

Final Minutes
Trinity Adaptive Management Working Group
Trinity Alps Golf Course, Weaverville, CA

Wednesday, September 13, 2010

Start of meeting: 9:35 AM

Attending members:

Member:	Representative Seat:
Tom Weseloh	California Trout, Inc.
Tim Viel	Natural Resources Conservation Service
Ed Duggan	Willow Creek Community Services District
Emelia Berol	Northcoast Environmental Center
Gil Saliba	Redwood Regional Audubon Society
Byron Leydecker	Friends of the Trinity River
Dana Hord	Big Bar Community Development Group
Richard Lorenz	Trinity County Resident
Alex Cousins ¹	Trinity County Resource Conservation District
Jeffrey Sutton ²	Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority
Joe McCarthy ³	Commercial Fishing Guide
David Steinhauser ⁴	Six Rivers Outfitters and Guides Association
Elizabeth Hadley ⁴	City of Redding Electric Utility Department

¹ alternate for Pat Frost.

² arrived during discussion of item 4.

³ arrived at start of item 9.

⁴ left during discussion of item 9.

Members that did not attend:

Member:	Representative Seat:
Arnold Whitridge	Trinity County Resident
Ann Hayden	Environmental Defense
Sandy Denn	Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District

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

1. Welcome, Introductions, Adopt Agenda and Approval of June Minutes

Tom Weseloh chaired this meeting as chair Arnold Whitridge was absent. Weseloh called the Trinity Adaptive Management Working Group (TAMWG) meeting to order. Introductions were made. Weseloh next addressed the meeting minutes from June. Several corrections were offered and accepted.

Ed Duggan made a motion to accept the June 2010 minutes as amended.

Emelia Berol seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. Open Forum and Public Comment

No comments at this time.

3. Designated Federal Officer Topics

Randy Brown, the Designated Federal Officer, reported that the request for TAMWG membership status for Rosekrans and Gant and the request that the TAMWG charter be renewed have been submitted to the Fish and Wildlife Regional Office in Sacramento. The request has to be processed in Sacramento and then Washington DC. Brown is now waiting for a response. The charter is scheduled to expire on January 2011.

Ed Duggan made a motion to request the TMC to write a letter to the Secretary of Interior requesting that the Department of Interior expedite the decisions on TAMWG membership and extension of the charter

Elizabeth Hadley seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Brown also noted the upcoming opportunity to meet with the Commissioner Conner from the Bureau of Reclamation Wednesday from 5:30 PM to 7 PM at the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP) office in Weaverville. Stakeholders are welcome to attend the meeting. Brown clarified the role of TAMWG members at the meeting would be as individuals and not TAMWG representatives.

4. Trinity Management Council Chair Report

Brian Person, the Trinity Management Council (TMC) chair, summarized activities of the TMC. He noted good progress by a working group on the flows for the Lower Klamath. A motion was passed regarding flow management. He noted that currently, flow conditions are at 3200 cubic feet per second (cfs)—well above the threshold of 2500 cfs. He reported ongoing discussion about purchasing extra water for releases. The selection process for a new Executive Director is moving along with a final decision anticipated October 1. Responding to a question by Byron Leydecker, Person reported that some candidates are scientists and that Arnold Whitridge, TAMWG chair, is involved in the process. He said

that, hopefully, a unanimous decision will be reached and if not, consensus will be sought. Person also noted progress on the issue of roles and responsibilities within the programs. Next Person fielded questions.

Leydecker raised the issue of needed watershed/tributary rehabilitation – tributaries the principal spawning grounds of coho and steelhead and the minimal amounts that have been allocated to this work. Jennifer Faler noted her intention to get more involved with the watershed groups and the need to get the planning stage going and have more projects in the “pipeline.” For FY 2011, there is as much as \$500,000 funding for watersheds if the projects are ready to go. Leydecker noted that, according to the Record of Decision (ROD), the TRRP was supposed to provide \$2 million per year for watershed/tributary efforts and this has not yet happened. Leydecker also noted that many of the supervisory personnel, especially at the regional level, have turned over and newcomers can lack knowledge of the foundations of the program. Faler noted that the upcoming presentations by the original authors of the Flow Evaluation and the ROD may help to provide this perspective.

