

**Final Minutes**  
**Trinity Adaptive Management Working Group**

April 12, 2005

Veteran’s Memorial Hall, Weaverville, CA

The meeting was open to the public.

12:50 P.M. convene

**Members in attendance:**

**Member:**

**Representative Seat:**

Arnold Whitridge (Chairman)	Safe Alternatives for Forest Environment
Ed Duggan	Willow Creek Community Service Department
David Steinhauser	Six Rivers Outfitter and Guide Association
Dana Hord	Big Bar Community Development Group
Dan Haycox	Miners Alliance
James Feider	City of Redding Electric Utility Department
Richard Lorenz	Trinity County Resident
Serge Birk	Central Valley Project Water Association
Patrick Frost	Trinity County Resource Conservation District

Designated Federal Official: Mike Long Fish and Wildlife Service, Arcata, CA (substituting for Steve Thompson).

**Members not in attendance:**

James Spear, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Byron Leydecker, California Trout, Inc.; Zeke Grader, Pacific Coast Federation of Fisherman’s Associations; Elizabeth Soderstrom, Natural Heritage Institute; Tim Colvin, Trinity Lake Owners Association.

**1. Welcome and Introduction; Adopt Agenda; Approve Minutes of September meeting**

Arnold Whitridge opened the meeting and the members introduced themselves.

**Agenda.** Whitridge expressed a desire to complete this meeting in one day and noted that Items 3, 4, and 5 would require some time to discuss. No new members orientation were needed at this time.

**Minutes.** Jim Feider asked why minutes were not distributed immediately after the meeting. Whitridge apologized and agreed to get minutes out more quickly. Ed Duggan noted correction to numbering of an item list.

**Dan Haycox made a motion to accept the minutes as amended.**

**Richard Lorenz seconded.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

## **2. Public Comment**

No public comments were offered.

## **3. Flow schedule for 2005**

Rod Wittler of the Trinity River Restoration Program presented information on the flow schedule (amounts of release water and the timing of releases at Lewiston Dam). He passed out copy of a memorandum from Andreas Krause to the Trinity River Flow Schedule Sub-group dated 4/7/05 (**Attachment 1**). This memo described flow release options discussed at 4/11/05 meeting of the Trinity River Flow Schedule Sub-group. It provided the basis for this discussion of the TAMWG about the amounts of the release during the peak, the amounts of release during the “ramp” down (the period of time during the reduction of peak flows back to low flows in July) and the timing of the various flows.

Wittler prefaced his comments by noting that this is a “normal water year” for the Trinity—it is expected to be normal levels of rainfall and flow. Projected flows are 1,025–1,350 thousand acre feet into Trinity Lake for the year.

At this point, Nina Hemphill the new Fisheries Biologist for Trinity River Restoration Program presented a review on the effects of late summer flows on fall chinook. The late summer flows are the increased flow over the normal flow of about 300 cfs—these are also referred to as “fall flows.” Hemphill noted that the California Department Fish and Game has found that these increased fall flows can cause earlier entry to the Trinity system by fall chinook. This earlier entry is a concern as the fall chinook may start to overlap in spawning with spring chinook and cause hybridization and loss of fidelity of the spring chinook. Hemphill also noted that Juvenile coho and steelhead move out of thermal refugia and do not return to these refugia after the pulse passes. They may be washed downstream and out of the system or the river water is cooler after the pulse flow and the juveniles no longer require the cooler water of the refugia. Little stranding of juvenile fish was noted—though coho and steelhead did strand themselves in one area. One concern is that the stranded coho are naturally spawned fish (hatchery juvenile coho have a maxillary mark). Hemphill finally noted that fall flows may induce early hibernation of Western Pond Turtles.

Wittler then continued with his presentation. He presented a set of seven options for flow releases. Four options were those discussed in the memo and (see **Attachment 1**). The

fifth option was a combination of two of the first four options and this was the recommended option of the TMAG. However, two additional options were developed yesterday in response to a letter received yesterday by the Trinity River Restoration Program from the Department of Interior (**Attachment 2**). This letter asked that options also be considered for holding back some of the spring flow water in order have this water for extra releases during the fall. This could be used to help alleviate fall fish kills in the Lower Klamath.

