



Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island HCP Tributary Committees Notes 10 October 2019

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

Others Present: Becky Gallaher (Tributary Project Coordinator). The following people joined the Committees for the discussion on the Peshastin Creek RM 8.8 Channel Reconnection Discussion: Jennifer Hadersberger and Mike Kaputa¹ (Chelan County Natural Resources Department), Dave Duvall and Deanne Pavlik-Kunkel (Grant PUD), and Denny Rohr (PRCC Habitat Subcommittee Facilitator).

The Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island Hydroelectric Projects Habitat Conservation Plans Tributary Committees met at Grant PUD in Wenatchee, Washington, on Thursday, 10 October 2019 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

I. Review and Adopt Agenda

Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the meeting and the Committees adopted the proposed agenda with the addition of a discussion on the Goodwin Side Channel project.

II. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

Tributary Committees members reviewed and approved the 12 September 2019 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.

- Barkley Irrigation – Under Pressure Project – The sponsor (Trout Unlimited; TU) reported that bids for Phase II piping were received on 27 September. They plan to award a contract in early October. The sponsor also received bids for the Barkley pump station and awarded that project to Pipe of Washington. The sponsor is working with the contractor to finalize scheduling and construction sequencing. One satellite well failed to provide adequate water volume and will be re-drilled at a new location.
- Icicle Boulder Field Project – The sponsor (TU) reported the statement of agreement (SOA) regarding anadromous fish management in the Icicle Creek watershed was signed by the YN, CCT, WDFW, NOAA Fisheries, and USFWS. The bid package is now ready for advertisement.

¹ Mike was on the phone for part of the Peshastin Creek RM 8.8 Channel Reconnection discussion.

Because the contract with TU on this project ends on 15 December 2019, the Rock Island Tributary Committee agreed to extend the contract period to 31 December 2021.

- Peshastin Creek RM 10.5 PIT-Tag Detection Site Project – This project is complete. The sponsor (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; WDFW) will provide the next annual report on 31 December 2019.
- Beaver Fever Project – The sponsor (TU) reported the proposed projects in the Entiat were approved by the USFS Forest Leadership Team. There will be a new District Ranger coming on board and when that happens, the sponsor will meet with the Forest Service to set up permitting pathways and identify implementation schedules. Before the meeting, the sponsor will identify specific sites for restoration, with a focus on Potato Creek.
- Methow Basin Barrier Diversion Assessment Project – The sponsor (Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group; CCFEG) did not provide an update this month.
- Derby Creek Fish Passage Project – The sponsor (CCFEG) reported they received the permit from the Army Corps of Engineers. All that remains are the Chelan County permits and a few design edits for the irrigation overflow diversion and the access road.
- Chiwawa Nutrient Enhancement Project – The sponsor (CCFEG) reported they will conduct nutrient treatments on 7-10 and 28-31 October 2019. They also provided a report describing 2018 monitoring efforts and results.
- Monitor Side Channel Design Project – The sponsor (Chelan County Natural Resources Department; CCNRD) reported that their consultant (Natural Systems Design) finalized preliminary plans, cost estimates, and basis of design report.
- Peshastin Creek Environmental Site Assessment Project – This project is complete and the sponsor (CCNRD) provided the Environmental Assessment report.
- Entiat Fish Passage and Barrier Assessment Project – The sponsor (CCFEG) reported field work was completed on all public lands and private lands where permission was granted. They were unable to secure permission to conduct surveys on 56 streamside parcels. They will continue to work with Cascadia Conservation District on landowner outreach.
- Twisp River Floodplain Left Bank Spring-fed Alcove Restoration Project – The sponsor (Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation; MSRF) completed planting around the constructed alcove.
- Johnson Creek Habitat Restoration Project – The sponsor (TU) did not provide an update this month. This work will occur in 2020.
- Cottonwood Flats Floodplain Restoration Project – The sponsor (CCNRD) reported construction will occur during fall 2020.
- Upper Kahler Stream and Floodplain Project – The sponsor (Yakama Nation; YN) reported construction is complete.
- Stormy Area “A: Stream and Floodplain Enhancement Project – The sponsor (YN) reported construction is complete.
- Napeequa Side Channel Connection Project – The sponsor (CCFEG) reported a site visit with permitting and regulatory agencies will occur on 22 October 2019.

