

Methow Restoration Council

August 16, 2016

Participants:

Name	Organization/Affiliation
Amy Martin	Okanogan Conservation District
Chris Butler	Yakama Nation
Chris Johnson	MSRF
Hannah Dewey	Methow Headwaters Campaign
Hans Smith	Yakama Nation
Jacqueline Wallace	Trout Unlimited
Jennifer Molesworth	Bureau of Reclamation
Jessica Goldberg	MSRF
John Crandall	MRC
Joy Juelson	UCSRB
Kelli Snodgrass	WDFW
Kirsten Kirkby	CCFEG
Susan Crampton	Local Citizen

Meeting Notes:

John Crandall – Monitoring Update: Paper of the month: *Juvenile salmon and steelhead occupancy of stream pools treated and not treated with restoration structures, Entiat River, Washington. Polivka et al 2015.* Karl Polivka has been working in the Entiat with the Forest Service Lab down there studying wood structures that have been installed for fish habitat. The goal of these structures is to increase fish biomass, not just move existing fish to new locations. Karl looked at pools with structures and natural pools without structures. Results were more conclusive with chinook than with steelhead. Found higher densities of chinook in pools with wood, also depth and velocity were important. Looked at different times of the year; peak densities were in summer, by September it gets harder to find juvenile fish. Results very applicable to the Methow. Different thing there with summer vs. spring chinook. Here at this time of year all of the summer chinook have left. A very interesting paper. Jenni Novak is also an author on it.

John – it's that time of year, when river flows have been dropping, that conditions are good to go out and do that monitoring. A lot of the land along the river is private, and people need to have access permissions before we go out there. It is important for all of us, because the public doesn't differentiate between agencies and groups. Any one group that is not getting access and has a negative interaction with a landowner, that interaction can have repercussions for others who need to get out there. One landowner got an access request letter that was so general that they couldn't figure out what was being proposed. The public groups us all together, so be aware and plan ahead. Know where you can be and where you can't. We have many groups doing monitoring, and outside consultants in particular don't always know where we have permissions.

Chris J – I have had more comments/complaints in the last month from the Methow, Twisp, and Chewuch landowners than ever before; I think people are getting fed up.

John – if we hire contractors, we need to be responsible for making sure that they are aware of access. Also, have been seeing a lot of flagging out there, so if you put it up have a plan to get it down.

John – Outreach Update: we met as a subcommittee of the Education and Outreach group a few years ago, and we had a pretty active group that met for a couple of years. We hadn't been doing it for a few years and we lost some of that coordination. Became a coordination issue especially with the schools. We met a couple of months ago and had folks from Methow Conservancy, CCFEG, Reclamation, OCD, Methow Natives, etc., all groups that have been engaged in outreach & education. One of the things that we have been doing is listing all of the events we do. Yesterday I met with Anne Andersen up at the school; she is the curriculum coordinator for the new IB program. We have the Salmon in the Classroom, Watershed Watchers, fishing day block prints, etc. Now each grade teacher has a framework to develop a lesson plan, and within each grade they take on different things. They have bigger themes that they can use to explore topics. We are working to figure out where our programs fit into that framework, and I think we got there for figuring out where we fit for grades K-6, and we are still working on 7-10. We have a lot of support, and our existing programs will be a cornerstone for some of the individual units. I will have an update at a future meeting.
If you are interested in participating in the Education/Outreach subcommittee contact John.

Chris J – we have been working with state agencies on using public lands for education; WDFW is apparently not very comfortable with the concept; they want us to have a \$2 million insurance policy. Also on the M2 WDFW property, it appears that they used grizzly bear habitat money to buy property on the mainstem Methow.

Jennifer Molesworth – doesn't the school have insurance when the kids are out doing stuff?

Chris J – they do, but they also want the organizer to have insurance because when people sue they tend to sue everyone.

