



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: December 7, 2022

Major TRRP activities between September and December 2022 include:

Excavation and hauling continue at the Oregon Gulch Channel Rehabilitation Site. Scoping is underway on an initiative to provide programmatic NEPA compliance for watershed restoration projects, and draft proposal to address sediment deficits in areas of the upper river currently not accessible for sediment management activities will be released shortly. Staff have supported several well attended outreach activities including the Weaverville Salmon Festival and the Hyampom Salmon Gathering.

Organizational Updates

- Elliott Sarnacki started as a civil engineering technician at the TRRP office on October 24. He comes to us from the National Park Service at Katmai National Park where he had served as a utilities operator.
- Chad Abel has accepted a promotion with the USFWS and will be leaving his role as Implementation Branch Chief effective 31 December 2022.
- Brandt Gutermuth will be retiring after over 20 years of service to the TRRP effective 31 December 2022.
- The outreach specialist position remains farther down in NCAO's priority list for recruitment.

Budget Updates/Adjustments:

The FY23 budget is tracking with what was approved in June, subject to appropriations. We remain under a continuing resolution. We will know how much funding remains to be allocated for channel rehabilitation in accordance with the June 2022 budget motion from TMC once we have costs associated with a recommendation on FY23 science proposals to be funded, a completed appraisal for the flowage easement on the River Acres Rd structure, and updated office operations and salary projections. FY23 Annual Funding Agreements are currently being negotiated with the Hoopa Valley and Yurok Tribes.

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Watershed Restoration Grant

A request for pre-proposals will be released by NFWF on or around January 10. It will include the funding from this cycle as well unspent funds from the first RFP (for a total of ~\$600k). Full proposals will be requested from a subset of applicants in late February and due March 21, with grantees notified in late May.

Phase II Implementation Review Contract

Since the September TMC meeting, Inter-Fluve's expert panel has completed their partner agency interviews. They conducted a visit of down-river (largely early Phase I) sites during the week of October 24. Draft recommendations should be presented to the IDT in March 2023.

TRRP Refinements Update

Chad Smith and Darcy Pickard, along with staff from USFWS and Reclamation, presented the status of the TRRP Refinements products to the USFWS and Reclamation Regional Directors in Sacramento on November 9, 2022. Regional DOI leadership are considering how to proceed with the documents. The Program Document and Science Plan were transmitted for legal review by the Office of the Solicitor on November 22, 2022. There is an agenda slot for discussion of the status of the refinements process on the December 2022 TMC agenda.

Implementation Update

Sky Ranch Channel Rehabilitation Site: As previously reported, TRRP staff had a meeting with USFS, BLM, and Trinity County PUD about the status of the land transfer on September 14. We were provided a project schedule of completed and upcoming activities. The new targeted date to record all deeds and the patent is March 2023. We hope to start NEPA on the project in 2023.

Oregon Gulch Channel Rehabilitation Site: As of the last QC report on November 14, 79,296 cy of pit run (24.7%) has been exported to Eagle Rock. The tribal construction crew has improved efficiencies and has averaged about 5,000 cy of export/week since mid-September. Rock processing ended in November, freeing up equipment and operators to begin hauling BLM excavated material to the U-1 stockpile area. If we can keep project funded and operating through the winter, floodplain excavation is projected to be complete at or around the time of the in-channel work period (beginning July 15) in 2023.

Evans Bar Channel Rehabilitation Site: State-Yurok Design Team continues to work on the existing conditions report.

Sawmill Gravel Processing Site: The VE study was conducted on the State-Yurok Tribe's 30% design the week of October 24. We expect the final report soon.

Upper Conner Creek Channel Rehabilitation Site: The VE study was conducted on Hoopa Valley Tribe's 30% design the week of October 24. We expect the final report soon.

EA Development

- Gravel Augmentation EA – We have an administrative draft currently in review that is being shared with BLM as the cooperating agency. The public draft EA is on track to be released for comment before the end of calendar year 2022.

- Watershed Programmatic EA – The 30-day scoping period ended on December 5. A public scoping meeting with virtual call-in option was held at the TRRP office on Thursday, November 17 at 5:30pm. A public draft EA is expected in fall 2023. BLM and USFS are cooperating agencies.

Gravel Processing: Yurok Tribe completed gravel processing at Sawmill in October. About 2,800 cy of oversized (cobble small boulder or CSB) was sorted while producing fish rock. There is a need for additional CSB at Oregon Gulch, so plans are in place to transport Sawmill CSB to the channel rehab site and backhaul surplus fish rock that was processed from Oregon Gulch to our upstream augmentation sites for stockpiling.