IV. Sugar Levee Project Update

Jeremy Cram and Kate Terrell provided an update on the Sugar Levee meeting, which occurred on 2 October. Jeremy Cram, Kate Terrell, and Hans Smith from the Tributary Committees participated in the

meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an update on project development activities including an overview of key features of the assessment reach and previous analyses, review of existing hydraulics work, and an overview of landowner outreach. Jeremy noted they intend to conduct a reach-scale evaluation, with the reach extending from an upstream bedrock outcrop to a downstream bedrock outcrop. He added that there are landowner constraints and multiple problem areas.

Kate said they identified stakeholder groups and established three different working groups (project steering committee, project development or design team, and stakeholder working group). Kate said she is on the steering committee and Jeremy is on the project development team. Inter-Fluve is currently modeling the effects of levee removal on stream dynamics. Phase I preliminary designs should be available December 2020.

Tracy Hillman noted that he received an email from Steve Kolk (Bureau of Reclamation; BOR) indicating that BOR is working on a charter for the Sugar Levee Project, which would be signed by BOR, the HCP Tributary Committees, and the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation. The purpose of the charter is to secure agreement of roles and responsibilities for the project. It is only a commitment to a process, not a guarantee of funding for the project. Tracy will share the charter with members as soon as he receives it from Steve.

V. Cottonwood Flats Monitoring

During the last HCP Tributary Committees meeting, Chelan County Natural Resources Department and their consultant (Natural Systems Design) discussed the Cottonwood Flats Floodplain Connection project with the Committees. The meeting ended with the Committees recommending the Light Touch with the Kahler Knock-Down approach. That is, the Committees recommended construction of the pilot channel and knocking down high points down gradient from the pilot channel to help with flow-path development. Because of the unique nature of this project (i.e., floodplain activation without infrastructure constraints), Tracy Hillman and Tom Kahler suggested the Committees should consider monitoring the project for effectiveness. Given that the project has the potential to entrap and strand ESA-listed fish, monitoring can be used to not only evaluate project effectiveness but can also guide possible salvage operations. Tracy said there is also a possibility the Salmon Recovery Funding Board could provide a cost share.

Members agreed that this project should be monitored, and Assessment Funds could be used to help monitor the project. Habitat could be evaluated using remote sensing surveys, while fish could be evaluated using mark-recapture techniques. Jeremy Cram agreed to scope the monitoring project and provide a rough cost estimate.

VI. Chiwaukum Creek Phase 1 Design Team

Tracy Hillman said he received an email from Jason Lundgren (CCFEG) asking if members of the HCP Tributary Committees would be willing to participate on the design team for the Lower Chiwaukum Creek Phase 1 Restoration Project. Justin Yeager, Catherine Willard, Kate Terrell, and Brandon Rogers all agreed to participate on the design team. Jeremy Cram said he would participate if Jason Lundgren removed Jeremy from the Merritt Oxbow Project. Tracy will share this information with Jason.

VII. Goodwin Side Channel Design Project

Tracy Hillman said he received an email from Jason Lundgren (CCFEG) asking the Committees to respond to a few questions regarding the Goodwin Side Channel Project. Tracy reminded the Committees that they received a General Salmon Habitat Project Application from CCFEG in 2018 asking the Committees to help fund the Goodwin Side Channel Design Project. The purpose of the project was to collect data, work through feasibility, and produce a preliminary design for an upstream connection to an existing 1,200-foot side channel at RM 12 on the Wenatchee River. The total cost of the project was

\$102,500. The sponsor requested \$45,000 from HCP Plan Species Account Funds. The Committees elected not to fund the project because they believed the project was too expensive and they were concerned that the resulting project may reduce or destroy existing riparian habitat, which is currently functioning properly. In his email, Jason asked the following three questions:

1. “Can you give me more specificity around the #1 ecological concern for the lower Wenatchee, connecting floodplain and wetlands? Is high or low flow habitat more important/limiting for juvenile salmon?”
2. “I’d like to understand the concern about transforming the site from high quality high flow side channel to perennial? Is the concern around construction clearing and grading impacts, or that if we engage the side channel, say an additional six months per year, that these flows would detract from the available habitat?”
3. “The RTT comments say that improving connection through a wider range could increase biological benefit, but goes on to say that without groundwater, the project would have no benefit. Would the RTT recommend investigating groundwater throughout the site? We’re happy to do this, but it’s expensive.”

