



Trinity River Restoration Program

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NC-150

MEMORANDUM

To: TMC

From: Mike Dixon, Executive Director
Trinity River Restoration Program

Subject: Director's Report

Date: June 3, 2022

Major TRRP activities between March and June 2022 include:

The spring restoration release was carried out successfully. A contract was awarded for a third-party review of our implementation activities. Watershed restoration grant proposals were reviewed and project funding will be awarded soon.

Organizational Updates

- Veronica Yates has started as the new riparian ecologist. She is currently working out of Hoopa and will report to the TRRP as her duty station starting in July.
- Both the primary and the alternate for the civil engineering technician vacancy declined offers, citing wildfire danger and cost of living relative to Rest of US locality pay. We will readvertise the position.
- We were unsuccessful in recruiting for our vacant secretary position and it was readvertised, closing June 7. We are awaiting the certificate of eligibles.
- The outreach specialist position remains farther down in NCAO's priority list for recruitment.

Budget Updates/Adjustments:

New interagency agreements have been completed for agreements that expire in FY22. In accordance with the June 2021 budget motion from TMC, an additional \$240k was added to Oregon Gulch implementation based upon salary savings from program office vacancies. There are ongoing challenges with awarding AFA funding to the Yurok and Hoopa Valley Tribe.

A proposal for the initial FY23 TRRP budget, based upon the funding proposed in the President's budget, will be discussed at the June TMC meeting.

Watershed Restoration Grant

A request for pre-proposals for our watershed grant through the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation closed in April. A pre-proposal review meeting was held on April 25; 4 of the 5

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applicants were invited to submit full proposals. A review of the full proposals was conducted on June 13. Funds for the selected projects should be awarded later this summer.

Phase II Implementation Review Contract

A joint Reclamation/USFWS panel conducted a review of submittals for the contract for a third-party review of our implementation activities. The contract (\$245,946.68) was awarded to a team led by Inter-Fluve, who has a strong reputation for restoration design and monitoring. They prepared a compelling quote which includes project management by ecologist Caitlyn Alcott, Jessica Hall of Wildling Studios as their public meeting facilitator, and an expert panel consisting of Dr. Matt Kondolf (U.C. Berkeley, fluvial geomorphology), Greg Koonce (Inter Fluve, fisheries ecology), Ben Snyder (WRSA, water resources engineering), Mike Burke (Inter Fluve, water resources engineering), and Emily Alcott (Inter Fluve, ecology). There will be site visits and a kick-off meeting with the IDT the week of June 27. Interviews with program experts are planned for next month, and a public stakeholder meeting is being planned for August. The final report is scheduled to be delivered in May of 2023, though we may extend the contract by three months due to sequencing challenges that have been identified.

Implementation Update

Sky Ranch Channel Rehabilitation Site: Oliver Rogers is investigating access options to the project from river left through a private landowner's property. They hold the only private parcel in the ESL and have wavered in supporting the project but have a number of features on their property that will need to be removed from the design if they ultimately decide not to participate. Oliver is investigating ways to appease their access concerns and get them onboard.

Oregon Gulch Channel Rehabilitation Site: We hope by the time of the TMC meeting, the issue surrounding the award of AFA funding for the tribally-led construction efforts will be resolved as that is the last issue remaining to project implementation.

Evans Bar Channel Rehabilitation Site: We are on solid footing with the neighborhood at Evans Bar and know a project is possible here. The State-Yurok design team recently approached Implementation Branch concerning the potential expansion of the ESL as areas to place excess material (i.e., spoils) is limited. This is a common issue for most rehab sites as floodplain lowering can generate a lot of sediment, but federal minerals (sediment) cannot leave federal lands. The best option is to find areas outside the 100 year that can contoured with the surrounding uplands, when possible.

Sawmill Gravel Processing Site: In order to process rock below the 100-year flood, we need to develop a close-out design for the site to be submitted to FEMA. The 30% close-out design is complete. With new augmentation sites likely being permitted over the next year, additional processing at Sawmill will foster the additional lowering (material removal) needed at the site to get to a closeout design.

