

TO: Executive Director, Trinity Management Council, TRRP  
FROM: Rod Wittler, Chief Scientist, Technical Modeling and Analysis Group, TRRP  
DATE: May 15, 2006  
SUBJECT: Annotated Schedule for Completion of TRRP Integrated Assessment Plan (IAP)

Further to discussions at the TMC meeting on March 30, 2006, I have prepared an annotated schedule for completing the TRRP's Integrated Assessment Plan (IAP)<sup>1</sup>. It is clear from our recent TMC discussions that the technical process of completing the IAP needs to be participatory, efficient, respectful, and consistent with the foundational documents of the TRRP (e.g. DEIS, ROD, Implementation Plan, Trinity River Flow Evaluation Study). To this end, I suggest that all conference calls/meetings and discussions among the TRRP and partner agencies adhere to a set of guiding principles. I would like these principles to be endorsed by the TMC together with the proposed schedule (both are listed below). My hope is that by following these principles we can ensure that discussions within the group remain focused on the difficult task at hand of pulling together a credible integrated assessment plan for the Trinity River.

## **Guiding Principles for All Involved in Finalizing the IAP**

1. Be hard on the problem, and easy on the people. Truly endeavor to listen to others' points of view.
2. Once it is accepted by the TMC, respect the agreed upon schedule and process for completing the IAP.
3. Once the membership of each technical group is established, ensure that all members are copied on technical communications, field meetings, etc.
4. Respect the agreed upon agenda for a meeting. Express opinions succinctly out of respect for others; clarify if your opinion is based on technical arguments or values. Refer to past documents and data to support arguments (e.g. TRFES, ROD, DEIS, TRRP Conceptual Model document, draft versions of IAP, other articles and reports), rather than just expressing subjective opinions.
5. Recognize that the TRRP assessment program is going to evolve over time, as candidate approaches are tested and compared.
6. Separate technical issues (e.g. different opinions about assessment or analytical approaches) from policy issues (e.g. interpretation of TRRP foundational documents (ROD, EIS, TRFES) regarding habitat and fish restoration targets)
7. Resolve as many technical issues as possible within the technical meetings, and direct policy issues that cannot be resolved up to the TMC or G2G level. If policy issues must be raised at the TMC or G2G level, endeavor to clarify in a concise way the decision that is requested and the arguments for and against alternatives (succinctly summarized). Similarly, technical issues that cannot be resolved by TRRP partners through either discussion or field tests of competing methods should be directed to the Scientific Advisory Board. See "Resolution Round Table" below.
8. Ensure that critical core components of the assessment program are maintained and are not damaged by budget allocations to short term issues of concern (i.e. minimize tensions between short and long term assessments).
9. Assume that all are committed to the success of the program

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<sup>1</sup> The IAP was previously referred to as the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (IMEP)

## Resolution Round Table

Disagreements are inevitable, and if handled constructively, are indications of a healthy problem-solving environment. The first step in handling a disagreement will be to decide if it is a policy issue or a technical issue. Examples of each (not a comprehensive list) are shown in Table 1.

*Table 1. Examples of policy issues (sent to TMC for resolution) vs. technical issues (resolved by TMAG, TRRP and/or SAB). This is not a comprehensive list.*

<b>Policy Issues (TMC Level)</b>	<b>Technical (TMAG, TRRP Partners, SAB)</b>
Overall cost ceilings on program; % split of total budget between implementation and science	Most cost effective means of assessing program effectiveness in the field (e.g., Numerical (NHM) vs. Empirical Habitat Mapping (EHM), or some combination of both)
Value issues (relative importance of fish vs. wildlife) and implications for prioritization of assessment expenditures	Most scientifically defensible, cost-effective way to test key hypotheses affecting management actions (e.g. how to set up reference reaches to test rehab site effectiveness at creating fry rearing habitat; functional relationship between geomorphic change and fish habitat abundance)
How decisions are made with respect to assessment (e.g. process for completing IAP, Resolution Round Table).	Most appropriate analytical methods (numerical models, statistical analyses) to complete assessments, revise annual management actions in an Adaptive Management framework
TRRP original goals (ROD, DEIS, TRFES, 1984 Act, 1955 Act)	Most cost effective way to implement rehabilitation projects
Changes to the Implementation Plan	

Policy issues should be “parked” during technical meetings, so that technical discussions will not get sidetracked.