Hannah Dewey – Methow Headwaters Campaign: I do all of the outreach, education, and local organizing for the campaign. The Methow Headwaters (www.methowheadwaters.org) was started back in 2013; copper prices had risen higher than they had in a decade, which prompted the exploratory application to the FS. Local citizens were concerned; the campaign had very grass roots beginnings. They contacted Conservation Northwest and the Wilderness Society in Seattle, which have given advice and assistance. Once the application was submitted, the FS held a public meeting, which generated over 700 comments, nearly all in opposition. Mike Liu said that this is the most interest that the community has shown in any issue. After 2014, the permit process was delayed due to fires and lack of personnel at the FS. In February of this year, the Campaign held a second public meeting.

Given what we know about the deposit, it would likely be an open pit mine, so it is really an issue about resources. The campaign has been successful in gathering community support, local citizens, and the business community. The campaign has recognized water as a significant resource that needs to be protected for future generations.

Back in 2013, copper prices went up, and Blue River Resources put in their application. There is historically known to be about a billion pounds of low-grade copper ore in Flagg Mountain, which most likely would have to be mined in an open pit, and a mine would likely grow to about 3000 acres or 6 square miles. Blue River has acquired a number of claims on Flagg Mountain over the years.

Concerns:

1. Water – 90% of the water here is in public ownership
2. Wildlife – federally protected species
3. Recreation – a critical economic driver
4. Salmon Recovery – a lot of money going toward salmon recovery, very culturally important.

Campaign Support:

140+ local businesses, 7 regional businesses, around 40 non-profit and civic organizations, 1,000 plus petition signers. Having the business support was helpful in getting support from our Senators. A

resource issue, but it could affect our economy. Having a lot of support for the Campaign has been a great part of this job, seeing people rally around the cause.

The Campaign is proposing something called a withdrawal area; the boundary lines were very purposefully drawn, worked with the Forest Service. A lot of thought went into it.

Jennifer – but they left out the Twisp River, which is a very important area

Hannah – true. That is brought up a lot. The reason was that we thought that including the Twisp River would make it harder for the agency to allow a mineral withdrawal area. It was primarily a size issue.

John – there is a lot of wilderness out there

Hannah – the scenic byway and wilderness areas are excluded already, so this addition would create a large pocket of protected area. There are many claims up there. Hart's Pass area was purposefully excluded, a lot of that water doesn't flow into the watershed and there is a lot of hobby mining up there. The way the withdrawal works is that it makes it off limits to industrial mining, but it doesn't affect roads or grazing rights, only the withdrawal from mineral entry. The withdrawal also would not affect valid and existing claims in the withdraw area. The claim holders have to do a minimum amount of maintenance every year to keep their claims active.

Jennifer – from an aquatic standpoint, those activities associated with small claims can do quite a bit of damage. Recreational miners can use suction dredging, which basically turns the creek upside down.

Chris Butler – is the outline (map) of the withdrawal area finalized, or just proposed?

Hannah – our proposal has been submitted to the Secretary of the Interior, in cooperation with the Forest Service; it is likely that Interior or the Forest Service may ask us to revise it somewhat.

Discussion – no mining allowed in Wilderness Areas

Joy – what is the likelihood that the Secretary of the Interior will withdraw this area for mining?

Hannah – a withdrawal can be of all different sizes, but it has happened in other areas. If we can get the withdrawal, it is on a 20-year renewal cycle. Recently our senators have introduced legislation in support of our proposal. If it can be passed, it can be coupled with legislation that could make it permanent. It was a big deal to get the legislation introduced. The hope is to get it passed before the current administration changes. Not a big likelihood of that, but people are working hard to get it passed.

Joy – is this a large company? Are they very willing to fight about this?

Hannah – you may have also seen that the Colville Tribes have come forward to claim that the area is culturally and spiritually significant, which has delayed the decision from the Forest Service again. This has changed things, but is a separate effort. Blue River Resources has expressed a lot of frustration with the FS on the timeline for the permitting. They are pushing back on the hold ups. It is the FS' duty to uphold the 1872 mining law, do some assessments on the impacts on the resources in the area, they have to have mitigation measures in place for any concerns for the resource, but if they meet the requirements then the FS has to issue the permit. If Blue River gets the permit and is able to gather current and valid information that makes it harder for citizen groups to fight. So, if we can get the segregation in place before they gather that information then the likelihood of the withdrawal is greater.