Person noted the meeting with Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Connor on September 15 and suggested that TAMWG members be frank when addressing Commissioner Connor. Regarding the TMC response to TAMWG requests and recommendations, Person stated his commitment as chair of the TMC to respond to the TAMWG in writing regarding ongoing requests and recommendations made by the TAMWG. Responses will be sent in advance of TAMWG meetings. Rich Lorenz asked that this specifically be noted for the record in these minutes.

Person stated that Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) does not have an obligation or authority under the Record of Decision (ROD) to fund boat ramp extensions but would help if they could.

Leydecker asked for more clarification about how much water was being diverted from the Trinity watershed and Reservoir. He said the ROD provided for diversion of 53 percent of watershed runoff. He cited many different volumes (or percent of inflows) that have been diverted over recent years. He stated that since the ROD was signed until the 2007 water year, diversions have been as high as 85.9 percent, but one year was 33 percent. However, the average for 2002 through 2007 was 57 percent. He also noted that the levels of the Trinity Reservoir have dropped over the last few years and that these lower reservoir levels impact the recreation-oriented businesses. Person noted that diversions using a 5-year running average indicate that about 50 percent has been diverted. This year, 310,000 acre feet are planned for export, which is about 25 percent and should help the reservoir. Ed Duggan asked about what the 53 percent export of water refers to. He asked if this was the 53 percent of the projected inflow to the reservoir. Person confirmed that it was 53 percent the “yield to the watershed.” Kelli Gant, representative for the Trinity Reservoir stakeholders, noted a problem may exist in that the projections for Trinity Reservoir are combined with Shasta Reservoir and this may create problems. Person countered that the Trinity predictions of inflow are based on snow conditions. Gant then opined that the snow measures are not being done rigorously and are based on either satellite or computer models. While she acceded that normally predictions have been done fairly well, but asked if some improvements may be in order. At least there are some questions that still remain for her stakeholders. Weseloh said a presentation and discussion on forecasting will be put in the agenda for a future meeting.

Person relayed that Central Valley Operations staff are working on a reply to the TMC letter. TAMWG members requested to see a response.

Tom Weseloh asked about status of the CDR retreat notes and the progress on program reorientation. Person responded that some of the recommendations have been implemented—particularly the request for proposals (RFP) process and the issue of obtaining more dependable funding for the tribes.

5. Hatchery operations/Ad-Hoc

Brian Person commented on the ongoing discussions regarding the review of management of the Trinity Hatchery. He noted the need to hold government-to-government negotiations between the Department of Interior and the Hoopa Valley Tribe to address this issue. He also noted the need for some level of transparency in the discussions. One issue is who should manage the hatchery. Person reported that The Hoopa Valley Tribe would like the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to take over management and requested an Interior decision, but the FWS has stated it is not able to do this in an Interior letter from Laura Brown. The Hoopa Valley Tribe has been encouraged by Interior to join the Ad-Hoc effort to develop new hatchery practices, but so far, have declined. Another issue is that California, a current manager of the hatchery has stated its need to manage the hatchery as part of the State's role and responsibility to the citizens of the state and need to provide fishing resources.

Responding to a question by Tom Weseloh, Person said that the TAMWG will be included in the review of hatchery practices. Weseloh asked why the Ad Hoc cannot continue in non-binding recommendations for hatchery practices. Weseloh noted that technical specialists of agencies of the TMC have been pulled from the process. Person stated he was unaware of the need for the Ad Hoc to continue. Weseloh replied that, as reported at the last TAMWG meeting, there was still much work to do for coho and steelhead recommendations and there was a need for Ad Hoc to continue to meet.

Byron Leydecker expressed his frustration over what should be a simple solution to reducing competition of hatchery fish on native fish is turning out to be an excessively complicated and lengthy process.

