



## Trinity River Restoration Program

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NC-150

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** TMC Members and Alternates; TAMWG Members

**FROM:** Doug Schleusner, Executive Director  
 Trinity River Restoration Program

**CC:** Staff

**SUBJECT:** Director's Report; March 19 to June 16, 2008

**DATE:** June 6, 2008

1. Summary: Primary areas of emphasis and accomplishments for the TRRP staff and partners during the past quarter have included: 1) conceptual designs and planning for the Remaining 8 channel rehab sites and Master EA/EIR; 2) finalization of 2008 hydrograph and release schedule; 3) completion of hatchery kiosk renovation, 4) continuation of requisitions for FY2008 grants, agreements and contracts, and 5) budget planning for FY2008 and FY2009.
2. General Program Administration:

- Personnel: Jennifer Faler joined our office March 31, 2008, and replaces Ed Solbos as the Implementation Branch Chief. Jennifer has 16 years of practical and academic experience in environmental restoration work. Prior to joining the Program, Jennifer worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Agency, helping small communities complete water and wastewater infrastructure projects. She also has experience with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Ducks Unlimited, and the Department of Defense.

David Bandrowski was recently hired to replace Joe Riess and joined the office on May 11. He comes to the Program from Michigan's Upper Peninsula, bringing with him specialized civil engineering expertise on a variety of river projects, both in Michigan and overseas in Central/South America. David has worked as a Civil Engineer with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for the past 10 years, overseeing the design and implementation of several river restoration and stabilization projects.

- Hatchery Kiosk Renovation and Dedication: This project was completed on schedule, and in time to have a dedication on May 22, before the Memorial Day weekend. This has been an excellent example of TRRP partners working together to complete a much needed update of a very highly used facility. The Core Design Team is to be commended for their efforts: Josh Allen (Trinity County), Diana Clifton (TRRP), Sheri Harral (Reclamation), Leslie Hunt (Hoopa Valley Tribe), Mike Odle (Forest Service), and Dana Wullenwaber (DFG). The Forest Service provided funds to match those from Reclamation and the TRRP, and they did a great job of hosting the celebration. Photos are on the website.
- FY2008 Budget: On May 23, DOI representatives sent out a memorandum confirming the disposition of the additional \$3 million received from Congress in December 2007. The budget decisions in the memo have been at various stages of implementation during the past several months, and can now be fully executed. Those decisions also have funding implications for FY2009, which are being addressed by the DOI representatives.
- FY2009 Budget Development: Because of the interconnection of FY2008 decisions and the FY2009 proposal, along with the TMC's inability to reach a 7 vote majority in the past, the DOI representatives have been reviewing the proposal developed by this office and presented at the January TMC meeting. The major factor delaying an updated budget proposal for TAMWG and TMC consideration has been the difficulty in resolving the division of labor (and funding responsibilities) between the two Interior agencies. The latest draft (still to be finalized and confirmed) will be distributed separately.

### 3. Rehabilitation Implementation Branch:

- Master EIR/EA for Phase 2 Channel Restoration Sites: This project is arguably one of the most important tasks in this year's program of work, since it not only covers the 23 Phase 2 sites, but will also authorize the "Remaining 8" sites of Phase 1 for construction beginning in the spring of 2009. Currently on schedule, this "master" is designed to streamline the NEPA/CEQA process, and will potentially involve some type of programmatic permit(s) from federal and state regulatory agencies. Planning level (30%) alternative designs have been provided to North State Resources for their use in developing the document that will soon become the Administrative Review Draft.
- Lewiston/Dark Gulch Rehab Site: Construction is expected to begin on/about July 15, and be completed no later than the end of the calendar year. Erik Ammon, the 8A contractor who built the Hocker Flat and Canyon Creek projects, was selected for the Lewiston/Dark Gulch project, and we expect another close and successful partnership.
- Gravel Augmentation: Approximately 2,500 tons stockpiled at the USFS Diversion Pool site and 1,000 tons stockpiled at the CDFG Sawmill site were injected during this year's high flows (May 6-13, 2008) using a mechanical conveyor system. Approximately 13,000 tons are stockpiled at the Indian Creek rehab site and will be placed at several locations in the Lewiston/Dark Gulch project this summer.

#### 4. Modeling and Analysis Branch:

- 2008 Flow Schedule: On April 7, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) published rainfall and snowpack information that resulted in a Normal water year designation for the Trinity River Basin. The Trinity Management Council (TMC) unanimously approved a recommended flow schedule on April 11, and the Executive Director forwarded it to the Bureau of Reclamation on April 14. Although there were concerns about the unusually dry spring, Reclamation's Central Valley Operations office began to implement the increased flows in late April. In early May, the DWR issued updated information that reflected Dry water year conditions. Following deliberations with the TMC and the Trinity Adaptive Management Working Group and a series of internal discussions in early May, Reclamation concluded that since the Record of Decision for the Program specifies a water year determination based on the April forecast, the recommended flow schedule for a Normal year would continue. A total of 647,000 acre-feet of water is being released under this schedule, with a peak of 6,175 cubic feet per second occurring in early May. The TRRP Office continues to receive some calls from people who are concerned about the significant drawdown to Trinity Reservoir. Based on the latest CVO projections, the water level will be about 123 feet below the crest at the end of November 2008.
- Scientific Framework and Integrated Assessment Plan (IAP): IAP Workshop #2 – “Habitat to Physical” (H2P), was held April 1-4 in Arcata, with significant participation by invited external experts. The IAP steering committee, with the direction of the TMC, is significantly changing the scope of the IAP. Part II will be “replaced” in two ways – first, by creating a new Chapter 4 describing, based on Chapters 1-3, the overall sampling design. Second, by using the RFP process to assist in the definition of the “How, When, and Where”, as well as the “Who”. The ‘New’ IAP, including Chapters 1-4, will be ready for SAB and program review in parts between the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and early September. The remainder of Part II may take 1-3 annual cycles of RFP's to flesh out.

#### 5. Recent Events and Meetings (Periodically refer to website calendar for updates):

- March 18 – Master EIR coordination meeting w/ RWQCB, Santa Rosa
- March 19-20 – TMC meeting, Arcata
- March 21 – Notice of Preparation for Master EIR/EA posted
- March 26 – Congressional staff field tour, upper Trinity River
- March 31 – Jennifer Faler, new RIG Branch Chief, arrives
- April 1-4 – IAP Workshop #2 – “Habitat to Physical” (H2P), Arcata
- April 9 – Flow scheduling workgroup meeting, Weitchpec
- April 11 – TMC conference call (final flow schedule recommendation)
- May 2 – Ed Solbos retires
- May 5 – TMC conference call (potential change in water year type)
- May 6-13 – Normal water year peak releases of 6,175 cfs
- May 12 – David Bandrowski, new Civil Engineer, arrives
- May 22 – “Ribbon-cutting” ceremony for dedication of renovated hatchery kiosk

6. Upcoming Events (Periodically refer to website calendar for updates):

- June 9-10 – TAMWG meeting, Weaverville
- June 16 – Award construction contract for Lewiston/Dark Gulch rehab sites
- June 16-17 – TMC meeting, Weaverville