

Final Minutes
Trinity Adaptive Management Working Group
Victorian Inn, 1709 Main Street, Weaverville, CA

Monday September 11, 2007

The meeting was open to the public.

9:18 AM

Attending members:

Member:	Representative Seat:
Arnold Whitridge (Chairman)	Safe Alternatives for Forest Environment
Ed Duggan	Willow Creek Community Service District
Richard Lorenz	Trinity County Resident
Serge Birk	Central Valley Project Water Association
Byron Leydecker	Friends of Trinity River
James Feider	City of Redding Electric Utility Department
Tom Weseloh	California Trout, Inc
Dana Hord	Big Bar Community Development Group
David Steinhauser	Six Rivers Outfitter and Guide Association
Spreck Rosekrans	Environmental Defense
Pat Frost	Trinity County Resource Conservation District
Francis Berg	Bureau of Land Management

Members that did not attend:

Member:	Representative Seat:
James Spear	Natural Resources Conservation Service
Elizabeth Soderstrom	Natural Heritage Institute
Joan Hartmann	Local Landowner
Dan Haycox	Miners Alliance

Designated Federal Officer: Randy Brown, Fish and Wildlife Service, Arcata, CA.

1. Adopt agenda and approval of minutes

Arnold Whitridge, chairman of the Trinity Adaptive Management Working Group (TAMWG), opened the meeting. There was discussion to include an additional presentation on Klamath fish and a discussion on wildlife.

Changes to June 2007 minutes

No changes were suggested to the June 2007 minutes.

Ed Duggan made a motion to accept the June 2007 minutes.

Pat Frost seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. Open forum; public comment

There was no public comment.

3. Designated Federal Officer topics

Randy Brown reported on his research regarding how the TAMWG should communicate its recommendations and on membership in the TAMWG. Brown reported that, according to the language of the new charter, the TAMWG reports to the regional director of Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) through the Trinity Management Council (TMC). Original language said that the TAMWG would report to the Secretary of the Interior through the TMC. Byron Leydecker asked why this was changed and he thought it was inconsistent with the Record of Decision (ROD). Brown did not know the reason for the change. It was asked if there were any other alternatives for the TAMWG to communicate its concerns and Brown said no, there were not. There were discussion about limitations of the TAMWG as only an advisory committee and what happens if the TMC does not listen. It was also noted that members of the TAMWG can write to anyone they want, as a private citizen.

There was discussion about having a TAMWG member such as the chairman serve on the TMC. Leydecker noted that the ROD stipulates that only members of various governments are allowed to be on the TMC.

Brown also reported on membership of TAMWG and his conversations with members that had not been attending meetings. It appeared that several members were going to resign: Dan Haycox, Elizabeth Soderstrom, and Joan Hartman.

TAMWG members commented on the ridiculousness with procedures for replacement of members. Currently it takes a year or more to assign new members or to find replacements. The holdup is lack of timely approvals either from regional offices or from the Secretary of Interior for any new appointments. Douglas Schluesner commented on the need to accelerate upcoming appointments, as next year will be an election year and will slow the process even more. Ed Duggan voiced an opinion that it may be

appropriate to simply drop non-attending members so business may be carried on more efficiently.

Tom Weseloh made a motion that the Chairman write letter to the TMC requesting an expedited process for replacing members and alternates and that new members be appointed by August 2008.

Pat Frost seconded.

The motion passed unanimously.

4. TRRP budget development and management

Douglas Schluesner, executive director of the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP) presented an update on the budget and noted that this presentation would also constitute his director's report (earlier scheduled as Item 8 on the agenda).

He reported on the success of securing additional \$680,000 funding for the TAMWG program this year. The source of these funds was other BOR offices (Shasta Area and Klamath Basin). He also noted there was an additional \$990,000 that had to be obligated by September which was handled by exercising "option years" within existing contracts. These changes gave about \$775,000 of "flexibility" for the budget. Schluesner noted that the TAMWG could forward ideas to the TMC about how these funds could be allocated. It was clarified that these ideas would likely need to be forwarded during this meeting, as the next scheduled TAMWG meeting would be too late.

There was some discussion about creating more transparency with contracting and using competitive bid process.

Schluesner drew attention to an August 2 memo on the 2008 budget that described a few changes to the budget submitted to the TMC.

Schluesner noted that a 7-question questionnaire seeking suggestions for improvement of the budget process had been sent out to TAMWG members. He encouraged members to complete it and email to Tom Weseloh. Weseloh said there is still time to submit a response.

Schluesner professed skepticism about the progress of the 2008 budget. He noted competing issues and that another continuing resolution might be coming for the first part of the year.

He noted that the public's visibility of the Indian Creek project where the field trip will be going and that most comments or questions by the public have been positive.