Tracy said these questions were directed to both the Upper Columbia Regional Technical Team (RTT) and the Tributary Committees. Tracy said the RTT reviewed and discussed these questions during their recent meeting. In short, at this time, there is no clear and easy answer to the first question. It depends on the fish species and when they use the lower river. In general, perennial side channel habitat is likely more important to spring Chinook and steelhead than high-flow, seasonal side channels. That said, perennial side channels need to be cool enough to support salmonids and not other warmwater-tolerant fish species during summer rearing. In addition, side channels need to be available during winter (i.e., connected with groundwater so they do not freeze solid). The Tributary Committees generally agreed with this response.

Regarding the second question, Tracy said the RTT was concerned with construction disturbing the existing side channel and the riparian vegetation on the floodplain. The Committees agreed and said it may be necessary to dig a deep channel (about 6-8’ deep) in order to engage groundwater. This would disturb the existing channel, which is currently functioning as a high-flow channel.

As for the final question, the RTT sees value in conducting a groundwater investigation throughout the site. However, the cost estimate provided by CCFEG of \$53,000 to do the groundwater evaluation is too high. The Committees agreed that a groundwater investigation is needed but believe the work can be completed for a lot less money. They would review a cost-effective proposal seeking funding to do groundwater monitoring at the project site.

VIII. Peshastin Creek RM 8.8 Channel Reconnection Project (Joint Meeting with the PRCC Habitat Subcommittee)

Jennifer Hadersberger (CCNRD) provided an overview of the Peshastin Creek RM 8.8 Channel Reconnection Project (Attachment 1 includes the slides she presented during the meeting). She said in 2012, Salmon Recovery Funding Board funds were used to complete a 30% design (drawing presented); the blue line indicates the channelized stream and the green represents the historical channel. The bed and banks have not been heavily altered and are still at historical elevations (minimum excavation needed to return perennial flow to historical channel). The original alternative included a \$14M option to redirect the stream into the historical channel. That option was deemed too costly.

Jennifer said another option is to return perennial flow into the historical channel and use the current channel as a high-flow channel. Biological benefits of this option include improved sediment sorting and spawning habitat for Chinook; however, this project alone is unlikely to bring Chinook back to the reach without additional projects. The third option is to develop a seasonal, high-flow channel.

Jennifer noted that the Tributary Committees funded an environmental assessment of the property. Results from the assessment indicate no environmental concerns. She said there are two rock pits located on the upper and lower sides and a business owner that does road work. Construction debris are located on site, but no hazardous materials were visible. There was some equipment and petroleum materials by the business buildings, so when debris are removed, it may be worth having a second walkthrough to determine if there are hazardous materials (e.g., petroleum contamination) present on the site.

Jennifer added that the Department of Transportation (DOT) is willing to give up the quarry on the southern section (includes the stream crossing) but may need to maintain storage on the northern parcel. Dan Dietrich owns 10 acres and he is ready to sell but wants a commitment by winter. If there is no commitment, he plans to put the property on the market. R&P Rock is willing to support the project with the caveat that the effects to them are clearly defined and they have access to their pit. They want to see design, plans, and modeling. The Brender parcel, which is in probate, was divided by the DOT when the highway was built. Jennifer said the section adjacent to the project is not useful. She believes they would be willing to sell.

Jennifer indicated there are no culverts upstream and the middle and bottom portions have some small relief pipes. Water in them is mainly groundwater. She noted having the perennial flow shifted to the historical channel would require a bridge. The Committees questioned if there are lower cost options that would eliminate the need for a bridge. Jennifer said she will look into those options. Jeremy Cram indicated that steelhead spawn in this reach and the side channel would benefit steelhead and possibly spring Chinook.

