



Trinity River Restoration Program

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MEMORANDUM

To: TMC

From: Mike Dixon, Executive Director
Trinity River Restoration Program

Subject: Director's Report

Date: December 6, 2021

Major TRRP activities between September and December 2021 include:

Construction was completed at Chapman Ranch Phase B and revegetation will continue into the winter. An Environmental Assessment on the Winter Flow Variability EA was released for public comment.

Organizational Updates

- A civil engineering technician position remains vacant and should be advertised soon.
- The project coordination specialist position remains vacant.
- Kathy Martens, TRRP Secretary, has moved on from her position.
- Trinity County has recently hired a new Environmental Compliance Specialist, Patrick Flynn, who will work ¾ time on TRRP issues, including representing the county on technical workgroups. Patrick may work out of the TRRP Office.
- The TRRP Office continues to operate in a 25% capacity maximum telework posture. Per recent direction from the Department of Interior, there may be greater flexibility on telework arrangements, but following supervisory approval of new telework agreements, supervisors will be returning to work by February 28, 2022. The remainder of staff will return to work by March 28, 2022.
- The TRRP's office space in Weaverville is under a three-year (one year firm) lease extension. Reclamation staff are working with GSA on a new lease for a similar or slightly smaller workspace requirement. Whether or not the office remains in the current location will be learned in the next couple years.

Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) Budget Update Adjustments since September TMC Meeting:

Reclamation continues to operate under a continuing resolution, but to date, this has not impacted routine expenditures. New interagency agreements are in progress for recently expired agreements, or those that will expire in the next two quarters of FY22. Negotiations on initial Annual Funding Agreements for the Hoopa Valley and Yurok Tribes are nearly complete and the agreements should be funded this winter. There is a possibility that the Oregon Gulch Channel Rehabilitation Project could receive some additional funding this year through the recently passed infrastructure bill.

Watershed Restoration Grant

A kickoff meeting was held with staff from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) on 30 November 2021. We are working to develop the initial subgrant solicitation which tentatively should be released for proposals by early spring of 2022. NFWF will be providing an overview of their staff and approach to grant management as part of the December 2021 TMC meeting.

Implementation Update (current as of 11/30/21)

Chapman B: As previously stated during the November TMC call, Brandt Gutermuth coordinated with NMFS in October to place three temporary crossings in the R-11 side channel to allow the HVT revegetation crew to access planting sites on river left. Two of those crossings were trench plates specifically placed for short-term planting access and have already been removed. The third crossing consists of dual culverts designed to overtop; this was modeled by McBain Associates at varying flows prior to placement. This crossing will remain and will receive periodic inspections for the next 3 years to facilitate irrigation access.

The HVT reveg crew is still onsite, currently focused on river right. River left has been completed except some bare root plants that are awaiting delivery. They expect to be onsite into January. We should recognize Shaun Green (HVT – Riparian Ecologist) for his diligence and hard work at the site. He has been working alongside the crew for several months now and has shown remarkable commitment to the effort and to his crew.

Sky Ranch Channel Rehabilitation Site: During our annual coordination meeting with BLM (Nov 17), we were informed that the Congressionally mandated land transfer is continuing to experience delays, largely due to realty delays by the USFS. The already delayed target date for this transfer (Feb 2022) now seems unlikely. This has thrown a wrench in our NEPA planning efforts and in our implementation sequencing of channel rehab sites. This seems to need agency leadership attention, or it will continue to languish.

Oregon Gulch Channel Rehabilitation Site: We met with the Yurok design team and construction staff the week of November 15. A CLOMR application is expected to be ready for County signature (Planning Dept) in early December. FRGP funding announcement is expected in December. A Statement of Work for phase 1 truck and haul activities is in draft but can easily be expanded should additional funding (FRGP or infrastructure bill) come to fruition. The SOW will be provided to Yurok and Hoopa soon to begin cost estimation and negotiation between the Tribes' submission and the Independent Government Cost Estimate (IGCE) we complete in-house. We are unable to fund construction through AFAs to the Tribes until a federal budget or additional continuing resolution is passed but have a framework in place to move quickly when funds become available this FY. Oregon Gulch will be our next channel rehab project, but the project duration will be subject to funding availability.

Evans Bar Channel Rehabilitation Site: Aaron Martin, Oliver Rogers, and Chad Abel met with the Evans Bar neighbors on Saturday, October 9 at the proposed rehab site. There are 8 parcels owned by a group of families that are not in the ESL but whose access would likely be impacted during construction. We shared the conceptual designs developed by Yurok-State design team. The neighbors are supportive of efforts to improve riparian and in-channel habitats but are concerned about how the project will impact access during and after construction. There was follow up from a de facto spokesperson for their group on Nov 29, and they plan to provide initial feedback through a group correspondence letter to the Program soon.

