

Draft Minutes of the July 23, 2001 TMC meeting in Sacramento

Present: Tom Stokely and Ralph Modine, Trinity County; Mike Ryan, Chairman and USBR; Mary Ellen Mueller, USFWS; Donna Darr, USBR; Russell Smith, USBR; Brandt Gutermuth, BLM; Serge Birk, CVPWA; Neil Manji, DFG; Bill Mendenhall, DWR; Charlie Chamberlain, Yurok Tribe; Frank Dimick for Westlands; Dave Hillemeier, Yurok Tribe; Mike Orcutt, George Kautsky and Joseph Jarnaghan, Hoopa Valley Tribe; Irma Lagomarsino, NMFS; Jeff Phipps, WAPA; Jay Glase, USFWS; Rod Wittler, USBR; Paul Olmstead, SMUD; Frank Perniciero, BOR- Native American Affairs Coordinator. Steve Thompson, USFWS; Note: Manji and Mendenhall were observers for the Resources Agency, but did not vote. Bob Stackhouse, CVPWA; and Leigh McDougal, USFS.

There was a general discussion of large numbers of spring chinook in the river and an apparent high pre-spawn mortality of adult spring chinook, especially below Douglas City. *Ceratomyxa shasta* is suspected, but has not been verified. The numbers of dead fish are probably in the hundreds. It is unclear if there is higher mortality in general or that there is a large run that has higher total numbers of pre-spawn mortality, but not as a percentage of the overall population.

The meeting was called to order at 8:46 am. Six of the voting members were present to make a quorum.

1. Minutes of the 5/17/01 TMC Meeting- There was a change on page 2- for the CVPIA Restoration Fund, in 2001 it incorrectly said that \$350,000 will be used, with \$650,000 to be carried over for 2002 for a total of \$1 million. It should state that there is a total of \$1.5 million available this year, with \$350,000 being spent this year, with \$1.15 million available next year.

Motion to approve by Mary Ellen Mueller, Second by Ralph Modine, approved unanimously.

Steve Thompson briefly introduced himself as the acting area manager for USFWS. Steve Williams is the USFWS national director and Craig Manson has been nominated as DOI's Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

2. Status of Office location and hiring of staff- Donna Darr reported that they requested office space in Weaverville from GSA. Regarding the hiring of staff in general, the application period has closed for the executive director job position. After hiring of the executive director, Reclamation will work on 2 supervisory positions- construction and scientist supervisors, as well as the office support staff person. They have ordered vehicles and are working on communications and computers. There was a general discussion of phasing in staffing as funding and project approvals are forthcoming.

The TMC met in executive session regarding the hiring of the executive director: Hiring includes non federal and federal employees, personnel did a first screening of folks who met minimum qualifications that was received by TMC members and/or alternates. Personnel only looks to see if federal applicants meet the qualifications. For non federal folks, only the first three make it on the list. One of those 3 is a federal employee, so one additional application was distributed.

USBR wants the TMC to be involved. The best way is to use the TMC like a "promotion panel" to review applicants and rank 1-12 with 3 interview questions submitted by each participant. Mike Ryan needs to make the final decision. Troy wanted to be part of the interview panel.

TMC participants will complete their ranking by Friday -mid morning, along with questions, all to be sent to Donna Darr.

There were 4 KSA's (Knowledge, skills and abilities) as follows:

- 1) Ability to serve as a focal point for program execution, and to build trust and consensus among various governmental agencies, technical specialists and stakeholders.
- 2) Ability to efficiently lead a multi-disciplined team and team members in carrying out complex, integrated projects, and demonstrated persistence required to individually promulgate and implement solutions supporting program goals.
- 3) Skill in verbal communication, to include organizational and conflict resolution skills in advising, summarizing and resolving project issues.
- 4) Ability to develop, acquire, allocate, and manage human and financial resources to effectively accomplish multiple project/program goals within established thresholds.

Interviews will be on August 6 or 9.

3. Status of TAMWG FACA Charter- Mary Ellen Mueller distributed the charter for the Trinity Adaptive Management Working Group, which is working its way through the Dept. of Interior. It is expected to take a couple of months to get final approval.
4. Status of Supplemental EIS/Recirculated Draft EIR (SEIS/RDEIR)- Mike Ryan reported that as a result of the litigation and Judge Wanger's Preliminary Injunction, the flow schedule is critically dry this year. Attorneys for defendants and plaintiffs are working on a stipulated order.

The draft Statement of Work should go out to the contractors soon. There will be a scoping session in late summer on the supplemental EIS/RDEIR effort. Mike Ryan understands that only the flow schedule is affected, but the judge's order might be different. Tom Stokely indicated that if bridge or channel restoration projects were to proceed ahead of certification of the SEIS/RDEIR, Trinity County would likely need to prepare separate EIR's because the county has never certified the programmatic EIR, and CEQA compliance is necessary in order to obtain construction permits.

5. Report from the Ad Hoc Trinity River Watershed Working Group on FY 2002 Budget- Serge Birk distributed a report from the ad hoc group and explained that the group met to assist in development of the FY 2002 budget. There have been 3 meetings held so far. He went over the details of the report from the group, which included a draft 3-year Strategic Action Plan (SAP). He suggested that the TMC look at this list and meld it with the findings of the recent Adaptive Management workshop. There still needs to be determination of a final prioritization criteria. These are factors which should be considered when prioritizing project proposals. Restoration of the Trinity River basin is larger in scope than just the items in the ROD, including tributary restoration, etc. By looking at other funding sources, a cross cutting budget could be developed. Stokely indicated that an advisory committee he sits on to advise the Department of Fish and Game on how to spend millions in restoration funds is interested in what the TMC or other groups think are high priority projects for the state to fund. For instance, the priorities of the TMC for watersheds and tributaries could then be funded through the state.