Emelia Berol clarified that the Hoopa Valley Tribe would like to see the FWS to manage the hatchery because, she presumes, the Tribe has had a poor relationship with the State. She clarified that the desire of the TAMWG for hatchery practices to aid restoration of the river is obstructed by the separate issue of the arcane and troublesome laws regulating the relations between the Tribes and government agencies. She suggested the Bureau may be able to help to resolve these sorts of issues. Weseloh still suggested it would be beneficial for the Hoopa Valley Tribe to participate in the Ad Hoc review discussions. Don Reck of the BOR noted that the hatchery is currently co-managed by the State and the Hoopa Valley Tribe and the Yurok Tribe. Leydecker questioned what defined co-management and questioned how much involvement the Tribes had. Reck also noted a review of hatcheries in the State of California are scheduled to occur by federal agencies. A particular focus will be the genetic effects on native populations. Wade Sinnen asked if these reviews may lead to binding legislation directing changes in management. Reck thought that is unlikely that no changes will result. Reck opined that the Tribes do have a role in decision-making via either government-to-government discussions or via the Ad Hoc discussions. The day-to-day management is handled by the State through a contract.

Tom Weseloh asked if a response to the TAMWG letter regarding hatchery management may be forthcoming. Person said yes the draft is in his in-box and, as long as the response does not contradict ongoing government-to-government discussions and review He stated there are no contractual provisions that impede management changes based on the BOR/Department of Fish and Game contract. There is also a discrepancy over the 50/50 split of the harvestable surplus. The marking effort with the new trailers also plays a role in the discussions. He also verified that the review of hatcheries by the FWS is proceeding and is scheduled for a draft in two years with Trinity and Klamath hatcheries to be the first to be reviewed.

6. TRRP Executive Director's Report

Jennifer Faler, acting Executive Director of the TRRP, handed out her report (Attachment 1) and a copy of the FY2011 Budget. She reviewed the items in her report. She noted her focus on organizational refinement and program roles and responsibilities. She reported that the communication and collaboration between Reclamation and the FWS has improved and that Ernie Clarke has helped in this regard. She noted that a Science Retreat is scheduled for next week where roles and responsibilities will be discussed further.

The 2012 budget process is being finalized and several new approaches are being introduced. The Science Coordinator will prepare the Science Work Plan. The budget process will be reviewed by the Science Advisory Board (SAB). A dispute resolution process is planned.

The Annual Report had stalled, but has been edited and is being passed onto the Science Coordinator for finalization next month. A new Temperature Management Workgroup is being formed.

A modification to the October ramp-down rate is being proposed. At this point, Andreas Krause handed out a two-page description on the proposal (Attachment 3) and gave an explanation. The current policy allows a drop of 150 cfs of flow in a single day. The proposal is to implement a 50 cfs decrease per day in order to reduce negative effects on riparian vegetation.

There was some discussion whether the ramp-down falls on a weekend and the potential impact to rafting businesses. Elizabeth Hadley noted that she did not receive the proposal, though she is a member of the Flow Workgroup. She noted she was fine with the proposal given there was no change in total flow, but that it appeared to be rushed and created concerns to the rafting businesses.

Ed Duggan motioned that the proposed ramp-down be accepted as a trial to determine its feasibility for annual utilization.

Jeff Sutton seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Faler continued with her presentation. She noted that consultants have recommended that the designs for channel work need more time before implementation. They recommended that

more evaluation is useful and that the program should consider designs that incorporate multiple channel designs to gain more edge habitat.

Faler noted other past accomplishments: a sediment workshop, Klamath Fall Flow recommendations, information booths, Tribal Trust training, and meetings regarding roles and responsibilities. She also handed out an agenda for Scientist Retreat meeting in Eureka, September 20-21 (Attachment 4).

Break for lunch.

9. Science Program Report

Item 9 was discussed immediately following the lunch break (e.g., prior to Items 7 and 8) in order prevent the five presenters from waiting longer than necessary. Following discussion of Item 9, the agenda returned to Item 7.

Ernie Clarke, Science Coordinator for the TRRP, gave an update on what he termed Adaptive Management and hypothesis testing. He passed out a hard copy of a memo and a set of Powerpoint presentations focused on fish monitoring (Attachment 5). These presentations were given by several technical specialists.