Jennifer indicated the cost of the project is about \$6M (construction to build bridges). Additional funds would likely be needed to purchase properties and easements. Dan Dietrich wants \$500K for his 10 acres (zoned commercial, has access from Hwy 97, house and well on one parcel, and buildings on the other). An alternative is to purchase a conservation easement for about \$70K. Jennifer said she would like to purchase the Dietrich property because Dan Dietrich plans to sell it and a new owner may not support the project. The Committees noted they do not typically purchase properties without a plan to move forward with restoration. This project is still early in the design process.

Jennifer enquired about the potential to use the remaining funding from the environmental assessment project to purchase an option to buy Dan Dietrich's property; offer \$7,000 for first right of refusal for two years. This would give the County time to figure out if they will do the project. Tracy Hillman said that is a significant change in the project scope and would require a new proposal.

When asked about funding from DOT, Jennifer said although DOT staff are supportive of the project, they do not have budget flexibility, so they cannot provide funds, including in-kind design time to support the project.

The Committee indicated the project is too expensive and there are more important places to spend \$6M. They recommended the County consider less expensive options to reconnect the side channel (e.g., bottomless culverts rather than bridges).

IX. Information Updates

The following information updates were provided during the meeting.

1. Approved Payment Requests from September and October:

Rock Island Plan Species Account:

- \$1,430.50 to Chelan PUD for Rock Island project coordination and administration during the third quarter of 2019.

- \$50.00 to Clifton Larson Allen for Rock Island financial administration in September 2019.
- \$68.46 to Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group for the Derby Creek Fish Passage Project.
- \$6,311.94 to Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group for the Chiwawa Nutrient Enhancement Project.
- \$871.24 to Chelan County Treasurer for the Monitor Side Channel Design Project.

Rocky Reach Plan Species Account:

- \$987.82 to Chelan PUD for Rocky Reach project coordination and administration during the third quarter of 2019.
- \$50.00 to Clifton Larson Allen for Rocky Reach financial administration in September 2019.
- \$3,994.94 to Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group for the Entiat Basin Fish Passage and Screening Assessment Project.
- \$113.60 to Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group for the Napeequa Side Channel Project.

Wells Plan Species Account:

- \$383.74 to Chelan PUD for Wells project coordination and administration during the third quarter of 2019.
- \$8,692.94 to the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation for the Twisp River Floodplain Restoration Project.

2. Tracy Hillman shared with the Tributary Committees the draft 2020 timeline for the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) process (see Attachment 2). In general, the process is squeezed into a shorter time period than in the past. Noteworthy, presentations will be given before applications are received. The draft schedule should not affect the Committees' ability to review draft and final applications that include a Tributary Committees cost share.
3. The Tributary Committees discussed their desire to visit completed projects. Tracy Hillman resurrected the prioritized list of projects the Committees identified last year. The Committees reviewed the list and suggested site visits occur in summer 2020. Tracy and Becky will work with project sponsors and landowners to schedule site visits next summer.
4. The Tributary Committees reviewed their list of high-priority (targeted) projects within each of the sub-basins (Wenatchee, Entiat, Methow, and Okanogan). This list includes the following possible projects:
 - Wenatchee River Basin
 - Icicle Creek Boulder Field Project (to be completed next year)
 - Upper Wenatchee (between Tumwater Canyon and Lake Wenatchee) Habitat Complexity Projects
 - Peshastin Creek RM 8.8 Off-Channel Reconnection Project (under consideration)
 - Peshastin-Icicle Pump-back Project
 - Upper Little Wenatchee Fish-passage Project

- Entiat River Basin
 - Habitat Protection Projects
- Methow River Basin
 - Sugar Dike Removal and Habitat Restoration Project (in development)
 - Chewuch Canal Company Irrigation Efficiency Project
- Okanogan River Basin
 - Passage at Enloe Dam
 - Salmon Creek/Okanogan Irrigation District Streamflow Project
 - Johnson Creek Fish Passage Project (upstream from Riverside)
 - Fish Passage into Okanogan Lake (includes passage projects in tributaries draining into Okanogan Lake; passage will be completed soon)

The Committees will continue to identify and discuss targeted projects within each sub-basin.