Sawmill Gravel Processing Site: The Design WG provided input on the 30% design for the close-out plan of the gravel processing site on November 10. The 30% design includes two alternatives: Alt F and Alt M. Both address the side channel breach but differ in the feature to be constructed as the gravel processing area is depleted over the coming years.

Upper Conner Creek Channel Rehabilitation Site: We expect a 30% design report from HVT design team soon. A couple landowner permissions are still in play, but there's enough landowner support to continue to advance design development.

Winter Flow Environmental Assessment (EA): The EA planning & drafting team met 35 times between Jan 21 and Nov 4. Milestones include an update memo & presentation to CVO (March); a scoping document and public notice (May); the winter flow white paper (July); the public draft EA (Sept); the EA public meeting on October 5; presentations to CA Advisory Committee on Salmon and Steelhead (Oct 21), Trout Unlimited (Oct 5), and Salmon Restoration Federation (Sept 24); completion of the final EA (Nov 22); and the CVO-TRRP procedure manual (Nov 26). Analyses include bedload yield, coarse bedload analysis, temperature, riparian recruitment, habitat availability (Capacity), redd scour, food availability (bed disturbance), juvenile salmonid growth, hydroelectric generation, and recreational impacts. Three Flow WG meetings were scheduled in November, including one meeting held jointly with IDT, to develop winter flow components (i.e., hydrographs) for WY22.

The EA planning and drafting team included Seth Naman, Ken Lindke, Justin Alvarez, Kyle de Juilio, Brandt Gutermuth, and Ironwood Consulting. We also leaned on the technical expertise of Todd Buxton and many in the Yurok fisheries program (Chris Laskodi, Emily Cooper, Dave Gaeuman). Eric Peterson helped tremendously with outreach (mostly through updates on the TRRP website) and with behind-the-scenes orchestration of the virtual public meeting; as did Mike Dixon for his efforts within Reclamation and DOI to maintain agency support and for casting a wide net with NGOs and governmental organizations during public comment.

We are confident this flow management action will improve the outcomes of Trinity River salmon and steelhead. A presentation on the EA and on the IDT's recommendation regarding winter flow will be occur at the December TMC meeting.

Public Outreach Update

Publications and Education Materials:

Trinity County Resource Conservation District (RCD) produced "Fish of the Trinity River" bookmarks, including Pacific lamprey, Chinook, steelhead, green sturgeon, and Coho salmon. These will be distributed during educational events and other outreach opportunities.

Eric Peterson has published the biographies received from our partners on the TRRP website. Thanks to all who have contributed. Please help us keep this fresh by notifying Eric and Chad when staffing changes. We can add new individuals or make edits to an existing biography at any time.

Public Events and Environmental Education:

RCD made the decision to cancel Salmon Festival in October due to COVID concerns. They are currently completing educational panels (i.e., an informational kiosk) for display at the hatchery overlook at Lewiston Dam.

The EA public meeting occurred October 5. Outreach during the comment period for the EA included presentations to Trout Unlimited, California Advisory Committee for Salmon and Steelhead, and the Salmon Restoration Federation.

James, Chris Laskodi, and RCD have scheduled 5 brownbag sessions for the Science Symposium scheduled through the end of the calendar year (Nov 10, Nov 18, Dec 2, Dec 7, and Dec 16).

Landowner and Stakeholder Meetings:

A Winter flow EA public meeting was held on October 5. Chad Abel and Oliver Rogers followed up with a stakeholder (riverfront landowner) after the EA meeting to discuss his winter flow concerns, including a visit to his property and some mapping assistance.

There was a meeting with riverfront property owners at Evans Bar channel rehab site on October 9.

Upcoming

In collaboration with RCD, we are planning a "Science on Tap" event at Trinity County Brewing Company in Weaverville the fourth Wednesday of every month beginning in January. The intent of this venue is to provide a forum for local scientists and resource professionals to share their findings with the general public in a casual setting. Presentations will run about 30-40 minutes followed by 20 minutes of Q&A. We hope the event covers including but not limited to river science. Chad Abel is actively recruiting presenters – please reach out with your presentation ideas!

Science Update

In Final Edits

The draft synthesis report, "Synthesizing 87 years of scientific inquiry into Trinity River water temperatures", (J. Eli Asarian, Kyle De Juilio, David Gaeuman, and Seth Naman) remains in peer review.

The draft synthesis report, "Trinity River Juvenile Salmonid Habitat Synthesis: Physical Habitat Capacity at the Restoration Site and Reach Scale- Draft" (Cooper, Gaeuman, De Juilio, Martin, Boyce, Goodman, Som, and Alvarez) remains in peer review.

The draft technical memorandum, "Trinity Systemwide Vegetation Mapping Report" (Hoopa Valley Tribe and McBain Associates) is in final edits.