Serge said this effort dovetailed well with the Adaptive Management workshop. Funding efforts should be focused on answering hypotheses in the TRFE, not just counting fish for the sake of counting fish, for instance. The list still needs to be prioritized and ranked.

Brandt Gutermuth explained that BLM manages much of the lands between Lewiston Dam and the North Fork where the channel restoration sites are located. There are numerous permits required and doing a prototype channel restoration site soon would be a good idea.

Jeff Phipps said this is a work in process. Pat Frost nothing is finalized. The next step would be to get fleshed out proposals and rank them based on a refined criteria.

Troy said any efforts like this should clearly follow the ROD priorities.

Ralph Modine asked who will make the final decisions in the future? The executive director of the TMC was the answer from Mike Ryan. He views the TMC as a board of directors.

6. Presentation of a “White Paper” from the Adaptive Environmental Assessment Management Program (AEMP) Workshop, June 28-30 Rod Wittler explained the workshop was to identify the hypotheses of the TRFE and how to test them. Participants were each day- 36, 30, and 18 persons, respectively. The assumption is that the TMC is the decision making body for the ROD. Recommendations from the Adaptive Environmental Assessment and Management Team (AEAMT) can include testing of competing hypotheses. Recommendations will come to the TMC from other groups. The idea is that Requests for Proposals (RFP’s) to perform the work would come from the Technical Modeling and Analysis Group (TMAG) and the TAMWG.

A key question asked was how much authority will the TMC give to the TAMWG and other groups such as the TMAG?

The central hypothesis- “A combination of mechanical alterations and vegetation removal in addition to managed high flow release in the spring will promote geofluvial processes leading to...?”

The lack of high flow volumes is the single largest limiting factor for AEMP. Rod said that peak flows may be changed to a different time of the year. The “white paper” will look at specific project tasks and ask for funding. The white paper will contain recommendations for next year.

Lunch from 12 to 12:55

- 6A. Public Comments- Jeff Phipps asked that the TMC look at AEMP in a different way. AEMP is not science. The focus is restoration, and what actions need to be done on the ground, and what do we need to do to be smarter next time. Testing hypotheses is fine, but the focus is to use science to be smarter.
7. FY 2002 Budget Priorities/Processes- Troy Fletcher wants to fill out as many of the “circles” on the management structure as possible. Tom Stokely suggested that all future meetings of any group be open to the public. For instance, neither NMFS nor Trinity Co. were invited to attend the AMP workshop.

BOR has asked for \$7 million, and FWS \$2 million for this program for next year.

Rod Wittler proposed getting the AEMP group and the ad hoc group to get together to finalize a budget for FY 2002.

Mike Ryan said he thinks that the flows next year are going to be 368,600 af as per Judge Wanger’s court order because the SEIR/R won’t likely be done by then.

Troy wants clear direction on where to go with budget and activities for next year.

To develop the budget, we need:

1. To know environmental documentation needs and costs- SEIS/RDEIR; EIR/EA for Bridges, EIR/EA for one bank feather; EIR/EA for other bank feathers; monitoring;
2. Harvest Management Activities
3. Ranking of watershed projects
4. Permitting issues/timing
5. Opening up a new office.

Mendenhall suggested that the State, as a contractor, hold some budget workshops and develop a budget.

Serge suggested development of an RFP to test specific hypotheses and get proposals from consultants. Rod said matching hypotheses with proposals through the ad hoc group would be relatively easy.

Mike Ryan said he wants some of the money to go to on the ground restoration efforts.

There was a discussion of last year's budget and the lessons to be learned.

Rod noted that a beneficial side of the court order is advance knowledge of next year's flows.

There was a general discussion of state funding available in FY 2002 and how it fits in with the Trinity program and the state's available funding.

Joseph Jarnaghan asked if CVPIA Restoration Funds will be used and carried over? Mike Ryan responded that if there are activities not covered by existing funds, the CVPIA RF might fund it, but Reclamation and USFWS would like to fund specific projects.

There was a motion by Troy Fletcher that the TMC authorize a budget subcommittee comprised of any TMC member who so desires. This subcommittee is to 1) work with consultants to identify and recognizing priorities 2) to frame the different hypotheses into RFP's and 3) will bring the work product back to the TMC with recommended criteria for evaluation of projects.

Discussion- Leigh McDougal said several important work items don't necessarily fit into the AEMP process. Answer- the budget subcommittee would take that into account.

Troy said he is thinking that over the next month, this should be fleshed out better with a more specific proposal to the TMC in about a month.

Motion seconded by Mary Ellen Mueller

Passed unanimously.

Troy will chair the subcommittee.

Some of the anticipated work items are:
SEIS/RDEIR

Bridges
Mainstem Restoration Projects
Administration
Gravel Placement
Baseline Monitoring
Processing Gravel @ Tributary Deltas

Mike Ryan asked that the groups double check with the Biological Opinions to ensure there is compliance.

The Next TMC meeting, primarily to deal with the FY 2002 budget is Monday August 27, 8:30 - 4 pm in Sacramento.