Option 1 was the original schedule described in the ROD for a normal water year (referred to here as the ROD Normal). Option 2 was a ROD Normal delayed for 3 days to accommodate the opening of fly fishing. Option 3 was an earlier release peak and an extended spring “bench” (i.e., the period of mid-level flow during declining ramp flow). This option was designed to benefit spring floodplain habitat for yellow-legged frog tadpoles and to also provide the cooler river temperatures for juvenile fish in early July. Option 4 was a 7,000 cfs release with a steeper “ramp” followed by a normal “bench.” The higher release was designed to permit calibration of models and see how floodplain infrastructure can handle the slightly higher flows in the Trinity River. The fifth option called Option 4a, was similar to option 4, but with a 4-day delay to accommodate the opening weekend of fly fishing season.

Wittler next introduced the two new options designed in response to the Department of Interior’s letter (**Attachment 2**). These options follow the Option 4a design, but they “trim” the option 4a release to keep some water in reserve for “fall flows.” Option 5 had 7,000 cfs peak and Option 6 had a 6,000 cfs peak. These options reserve about 20,000 acre-feet for fall flows. Wittler finally noted that the TMAG recommends option 5: 7,000 cfs release over four days, with a steeper ramp to provide 20,300 acre-feet in reserve for late-summer and fall releases.

The following discussion centered on whether the spring flow water should be reserved for fall emergency flow and whether this reserve water would count as “restoration” water. Ed Duggan suggested that that the 50,000 acre-feet promised by the Bureau of Reclamation for Humboldt County be used as the reserved amounts for fall flows.

In response to questions, Wittler explained some of the thoughts behind extending the spring bench. He noted that they related to maintaining cooler water temperatures for juveniles. He passed out a graph showing Trinity water temperatures from last year that showed that temperature optimums were not met during two periods (**Attachment 3**).

The TAMWG members agreed that the 7,000 cfs peak was desirable. They also agreed that the ROD recommendation for the spring bench was good.

**Richard Lorenz made a motion that the TAMWG recommend to the Trinity Management Council that there should be a 7,000 cfs release and with the ROD “bench” (Option 4a) and no “fall flows” be scheduled.**

**Seconded by Dan Haycox.**

**Motion passed.**

**Ed Duggan made a motion that the needed water for a fall flow be taken from 50,000 acre feet that Humboldt County requested from the Department of Interior. There was no second and the motion failed.**

#### **4. Floodplain preparations for 8,500 and 11,000 cfs releases**

Ed Solbos of the Trinity River Restoration Program described some of the issues with assessing the risks associated with the 11,000 cfs planned releases. He passed out several pages of handouts (**Attachment 4**). Under one scenario, assuming a 11,000 cfs release from the Lewiston Dam plus a 100-year spring event from all the tributaries, flows in the Trinity River at Indian Creek would be 15,417 cfs. This flow would flood nine major structures (private houses etc.). Under a second scenario of 11,000 cfs, but assuming only a 10-year spring event in the tributaries, the maximum flow would be 13,096 cfs. This level of flow would only flood three structures (see **Attachment 4a**). He recommended that the 10-year level plus 1 extra foot of “free board” be used as the “flood line” for preliminary assessments of risk. Those structures below that level would require mitigation measures.

**Ed Duggan made a motion to endorse the screening criteria procedure that uses a 11,000 cfs plus 10-year spring event for tributaries as outlined in the Briefing Paper in Attachment 4.**

**Seconded by Pat Frost.**

**Seven members voted for, one voted against, and one abstained.**

**Chairman Whitridge stated he would have to confer with the Designated Federal Representative to see if this vote constitutes a passed motion or not.**

Serge Birk expressed concern about making a vote on this issue—especially a “line” for 11,000 cfs plus 10-year spring event flow. His concern was based on lack of understanding of the implications of a 11,000 plus 10-year cfs flow and thought that this issue may need more explanation and time to consider.

Solbos also passed out some additional handouts showing an example assessment form (**Attachment 4b**). He noted that there are 529 private riparian properties downstream of Lewiston Dam.

Sid Mickelson, a member of the public, noted that the TAMWG members should spend more time looking more closely at some of the issues related to flood effects. He also noted that not many TAMWG members have come down to see his property and the issues he faces with higher flows.