Upper Conner Creek Channel Rehabilitation Site: We received the 30% design from the Hoopa Valley Tribe design team. It is under review and will be discussed at the next Design Workgroup meeting.

EA Development

New gravel augmentation sites above Indian Creek - Public scoping for this EA occurred March 17 – April 17. See below under “Landowner and Stakeholder Meetings” for more information on current status.

Watershed Programmatic EA: On May 5, Implementation Branch organized a kickoff meeting to begin development of a programmatic EA that will facilitate watershed restoration projects in the Trinity watershed, similar to the EA that Six Rivers National Forest completed in 2018. Co-lead federal land management agencies include BLM and FS. The tentative date to begin public scoping of the EA is July 8, 2022. We’d like to thank Keli McElroy and a number of Forest Service staff (Eric Wisemann, Kent Bloomer, Joe Rodarme, Galen Anderson, Christine Mai, Amanda Brinkman-Parker, and Robin Chin) and Alden Neal and Chad Endicott of BLM for attending this half day meeting. Ironwood Consultants was also on hand, as well Josh Smith from the Watershed Center in Hayfork.

Public Outreach Update

Publications and Education Materials:

We have published regular posts to TRRP’s Facebook page. Check us out!

We provided our annual summary to RCD for publication in the spring quarterly of the Conservation Almanac. As of today, RCD has yet to post the newsletter but likely will soon.

Public Events and Environmental Education:

Day at the Wetlands occurred on June 19 at Bucktail this year. Third and fourth graders from Weaverville and Lewiston attended the event. Instructors from BLM, TRRP, Yurok Tribe, the Watershed Center, and RCD led students through a number of educational stations to learn about bird migration and habitat loss, juvenile fish habitat and predator avoidance, salmon dissection, macroinvertebrate collection and ID, wetland observations, and pollinator habitat structures.

RCD coordinated an invasive plant pull at Bucktail on March 19, and a number of TRRP staff participated.

RCD and TRRP hosted the annual River Day event on June 6. This year, the event included Coffee Creek and Trinity Center elementaries and the “school” was at Coffee Creek. There were two stations, streamside ecology/species adaptation and ecosystem explorations (nature observation).

Science on Tap, at Trinity County Brewing Company, continues to be a popular event in Weaverville. The event occurs the fourth Wednesday of every month at 6pm and includes a one hour presentation and Q&A with the guest speaker. Presentations include:

- March 23: Exploring Modern Trinity Alps Glaciers: history, current status, and ecological connections from the most threatened glacier ice in California. Presented by: Justin Garwood, Michael van Hattem, and Ken Lindke
- April 27: Restoration on Indian Valley Creek. Presented by Josh Smith.
- May 25: From Snowpack to Streams. Presented by Josh Smith and Cindy Buxton.
- UPCOMING June 22: Forest Management and Why It Matters: lessons learned from recent droughts and wildfires. Presented by Eric Knapp, PhD

Landowner and Stakeholder Meetings:

During the week of May 16, Brandt Gutermuth organized Ironwood Consultants and BLM/contract archaeologists to visit most areas being considered as new gravel augmentation areas above Indian Creek as part of the EA development. Site visits included visits with landowners at a few parcels. Site descriptions are now being written, and archaeological surveys are being scheduled.

Upcoming

Trinity River Cleanup will occur on Saturday, June 25. The event will be in Douglas City with food and libations to follow.

TRRP has three dates in July for river trips with Weaverville Summer Camp. Those are Canyon Creek on July 7, East Weaver on July 13, and North Fork Trinity on July 18.

The Public Float will occur this year on Saturday, July 30. The tentative plan is to float the Lewiston to Steelbridge area.

Science Update

In Review or Final Edits

The draft synthesis report, “Synthesizing 87 years of scientific inquiry into Trinity River water temperatures”, (J. Eli Asarian, Kyle De Julio, David Gaeuman, and Seth Naman) is in final edits.

