



Trinity River Restoration Program

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NC-150

MEMORANDUM

TO: TMC and TAMWG Members

FROM: Robin Schrock, Executive Director
Trinity River Restoration Program

SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report

DATE: December 10, 2015

Trinity River Restoration Program fall 2015 activities were focused on completion of construction projects at Limekiln Gulch and Upper Douglas City. Revegetation plans needed significant changes to adapt to the challenging site conditions; seeding, mulching and planting are near completion based on weather conditions. Watershed projects coordinated by the Trinity County Resource Conservation District continued over the summer. TRRP provided some of the riparian plants originally ordered for the Upper Douglas City project to the Hoopa Valley Tribe-CDFW Supply Creek Project.

Budget Update

The TRRP FY2016 proposed budget still awaits congressional approval of the federal budget. The TMC approved proposed budget reflects recommendations to decrease spending in other areas to increase funding for rehabilitation projects. The new environmental services contract was negotiated at an annual savings of ~\$240,000 compared to the previous contract. Geomorphic monitoring activities were planned for a projected normal water year after the potential wet water year projections, reducing the proposed option year commitment from \$939,695 to less than half at \$445,500 which includes peer reviewed Gravel Implementation Monitoring (\$85,000) and Delta Surveys (\$70,000). The proposed budget for rehabilitation project construction in 2016 is currently \$3.3M. The TMC asked that expenditures for watershed projects be held at \$500K. The Program awaits congressional budget deliberations, therefore amounts for all discretionary work may be adjusted when the Program receives the official OMB information that it is funded for 2016.

Organizational Updates

Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) member Clair Stalnaker, one of the original researchers and proponents of the modern Trinity River Restoration Program has rotated out of the SAB. As the lead author of the Implementation Plan, he helped set the high standard for science-based adaptive management that the program still aspires to today. He will be missed but has indicated his willingness to be available to provide continuing advice to the program.

The SAB has provided an extensive review of the SAB nominees and has provided the information to the Executive Director.

Executive Director – My last day in the office December 18, and the official separation date is December 31, 2015. The Interest Announcement for a temporary promotion/detail was posted December 8, 2015 at <https://www.usajobs.gov>.

Implementation Branch Chief – Brandt Gutermuth's detail as the Acting Implementation Branch Chief was extended for up to additional 120 days.

Experience Works – The TRRP Weaverville office has filled one of the two state volunteer positions available for Trinity County. The program provides on-the-job training for low income, over 55 year olds to teach them new job skills.

Science Updates - see quarterly work group summary

Science Coordination & Interdisciplinary Team

FY17 Workplan – TRRP workgroups were asked to develop a prioritized list of assessments to be used in developing a multidisciplinary science work plan for FY17. This effort was initiated earlier than usual due to earlier contracting/funding commitment deadlines of BOR. The Fish WG has developed a consensus prioritized list, the Gravel WG developed a list for review by the IDT with a recommendation that all proposed work be reviewed together.

DSS - Andreas Krause has been coordinating efforts with a subgroup of the IDT to develop/scope out the components of the DSS that would be used to evaluate the Healthy River fundamental objective.

Fish Production Model - A workshop on the Juvenile Fish Production Model (SSS) was held in Arcata on November 4-5. The status of model development was discussed with TRRP partner staff and two scenarios developed by the Fish WG were discussed. These scenarios will be evaluated using SSS to demonstrate potential uses of the model at the spring DSS workshop.

Watershed Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)

The FOA is in Denver for final review and posting. Allocation to and Implementation of all new efforts is dependent on approval of the FY2016 federal, agency and program budgets, with transmittal by the Office of Management and Budget.

River Corridor Concept - status

- Existing conditions for the 40 miles completed
- Scope was broadened with additional detail in the following areas
 - Hydrology
 - Metrics of channel morphology
- Habitat detail to be added
 - Fish habitat considerations included in the CP document include salmon and steelhead spawning areas and availability of fry and presmolt rearing area with variations in discharge.
 - Section for the "potential management actions" section on instream habitat construction completed.
- The "processes and potential" section that addresses bedload and suspended sediment transport changes through time on the river is in progress.

Compliance and Implementation Update

Implementation Projects:

- Limekiln Gulch: Roads were decommissioned and access is recommended by foot on the left bank. Cottonwood pole cuttings will be completed on river left the week of December 14th. The site looks great thanks to the contractor, the Yurok tribe.
- Upper Douglas City: Installation of willow and cottonwood pole clusters was completed last week by Hoopa Valley tribal (HVT) staff working with the construction contractor, Falcon Builders, which completed civil construction ahead of schedule. Planting of sedges and rushes, grass plugs, and red willow container stock, acorns and upland vegetation will be planted over the next two weeks. The temporary bridge over Weaver Creek is scheduled for removal by December 22nd.

