraiser, the Committees will only honor the assessment conducted by their appraiser. Because the sponsor asked for \$3,250 for appraisal and review, the Committee subtracted this amount from the Tributary Committee request. Thus, the amount the Wells Committee will pay the sponsor for this project is \$15,185 (\$18,435 - \$3,250).

#### **Nason Creek Upper White Pine Floodplain Reconnection Project**

Chelan County Natural Resources Department is the sponsor of the Nason Creek Upper White Pine Floodplain Reconnection Project. The purpose of this project is to reestablish hydrogeomorphic connectivity between Nason Creek and its floodplain, and restore and enhance stream channel functions to increase productivity and survival of ESA-listed fish. This will be accomplished by removing about 0.5 miles of levee and relocating 1,500 feet of straightened mainstem to restore sinuosity and habitat complexity. The total cost of the project is \$2,845,107. The sponsor requested \$400,000 from HCP Tributary Funds.

Although the Committees generally support floodplain reconnection projects and they recognize that the proposed project is a priority action in a priority area that would benefit Plan Species, the Committees cannot support the total cost of the proposed project. They do not believe the potential benefits to Plan Species justify the total cost of the project, even when the cost of re-routing the Chelan PUD powerlines is ignored. In addition, they believe the Upper White Pine site has great potential to produce a relatively

large biological effect, but constraints placed on the project do not allow the full potential of the site to be realized. Based on these concerns, *the Tributary Committees elected not to fund this project.*

**Lower Nason Creek KG Protection Project**

The Chelan-Douglas Land Trust is the sponsor of the Lower Nason Creek KG Protection Project. The purpose of this project is to protect permanently 3,900 feet of riverbank and 16.32 acres of high quality riparian/floodplain/wetland habitat on lower Nason Creek (RM 1.2-1.8). The total cost of the project is \$197,500. The sponsor requested \$29,625 from HCP Tributary Funds. *The Rocky Reach Committee approved funding for this project.*

The Rocky Reach Committee pointed out that the Committee will order and pay for the appraisal and review. Because the sponsor asked for \$5,000 for appraisal and review, the Committee subtracted this amount from the Tributary Committee request. Thus, the amount the Rocky Reach Committee will pay the sponsor for this project is \$24,625 (\$29,625 - \$5,000).

**Summary of Review of 2015 General Salmon Habitat Program Projects.**

Project Name	Sponsor <sup>1</sup>	Total Cost	Request from T.C.	T.C. Contribution <sup>2</sup>
Wenatchee Basin Barrier and Diversion Assessment	CCFEG	\$361,589	\$40,000	\$0
Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Phase II	TU-WWP	\$1,760,759	\$125,000	\$0
Icicle Creek – Boulder Field – Wild Fish to Wilderness	TU-WWP	\$1,571,189	\$250,000	RI: \$250,000
M2 Right Sugar Acquisition	MSRF	\$122,903	\$18,435	W: \$15,185
Nason Creek UWP Floodplain Reconnection	CCNRD	\$2,845,107	\$400,000	\$0
Lower Nason Creek KG Protection	CDLT	\$197,500	\$29,625	RR: \$24,625
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$6,859,047</b>	<b>\$863,060</b>	<b>\$289,810</b>

<sup>1</sup> CCNRD = Chelan County Natural Resource Department; CCFEG = Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group; MSRF = Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation; CDLT = Chelan-Douglas Land Trust, and TU-WWP = Trout Unlimited – Washington Water Project.

<sup>2</sup> RI = Rock Island Plan Species Account; RR = Rocky Reach Plan Species Account; W = Wells Plan Species Account.

**V. Information Updates**

The following information updates were provided during the meeting.

1. Approved Payment Requests in April, May, and June:

Rock Island Plan Species Account:

- \$805.33 to Chelan PUD for project coordination and administration during the second quarter of 2015.

Rocky Reach Plan Species Account:

- \$489.93 to Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group for the Silver Side Channel Design Project.
- \$1,393.42 to the Okanogan Conservation District for the Similkameen RM 3.8 Design Project.
- \$3,232.81 to Trout Unlimited for the Clear Creek Fish Passage and Instream Flow Enhancement Project.

- \$755.30 to Chelan PUD for project coordination and administration during the second quarter of 2015.

Wells Plan Species Account:

- \$603.66 to Chelan PUD for project coordination and administration during the second quarter of 2015.
2. Chris Fisher reported that he will talk with Kari Alex with the Okanagan Nation about a possible field trip in Canada in October.
  3. Tracy Hillman said that Jason Lundgren met with him to discuss funding for developing a monitoring plan designed to assess the nutrient-enhancement pilot study in the Chiwawa River basin. Recall that in April the Committees asked CCFEG to submit a Small Projects application seeking funds to develop a nutrient enhancement monitoring plan. In June, CCFEG submitted an application asking for financial support to develop a treatment and effectiveness monitoring plan, and to obtain permits from the U.S. Forest Service and Washington Department of Ecology. The total cost of the project was \$40,250. The Committees elected not to fund the project, because it included permitting and was more expensive than anticipated. Jason asked Tracy if they could revise the application and only ask for funding to develop the monitoring plan (no permitting). After sharing this information with the Committees, the Committees agreed that Jason could submit a Small Projects application seeking funding for only developing the monitoring plan.

## **VI. Next Steps**

If necessary, the next meeting of the Tributary Committees will be on Thursday, 13 August 2015 at Grant PUD in Wenatchee.

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