Wade Sinnen introduced some of the rationale for monitoring fish. He cited an underlying hypothesis of the program—that rehabilitation will increase annual recruitment of naturally produced anadromous species. He noted this was the main hypothesis and the most difficult to test. He next introduced four sub-hypotheses related to juvenile rearing, spawning, and juvenile out migration. He presented alternative hypothesis that may be reasons for failure to show increases in fish. These alternatives included over harvest, conditions in the Klamath or ocean conditions, density dependent feedback, or hatchery effects. He listed several metrics or numeric goals: 62,000 fall Chinook, 6,000 spring Chinook, 40,000 natural steelhead, and 1,400 coho. He also listed other metrics or measures of juvenile fish that could be used to assess success. Regarding results, adult fall Chinook show no positive or negative trends over time. However, the natural-to-hatchery ratios are changing in favor of natural Chinook. Spring Chinook show a slight negative trend in numbers. Coho show a decline in natural numbers and hatchery numbers are very dominant. Fall run steelhead show a slight increase in wild fish, but still have a large hatchery component. There is some evidence that the longitudinal distribution of redds over the river may be increasing.

Next, George Kautsky of the Hoopa Valley Tribe presented information on monitoring fish via coded wire tags. Juvenile fish are tagged and can be followed as they are harvested in mixed stock fisheries in the ocean and in river fisheries. To determine if naturally produced Trinity adult Chinook are increasing, they reconstruct the age-cohort structure over five years of returning fish. By assuming specific survival rates, and counting returning fish by age groups, they back-calculate the numeric size of a specific cohort population at age 2. They then can estimate the ratios of hatchery fish to natural fish and use ocean data to estimate survival of Trinity natural fall Chinook at age 2. Their preliminary data show a range from 10,000 to 140,000 natural Trinity fall Chinook at age 2 in the ocean with an average of about 40,000 to 50,000 fish. There was no clear trend over time from 1995 to 2004. Kautsky noted that few basins are able to do this sort of analysis.

C.J. Ralph, of the Redwood Sciences Lab, explained some of the monitoring of birds in riparian zones along the river. All species show high year-to-year variation but general increases and peaks in 2006 and slight declines thereafter. Ralph concluded that continued monitoring is needed but due to funding cuts the monitoring program has been suspended. Faler provided some background on this by citing a failure of reports being received on time. Ralph responded that Redwood Sciences Lab gets all their reports in on time. Faler clarified that some problems with the reports still existed and this lead to a failure in getting the final signature. As a result, the next contract was put out to bid as a public RFP and it ended up having a small business restriction. Faler noted that Redwood Sciences Lab could still bid on the project, but would now need to team with a small business concern. Wade Sinnen expressed his view that "it was a shame" that this had happened, and that the Redwood Sciences Lab may be replaced by a group with less expertise and that would have to start over.

Jamie Battaso, of the FWS, presented monitoring data on foothill yellow-legged frogs. He showed that reproductive success is much lower in the mainstem versus the North Fork or South Fork of the Trinity River. Stranding of egg masses can occur with declines in flow from 2000 cfs to 700 cfs.

Dave Gaeuman, Trinity River Restoration Program, showed effects of dredging Hamilton and other ponds and the decrease of sediment delivery to the mainstem that has followed.

Tom Weseloh thanked the group and asked that the presenters try to give more synthesis about how well the program is working and specifically how the results can be turned into management actions. Rich Lorenz also asked that the science presenters attempt to discern how well the projects are performing toward the program goals.

7. TRRP interface with CVO

Following the discussion of Item 9, the discussion returned to back to the regular order of the agenda and picked up at Item 7.

Tom Weseloh suggested that, due to time constraints, Item 7 be considered "discussed" since Brian Person touched on this subject and be tabled for a future agenda.

8. Klamath River flow augmentation and coordination

Ernie Clarke gave a Powerpoint entitled Klamath Flow Evaluation and he passed out a hardcopy of this presentation (Attachment 6). Clarke also passed out a copy of a memo outlining the response from a workgroup assembled to assess the effects of the special fall flow releases (Attachment 7).

Clarke summarized that the fall flows were originally designed to alleviate another fish die-off similar to that which occurred in September 2002. He reviewed the conditions of the die-off and how triggers were established to guide for future releases. He next summarized the recommendations that provided guidelines for releasing water to alleviate spread of disease. He touched on the memo with its attached appendices that provide more information on scientific evidence supporting the recommendations for fall releases.

