

**Executive Director's Report**  
**To the**  
**Trinity Adaptive Management Working Group**  
**March 19, 2009**

**INTRODUCTION**

Congratulations to all the new and re-appointed members of the Trinity Adaptive Management Working Group and thank you for your three-year commitment in advising your new Executive Director and the Trinity Management Council (TMC) on how to do our best work in restoring the upper Trinity River. As you are aware, the Trinity River Restoration Program (Program) is an outstanding opportunity to utilize federal, state and local resources to significantly improve the natural environment and the associated fisheries. As the Executive Director of the Program, I am grateful for this opportunity and am dedicated to working with our Program partners, members of the TAMWG, and other stakeholders in achieving the goals identified in the 2000 Record of Decision and Implementation Plan.

A key piece of the founding authorities and Program plans that has yet to fully evolve is the adaptive management aspects of the Program. We are now collectively at a crossroads in the recent history of this Program as the fifth year since the construction of the first restoration site is approaching and there are a number of new players involved so now is the time to re-visit the direction and focus of the Program both from a scientific and a managerial perspective. This is where the relationship between the Program and the TAMWG, from my perspective, will be most helpful as all of you bring your unique and valuable experiences to the table to assist us. I look forward to working with all of you in helping shape the future of the Program.

**Executive Director's Agenda**

I have spent my first two months getting up to speed on the many aspects of the Program's history, founding authorities, activities, relationships and the current status. As you might expect, with the number of people that are involved in the Program, I have received many differing views on how people see things and what they believe is important as we look forward to reshaping the Program. Not having a history with the Program I bring an unbiased perspective and the appropriate experience to help effectuate the positive change desired by virtually everyone I have spoken with.

I am continuing to “gather data” from our Program partners and their staff, from Reclamation and FWS as the lead agencies directing the Program, and I look forward to interfacing with the members of the TAMWG as part of my on-going assessment of the current status. Following is my view of the priorities and goals that I have identified to-date that I will be working on with all involved.

### Short-term Priorities

- Continue the process of meeting face-to-face with Program partners at their offices and out in the field to gain a full view of their responsibilities and involvement not only on the Trinity issues but their other projects and priorities.
- Improve communications across the board through updating the website frequently and keeping all involved informed through emails, meetings and telecom.
- Work with staff to set Program priorities that focus on keeping up the pace with on-going activities and contractual commitments while we also adjust for the difficult process of re-organization and office expansion. It is critical that I maintain a high level of communication with staff, key staff of FWS and Program partners, the TMC and TAMWG as we look at new ways of conducting Program business.
- Work with Brian Person and Mike Long as the DOI/Program team that develops the agency integration plan and the associated reorganization that implements the directives of our respective Regional Directors. The reorganization will be performed proactively with our Program partners and staff to assure as smooth a transition as possible.
- Complete office expansion: The goal of the office expansion is to provide 1) a larger conference room, and 2) five additional work stations to accommodate new staff and Program partner staff that are working near or in Weaverville with Program staff.
- Complete the FY 2010 budget approval process in a timely fashion in order to be in a position to complete AFA negotiations with our tribal partners prior to the start of the fiscal year in October. Immediately after the FY 2010 budget is approved, begin the process of working with the IAP Steering Committee and the B Team to establish a multi-year budgeting process (2011-2015). This process will recognize science program assessment priorities in a logical step up and step down system that can adapt to changes in funding levels and also be flexible in addressing adaptive management objectives. The process will integrate construction completion schedules and compliance and regulatory

demands on Program funding. Any activity that is deemed as an inherent DOI governmental function will be managed by Program staff.

- Develop the first annual report jointly with Program partners and other participants that illustrates the activities and findings for 2009.
- Facilitate the establishment of a Trinity Operations Task Force that better integrates Trinity issues into the decision making processes for Trinity Dam operations for ROD releases and Central Valley diversions.

### **Long-term Priorities**

- Focus Program efforts toward completion of the remaining 30 restoration sites and the commensurate evaluations to apply the best available knowledge for applying adaptive management practices.
- Continue refining the long-view budgeting process that integrates the science objectives identified within the IAP and completion of the restoration sites in a cost effective manner.
- Work with Program partners to look at effective and creative means that simplify and streamline agreements and contracts both between partners and out-side contractors.
- Develop a watershed improvement program that integrates the available resources of the Program with that of other land management agencies.
- Create an environment for robust scientific discovery and discourse between partners and outside peer groups
- Continue to improve communications and working relationships

### **Organization**

As presented on March 18, the Program will be undertaking a reorganization that is designed to fully integrate the TRRP related functions performed by the FWS staff in Arcata with the Program office in Weaverville. This will be accomplished through the use of two full time positions that will be filled by the FWS by advertising for a GS-13 Science Program Coordinator and a GS-12 Fish Biologist or Ecologist. The third position will be initially shared between existing staff at Arcata that perform most of their work on Trinity projects. This position could become a permanent transfer in the future. Following are the goals of the reorganization.

