

Methow Restoration Council

November 20, 2012

Participants:

Name	Organization/Affiliation
Bob Clark	Okanogan Conservation District
Chris Johnson	MSRF
Chuck Peven	RTT
Crystal Elliot	Herrera Environmental
Derek Van Marter	UCSRB
Don Phillips	Local Landowner
Gene Shull	Forest Service
Gina McCoy	WDFW
Hans Smith	Yakama Nation
Heide Andersen	Methow Conservancy
Jarred Johnson	Yakama Nation
Jeri Timm	WWP-TU
Jessica Goldberg	MSRF
John Crandall	Wild Fish Conservancy
Kate Terrell	US Fish and Wildlife Service/RTT
Ken Bevis	WDFW
Lee Hatcher	Methow Watershed Council
Leslie Michel	Okanogan Conservation District
Michael Notaro	Watershed Resource Solutions
Michelle Dewey	Dewey Consulting LLC
Peter Jenkins	US Fish and Wildlife Service

Meeting Notes:

Derek Van Marter—UCSRB update: The Implementation Team meeting will be December 4th in Wenatchee at Chelan PUD Auditorium, from 10-3. Representatives from the USFWS Abernathy office will be there to talk about bull trout genetics. Recovery planning with USFWS will also be on the agenda; we are working to reintegrate bull trout information into the recovery plan. Kate Terrell—the draft plan, at the 5-state level, is in review now at our Boise office. We are also trying to develop an action plan for the Upper Columbia, which we hope to integrate into the biological strategy. We will do this watershed by watershed starting with the Wenatchee, then Entiat, then Methow.

Derek—we would like to be able to target and track actions that are designed to benefit bull trout. We will be working with people in each of the subbasins to pull that information together. Kate—it will likely be more of an implementation style action plan; we will look at the data gaps. We will probably not try to do threats analysis first.

Derek—SRFB is making decisions on the funding list in Olympia on Dec 6th and 7th. I will be there testifying about our list; we have about 12 projects funded for 1.953 million. Our board is having our year-end business meeting Dec 13th.

Landowner liability legislation is moving forward with partners across the state, and they are on target to introduce legislation in both houses this session; both houses at the same time. We are working on senate sponsorship now (we already have house sponsorship), and both bills will likely be referred to

judiciary. There will be committee meetings and testifying on the need for landowner liability legislation.

Hans Smith—YN River Recreation Assessments: everyone probably remembers that last year we completed a river recreation assessment of M2, and we are looking at doing something similar on the Twisp River from Newby Creek to the mouth, and on the Chewuch River from Twentymile down to the mouth. We have a new consultant, MIG, and we would like them to come to MRC and give a presentation on their work scope. MIG recently completed a similar assessment in Wenatchee; they will use a similar protocol on the Twisp and Chewuch. They will do focus groups, interviews, and try to get a sense of the use. I hope they will come and get contacts, and I would like to hear if anyone has ideas for them. They will be trying to characterize recreation use on those reaches to inform YN projects and anyone else who wants to use the information. We can also make the MIG protocol from the Wenatchee available for review.

John Crandall—in terms of how the results of the assessment done on M2, how does it inform how you would design a project?

Hans—it is part of the body of knowledge that informs the basis of design; gives a characterization of use so that we can use that in developing the design.

Chuck Peven—is it part of your outreach?

Hans—it provides a basis that we have done due diligence on issues, helps defend the project. It is just information and not recommendations. The YN scaled up the recreation assessment program, and MIG was the competitive bidder.

Chris Johnson—would like to talk with you about adding other areas to the assessments to save in economies of scale.

John Crandall—River Signage: signage and outreach, how that relates to the work that we are doing. We are trying to figure out how to go about signing, whether to sign, etc., so we can coordinate, and what public outreach that we want to do. When I worked in the Klamath, we had a restoration project with a sign on either end that just drew attention to the project without calling it a hazard. If we want to get something going, now is the time to do it. We need to be thinking about it, and getting things in before the spring boating season starts.

Chris—we are talking about two things, one is information at the put-ins where people have time to read the information, the other is when people are halfway down the river, how we give people information about upcoming features.

John—the two WDFW fish traps on the river have warning signs. Effective, but we need to think about what we want to do.

Discussion—how to let people know about restoration project/structures, how long to have signs and maintain them, having kiosks at put-ins be maintained long-term, aesthetics

John—the in-river signs are challenging to get people to pay attention to; we need to think of what our intentions are

Crystal Elliot—we did a project on the lower Tolt, where we had a sign at the put-in, then a smaller sign on hazards; the combination approach has worked well

Ken Bevis—need to think about what we are starting for a communication and outreach strategy for river users

Chris—can Herrera share their information?