The campaign has hit many milestones, including the recent legislation. Twisp Town Council just passed a resolution supporting the withdrawal, and all this is important for the campaign. We keep working to build support and to be very transparent in our activities.

Jennifer – TU has been working on the recreational suction dredging issue, any news on that?

Hannah – we have been working with Crystal, but not on the suction dredging

Jacqueline Wallace – our delegation in DC has been supporting the Campaign. Crystal will be back from leave after Labor Day. Do you feel that there are any gaps or holes that would need to be filled in order to achieve success?

Hannah – we are working to show the diversity of support, including the sportsmen and the agricultural support, always working on continuing to build that diverse support.

Jennifer – are the county commissioners in support?

Hannah – yes, Ray Campbell submitted a letter of support for our delegation.

Joy Juelson – UCSRB Updates: The SRFB process is ending. We are at the last step in a process that began in April. Last Friday was the deadline to submit to the state in PRISM. Only 10 percent of the regionally allocated funds can be applied toward monitoring, so even though the bull trout project is technically above the line, it will not be funded.

Chris J – if the other monitoring project fails to come under contract, then John is waiting patiently in line.

Joy – we have two citizen committees that each come up with a prioritized list for their area, and then we collate the lists, with the RTT score as the tiebreaker. This year the CAC didn't move any projects around, although they reduced the award to Silver. They also switched the Match and SRFB request for Twisp River Floodplain Acquisition

Chris J – MSRF asked for that switch based on increased match from the Colville Tribes

Joy – if any additional funds become available then the next projects on the list could receive funding. The citizens felt that the Okanogan Assessment should be higher on the list because of its area and the outreach that would occur. Also, the Peshastin Confluence project was pulled and will be removed in the list.

The process is not over yet; it needs to go through the State Review Panel first, and any project could be labeled as a POC and have to address concerns.

Joy – Outreach and Education grant: we have about \$25,000 for outreach and education. A simple process, short application. These are SRFB Lead Entity funds, a special program. Projects have to work to further habitat recovery actions in the basin. Are we moving the dial toward recovery. For example, CCFEG does forums, outreach materials for the general public, film festivals, diverse activities. The more you have in there, the better you are going to do. Maximum of \$10k request per applicant. You need to have a current SRFB grant or partner with someone who does. Application will be due in September. Okanogan County will have to approve of the projects. Money has to be spent by June 1 of 2017. Funds have to be spent in Okanogan County.

Joy – Adaptive Management: UCSRB as a part of the Salmon Recovery plan does an adaptive management process and check in every five years that correlates with NOAA status review. We've been trying to wrap our heads around what we need to adaptively manage. Trying to determine what the need is at this time.

The Biological Strategy updates are needed, as well a need for prioritization of future habitat actions that feeds into an Implementation Schedule. Have an RTT steering committee as well as an IT steering committee. We will go into details at the next IT meeting on September. The WATs will be very involved; it will be a prioritization decision tool. If you are interested, please attend the IT meeting on September 27 in Wenatchee at the Chelan Co PUD Auditorium.

Joy – Habitat Work Schedule: GSRO is forming a capitol budget request based on budget information for all Proposed and Conceptual projects based on the budget information in HWS. This is the first time that they have done their budgeting this way. We need to get this information in HWS to help the GSRO with the budgeting.

Joy – RTT: we have a new chair for the Regional Technical Team, Tracy Hillman, and the next RTT meeting will be open to the public. You will start getting announcements and notes soon. This will affect targeted projects that need review. If you have documents or assessments that need review, you can work with me or with Tracy to get it on the RTT schedule.