- Better communications and project planning between the Program staff, FWS and our Program partners. Building trust and respectful working relationships between Program partners.
- Creation of a “science community” that collaborate to achieve Program objectives through the use of the best knowledge available in evaluating and planning for restoration projects and determining the effectiveness in fish production and other measures.
- Provides the environment to allow for efficient and timely development of budgets, agreements and contracts which is currently a source of frustration across all Program functions.

### **Budget Development Process**

At the February 2, 2009 meeting of the TMC, the Executive Director was tasked with developing an interim and long-term budget process in order to address the FY 2010 budget under the current schedule and the 2011 – 2015 out-yr budgets in a new and comprehensive way. The IAP Steering Committee was also tasked with trying to meet to use the IAP prioritization process to assist in getting the science portion of the budget developed. Attached is a flow chart and a written explanation of the two processes that are recommended.

It was determined by the IAP SC that there was not sufficient time to effectively provide input to the 2010 budget so the alternative was to delay the IAP process until the five-yr budget process began. The DOI budget team made up of Program staff and Joe Polos appointed by Mike Long as the FWS representative to the team met on March 5 to take the first cut at the FY 2010 budget. That draft was provided to the B Team made up of appointed members from the TMC and TAMWG in preparation for a meeting on March 16. At that meeting, a number of recommendations were made and a meeting to discuss TAMWG comments and finalize a draft for the April 1-2 TMC meeting was set for March 25.

The TMC will review this draft and determine if they can approve it on April 2. If not it can be remanded back to the B Team for further work and the TMC would hold a special meeting in May to address the budget if necessary.

Following is the FY 2010 budget presentation.

**Trinity River Restoration Program**  
**Proposed Budget Development Process**

**FY 2010**

Given the nature of the compressed schedule to get the 2010 budget before the TMC (draft by April 1 and final by May, a special meeting of the TMC) the following process is recommended:

Utilizing the 2009 budget structure as the starting point, the RIG branch chief will adjust the implementation priorities based on the funding available after the 2009 contract carryovers are developed and the design work needed has been defined. Those issues have been addressed and are incorporated in the FY 2010 draft.

On the Science side, on-going work items and existing priorities in the FY 2009 operating budget would be the starting point. That information will then be utilized to help develop a draft FY 2010 budget that will address the Science work plan for the year.

A core group of TRRP staff and FWS designee (internal 'DOI' team) takes the first cut at setting priorities to available dollars. Once this group is comfortable with the draft, it will be taken to a larger group ('B' Team) that will consist of the core internal group and designees from each Program Partner with input from Workgroup leaders (some of the same folks perhaps). This group will work toward a consensus (with noted minority opinions) for the budget to be reformulated by the DOI team for presentation to the TAMWG in March and the TMC with TAMWG comments in April.

If there are unresolved issues, the TMC can direct the DOI team to take another cut at balancing the requests and schedule the B Team to reconsider TMC recommendations or other matters. The budget will then be resubmitted At a special May meeting of the TMC for approval.

Recommended 'DOI' team for 2010:

Executive Director, RIG Branch Chief, Budget Analyst, TMAG Fisheries Biologist and a FWS designee (Joe Polos). (After the new TRRP Science Program Coordinator position is filled, that person will have the science-side responsibilities for budget development)

The 'B' Team would be the above plus one designee and alternate from each of the partners that wish to participate.

## **FY 2011 thru 2015**

After the dust settles on the FY 2010 process, the DOI, IAP SC and B Team will then immediately begin a longer-term budget development process that incorporates the IAP prioritization process. The budget will be developed to incorporate on-going activities and programs that form base-level funding for Program Partners and will begin to phase in the RFP process for those assessments that would provide clear benefits to the adaptive management goals and setting projects in line with the science priorities determined within the IAP.