Crystal—yes

Chris—the problem is that if you make a map that says that dangers are in specific locations, because dangers can move every year. Can be more generic

Peter Jenkins—and not making a distinction between our wood and natural wood

Chris—yes, if we keep telling the public that our structures are safe, then we will get pressure to remove natural structures and rebuild them so that they are safe.

Ken—beyond telling people about the structures, we are taking the step of creating river infrastructure that people will use.

Derek—there are a lot of legal and legislative debates going on, there is a risk in going too far. At the least we need to seriously consider signing put-ins and take-outs, but we need to be careful of creating expectations.

Chris—in looking at the liability of the construction site, we are very careful in how we have our contractors control access to the construction site, and we are not yet done, a case could be made that we need to control the site, and label it as a restoration site rather than a recreation site

Kate—could you put up a sign that says Construction Zone, enter at your own risk?

Gina McCoy—you need to have the conversation with DNR

Chris—we have had the conversation with them, and we are making progress

Gina—you need to make sure that they are not prescribing the signs

Chris—they are not, DNR is working with us

Hans—they are interested in working with us, in having us develop the signage

Chris—we are also not the only ones doing this, and we need to be aware that what we do here will be looked at in other places, we also need to be able to reference what is happening in other places

Hans—they are also working on this in the Wenatchee and Entiat, YN plans to bring that information back to the Methow, but we also need to take it a step further and start working in on here. We need to deal with all of the different layers and start immediately; also need to get ahead of it with landowners that have already allowed us access

Kate—can we have this on the agenda for the December IT meeting? Can get support from some of those folks

Derek—yes

Chris—we have historically used formal and informal river access points, so we will take advantage of that by putting signs where people go

Ken—the demographic of river use may be different in the different rivers/reaches

John Crandall—Monitoring Update: I will be updating the monitoring world and the subbasin monitoring map, so I will start harassing people for their planned activities for 2013. Many things will not change. I will also try to develop one for implementation monitoring. YN have started to get their head around it, UCSRB has started to put things out there. I will aim for January or February to give people time to figure out what they are doing.

I will start finalizing the Monitoring plan for the Methow, which is Appendix C for the Monitoring strategy, which is an appendix to Appendix P for the Recovery Plan. It is really tied to the key management questions in the Recovery Plan, and how our monitoring is and is not addressing the key management questions. It will be broken down in to status and trend monitoring, implementation monitoring, and something else that is difficult to tie down. I am hoping to have a draft by the end of March. It will probably go through MaDMC first, then go to RTT.

The Methow does not really fit the definition of an IMW, there is a lot of work going on, irrigation efficiencies, there is a lot of noise

Chuck—couldn't you have intensively monitored assessment units?

John—yes; how to capture the information is the struggle.

Chris—it is difficult to explain to landowners/public what the USGS is doing. We need to find a way to communicate with the public about what we are doing. We need to be able to rise to the occasion when asked.

John—we are making progress on getting interim information rather than waiting three years for a final report. Effectiveness monitoring on a project scale. Best examples we will get are on the project scale. We need to be able to show a cause and effect to the public.

Chris—this is the communication that we need to be able to do to keep working on people's land.

Chris Johnson—MSRF M2 Update: the construction at Whitefish Island (WFI) is largely done; the machines are off the site, water is on the site, and we are starting in to monitoring and re-vegetation. More than 300 pieces of new wood in the river. There were a lot of challenges in placing that level of wood at design criteria for DNR and Reclamation, some is buried 17 feet in the bed of the river. We had to pump 4000 gallons of water a minute, which was also a logistical challenge to deal with. We will be using what we learned from this project prior to construction at WDFW Floodplain next year. We had a second project downstream at the RM-46 project; we worked with the designer and modified the design to reduce the difficulties. We will be working on improving the access point at WFI, and would appreciate feedback on the project; that input will be very helpful over the next few months. Derek—liked the use of rope. Chris—some of the structures are lightly cabled to satisfy DNR and Reclamation and are 100-year structures. Some of the smaller structures are in lower flow, depositional areas, and are designed to be 10-year structures. There are some very different types of structures out there. Next year's project will be at the WDFW Floodplain site, and will be another 300-400 pieces of wood.

Ken Bevis—Outreach Update: Fish guides are here. The MV Interpretive Center has a beautiful watershed wall, they are open on weekends. CCFEG is coming up with a film series in the different basins, here it will be in February at the Twisp Pub; the movie will be *Alaska Gold*, afterwards they want to have a panel to answer questions. Stay tuned.