Roundtable

John Crandall – Monitoring: we are going to start genetic sampling for bull trout in the basin. We know a lot about what streams they occupy, but there is a lot we don't know. There is an effort out of the FS out of Missoula to identify the range of bull trout. We have them here, but also other states in the NW. they ran a model based on stream gradient and temperature. Used those to predict different levels of probably of where they could occur. Some of them we know they are there, but there are a lot of streams where we have no information. The technique is Environmental DNA (eDNA). You go to a stream, filter water in filter paper, put it in a sterile bag, and send it out for sampling. If we can get the samples together they will run the sample for us. If you want multiple species you need a sample for each one. We are going to start with a few sites this year. So if you know you will be in one of these areas, and you are willing to help take samples, we can get a bunch of samples. We will start in a few areas where we know we have bull trout but the upper limits of their distribution is undefined. Upper Methow, Goat Creek, Eightmile, and probably Blue Buck Creek. We need to figure out the details. We have a kit, UCSRB has another kit that we can potentially use. The program is trying to find juvenile fish. Has a sweet probably of detection. If there is one fish there is like 80% probability, if there is two fish there is like 99%. Fish have to be somewhat close, like a km upstream. Bull trout redd surveys – we are looking for help if people are interested in volunteering their time. They are really fun, bull trout spawn in the most amazing spots.

Hans Smith – YN Updates: we are starting to look at project opportunities in the Fawn Creek/Weeman area from the RA last year. Working with landowners and getting information for the 2D hydraulic model.

We also are going to complete another recreational user assessment of the same reach, approx. Mazama to Weeman. That assessment is going on now.

We are still working on the Beaver Creek RA with TetraTech; no updates at this time.

Jennifer – the areas up there with Volstead Creek, dispersed camping, are all important areas to look at, they have a lot of impact on Beaver Creek

Hans – Twisp Ponds is going well, almost done. There is now a flowing side channel through an old levee riprapped bank, coming off of the neighboring property of the MSRF left bank. Big change in the hydrology in the site. Looking forward to the reveg and watching it. Landowners are excited, a really positive project.

Newby Narrows project – we had a setback with the landowner, knocked us out of the work window, need to get the bridge out before the high flows, got some wood treatment done where we could access, but weren't able to do the side channel work that we had proposed. Hope to get back in and finish next year.

Big Valley project is still on hold; it will not happen this year. The Right of Entry agreement process with DNR has been difficult. We will have to resolve the issue of working on SOAL throughout the basin.

Jennifer – are you still considering any projects on the WDFW land where we did our M2 project?

Hans – I'm still talking to Chris (Johnson)

Chris J – do you expect anything this year from DNR?

Hans – I'm hopeful. We need to know for budgeting process.

Discussion – extent of SOAL in the basin

Chris J – if there are opportunities on SOAL where YN and MSRF can partner, I wouldn't throw that out the window.

Chris Butler – YN Chewuch Projects: We had a channel spanning jam setting up at the inlet on our River Right project. We went out with WDFW and decided to monitor it. It is beautiful. We went out a few weeks ago and did some snorkeling; it created about an 11 ft. pool. We saw chinook, a lot of use in the channel, saw a bull trout – it looks great. The plants are doing great, natural regeneration.

Jennifer – what kind of flow split do you think you have?

Chris B – haven't measured, but I think it's around 10% or more. It would be nice to know what kind of event we had last spring.

Chewuch RiverMile 15-20; this is still being developed as two separate projects, but for NEPA process it's one. Met with Forest Service in June, with Gene, Lance, Philip, and the FS gave us their opinions on what we should pursue. We are moving forward with 30% design based on that, planning on construction in 17-18.

Eightmile Creek barrier – we surveyed it with RiverDesignGroup, and this year we went out to bid and Inter-Fluve won for developing the final design from the concept. We are designing a potential project that will resolve the barrier without any maintenance. We also will design something for the natural partial barrier, but we don't know if we will do anything with that because we know fish get over it. Everything will go through public comment. I will be interested to hear what the eDNA results are for Eightmile creek.

