

Water Resource Technical Advisory Committee (WRTAC) Meeting Notes
January 23, 2018
Noxon Emergency Services Building
10:00 a.m. (MST)

WRTAC Representative Attendees:

Eric Oldenburg, Avista; Ken Bouwens, IDFG; Ken Merrill, Kalispel Tribe; Randy Apfelbeck, MDEQ; Ryan Kreiner, MFWP; Doug Grupenhoff, USFS; Kevin Aceituno, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Bill Love, Panhandle Chapter Trout Unlimited; Jim Nash, Cabinet Resource Group.

Other Attendees:

Shana Bernall, Paul Kusnierz, Susan Drumheller, and Sean Moran, Avista; Brita Olson, Lower Clark Fork Watershed Group; Jason Blakney, MFWP.

Welcome and introductions:

Eric Oldenburg welcomed those in attendance and invited participants to introduce themselves. The purpose of this meeting is to review the draft 2018 Annual Implementation Plans (AIPs) and provide recommendations to the Management Committee (MC).

Other business:

- Consent mails
 - Project Evaluation Ranking Criteria: The AIT scored all the ranked projects and provided the recommended scores to the WRTAC which we modify and/or approve today.
 - Creel Survey for Lightning Creek, lower Clark Fork River and Pack River tributaries.
- Fall Meeting Date
 - September 11 at 10 a.m.

Review of draft 2018 Annual Implementation Plans:

Appendix A: Idaho Tributary Habitat Acquisition and Fishery Enhancement Program
Tributary Habitat Acquisition and Enhancement

- Ken discussed the cap on the budget for this project. He is asking the group and the MC to approve increasing funding for that program. Eric noted they are working on a solution for the funding issue and wanted to make sure the WRTAC was comfortable with them bringing a solution to the MC. There were no concerns from the WRTAC.
1. Habitat Restoration Scoping Fund
 2. Habitat Restoration and Acquired Property Maintenance and Monitoring Fund
 3. Priority Native Salmonid Habitat Acquisition and Conservation Fund
 4. Lightning Creek Rootwad Salvage
 5. Habitat Prioritization Evaluation for Trestle Creek

- The WRTAC discussed the ranking score for this project and approved the score the AIT proposed.
6. Habitat Prioritization Evaluation for Caribou and Hellroaring Creeks
 - Bill Love highlighted the effects of the fires and timber salvage that occurred 60 years ago.
 - The WRTAC discussed the ranking score for this project and approved the score the AIT proposed.
 7. Pack River Temperature Monitoring
 8. Spring and Mosquito Creeks Pathogen Survey
 9. Idaho Field Station Planning
 10. Lightning Creek Large Woody Debris and Recruitment Project
 11. Idaho Land Conservation Strategy
 12. Twin Creek Restoration Revegetation

Fishery Resource Monitoring, Enhancement, and Management

13. Fish Resource Monitoring, Enhancement, and Management Plan

The WRTAC recommends that the MC approve the Appendix A Project Plans as written.

Appendix B: Montana Tributary Habitat Acquisition and Recreational Fishery Enhancement Program

Tributary Habitat Acquisition and Enhancement

1. Habitat Restoration Monitoring and Native Salmonid Abundance Monitoring Plan
2. Miners Gulch Stream and Riparian Restoration Project
3. Vermilion River Sims Reach Restoration Survey and Design
4. Mainstem Bull River Reforestation on Forest Service Lands and NEPA Process
5. Match Funds for Outreach in Bull River Revegetation (Section 319 Project)
6. Stream Gage Monitoring
7. Cabinet Ranger District Automated Snow Recording Site Operation and Maintenance
8. Crow Creek Bull Trout Investigation
9. Lolo National Forest Priority Native Salmonid Habitat Restoration Assessment and Planning
10. Graves Creek Pilot Habitat Enhancement Project
 - Eric noted and the WRTAC agreed to add fixed photo points to the project plan before it goes to the MC.
 - The WRTAC discussed the ranking score for this project and approved the score the AIT proposed.
11. EF Blue Reach 2 Survey and Design – Phase I
12. Dry Creek Sediment Reduction, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Compliance
13. Lower Clark Fork Watershed Group Project Coordination
14. Montana Land Conservation Strategy
15. Habitat Restoration Monitoring and Maintenance Fund
16. Habitat Restoration, Property Acquisition, and Conservation Easement Contingency Fund