John—got a bunch of stories in late last year about the monitoring folks, had some issues, so I would like to do a quick survey of the monitoring folks and find out if there were any issues, try to summarize, and know where interactions occurred. Michael Notaro—we need to know where the interaction occurred, whether they were within the mean high, whether they left equipment, flags, etc.

Discussion—MRC web site, waiting for next phase with Pyramid and BEF, working on next steps in outreach and communication.

Ken—the fishery is still open; it's slow this year, creel counters are willing to disseminate information.

Chris—met with Amanda Jackson at MAA last week on the MRC calendars. The thought is to keep doing the children's art work, but link to photo of work in the field. We would like to have each of the implementers adopt a month.

Chuck Peven—Presentation: Revised Draft Scoring Criteria

We have heard over the years questions about transparency in how the RTT conducts business, so I wanted to share the revisions to the scoring criteria that we are working on. Over the last 3-4 months, the RTT has worked to revise the scoring criteria. This is the first WAT presentation, then once we conclude the presentations we will send the revision out and ask for written input. If you can coordinate the input, that would be great, but doesn't have to be. I will give 2 weeks for review and comment, and then the RTT will meet, I will collate the comments, and the RTT will consider what action to take on the input. Please do not expect us to implement every piece of input, but we will take it all seriously. After the input is reviewed, we will respond with written comments on how the input was considered and what actions were taken. Will send out a compilation of all comments received and what actions taken.

Chris—how does this work with the new lead entity?

Chuck—we are working with the existing lead entity for now.

Presentation

Why revised the Scoring?

Previous Scoring: VSP criteria are at population scale, while projects are not

New Scoring:

- More focused on project scale
- Criteria based on
 - How well project addresses ecological concerns (limiting factors)
 - Location and scale
 - Methods
 - Affect on freshwater survival
 - Cost effectiveness, and
 - Landowner agreement

New criteria is simplified, don't have to reference multiple tables. Wanted to be able to have a more detailed way to review projects

New Structure (simpler approach)

1. Category (topic or issue); Question(s) related to category (frames the issue)
2. Rationale (provides background and describes why the RTT determined the category is important).
3. Scoring (shows range of scores)

Chuck—we will still average scores between different RTT members, and there are still four different types of projects: Restoration, protection, assessments, design

Michael—how is landowner agreement defined?

Chuck—we have talked about providing a form, we will define it very distinctly; there will be more points for a signed agreement (5%); it is important, but does not trump more important issues like survival.

Discussion—imminent threat to proposed acquisition/CE properties

Chris—would like to see “threats to restoration opportunities” looked at rather than just whether a property might be listed; what would happen to restoration opportunities in the reach if we cannot obtain the property.

Chuck—all four project types have a possible 100 points; each of the four types are prioritized equally

John—it looks like the new scoring makes it easier for Assessments to score more highly than other types of projects

Discussion—weighting of the different project types

Chuck—previously cost effectiveness was not scored, in new scheme we now rank “benefit scores” and “cost effectiveness” score. Benefit scores and costs will be used to develop a 1:1 benefit to cost ratio based on percentages. Anything that isn't cost will be included in benefit. The magnitude of the benefit relative to 1:1 line is calculated for each project. Projects then ranked based on the magnitude of the benefit and assigned to a bin, which is associated with a score. The line will have to be determined every year based on the information from the projects.

Chris—this will tend to be reflected in projects that will tend to cheap out on a number of elements in order to maximize the score relative to the benefit.

John—seems to maximize benefit for as little cost as you possibly can

Discussion—cost benefit analysis

John—now that you are not comparing each of the different project types by the same criteria, it seems like it will be easier to get a higher score for assessments and design; previously they were not funded through this process.

Chuck—primary difference between the project types is the weighting on the cost effectiveness. Cost effectiveness is very difficult to evaluate.

Proposed Schedule: Will send written draft for input by Dec 3rd, there will be a two week review period, comments due back by Dec 17th, will compile comments and send out to RTT, which will meet to

consider input in January. I will then compile a written response to the comments, and will send written response to stakeholders by January 18th.

Roundtable

Jeri Timm—on MVID, we are continuing to identify alternatives and funding, working with board and hope to select an alternative by mid-December. On CCC, we are working on permitting and hope to construct in the spring. We are also working on a well conversion on the Twisp River. TU has CCPI funds for irrigation efficiencies, let Jeri know if you have any candidates.

Michael Notaro—on signage, there is a real difference between what you would use in a construction zone than what you would use in general areas. There is also a whole legal component for life jackets, alcohol, which are often ignored, that goes beyond the other issues.