The proposed approach for resolving technical disputes is to either: 1) propose a field test/comparison in the IAP to resolve the disagreement (e.g. compare numerical vs. empirical methods of rating habitat against actual fry habitat utilization); or 2) if a field test isn’t possible, lay out the options and pros/cons in the IAP, and ask the SAB for their feedback (e.g., is a 1-dimensional or 2-dimensional riparian establishment model required?). If, following advice from the SAB there is still no technical resolution, then the issue elevates to the TMC.

At the end of the technical meeting, the policy issues in the parking lot need to be clearly framed for the TMC. Alternatives need to be described concisely, with their pros and cons, allowing the TMC to quickly make an informed decision.

### **Resolution Round Table Summary**

1. Resolve all issues at the lowest level.
2. Separate policy from technical issues early and often.

3. Let the TMC say if an issue is not policy, or if it needs more 'deliberation' at the technical level before receipt and deliberation by the TMC.
4. The first principle of technical resolution is mutual agreement per the goals of the organization (Table 2.1, B-Team prioritization criteria). A resolved issue is still subject to external or SAB peer review.
5. The second principle of technical resolution is simultaneous testing of the alternatives (i.e. NHM versus EHM). Funding availability will probably limit this option, bringing a strong incentive (if enforced by the TMC) to the process to resolve at the lowest level. A resolved issue is still subject to external or SAB peer review.
6. The third principle of technical resolution is review by SAB.
7. If, following receipt of advice from the SAB, the parties cannot reach resolution, the issue rises to the TMC for resolution. A resolved issue is still subject to external peer review.

## Integrated Assessment Plan (IAP) - Schedule of Events 2006

Event	Date <sup>2</sup>	Content	Prerequisites for Meeting
Issues Document	May 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe issues</li> <li>• Describe process for resolving technical and policy issues</li> <li>• Further annotate schedule in response to TMC comments</li> <li>• Establish set of guiding principles for moving forward</li> <li>• Draft Agenda for Meeting 1</li> </ul>	Solicit issues by end of finalizing comments period (May 5)
Conf Call	May 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss Issues Document, Meeting 1 Agenda</li> </ul>	Read/think upon Issues Document
Meeting 1	May 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt process for resolving technical and policy issues</li> <li>• Discuss overall goals/structure of IAP (Chapter 2, Table 2.1); Revise Table 2.1 and highlight required changes</li> <li>• Expand and sort list of issues and prioritize for resolution</li> <li>• Assign issues to interagency subgroups for resolution</li> <li>• Policy issues in “parking lot”</li> <li>• Review objectives for Meeting 2; establish executive committee to finalize agenda for Meeting 2</li> </ul>	Read and comment on IAP – provide comments to facilitator; Participate in Conference call; Read Issues Document Suggest changes to 2.1 ahead of meeting 1; Read Table 2.1 – provide suggested revisions to facilitator
Circulate Subgroup docs	June 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports from Subgroups circulated by June 7th</li> <li>• Draft revisions/additions to IAP</li> </ul>	Subgroups meet, deliberate, and resolve issues following principles
Conference call	June 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review agenda for Meeting 2</li> </ul>	
Meeting 2	June 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workgroups review interim products from subgroups</li> <li>• Resolution Round Table</li> <li>• <b>Output:</b> Points of revision (Chapters 1-3 to be completed by June 30, Chapters 4-9 to be completed by July 30)</li> </ul>	Circulate subgroup documents to larger workgroups; Review subgroup documents
Revised IAP	Aug 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised IAP sent to SAB members for review</li> </ul>	
Meeting 3 (Science Framework Review)	Sept. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “QRMLADPWR” process for SAB: Questions, Read, Meet, Listen, Ask, Deliberate, Present, Write, Revise (TRRP to revise)</li> </ul>	SAB to review IAP over 4 week period
TMC Meeting	Oct. 15 <sup>3</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final vetting of the IAP and approval/redirection</li> </ul>	

<sup>2</sup> Upon adoption by the TMC, the dates for this process will be revised together by the TMC & TAMWG Tech Reps.

<sup>3</sup> Practically this will take place at the regularly scheduled TMC meeting following completion of revisions following the Science Framework Review.