The draft report, "Assessing temperature regimes and juvenile Chinook Salmon growth in Trinity River off channel and mainstem habitats" (Emily J. Cooper, Kenneth Lindke, Taylor Daley, Kyle DeJulio, Kyle Hopkins) remains in peer review.

Final Publications and Reports

None since September meeting

Design Reports

None since September meeting

Environmental Reports and Findings

The Winter Flow Variability Environmental Assessment was released for public comment in September. The EA was revised based upon comments received. An updated draft EA and draft Finding of No Significant Impact are on hold pending further guidance from the Secretary of Interior’s office.

Post-Implementation Reports

None since September meeting

Program Science Metrics Objectives and Targets

New timeline determined by IDT on 30 November 2021. Refer to James Lee’s presentation to TMC on 08 December 2021 for details

Final Data Packages

None since September meeting

**Appendix I: Technical Workgroup Briefings
September 2021**

Updates have been prepared for the Trinity Management Council by the Trinity River Restoration Program Technical Workgroup (WG) Coordinators.

Workgroup: Fish **Coordinator:** Bill Pinnix

The Fish Work Group did not meet this quarter, but did meet the day before the September quarterly meeting. Targets need to be developed for two remaining objectives before the effort can be considered complete, the pre-spawn mortality target and the juvenile outmigration temperature target. Updates from subgroups working on these targets were provided. Bill Pinnix provided a preview of the juvenile synthesis report. Much of the rest of the meeting was dedicated to presentations of proposed projects for FY2022 science funding, and projects were ranked by each agency following the meeting. The combined ranking was then provided to IDT. Bill Pinnix was elected as the next Fish Work Group coordinator.

Workgroup: Design **Coordinator:** Oliver Rogers

Comments on the Sawmill 30% Design were solicited and received in October. The Design Team met on November 10th to receive updates from the Hoopa Design Team, Federal Design Team, and Yurok/State Design team. Topics covered were the proposed Sawmill Site Design, proposed Upper Conner Site Design, an update on Restoration Action Review and selection of a Design Team Coordinator for FY 2022.

Project Updates

- Sawmill Site Design: Discussion and response to comments of the Sawmill Design by Yurok/State Design Team, existing conditions, site evolution since construction of 2009 Rehabilitation Project, design features and objectives, gravel processing and spoils logistics. Progressing from the 30% design level and providing additional uncertainty, expected evolution, and habitat analysis to support a 60% design.
- Upper Conner Creek Site Design: Project update by Hoopa Design Team, progressing to a 30% design report following modeling of Alternatives with new engineer (Katrina Harrison) providing oversight. The project has been delayed due to complications with private landowner outreach.
- Sky Ranch Channel Rehabilitation Site: Project update by Federal Design Team, 60% Design presentation to the BLM scheduled, the project has been delayed due to complications with land transfer, postponing development of an EA for the project.
- Oregon Gulch Channel Rehabilitation Site: Submittal of the CLOMR application to FEMA scheduled mid-December 2021. Initial implementation of the Oregon Gulch project could potentially occur as early as Winter of 2021.
- Evans Bar Channel Rehabilitation Site: Private landowner outreach has occurred in conjunction with Conceptual Design development. Early planning and organization of landowner’s concerns seems promising in development of a successful project proposal with landowner buy-in.

Project Updates

- Chapman Ranch Phase B Channel Rehabilitation Project: Civil construction completed mid-October and Revegetation is nearing completion. A Post-Implementation Report developed by the HVT will follow.

Design Team Meeting Calendar

- Wednesday, January 12, 2022 @ 9:00 a.m - 1:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, April 6, 2022 @ 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, July 13, 2022 @ 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, October 5, 2022 @ 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Workgroup: Flow **Coordinator:** Seth Naman

The Flow Work Group (FWG) met on three different occasions in the fall of 2021 (10/19, 11/9, 11/19) to develop winter flow recommendations for water year (WY) 2022 based on the guidelines outlined in TRRP’s Winter Flow Environmental Assessment (EA). The FWG reviewed pre-Lewiston Dam hydrographs from the Trinity River at Lewiston gage, and developed recommendations for the six different flow components based on the natural shapes and ecological functions present in the historical record, current Trinity River channel form and floodplain elevations, results from TRRP’s invertebrate studies, as well as modeling and information provided in the EA. The FWG developed a recommendation to the IDT and met with the IDT 11/30 to discuss the recommendations.

Workgroup: Watershed **Coordinator:** Chad Abel

Watershed Workgroup did not meet in the last quarter.

Workgroup: Physical **Coordinator:** Conor Shea

The Physical Workgroup met on August 30, 2021 via teleconference to rank proposals for FY2022 Flex Science Funding. Six proposals were considered by the Physical Workgroup. The Physical Workgroup recommended three proposals for consideration by the Interdisciplinary Team. The three selected proposals in order of rank are:

Rank	Title
1	Post Monument Fire Turbidity Monitoring, Mainstem Trinity River
2	Development of a bed surface grain size
3	Mainstem Trinity River Bar Area Mapping

The workgroup also discussed the Channel rehabilitation Review and the River Corridor Management Plan. The Workgroup recommended restarting the river corridor delineation project.