Heide Andersen—Beaver Project update: we have 18 active sites where beavers have been released, not including the ones we established this year. About 60% success, which is the best we've seen in any of the beaver projects. We are putting together a video; we got about 7 hours of footage from EcoTrust of interviews and things in the field, hope to have a draft of the video in the next month. We will be using the video for the public, funders, etc., and we hope to reach a broad, general audience. The video will also be for WDFW and the Forest Service.

Amanda Barg—working on fish screening projects in the Upper Columbia for WDFW; we have a completed project and one in the permitting process. We put in a screen for Vic Stokes in the ditch right of way.

Chuck—I am looking for lists of potential screening projects. Amanda—I have that; I am working with Pat Schille at the WDFW Yakima Screen shop, and going to potential sites to evaluate. The projects will be able to use the screen shop expertise. Discussion—screening projects; Bob Clark and Gene Shull have lists too.

Gene Shull—The Forest Service will be submitting a proposal for the EcoTrust grant for the Chewuch Road decommissioning effort. We will be asking for \$100,000 for funds to decommission roads in association with the Buck sale and the Chewuch Transportation Plan. Partners with TWS, Conservation Northwest, Yakama Nation, and the grant is due December 17. Still looking for other partners, contact Gene. We are also looking at creating additional bull trout spawning habitat in Goat Creek, working with Robes Parrish and John Crandall. A bigger project is also planned at Early Winters Creek by the campground, where the highway has constricted the stream. We will do bioengineered armoring next to the stream, move the campground away from the stream, and we hope to partner with MSRF on that.

We will be coming out with a draft Eightmile Creek sub-watershed plan, hope to have review on that from interested folks. This will be a focus area for the Forest Service. I will have it out next month, and will send it out for review.

Derek—great tour of the Chewuch roads put on by Gene last month.

Ken Bevis—on behalf of CCFEG, they had a board retreat last week, and they may be looking for someone to help with project development, stay tuned.

Steelhead fishery has been slow, the river is flow is up, looks like it will stay open.

Chris Johnson—I will send up a calendar mockup through Jessica, send out comments back.

Also, prior to the next MRC meeting, the comment period on the Twin Lakes Aquifer Project closes, and I recommend that people look at that and comment. Information at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/cwp/tlws.html>; comments will be accepted through December 14th.

John Crandall—I am working with NFWF on the Columbia Basin’s water transactions program. We are doing an accounting framework, trying to assess how either compliant the transactions are, and also the tiers, like how well does the flow transaction address limiting factors. It went through MaDMC, should be finalized in January. The Lower Chewuch is a test sub-basin for the highest level of monitoring, and is one of three basins in the Columbia. Water transactions and instream flow is restoration. Getting a handle on how much flow is needed to make a difference is what we are working on. It presses our ability to detect change and to figure out what can we actually measure. What does the cfs do to the physical habitat?

Chuck Peven—presented the scoring criteria, which is just one aspect to the revisions to the Biological Strategy. Up next is Appendix D, started earlier this year; we compiled the information for the Methow, then realized that we didn’t have all the expertise in the room for the Methow, and just recently started to compile the huge number of comments, really appreciated the input.

Lee Hatcher—Methow watershed council—one of the main things in the plan was to update the instream flow rule, and we have been getting more encouragement to continue with that. We have been operating under Phase 4 planning funding, which ends in June, so we are looking for other funding sources and looking for ways to be an entity that has a longer term life. We are also continuing to work on water storage, more on that in upcoming meetings.

Next MRC Meeting December 18th

Definitions of Commonly used Acronyms	
ANS	Aquatic Nuisance Species
AREMP	Aquatic and Riparian Effectiveness Monitoring Program
BEF	Bonneville Environmental Foundation
BO/BiOp	Biological Opinion
BPA	Bonneville Power Administration
CBFWA	Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority (pronounced "cubfwah")
CCFEG	Columbia Cascade Fisheries Enhancement Group (formerly Upper Columbia Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group)
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
FFFPP	Family Forest Fish Passage Program
FIA	Forest Inventory and Analysis program (USFS)
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)
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NPCC	Northwest Power and Conservation Council
OBMEP	Okanogan Basin Monitoring and Evaluation Program
OWL	Okanogan Wilderness League
PCSRF	Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (pronounced "Pacsurf")

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
RM	River Mile
RPA	Reasonable and Prudent Alternative(s)
RTT	Regional Technical Team
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")
STEM Database	Status, Trend and Effectiveness Monitoring database at NOAA's Northwest Fisheries Science Center
UCSRB	Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board
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 (formerly Washington Rivers Conservancy)
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. This 7-year status report gives our funding sources, partners, and the public an overview of past activities, current business practices, products and publications, and future program directions. It is designed to increase accountability and summarize our accomplishments during the initial phase of the program.