For the priority list, this isn't something that will be addressed until 2019

Eightmile Creek and Twentymile didn't make the Chewuch Transportation Plan actions. Both would need to go through a NEPA process again for any projects. Not much traction on Twentymile. They have their priority lists, and when it comes up we're ready to go. 19-21

Kelli Snodgrass – WDFW: we're ramping down, people are working on and finishing up the projects we've been permitting. I want to encourage people to contact me and I'm happy to look at projects early – I'm happy to look at 30% designs, and to give feedback. Other than that, I've been in reactive mode every time it rains. If something comes up that is an emergency, give Lynda Hofmann a call and we'll come look at it.

Jacqueline Wallace– TU: we are working with individual landowners to increase irrigation efficiencies. We are wrapping up loose ends on MVID. Our other big project, Barkley, there is a lot of talk of where to go next.

Amy Martin – OCD: Terri Williams is still working with Benson Creek irrigators, something is in the works. We will be working with Craig Boesal on Davis Lake regarding some cattle.

Chris J – MSRF is also working with OCD on replacing some surface irrigation diversions on Frazer Creek

Amy – the Conservation District has an Outreach and Education coordinator position open; it will be a full-time position.

Kristen Kirkby – CCFEG: Silver is finishing up, and Methow Natives is out doing the planting work. It is looking great, hopefully can get a tour out there. Also will be doing some more fieldwork for the Twisp to Carlton RA, hope to be wrapping that up soon.

Joy Juelson – UCSRB: MarySutton Carruthers has offered that if anyone would like to do eDNA testing, she is happy to come up and do the testing kit, but your organization will need to pay for the lab

processing. The other service we have available is that if you ever need a mobile PIT tag detector, you can check one out from us.

The RTT did want to do a post-project tour, so if you know of a project that you put in that would benefit them to see, let me or Tracy Hillman know.

We were thinking of pursuing finding out what is happening with the Army Corps SPIF (ESA Programmatic Consultation)

Chris J – we have found that the biggest issue with aquatic permitting has been with the Department of Ecology.

Jennifer Molesworth – Reclamation: The Bureau of Reclamation has been monitoring and evaluating our projects since 2004. It is one of the RPAs in the BiOP for the FCRPS to do effectiveness monitoring of our habitat actions. We have contracted with Inter-Fluve who has subcontracted with Tracy Hillman to see what we can learn. We are calling it the IMW evaluation report, with a draft out in 2017. A lot of the study is still going on, and there will be a follow up report as the new information comes in. Inter-Fluve will come to MRC and present on the report in September.

Chris J – can we have these inform each other, with regard to the adaptive management update?

Joy – Tracy is working with all of the groups so he is tied in to it all.

John Crandall – Goat Creek update: This project was the first ever SRFB funded bull trout specific habitat project. Implemented last fall, with a partnership with NFF, MSRF, USFS, and USFWS; it included wood structures and felled trees into the creek. We went back this spring, did a couple of visits, walked the sites. At both sites wood had moved. One of the project goals was to increase spawning habitat, and at the upper site, we got gravel deposition. About 10 of the logs we felled stayed the same, about 3 or 4 re-orientated themselves, and about a dozen drifted downstream, stuck together, and formed new small logjams that have scoured some pools. Not a massive amount of spawning gravels to begin with, and that hasn't changed a lot, but we are looking. We will do a longitudinal profile through the reach to look at changes this fall. We are also doing a work party with NFF to clean up dispersed camping site, do more plantings, and put up the signage that is required.

Chris Johnson – MSRF: Twisp River Floodplain Phase I project is complete, with the levee removed in some locations, pierced in other locations. We are left with a project that is described as “expected controlled chaos”, and it should be a fun project to watch. We are working on an acquisition to double the restoration area, more could be happening in the next couple of years. Site is publicly accessible. Be aware that there is a private landowner between the county road and the site, so contact us if you plan to visit.

We are expecting an HPA for the removal of cars and debris from the river with DNR funds. We will be working with OCD on irrigation wells on Frazer Creek, and they may be helping us complete the last two bridges on Frazer Creek. There will be 11 new bridges on Frazer Creek/Beaver when we are done, thanks to the help of UCSRB, RCO, SRFB, CTCR, and OCD.