17. Clark Fork River Westslope Cutthroat Trout Experimental Transport Program

18. Crow Creek Restoration Design:

- This is a new project that was not included in the mail out to the WRTAC.
- Jason provided a summary of the details of the proposed project and noted that NorthWestern Energy and BPA have been approached to provide funds for the project. NorthWestern Energy is working to expand the scope of the area they can fund projects in to include Prospect Creek. This proposal will allow the hiring of a contractor to start design and this work may be funded by NorthWestern Energy if NorthWestern Energy is able to expand its mitigation area to include Prospect Creek. The WRTAC discussed the project and did not have any concerns.
- The WRTAC discussed the ranking score for this project and approved the score the AIT proposed.

Recreational Fishery Enhancement

19. Cabinet Gorge and Noxon Reservoir Fisheries Monitoring Plan

20. Managing Aquatic Invasive Plants on Noxon and Cabinet Gorge Reservoirs

21. Eurasian Watermilfoil Literature Review and Noxon Reservoir Existing Data Analysis

- Ken Merrill noted there is a flowering rush symposium the last week of February in Washington that is being coordinated by the invasive species council, and the goal is to come up with a management plan for Washington.

22. Mountain Lake Fisheries Monitoring Project

23. Thompson Falls Field Station Facility Feasibility Study

24. Lower Bull River Day Use Boat Access Plan and Final Design

25. Noxon Reservoir Boat Ramp Improvements

26. Montana Mussel Response Support

- Eric provided an update on the Montana legislature and the potential for supplementing funding for the response effort with CFSA funds. MFWP is still awaiting the final decision on whether or not they will support this project.
- The USFWS is drafting a memo related to the mussel response, and there is concern that CFSA funds are considered unobligated.
- Ken Merrill noted the Kalispel Tribe needs time to review and think about the proposal, but most likely won't be able to support it.

The WRTAC recommends that the MC approve the Appendix B Project Plans as written with the addition of fixed photo points for the Graves Creek Stream Restoration Project and the WRTAC does not have consensus moving the Montana Mussel Response Support Project Plan to the MC.

Appendix C: Fish Passage/Native Salmonid Restoration Program

1. Native Salmonid Restoration Plan Five-Year Plan (2018–2022)

2. Upstream Fish Passage Program

3. Fish Capture Facilities Operation, Development and Testing

4. Tributary Trapping and Downstream Juvenile Bull Trout Transport Program

5. Bull Trout Emigration Study
6. East Fork Bull River Bedload Sediment Sampling 2016–2020
7. Fish Abundance Monitoring
8. Non-Native Fish Suppression Project in the East Fork Bull River

The WRTAC recommends that the MC approve the Appendix C Project Plans as written.

Appendix D: Bull Trout Protection and Public Education Project

1. Bull Trout Protection and Public Education Project, Idaho Department of Fish and Game
 - Bill Love noted that in the town of Pend Oreille near the roundabout by Sand Creek there is an opportunity to provide a design for metal art which will be awarded through a grant application process. Tom Whalen (IDFG) is planning on submitting a proposal for art related to Bull Trout. He also noted that “The stream I call home” was selected and honored at the University of Idaho film festival.
2. Bull Trout Protection and Public Education Project, Panhandle Chapter Trout Unlimited
3. Bull Trout Protection and Public Education Project, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
4. Lake Pend Oreille Boater’s Guide
 - Ken Merrill noted that he would like to review the draft before it is final.
5. Interpretive Signs and Kiosk Component for Trestle Creek Education Center

The WRTAC recommends that the MC approve the Appendix D Project Plans as written.

Appendix E: Watershed Councils Program

1. Pack River Watershed Council, Bonner Soil and Water Conservation District
 - Ken Merrill noted that Jessica has shown interest in helping out with the Caribou/Pack River watershed assessment.
2. Lower Clark Fork Watershed Council Projects

The WRTAC recommends that the MC approve the Appendix E Project Plans as written.

Appendix F1: Clark Fork River water Quality Monitoring Program

1. Clark Fork River water Quality Monitoring Program

The WRTAC recommends that the MC approve the Appendix F1 Project Plans as written.

Appendix F2: Monitoring of Noxon Reservoir Stratification and Mobilization of Sediment Nutrients/Metals

1. Monitoring of Noxon Reservoir Stratification and Mobilization of Sediment Nutrients/Metals

The WRTAC recommends that the MC approve the Appendix F2 Project Plans as written.