Environmental Compliance:

- Bucktail: The Public Draft Trinity River Channel Rehabilitation Site EA was released for comment Nov 19, 2015. Public review period ends January 4, 2016.
- Lower Dutch Creek: Design and surveys complete. TRRP is working with the USFS on NEPA and determining key issues and the potential need for developing Project alternatives.
Deep Gulch: Project Design report nearing completion. DWR is evaluating base flood elevations with DWR's Trinity River HES-RAS model.
- Administrative draft of Programmatic Biological Assessments for terrestrial and aquatic is in development for review to NMFS and USFWS by January 2016.

2015 designs for out year planning

- Designers provided updated design to TSC for habitat assessment – results expected this/next week
- Designers are completing design reports – reports are needed for compliance to proceed
- Wood and riparian designs are in progress
- Base flood analysis awaits DWR guidance

Schedule for out year construction planning - handout

- Sequence by Logic Model Prioritization of remaining 47 sites by condition
- Sequence by Logic Model of all potential sites by condition

Public Outreach

- 9/24/15 Harvest Fest in Weaverville: educational outreach booth
- 10/7/15 Salmon Festival in Weaverville: educational outreach booth
- 10/17/15 Return of the Salmon Festival, Coleman NFH: educational outreach booth
- Fall 2015 TCRCD Conservation Almanac-"Restoring the Trinity River – Why add gravel & wood to the river?"
- Fall 2015 Trinity Journal Almanac- "The Trinity River Restoration Program"
- 11/20/15 Area mailing to ~150 Bucktail area residents regarding upcoming Bucktail public meeting and release of draft environmental document
- 11/25/15 and 12/2/15 Publications (2) in Trinity Journal regarding Bucktail public meeting and release of draft environmental document
- 11/21/15 and 11/28/15 Publications (2) in Redding Record Searchlight regarding Bucktail public meeting and release of draft environmental document
- 11/19/15 BOR TRRP Press Release-"Reclamation Announces Draft Environmental Documents and Public Meeting on Bucktail Channel Rehabilitation Project
- 11/23/15 Email notification to 'listserve' group on Bucktail public meeting and release of draft environmental document
- 11/23/15 Email notification to 'Interested parties' group--including Trinity River fishermen--on Bucktail public meeting and release of draft environmental document
- 12/2/15 Public Meeting at Lewiston Moose Lodge to present proposed 2016 Bucktail Channel Rehabilitation project and Draft EA/IS, with information on how to submit comments of the environmental document
- Winter Holiday Special Section-"Season's Greeting from the Trinity River Restoration Program"

Publications and Reports

Recent Documents

- Ashton, D. T., J. B. Bettaso, and H. H. Welsh Jr. 2015. Changes across a decade in size, growth, and body condition of Western Pond Turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*) populations on free-flowing and regulated forks of the Trinity River in northwest California. *Copeia* 103(3): 621-633. doi 10.1643/CP-15-253.

- Lind, A. J., H. H. Welsh Jr., and C. A. Wheeler. 2015. Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog (*Rana boylei*) oviposition site choice at multiple spatial scales. Journal of Herpetology.
- North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and U.S. Bureau of Land Management. 2015. Trinity River Channel Rehabilitation Site: Bucktail (River Mile 105.45-107.0). Draft environmental assessment/initial study. Trinity River Restoration Program, Weaverville, California.
- North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and U.S. Bureau of Land Management. 2015. Trinity River Channel Rehabilitation Sites: Bucktail (River Mile 105.45-107.0). Project Initial Study Environmental Checklist and Evaluation of Environmental Impact. Trinity River Restoration Program, Weaverville, California.
- Snover, M. L., M. J. Adams, D. T. Ashton, J. B. Bettaso, and H. H. Welsh Jr. 2015. Evidence of counter-gradient growth in western pond turtles (*Actinemys marmorata*) across thermal gradients. Freshwater Biology 60(9): 1944-1963.
- TRRP (Trinity River Restoration Program). 2015. Restoration Flow Releases on the Trinity River – Water Year 2014. Work Group Report TR-TRRP-2015-1. TRRP, Weaverville, California.
- TRRP (Trinity River Restoration Program). 2015. Trinity River Restoration Flow Release Schedule Design for Water Year 2015. Technical Memorandum WG-TRRP-Flow-2015-1. TRRP, Weaverville, California.

Data Packages

- Aerial Photography from July 2015 is available from the TRRP office upon request, and will be posted to the ODP in the near future.
- TRRP (Trinity River Restoration Program). 2015. Aerial Photography of the Trinity River from the North Fork to Weitchpec, July 2014. Data Package by TRRP, Weaverville, California.

Website Links

Bucktail public meeting presentation posted here:

- <http://www.trrp.net/2015/2016-bucktail-environmental-document/>

Explore under these headings:

Presentations from Public Meeting:

- Environmental Document -Gutermuth (1.9 MB)
- Restoration Design -Meyer (9.8 MB)

Other Relevant Documents:

- Master EIR
- ProgrammaticEIS/EIR
- TRRP Foundational Documents

Save the Date

- **March 30 – April 1, 2016: TRRP Science Symposium (tentative)**