Schluesner and Brian Pearson went to Washington DC recently and Schluesner thought it was a very productive trip. The purpose of the trip was to promote program accomplishments and answer questions. The people they met with were interested in hearing about the program.

Jim Feider noted that he would be a witness at the upcoming hearing on the Trinity legislation on September 18. He also asked if a motion had already been made in a previous TAMWG meeting to use additional funding for construction projects this year. Schluesner noted the need to reduce the “bow wake” (costs being pushed off to future years). Schluesner thought that savings would not be large if construction projects were started in an earlier year and carried over to the next year. Feider opined that it is more likely the case that savings are realized if construction projects can be completed in a single year versus running into multiple years.

Tom Weseloh noted that he is also going to give testimony for the Trinity legislation hearing.

5. **TMC issues; TAMWG-TMC communications**

Arnold Whitridge summarized issues that the TAMWG currently has with the TMC; he noted that the TMC is not responding adequately to TAMWG recommendations.

Mike Long, Chairman of the TMC gave some updates on progress on the TMC side. Long said there is acknowledgement of the cumbersome nature of the program and the TMC is seeking ideas about changes to the structure of the program. He noted specifically that a memo has been sent and a signature is imminent. This memo will direct Brian Pearson and himself to work with the TMC on the issue of “roles and responsibilities.” One specific action that is planned is to have facilitated discussions among TMC members regarding “how things should be.”

Arnold Whitridge commented that he feared that this would be a long process.

Tom Weseloh noted that a motion was passed concerning “roles and responsibilities” at a prior TMC meeting, and that any action that is currently developing is slow.

There was discussion about whether the Chairman of the TAMWG could be added to the TMC. According to Long, the answer was no, since the Chairman was not a member of a government agency. There was discussion about ways to increase influence of the TAMWG in TMC meetings. It was noted that the Chairman should be able to join the TMC as an “ex-officio” member.

Tom Weseloh made a motion that the TMC include a TAMWG representative or designee as a non-voting member of the TMC at all TMC functions.

Seconded by Byron Leydecker.

The motion passed unanimously.

Byron Leydecker moved that the TAMWG Chair be the representative.

Seconded by Jim Feider.

The motion passed unanimously.

6. Experience with other restoration efforts

Mike Berry, Staff Environmental Scientist of the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG), presented information on several restoration projects in tributaries to the Northern Sacramento River.

The Sacramento River has a variety of salmon and steelhead runs (spring, fall, and winter runs) and Berry summarized it as having a fish spawning every day of the year. His talk focused on restoration in three tributaries to the upper Sacramento River: Clear Creek, Cow Creek, and Battle Creek.

Cow Creek flows from the Cascade Range east of Redding and is one of the better streams for fall-run Chinook. He noted its long length and that, as most streams on the east side; it has a falls at about the 1000-foot elevation level. He noted there are 50 to 100 diversions from the stream along the valley floor. Many are barriers to fish passage and most are private. He noted that many diversions violate some various environmental regulations but a "hardball" approach has not worked toward resolution. The DFG now takes a proactive approach. He described the plan for restoring flows to Cow Creek via the decommissioning of the Kilarc Hydropower Project. The decision to decommission was based on the DFG recommendation to allocated 30 cubic feet per second for in-stream flows.

Battle Creek drains Mount Lassen area and has many spring flows with temperatures of 50 F. Nine dams had been originally constructed in the upper basin for mining. Pacific Gas and Electric purchased the dams in the 1930's and these dams collect nearly all the water in the stream. In addition, a barrier at a lower portion of Battle Creek had been constructed at Coleman Hatchery; this has kept fish out of the upper basin for years. The current restoration project calls for removing five dams, screening the remaining to increasing the flow of water in the mainstem. Despite these impediments, Battle Creek has a large fall run of Chinook (100,000 spawners in Battle Creek below Coleman Hatchery). There is a remnant run of Spring Chinook (100 fish) that is thought to have been seeded in from other nearby streams (Mill or Deer Creek). The DFG want to separate these from the mixing with the fall run. He noted very good trout fishing just above the hatchery. Berry stated that the mainstem Sacramento is the only know stream with a viable winter run of Chinook (about 1000 fish). The DFG hopes to establish a second run in Battle Creek and they think they have habitat for 2500 fish.

Battle Creek restoration costs were \$104 million (70 % implementation, 7 % on monitoring, and 23 % on overhead and other costs). It is about a 10-year project; they are about half done and it is about five years behind schedule.

Clear Creek flows from the Klamath Mountains west of Redding. The watershed has had long-term mining for gold and gravel; Whiskeytown dam was built in the middle of the watershed in 1963. Identified impacts included reduced flows, high temperatures and loss of gravel. Restoration focused on increased flows (at least double), removal of Selzer Dam (smaller private dam below Whiskeytown Dam), and installation of a weir in mid-August (to keep fall fish from mixing with upstream spring fish), gravel injections, and construction of new channels.