Appendix F3: Aquatic Organism Tissue Analysis

- There are no 2018 Project Plans associated with Appendix F3.

The WRTAC recommends that the MC approve Appendix F3 as written.

Appendix F4: Water Quality Protection and Monitoring Plan for Maintenance, Construction, and Emergency Activities

- There are no 2018 Project Plans associated with Appendix F4.

The WRTAC recommends that the MC approve Appendix F4 as written.

Appendix F5: Dissolved Gas Supersaturation Control, Mitigation, and Monitoring Operations

- There are no 2018 Project Plans for operations under Appendix F5.

TDG Monitoring

1. Total Dissolved Gas Monitoring

TDG Mitigation and Monitoring Program

2. Analysis of Gas Bubble Disease Monitoring Data
 - Ken Merrill asked if AIT usually always ranks project plans. Eric described the new ranking process and emphasized that the AIT is providing recommendations to the WRTAC and the WRTAC will provide the final recommendations to the MC.
 - The WRTAC discussed the ranking score for this project and approved the score the AIT proposed.
3. Lake Pend Oreille Stock Identification of Bull Trout
 - The WRTAC discussed the ranking score for this project and approved the score the AIT proposed.
4. Lake Pend Oreille/Clark Fork River Walleye Population Assessment
 - The WRTAC discussed the ranking score for this project and approved the score the AIT proposed.
5. Lake Pend Oreille Angler Incentive Program
 - Ken Bouwens noted there is a new club on Lake Pend Oreille that has permission to have two more derbies. Ken would like to add \$4,000 to the budget to this project plan to help sponsor these additional two derbies.
6. Lake Pend Oreille Trap and Gill Net Program
 - Ken Bouwens is proposing a change in scope, but not budget for 2018. IDFG is working with Mike Hansen to model the Lake Trout population. They looked closely at fish capture data in relation to mesh size and determined they get more benefit; therefore, more Lake Trout captured when they use a particular mesh size. He is proposing to increase gill netting efforts back to levels in 2014 for the next 10 years to get the population back to where it was in 1999. Their modeling results also showed trap netting was costing \$40,000 a year and very few Lake Trout were captured. Trap netting was originally kept as a monitoring tool, but they have found a way to monitor using gill nets. So, no trap nets will be

deployed in 2018; but, cost saved will be used for extra gill netting efforts since more weeks will be gill netted verses what was originally planned. Ken noted that additional efforts will cost an additional \$250,000 over the next 10 years, but 18 years into the future they anticipate a cost savings of 2.2 million dollars.

- The WRTAC agreed that there may be a need to modify the title.
7. Demography of Adfluvial Bull Trout in Lake Pend Oreille
 8. LPO/Lower Clark Fork Strontium Isotope Baseline Collection
 9. Lake Pend Oreille Bull Trout Survival Study
 - Ken Merrill asked if they are also measuring flow and temperature in tributaries as part of the survival study. Ken Bouwens thought that would be a good idea.
 10. Lake Pend Oreille Nearshore Index Netting
 11. Box Canyon Reservoir Northern Pike Suppression

GSCP Alternative

12. Gas Supersaturation Control Program Total Dissolved Gas Abatement

The WRTAC recommends that the MC approve the Appendix F5 Project Plans as written with the proposed additional \$4,000 added to the Lake Pend Oreille Angler Incentive Program Project Plan and a potential change in the title for the Lake Pend Oreille Trap and Gill Net Program Project Plan with removal of "Trap and" since trap netting will no longer be occurring.

Appendix T: Project Operations Package

1. Project Operations and Coordination
2. Priest River Coldwater Bypass Preliminary Design
 - Bill Love stated that Idaho Department of Natural Resources implemented a study at the lower dam to determine how to meet the minimum water rights during low flows. Recommendations from the study included extending the gates and conducting work on the thoroughfare. There is a proposal to extent the gates to keep the lake at full pool and to also meet the water rights. Trout Unlimited is in support of this project. The state statute states that the lower dam is required to keep the lake at a certain pool level, but at the same time allow enough water for the water rights downstream (minimum instream flow). Holding the lake level takes precedence over instream flow in the Priest River. Bill believes the ID legislature will fund these projects.
3. Cabinet Gorge Fish Hatchery Spring Collection System Upgrade

The WRTAC recommends that the MC approve the Appendix T Project Plans as written.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m. MST.