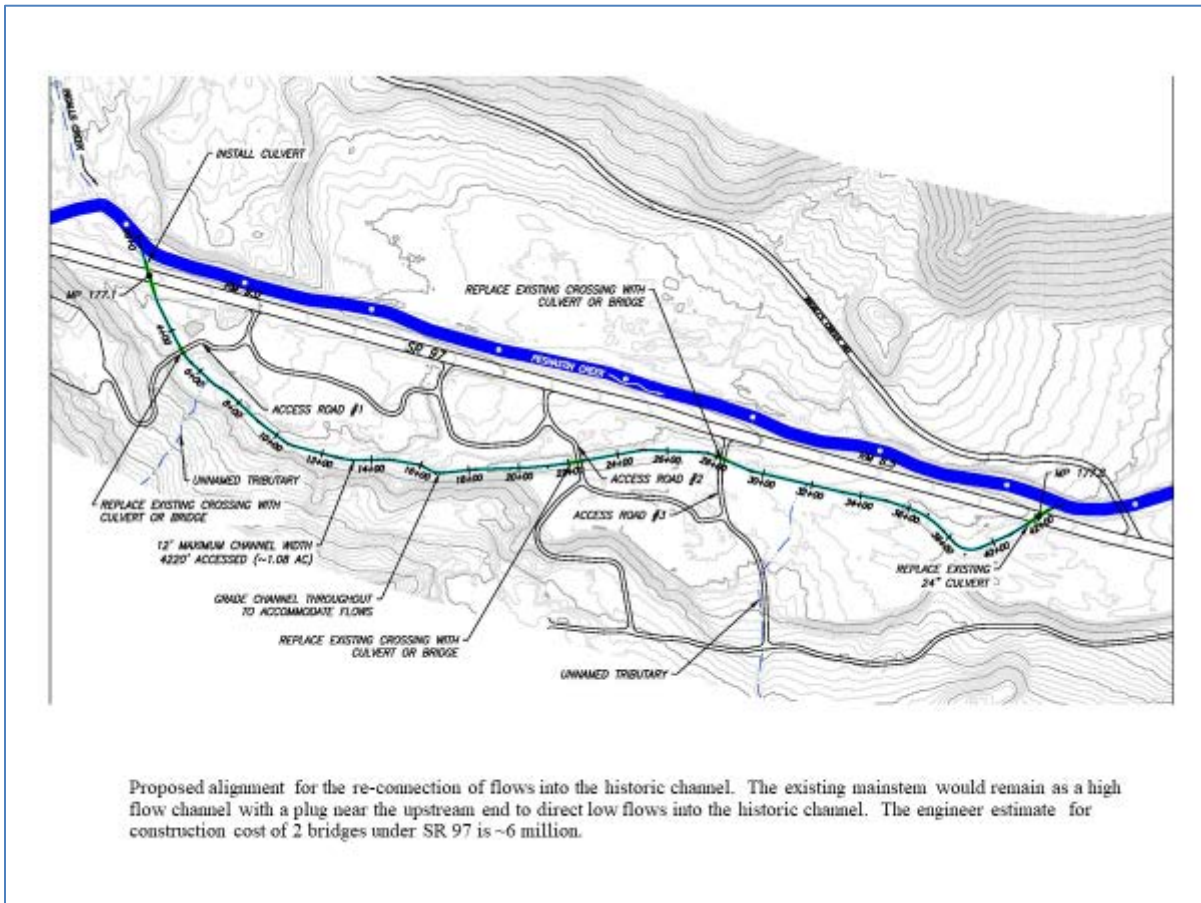
X. Next Steps

If necessary, the next meeting of the Tributary Committees will be on Thursday, 14 November at Grant PUD in Wenatchee.