This restoration project appears to be highly successful: pre-project fall fish were 1,700 while post-project highest returns were 16,000. Spring-run Chinook formerly were non-existent; recently spring fish have found their way in. One major step to success was that BLM bought most of the land. Project costs were about \$40 million (\$7.8 million land acquisition, \$8.5 million channel construction, \$5.7 million dam removal, \$4.9 million gravel injections, \$8 million monitoring).

Fielding questions about “lessons learned,” Berry noted the following important components to restoration: cool water, improved passage, added gravel, and creating habitat. He also commented that monitoring of birds use give good results for restoration success. He noted that fish returns are monitored by August snorkel counts, counts of redds for steelhead. Rotary screw traps do not give good abundance estimates for juveniles; screw traps are better suited for run timing information.

What would speed up the process? Environmental issues are important, but Berry noted that more money should be put into implementation and only increase the monitoring efforts once implementation has been started. The role of stakeholders and their interest in getting fish back was important. Education works better than “playing hardball.”

7. Fish returns; river conditions

Nina Hemphill, fish biologist with the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP) gave an update on flows, temperatures, and disease (Attachment 2). She noted that they are using a new, more sensitive, method of detecting infections and that Trinity River fish have fewer incidences of infections than Klamath River fish. She also noted that incidence of infection does not necessarily mean expression of disease.

Wade Sinnen quoted run summaries of Chinook and steelhead at the upstream migration weirs on the Trinity River and noted lower Chinook counts than last year. He said the hope is that low counts are due to a later run and not a reduced run. Steelhead numbers seem to be higher. 85 % of the steelhead are hatchery and they hope fishing should be good.

Tom Weseloh asked about dive counts and if they are finding many of these early arriving hatchery steelhead entering the North Fork, New River or South Fork. He expressed concern of hatchery fish mixing with wild fish and hoped that counts are watching for this. Sinnen agreed and said that they have not seen tagged fish in the snorkel counts so far.

Jim Feider requested that the TAMWG hear a presentation on multi-year fish returns at the next meeting.

Greg Stutzer of the US Fish and Wildlife Service Arcata Office gave an update of the radio-tracking study of coho underway in the Klamath River. He noted that the Biological Opinion for coho stated that greater flows would move juvenile fish faster downstream. However, the National Academy review concluded there was no data to support this. This issue was the basis for a monitoring program using radio telemetry started in 2005. The project is looking at five reaches from Iron Gate Dam to River Mile

13 on the Klamath River. There is a system of seven stations and mobile receivers that track marked fish moving downstream. The project is quantifying survival of hatchery versus wild and differences associated with varying discharge, temperature, and date of release.

Preliminary findings are that fish migrate faster later in year as the flows decrease and temperatures increase. Wild fish travel faster than hatchery fish. Flow seems to affect only hatchery fish. Survival is about 80 % or greater in any of the five reaches of the Klamath and is nearly the same in all reaches. Overall survival is about 65 % for total river. He cited a need more years of data or performing experimental releases.

8. Executive Director's report

The executive director's report was covered earlier in Item 4. Rod Wittler of the TRRP used this slot to give an update on the Integrated Assessment Plan. Wittler passed out a handout showing the plan for an upcoming workshop in November 6 (Attachment 1). He noted some of the issues with which the steering committee is grappling.

After Wittler's presentation, Jim Feider asked if they could address the ideas for use of the additional TRRP budget funds that were noted earlier by Douglas Schluesner (during Item 4). The TAMWG members generally agreed that the funds should go to the channel projects or projects to improve the watershed. Byron Leydecker asked if science needs more funds and he noted the failure of the previous Trinity restoration program in the 1990's as "lacking in science." He said all but one of the channel management projects failed.. and one side channel is now high and dry 75 feet from the river. Rich Lorenz noted that we know what to do from the Flow Study and that DFG also presented opinions that implementation is one of the better ways to spend money. Whitridge suggested that this be discussed further after the next presentation as this presentation may shed additional light on the subject.

9. Channel rehabilitation planning/design update

Brandt Gutermuth of the TRRP gave an update on the environmental work for the projects planned for Lewiston 4 and Dark Gulch. He noted that the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is being completed and that they are working on a number of new entities. He passed out their schedule for their planned environmental work in 2008 (Attachment 3).

John Klochak of the TRRP also briefly presented a schedule of implementation activities (Attachment 4). When asked how well science is guiding the restoration designs, Klochak noted that this project is better than the Everglades but perhaps not as good as some other sites. He thought some more monitoring could be used. It was suggested that the TRRP staff could pass out written documents that address how implementation designs are linked to science before meetings in the future.