Bill Brock noted that this year was very benign regarding the need for fall flows and that falls flows may be needed in future years. Jennifer Faler added that increased flows will impact in-channel any work that may be occurring at the time of the flow release.

TAMWG did not make a new motion on the fall pulse flows but noted the documentation and process of developing the work group recommendation was well done. Also, it was thought that the future utility of the final result was beneficial.

9. Science Program Retreat

Item 9 was discussed before Item 7 (see above).

10. Rig/Channel Rehabilitation

Jennifer Faler, Acting Director of the TRRP, handed out a two-page handout on lessons learned from the Phase 1 rehabilitation projects (Attachment 8). She first noted the extra efforts being employed to keep turbidity from becoming a problem. They have insisted that the contractor does not exceed the 20 NTU exceedance limit at 500 feet downstream of the site.

Faler noted that the river is responding to the rehabilitation and, in some cases, public comments are noting changes as both positive and negative. But this is a good sign that the projects are having effect as intended. Her handout listed several lessons learned: importance of wood, importance of side channels, changes to design have occurred, need for design and construction reports, need to scale projects to flow regime, and the potential for channel migration is limited. She noted that public outreach is needed. She presented a table contrasting the original plan and the actual work completed. She noted a main difference of the original plan of removal of berms versus the actual need to lower terraces created by gold dredging. They still do not know the desired future condition of the riparian vegetation and there has been limited success in riparian re-vegetation.

11. TAMWG Involvement in TRRP Work Groups

Tom Weseloh suggested that this topic be tabled until the next meeting, given the flux that workgroups are undergoing.

12. TAMWG recommendations/status of previous recommendations

Rich Lorenz asked that the TMC provide a brief executive summary of their responses to the TAMWG requests. Dana Hord noted that they were interviewed by the California's Gold television show.

Tom Weseloh provided an opportunity for any additional public comments. None were made at this time.

13. Tentative Date and Agenda Topics for Next Meeting

Tom Weseloh suggested the next meeting be held December 14 in Redding, CA. He suggested these agenda items: presentation by DWR on Trinity inflow forecasts, FWS hatchery review, FWS presentation on lamprey, CVO presentation, and workgroups. Rich Lorenz asked for a presentation from the TRRP science group on restoration sites and what we learned from those. Emelia Berol asked for a status update on the South Fork. Weseloh suggested they consult with Whitridge on these subjects.

The meeting was adjourned.

LIST OF MOTIONS

Ed Duggan made a motion to accept the June 2010 minutes as amended.

Emelia Berol seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Ed Duggan made a motion to request the TMC to write a letter to the Secretary of Interior requesting that the Department of Interior expedite the decisions on TAMWG membership and extension of the charter

Elizabeth Hadley seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Ed Duggan motioned that the proposed ramp down be accepted as a trial to determine its feasibility for future utilization.

Jeff Sutton seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

- Attachment 1: Director's Report for Trinity River Restoration Program, September 13, 2010. Handed out by Jennifer Faler.
- Attachment 2: FY2011 TRRP Proposed Budget and Workplan. Handed out by Jennifer Faler.
- Attachment 3: Immediate Consideration for Reducing the WY2011 450 cfs-300 cfs Baseflow Recession Rate. September 2, 2010. Handed out by Andreas Kraus.
- Attachment 4: Proposed Agenda Trinity River Restoration Program Scientists' Retreat. Humboldt Bay Aquatic Center, Eureka, CA. Sept. 20-21, 2010. Handed out by Jennifer Faler.
- Attachment 5: Science Program Report and attached Powerpoint reports. September 13, 2010. Handed out by Ernie Clarke.
- Attachment 6: Klamath Fall Flow Evaluation. Hardcopy of Powerpoint presentation by Ernie Clarke.
- Attachment 7: Klamath Fall Flow Releases. Memo from Ernie Clarke to Jennifer Faler, August 30, 2010. Appendices of scientific evidence supporting fall flow releases to alleviate disease.
- Attachment 8: Phase 1 Lessons learned. TAMWG meeting September 13, 2010. Passed out by Jennifer Faler.

Other document 1: Letter of June 15, 2010 from TAMWG to TMC.