#### **5. FY2006 Budget process and priorities**

Doug Schleusner passed out the 2005 budget (**Attachment 5**) and talked about some of the problems with establishing the 2005 budget in a timely manner. He expressed his thoughts that the 2006 budget establishment will have similar problems. He expressed his desire to have the 2006 budget finalized by June in order to get contracts going. He asked that the TAMWG perform an examination of the programs and to reach agreement on what the fundamentals for the program should be.

Jim Feider thought that visible works in the river ought to have the highest priorities.

Pat Frost mentioned the need for restoration work in the tributaries.

## **6. Executive Director's Report**

Doug Schleusner provided a handout on the report but did not have time to discuss it (**Attachment 6**).

## **7. Designated Federal Official's Report**

Mike Long passed out his report (**Attachment 7**). Long reviewed the items in his report and mentioned that the TAMWG charter was filed on November 21, 2004. He noted that the TAMWG nominations package was being finalized. Several members have indicated that they no longer wish to participate in the TAMWG (Jeffrey Bryant, William Huber, Kevin Lewis, and Jimmy Smith) and Chuck Schultz has retired from BLM.

Reimbursements procedures were reviewed for members of the TAMWG. Serge Birk suggested that a simple set of rules be agreed on for acceptable meetings that TAMWG members can be reimbursed for. These meetings could be subgroups of the Trinity River Restoration Program, TAMWG meetings, and TMC meetings.

Rod Wittler wanted that the TAMWG members have every opportunity to participation in Trinity River Restoration Program. He suggested that TAMWG members be appointed to subgroups, perhaps during a future meeting.

## **8. Open Forum; Public Comment**

No comments from the public.

## **9. Date and agenda topics for next meeting**

Ed Duggan passed out copies of the letter from Humboldt County to Department of Interior dated 3/9/05 requesting the 50,000 acre-feet of water per the Central Valley Project Contract (**Attachment 8**). This letter is one of a series of on-going and repeated requests by Humboldt County to the Department of the Interior regarding the additional water for the Trinity River.

There was a desire to schedule the next meeting within the next two months, but an actual date was not chosen.

**Adjourn**

**List of motions that were passed:**

Dan Haycox made a motion to accept the minutes as amended.

Richard Lorenz seconded.

Motion passed unanimously.

Richard Lorenz made a motion that the TAMWG recommend to the TMC that there should be a 7,000 cfs release and with the ROD “bench” (Option 4a) and no “fall flows” be scheduled.

Seconded by Dan Haycox.

Motion passed.

Ed Duggan made a motion to endorse the screening criteria procedure that uses a 11,000 cfs plus 10-year spring event for tributaries as outlined in the Briefing Paper in Attachment 4.

Seconded by Pat Frost.

Seven members voted for, one voted against, and one abstained.

Chairman Whitridge stated he would have to confer with the Designated Federal Representative to see if this vote constitutes a passed motion or not.

## **List of Attachments**

**Attachment 1:** Memo of 4/7/05 from Andreas Kraus to Trinity River Flow Schedule Sub-group regarding flow release options that are under consideration.

### **Three additional information items attached after the meeting:**

**Attachment 1a:** Frequently asked questions (FAQs) Trinity Lake Resort Owners meeting and public open house

**Attachment 1b:** Graph - Normal Year ( 50% Exceedence ) Average Lake Levels

**Attachment 1c:** Spring Flow Recommendation for the Yellow-legged frog.

**Attachment 2:** Letter of 4/11/05 from Kirk Rodgers of Bureau of Reclamation and Steve Thompson of US Department of Interior to Douglas Schleusner of Trinity River Restoration Program asking that options be considered for some reserve water be held back for fall flows.

**Attachment 3:** Graph of 2004 Trinity River temperatures at Weitchpec during the spring release.

**Attachment 4:** Trinity Management Council Draft Agenda (Solbos referred specifically to the attached Briefing Paper for Action Item 2).

**Attachment 4a:** Photo of Indian Creek showing the Trinity River flood levels for a 11,000 cfs release plus a 100-year spring event and a 10-year spring event.

**Attachment 4b:** Example of floodplain assessment form.

**Attachment 5:** 2005 Budget.

**Attachment 6:** Executive Directors Report.

**Attachment 7:** Designated Federal Official Report.

**Attachment 8:** Letter dated 3/9/05 from the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors to the Department of Interior requesting the 50,000 acre feet of water to be released for Humboldt County.