10. Pre-construction habitat assessment at Indian Creek

Aaron Martin, fisheries biologist from the Yurok Tribe, provided an update on monitoring of fish and habitats. This work is focused on finding how well restoration is working. His group has defined habitats before and after restoration; they are quantifying areas of fry and juvenile habitats. Areas along the Indian Creek project have been surveyed for pre-project conditions.

Responding to questions, Martin noted that they did not see many juvenile fish at the restored Hocker Flats. But, he did see fish at other sites that had wood debris.

Pat Frost wondered whether lack of fish at Hocker Flats is due to “the need for more time.”

At this point, the TAMWG returned to the issue Jim Feider had raised about use of the additional funds. Feider was interested in the additional funds be used for Dark Gulch and Lewiston Projects.

Jim Feider made a motion that implementation projects be given a priority for the new funds that become available.

Seconded by Tom Weseloh

The motion passed unanimously.

11. Tentative date and agenda topics for next meeting

It was discussed that the next meeting be comprised of two, half-days starting at noon on day one. Other topics for discussion topics were fish returns and wildlife.

12. Field Trip Overview

A field trip was planned for the remaining portion of the day. Ed Solbos gave an overview of the project at Indian Creek and what the group would see during the field trip. He described the new ideas of notching the berm being employed. The idea is to keep some of the woody debris in place and allowing the river to work the area with less earth moving by equipment.

13. Field Trip: Indian Creek rehab site

Joe Riess explained the project goals and described the three sites along Indian Creek. He passed out a map of the area showing the various project activities (Attachment 5). The overall goal is to restore the floodplain and to create channels for the planned high flows through this reach.

The first site visited was just above Weaver Creek and was the site of a newly created side channel with floodplain contouring and clearing of understory vegetation. The abundant fine sediment at this stop was noted. Responding to questions, Riess thought that, if they mobilize during high flows, they would likely be carried all the way to the

ocean. Much of contoured floodplain would be flooded at 6,000 cfs of flow. This should help to reduce threats of flooding to homes in the Indian Creek area.

The second stop was at the confluence of Indian Creek and the Trinity River. Here the floodplain had been cleared of most understory vegetation and contoured slightly to better allow 6000 cfs flows to access the floodplain. Mature trees had mostly been left in place and wood had been placed onto the floodplain to create "roughness elements." A natural (non-concrete) river access (take out and put in for trailers and boats) was being created or re-configured.

The third site was at the Vitzum Grade Pull-Out on Highway 299. Across the river, a series of "bank notches" or excavations into the bank had been created every 250 feet along the river. These were designed to help destabilize the berm and allow water to flow into a natural side channel on the backside of the berm. The idea behind the work at Indian Creek was to start, or facilitate, the process of hydrologic change that the high flows are hoped to begin. The notches and side channels will help to create more off channel habitat for juvenile fish.

This was the end the field trip and the meeting.

LIST OF MOTIONS

Ed Duggan made a motion to accept the March 2007 minutes.

Pat Frost seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Tom Weseloh made a motion that the Chairman write letter to the TMC requesting an expedited process for replacing members and alternates and that new members be appointed by August 2008.

Pat Frost seconded.

The motion passed unanimously.

Tom Weseloh made a motion that the TMC include a TAMWG representative or designee as a non-voting member of the TMC at all TMC functions.

Seconded by Byron Leydecker.

The motion passed unanimously.

Byron Leydecker moved that the TAMWG Chair be the representative.

Seconded by Jim Feider.

The motion passed unanimously.

Jim Feider made a motion that implementation projects be given a priority for the new funds that become available.

Seconded by Tom Weseloh.

The motion passed unanimously.

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Pre-Workshop #0 Schedule and Tasks. Passed out by Rod Wittler.

Attachment 2: Memo regarding 2007 Klamath River Pathogen Monitoring. To Klamath Fish Health Distribution List, from Ken Nichols. 8/14/07. Flow data for the Trinity and Klamath Rivers. Passed out by Nina Hemphill.

Attachment 3: Lewiston 4 – Dark Gulch: ENV Schedule for 2008. Passed out by Brant Gutermuth.

Attachment 4: Remaining 8 (R8) and Phase 2 Schedule (Summary) Revised 09/10/07. Passed out by John Klochak.

Attachment 5: Indian Creek Rehabilitation Project Map. Passed out by Joe Riess.

Other Documents that were made available during the meeting

Letter from TAMWG Chairman Arnold Whitridge to TMC Chairman Mike Long. June 19, 2007

Letter from Northern California Power Agency (NCPA) James Pope to Congressman Mike Thompson. July 19, 2007.

Article to Trinity Journal- Newspaper From TRRP. Lake Levels, Salmon Runs, Indian creek and Other Items of Interest – Doug Schleusner