Public Outreach Update

Publications and Education Materials:

- We published the watershed PEA scoping notice in early November and did direct mailings to Tribes in advance of the public scoping period. We also sent 160 emails to interested parties and another 65 posted mailings to interested parties.
- We have published regular posts to TRRP's Facebook page. Check us out!
- We submitted an article about the strong spring Chinook run to the Conservation Almanac

Public Events and Environmental Education:

- The public scoping meeting for the watershed programmatic EA was November 17.
- We cohosted the annual Salmon Festival in Weaverville with the Trinity County RCD on Saturday, October 1.
- TRRP staff assisted the RCD and Watershed Center at the Hyampom Salmon Gathering on Saturday, November 19.
- Veronica Yates (Hoopa) organized a volunteer planting event at the recently completed Chapman B channel rehab site on Saturday, October 29. RCD assisted in this event as well.

Science on Tap, at Trinity County Brewing Company

- October – Michael Kauffman and Justin Garwood presented “Klamath Mountains: A Natural History” from their newly published book of the same title. Hard cover copies of their book were also sold and signed by the authors at the event.
- November – Mike Belchik (Yurok Tribe) presented “Klamath Dam Removal: Bringing the Salmon Home”
- December – No scheduled presenters in December due to the holiday. We are continuing to line up presenters for the 2023 calendar. If you have a presentation idea and presenter in mind, please let us know!

Landowner and Stakeholder Meetings:

Several meetings in the last quarter occurred with landowners along the Trinity River corridor in advance of the public draft sediment augmentation EA. These meetings were scheduled to coordinate landowner participation in future augmentation sites we hope to permit, and to answer questions and concerns from residents about the project.

Upcoming

We have a Wild & Scenic Film Festival, Birding Days, and a TRRP Open House at the Weaverville Art Walk planned in early 2023! More details to come.

Science Update

The Science Advisory Board is currently reviewing investigation plans for the FY 2023 science budget. Four IP's were received. As proposed, they sum to slightly less than the allotted amount (\$500,000). For each IP, the SAB will recommend either funding, not funding, or funding with revisions and their recommendations are expected soon.

In Review or Final Edits

The draft synthesis report, "Synthesizing 87 years of scientific inquiry into Trinity River water temperatures", (J. Eli Asarian, Kyle DeJulio, David Gaeuman, Todd Buxton, and Seth Naman) remains in final edits.

The draft report, "Tracking coarse sediment augmentations with RFID tracers in the Trinity River, CA" (Gaeuman and De Julio) is in final edits.

The draft report, "Stream bed disturbance and risk of salmonid redd scour in the Trinity River, CA" (Gaeuman, De Julio, and Buxton) is in final edits.

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 final edits.

Final Publications and Reports

The synthesis report, "Cooper-Hertel, E., D. Gaeuman, K. De Julio, A. Martin, J. Boyce, D. H. Goodman, N. Som, and J. Alvarez. 2022. **Trinity River Juvenile Salmonid Habitat Synthesis: Physical Habitat Capacity at the Restoration Site and Reach Scale.** Report for the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP). Klamath, California.

Available: <https://www.trrp.net/library/document?id=2570> was completed and posted to the TRRP Dataport.

The report, "Cooper-Hertel, E. J., K. T. Lindke, T. Daley, K. De Julio, and K. Hopkins. 2022. **Assessing temperature regimes and juvenile Chinook Salmon growth in Trinity River off-channel and mainstem habitats.** Report for the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP). Yurok Tribe Fisheries Department, Klamath, California.

Available: <https://www.trrp.net/library/document?id=2567> was completed and posted to the TRRP Dataport.

The synthesis report, "Pinnix, W. D., S. P. Boyle, T. Wallin, T. Daley, and N. A. Som. 2022. **Long-Term Analyses of Estimates of Abundance of Juvenile Chinook Salmon on the**

Trinity River, 1989-2018. Arcata Fisheries Technical Series Report TS 2022-40, report for the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP). U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arcata, California. Available: <https://www.trrp.net/library/document?id=2571>” was completed and posted to the TRRP Dataport.

The synthesis report, “Buxton, T. H. and D. N. Bradley. 2022. **Evolution of tributary junctions and their capacity for rearing juvenile Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) on a regulated river.** *Ecohydrology* :. DOI: 10.1002/eco.2463.

Available: <https://www.trrp.net/library/document?id=2569>” was submitted as a journal article and published in the journal *Ecohydrology*. It may also be found on the TRRP Dataport.

The report, “Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP). 2022. Trinity River winter flow project. Report for the TRRP. TRRP, Weaverville, California.

Available: <https://www.trrp.net/library/document?id=2566>” was submitted to TRRP and posted to the Dataport.