Next MRC Meeting September 20th

Definitions of Commonly used Acronyms	
AEM	Action Effectiveness Monitoring
ANS	Aquatic Nuisance Species
AREMP	Aquatic and Riparian Effectiveness Monitoring Program
BACI	Before, After, Control, Impact (study design type)
BEF	Bonneville Environmental Foundation
BO/BiOp	Biological Opinion
BPA	Bonneville Power Administration
CAC	Citizens Advisory Committee (for SRFB funding applications)
CAO	Critical Areas Ordinance
CBFWA	Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority (pronounced "cubfwah")
CCFEG	Columbia Cascade Fisheries Enhancement Group
CCT	Colville Confederated Tribes
CHaMP	Columbia Habitat Monitoring Program
CMZ	Channel Migration Zone
CREP	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
CSF	Community Salmon Fund
EDT	Ecosystem Diagnosis and Treatment
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FCRPS	Federal Columbia River Power System
FFFP	Family Forest Fish Passage Program
FIA	Forest Inventory and Analysis program (USFS)
Four "H"s	The four factors affecting salmon recovery: Hatchery, Hydro, Habitat, Harvest
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
HGMP	Hatchery Genetic Management Plan
HPA	Hydraulic Project Approval
HSRG	Hatchery Scientific Review Group
HWS	Habitat Work Schedule
IMW	Intensively Monitored Watershed
IS	Implementation Schedule
ISEMP	Integrated Status and Effectiveness Monitoring Project
ISRP	Independent Scientific Review Panel
IT	Implementation Team
LW/LWD	Large Wood/Large Woody Debris
M2	Middle Methow (a project area defined as the reach between Winthrop and Twisp)
MaDMC	Monitoring and Data Management Committee (pronounced "madmac")
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRC	Methow Restoration Council
MSRF	Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation (pronounced "em-surf")
MVRD	Methow Valley Ranger District
MWC	Methow Watershed Council
MYAP	Multi-year Action Plan (also sometimes called the 3-year workplan)
NFF	National Forest Foundation
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NPCC	Northwest Power and Conservation Council

OCD	Okanogan Conservation District
OBMEP	Okanogan Basin Monitoring and Evaluation Program
OWL	Okanogan Wilderness League
PCSRF	Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (pronounced "Pacsurf")
PHABSIM	Physical Habitat Simulation
PIBO	PACFISH/INFISH* Biological Opinion
PNAMP	Pacific Northwest Aquatic Monitoring Partnership
PUD	Public Utility District
QAQC	Quality Assurance, Quality Control
RA	Reach Assessment
RCO	(Washington State) Recreation and Conservation Office
REI	Reach-based Ecosystem Indicators (used in Reach Assessments)
RFEG	Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group
RFP	Request for Proposals
RM	River Mile
RPA	Reasonable and Prudent Alternative(s)
RTT	Regional Technical Team
SEPA	State Environmental Policy Act
SMP	Shoreline Management Plan
SOAL	State Owned Aquatic Lands
SOW	Statement of Work
SPIF	Specific Project Information Form (used with the Corps ESA programmatic)
SRFB	(Washington State) Salmon Recovery Funding Board (pronounced "surfboard")
SRP	State Review Panel (for SRFB funding applications)
STEM Database	Status, Trend and Effectiveness Monitoring database at NOAA's Northwest Fisheries Science Center
UCSRB	Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board
TRT	Technical Recovery Team (NOAA)
USFS	US Forest Service
USGS	US Geological Survey
VSP	Viable Salmonid Population
WAT	Watershed Action Team (the MRC is our WAT)
WDFW	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
WDNR	Washington Department of Natural Resources
WNFH	Winthrop National Fish Hatchery
WWP-TU	Washington Water Project of Trout Unlimited
YN	Yakama Nation

*PACFISH/INFISH The PACFISH/INFISH Biological Opinion (PIBO) Effectiveness Monitoring Program was initiated in 1998 to provide a consistent framework for monitoring aquatic and riparian resources on most Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands within the Upper Columbia River Basin.