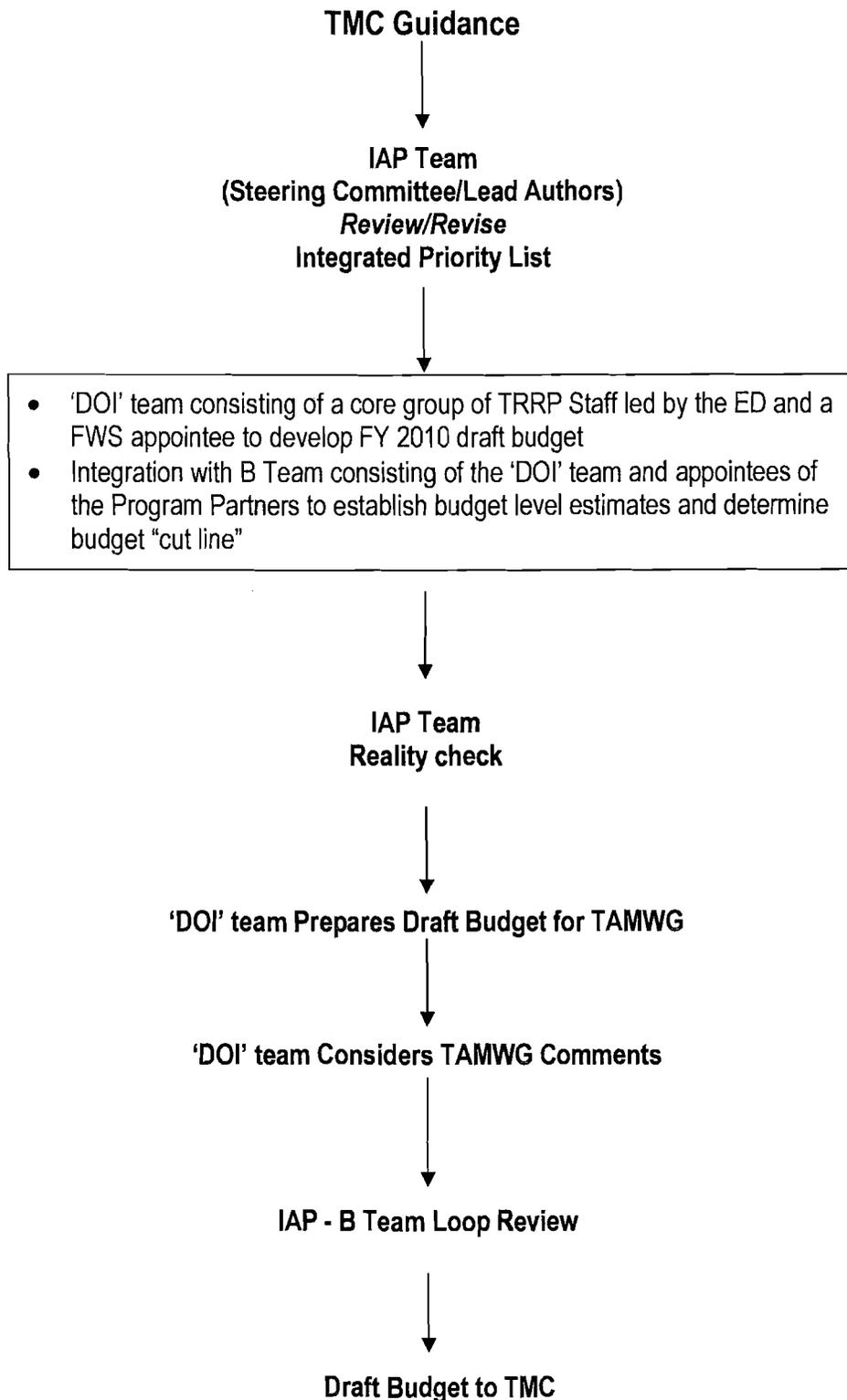
Out-year budgeting can help determine when higher priority assessments can be addressed by shifting forward to match available funding. Core monitoring activities can be streamlined through multi-year agreements with the Program Partners that would be adjusted annually based on changing conditions or findings.

The same above approach will be used to get draft budgets established but each budget will be refined through evaluation and updates of core activities and new assessments that may be developed through an RFP process and through the adaptive management findings in a IAP-type review.

The target to present a 2011 – 2015 draft budget framework and process to the TMC for consideration would be the September meeting.

One of the common threads running through the budget development process is that there are core programs (primarily monitoring) that are dependant on an annual funding stream and some recognition of this must be taken into account. In addition, the Secretary of the Department of Interior has made a strong commitment toward its tribal trust responsibilities and has set a high priority in assisting tribes in building capacities toward reaching their self-governance objectives. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the Interior agencies within the Program to take this into consideration when formulating Program work plans and associated budget line items that may assist with tribal partner capacity development within the existing authorities of the Program.

## Proposed Budget Process



After the 2010 budget is approved a similar process (with lessons learned) will resume to establish a 2011-2015 budget that fully incorporates the IAP prioritization process and an RFP based approach in determining project-level costs and schedules