The next Physical Workgroup meeting is scheduled for December 14.

Workgroup: Riparian and Aquatic Ecology **Coordinator:** Chris Laskodi

The Riparian and Aquatic Ecology Workgroup did not meet in the last quarter

Workgroup: Interdisciplinary Team **Coordinator:** James Lee

The Interdisciplinary Team met three times last quarter: 26 October, 08 November, and 30 November. The first two meetings were focused on determining which science projects to recommend for funding for FY 22. The last meeting was held jointly with the Flow Workgroup and was focused on the variable winter flow proposal for WY 22. The IDT requested full proposals to be developed from the following pre-proposals:

- 6. NREI vs Physical Habitat Assessment
- 5. Proposed improvements to RBM10
- 4. Effects of Scour and Inundation on Aquatic Communities
- 7. 2-D Temperature Model
- 2. Bed-surface Grain Size Map

Full proposals will be submitted for SAB review on 14 January, budgets will be refined after SAB review, and a prioritized list of projects will be recommended to TMC for funding at the March quarterly meeting.

At the 30 November meeting, the IDT decided to recommend to TMC to adopt the Flow Workgroup’s proposal to implement variable winter flows during WY 22.

Appendix II: Synthesis Reports Tracking and Estimated Completion Dates

Synthesis Reports													
Project No.	Brief Title	Involved Entities	Proposed Due	FY20 q1	FY20 q2	FY20 q3	FY20 q4	FY21 q1	FY21 q2	FY21 q3	FY21 q4	FY22 q1	Notes
TRRP-2018-002	Tributary Delta	<i>Program Office (POC: Todd Buxton, TRRP)</i>	March 2019	*									incorporating WY19 and 20
TRRP-2018-003	Fish Habitat	<i>HVT, USFWS, YT, USBR TSC (POC: Damon Goodman, USFWS)</i>	2 nd Q 2019										FINAL POSTED!
TRRP-2018-007	Juvenile Chinook Production	<i>USFWS, YT, HVT (POC: Bill Pinnix, USFWS)</i>	July 2017								PR		YT Portion Posted! USFWS and HVT portion submitted to TRRP for peer review Aug 21
TRRP-2018-009	Cohort Reconstruction	<i>HVT, USFWS, CDFW (POC: Ken Lindke, CDFW)</i>	2 nd Q 2019				*						
TRRP-2018-011	Adult Salmon Spawning	<i>USFWS, HVT, YT, CDFW (POC: Steve Gough, USFWS)</i>	2 nd Q 2019										"PR draft to be ready in April"
TRRP-2018-018	Bed Mobility and Scour	<i>HVT, USFWS (POC: Geoff Hales & Scott McBain, McBain Associates)</i>	2 nd Q 2018										FINAL POSTED!
TRRP-2018-019	Cottonwood Seed Dispersal	<i>HVT (POC: John Bair, McBain Associates)</i>	3 rd Q 2018										FINAL POSTED!
TRRP-2018-021	Riparian Encroachment	<i>HVT (POC: John Bair, McBain Associates)</i>	4 th Q 2018										FINAL POSTED!
TRRP-2018-022	Sediment Storage	<i>HVT, USFWS (POC: Geoff Hales & Scott McBain, McBain Associates)</i>	4 th Q 2018										"submitted to Program March"
TRRP-2018-025	Channel Complexity	<i>HVT, USFWS (POC: Smokey Pittman & Scott McBain, McBain Associates)</i>	August 2019										Delayed- uncertain timeline
TRRP-2018-027	Fine Sediment	<i>Program Office, NMFS, HVT (POC: Todd Buxton, TRRP)</i>	July 2020										FINAL POSTED!
TRRP-2018-032	Water Temperature	<i>YT, USFWS, HVT, USBR, NMFS (POC: Eli Asarian, Riverbend Sciences)</i>	May 2019		*						PR		Draft submitted to TRRP for peer review July 21
TRRP-2018-033	Large Wood Management	<i>NMFS, YT, HVT (POC: Scott McBain)</i>	April 2018										Internal review
NA	Flow Synthesis	<i>HVT et al. (POC: Justin Alvarez)</i>	Mid FY 22										

* = due date for TRRP Peer Review process according to status assessment in December 2018. Green= on time, blue= complete, orange=delayed.

TRRP staff have created a web page for linking synthesis reports as they are completed. It incorporates additional reports that have had a synthesis intent but were not specifically funded by the FY2018 effort. The page is live at <https://www.trrp.net/restoration/adaptive-management/synthesis-reports/>.