The draft synthesis report, “Trinity River Juvenile Salmonid Habitat Synthesis: Physical Habitat Capacity at the Restoration Site and Reach Scale- Draft” (Cooper, Gaeuman, De Julio, Martin, Boyce, Goodman, Som, and Alvarez) is in final edits, and the authors expect a final draft to be completed in August 2022.

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 De Julio, Kyle Hopkins) is in final edits.

The draft report, “Tracking coarse sediment augmentations with RFID tracers in the Trinity River, CA” (Gaeuman and De Julio) was received by TRRP and submitted to peer review.

The draft report, “Stream bed disturbance and risk of salmonid redd scour in the Trinity River, CA” (Gaeuman, De Julio, and Buxton) was received by TRRP and submitted to peer review.

The draft synthesis report, “Coarse Sediment Storage Synthesis on the Trinity River: Recommendations and Correlations to Juvenile Chinook Salmon Rearing Habitat” (McBain Associates and Hoopa Valley Tribe) is in peer review.

The draft synthesis report, “Long-Term Analyses of Estimates of Abundance of Juvenile Chinook Salmon on the Trinity River, 1989-2018”(USFWS), which is part of the juvenile chinook production pair of reports, is in final edits.

Final Publications and Reports

The report, “A First Year of Periphyton Monitoring in the Trinity River, California” (E. Peterson) was finalized and posted to the TRRP document and data library (<https://www.trrp.net/library/document?id=2549>).

Design Reports- · Upper Conner Creek Site Design: The Hoopa Design Team has completed the 30% Design Drawings and Report, alternatives include mainstem channel realignment, lowering of adjacent floodplains and side channel construction to reactivate geomorphic processes and increase the function and health of the river.

Dutch Creek Final Design Report – posted to dataport on 5/27/22

Environmental Reports and Findings- N/A

Post-Implementation Reports- N/A

Program Science Metrics Objectives and Targets- The Physical workgroup updated several objectives and targets recently. The Fish workgroup completed adult and juvenile water temperature targets. The Objectives and Targets reports is now ready for TMC consideration.

Final Data Packages- N/A

Appendix I: Technical Workgroup Briefings March 2022

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 workgroup met May 3rd to discuss the objectives and targets exercise. The workgroup made a formal recommendation to the IDT to remove the Weitchpec water temperature target. A sub-workgroup was formed to develop water temperature targets at Lewiston for adult salmon during the holding, spawning, and incubation periods; this sub-workgroup developed a memo to the IDT to change the current adult temperature targets to the new targets the sub-workgroup developed.

Workgroup: Design

Coordinator: Oliver Rogers

Major Design Team activities between March and May 2022 include:

The Design Team met on April 6th to receive updates from the Hoopa Design Team, Federal Design Team, and Yurok/State Design team. Topics covered included a status update of the TMC Executive Director’s Report June 3, 2022

Upper Conner Creek Rehabilitation Site design, cost considerations and timeline for implementation of the Oregon Gulch Rehabilitation project, a progress update on the Sky Ranch Site Design, and updates on the Sawmill Gravel Augmentation Site and Evans Bar Channel Rehabilitation projects. The Design Team Workgroup reviewed revisions to the Design Process and schedule (Appendix F of Channel Rehabilitation Design Guidelines for the Mainstem Trinity River).