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

Attachment 1

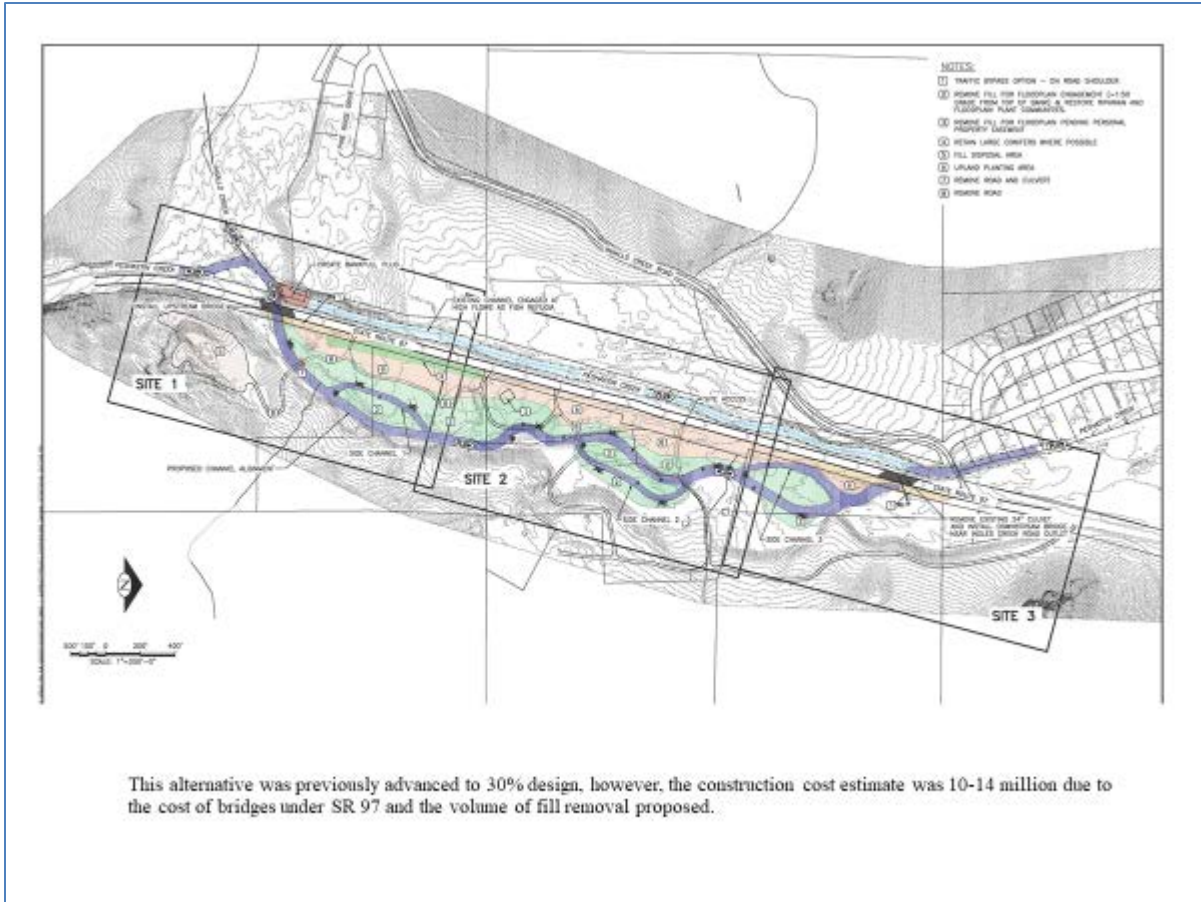
Slides Presented by Jennifer Hadersberger on the Peshastin Creek RM 8.8 Channel Reconnection Project





Landowners within the project area include: WSDOT, R & P Rock LLC, Dan Dietrich, and Dorothy Brender (Louie Brender is the point of contact). The approximate proposed channel re-location is depicted in a pink dashed line.





This alternative was previously advanced to 30% design, however, the construction cost estimate was 10-14 million due to the cost of bridges under SR 97 and the volume of fill removal proposed.

Attachment 2

Draft Salmon Recovery Funding Board Schedule for 2020