Proposed Project Updates

- Oregon Gulch Channel Rehabilitation Site: Final cost considerations for Oregon Gulch FY22 funding should be complete by end of May. Implementation is anticipated to involve initial excavation outside of regulatory floodway with pending CLOMR review/approval, forward positioning of materials (gravel processing and large wood), and transport of mining overburden.
- Sawmill Site Design: Past and ongoing gravel processing activities at the Sawmill site necessitate a closeout design, currently at 30%. Alternatives include floodplain lowering and a constructed meander in the existing processing area. Designers are determining suitable locations for stockpiling processed material and identifying additional spoiling areas for containing current excavation estimates. Additional uncertainty analysis, expected evolution, and habitat enhancement opportunities will support Yurok/State Design Team development of a 60% design.
- Upper Conner Creek Site Design: The Hoopa Design Team has completed the 30% Design Drawings and Report, alternatives include mainstem channel realignment, lowering of adjacent floodplains and side channel construction to reactivate geomorphic processes and increase the function and health of the river.
- Sky Ranch Channel Rehabilitation Site: TRRP staff met with representatives from USFS and on multiple occasions with BLM to discuss the land transfer and implications to the project Design, currently at 60%. Public access, rock processing and large wood sourcing have been explored further to ensure a comprehensive and implementable final design, but the project continues to be delayed due to complications with the land transfer further postponing development of a NEPA document for the project.
- Evans Bar Channel Rehabilitation Site: Yurok/State Design Team continues work on the Existing Conditions Report for the project. Five early concepts were developed to inform private landowners and garner their support and both TRRP and the Evans Bar Neighborhood are optimistic that we can work together to “restore the ecological values of the anadromous fisheries and biological systems” of the Trinity River.

Project Updates

- Chapman Ranch Phase B Channel Rehabilitation Project: The Post-Implementation Report developed by the HVT is expected to be completed by end of May. Irrigation and post-vegetation maintenance of the site has commenced for the 2022 season.

Design Team Meeting Calendar

TMC Executive Director’s Report June 3, 2022

- 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 Workgroup did not meet last quarter

Workgroup: Watershed

Coordinator: Chad Abel

The Watershed workgroup did not meet last quarter. The next meeting will be held near the end of July.

Workgroup: Physical

Coordinator: Todd Buxton

The Physical Workgroup did not meet last quarter

Workgroup: Riparian and Aquatic Ecology

Coordinator: Chris Laskodi

The Riparian and Aquatic Ecology Workgroup did not meet last quarter

Workgroup: Interdisciplinary Team

Coordinator: James Lee

The Interdisciplinary Team met twice last quarter- 13 April and 25 May. Meeting topics included the Objectives and Targets report and FY 2023 Science Planning. The Objectives and Targets report is ready for TMC review and will be presented at the June 2022 TMC meeting. FY 2023 Science Planning discussions focused (and continue to focus), on how to best allocate 2023 flex funding. The IDT is comfortable with using the science priorities that have been identified through the refinements project to solicit research proposals, and a possible pathway to reach a consensus recommendation to TMC will be presented at the June 2023 TMC meeting.

Appendix II: Synthesis Reports Tracking and Estimated Completion Dates

Synthesis Reports				
Project No.	Brief Title	Involved Entities	Proposed Due*	Status
TRRP-2018-002	Tributary Delta	<i>Program Office (POC: Todd Buxton, TRRP)</i>	March 2019	Submitted as a journal article; in-review as of May 2022
TRRP-2018-003	Fish Habitat	<i>HVT, USFWS, YT, USBR TSC (POC: Damon Goodman, USFWS)</i>	2 nd Q 2019	USFWS portion Posted; YT portion in final edits
TRRP-2018-007	Juvenile Chinook Production	<i>USFWS, YT, HVT (POC: Bill Pinnix, USFWS)</i>	July 2017	YT Portion Posted USFWS portion in final edits
TRRP-2018-009	Cohort Reconstruction	<i>HVT, USFWS, CDFW (POC: Ken Lindke, CDFW)</i>	2 nd Q 2019	In progress
TRRP-2018-011	Adult Salmon Spawning	<i>USFWS, HVT, YT, CDFW (POC: Steve Gough, USFWS)</i>	2 nd Q 2019	In final edits
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	In peer review as of May 2022
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	In final edits
TRRP-2018-033	Large Wood Management	<i>NMFS, YT, HVT (POC: Scott McBain)</i>	April 2018	Recently reorganized team, in progress, external review draft expected late CY 2022
NA	Flow Synthesis	<i>HVT et al. (POC: Justin Alvarez)</i>	Mid FY 22	In Progress

* = due date for TRRP Peer Review process according to status assessment in December 2018. 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/>.ed frog production will be modeled this year using FYFAM