The journal article, “Buxton, T. H., Y.G. Lai, N.A. Som, E. Peterson, and B. Abban (2022) The mechanics of diurnal thermal stratification in river pools: Implications for water management and species conservation *Hydrological Processes* 2022:36:e14749” was published and is available online at <https://doi.org/10.1002/hyp.14749>.

The journal article,”Lai, Y.G., T.H. Buxton, and B. Abban (2022) 3D CFS Modeling of River Pool Stratification Characteristics *ASCE World Environmental and Water Resources Congress* 2022:184-193” was published and posted to the TRRP Dataport.

Design Reports- N/A

Environmental Reports and Findings- The Riparian Revegetation and Monitoring Plan (RRMP) v 1.0 was finalized. This plan was approved by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, and posted to the TRRP dataport.

Post-Implementation Reports- N/A

The Dutch Creek and Chapman Ranch Channel Rehabilitation Project Post-implementation Reports were completed and submitted to the Program and are undergoing review for compliance with privacy and accessibility.

Final Data Packages- N/A

Appendix I: Technical Workgroup Briefings December 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 October 26th. The status of the adult synthesis report was discussed and a strategy to finish up the report was discussed. In addition, the group discussed potential TMC Executive Director’s Report December 7, 2022

monitoring plan for monitoring flow management actions that will potentially occur outside of the spring snowmelt hydrograph (i.e. winter flow variability). The group also discussed whether the development of a pre-spawn mortality target is warranted, and the group largely agreed that it is not warranted under the current water management regime.

Workgroup: Design

Coordinator: Oliver Rogers

Major Design Team activities between September and November 2022 include:

The Design Team met on October 5th to receive updates from the Federal Design Team, Yurok/State Design Team, and Hoopa Design Team. Topics covered included a progress update on the Sky Ranch BLM/USFS/TPUD Land Transfer and updated timeline, a progress update on the existing conditions data collection and report for the Evans Bar Channel Rehabilitation project, a progress update on the Sawmill Gravel Processing Site Rehabilitation Design and current processing operations, and progress update on the Upper Conner Creek Rehabilitation Site design. The Design Team Workgroup received another update on the Value Planning Study Process which was conducted on October 24-28 at the TRRP Weaverville office and the Phase II Review which is ongoing.

Proposed Project Updates

- Sky Ranch Channel Rehabilitation Site: The Sky Ranch BLM/USFS/TPUD Land Transfer timeline was updated by the Interagency Liaison, Brenda Tracy (USFS). The new tentative completion date is March 2023. TPUD has a contract in place for the Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) and has received a copy of the Phase I ESA from TRRP. TRRP staff will continue to work with the landowners to obtain agreement for their participation.
- Evans Bar Channel Rehabilitation Site: Existing conditions data has been compiled for report drafting. CDFW geologist, Colin Hughes has conducted site assessment(s) with Ken Lindke. Landowner access limits design options for the site. An expansion of the previous ESL to include an upslope area (part of old hydraulic mining scar on river left at downstream end) will help with the lack of suitable spoil areas.
- Sawmill Gravel Processing Rehabilitation Site: A 4-week processing operation at Sawmill has continued to lower elevations/remove overburden toward a final closeout design surface. Existing conditions topography will now be less reflective of the altered surface and necessitate calculations to determine accurate cut/fill quantities. Additional LiDAR data will support topographic differencing and support the design, currently at 30%.
- Upper Conner Creek Site Design: The Hoopa Design Team is awaiting direction from VE study for the two 30% alternatives at Upper Connor. Major site constraints include identifying suitable spoils locations and the potential acquisition of Smith Pit by Western Rivers Conservancy may help with this issue. TRRP staff will continue to work with the landowners to obtain agreement for their participation.

Project Updates

- Chapman Ranch Phase B Channel Rehabilitation Project: The Post-Implementation Report and As-Built deliverables developed by the HVT was received on November 3. TRRP review of the PIR is nearing completion. Irrigation and post-revegetation maintenance of the site will continue through the 2024 season.
- Oregon Gulch Channel Rehabilitation Site: TRRP FY 22 funding for the Oregon Gulch project will be exhausted and additional funding will need to be awarded to continue haul/export operations after April 1, 2023. A CLOMR submittal package was submitted to FEMA for review/approval on November 10 and unless additional information is required, FEMA will issue a final determination letter within 90 days. To date, approximately 92,000 CY of overburden has been exported to the disposal site at the La Grange Mine operated by Eagle Rock, Inc. Revegetation Designs are being refined by TRRP Riparian Ecologist, Veronica Yates.
- VE Study: The TRRP hosted Regional USBR and Technical Service Center staff for the combined Sawmill Gravel Processing Rehabilitation Site/Upper Conner Creek Rehabilitation Site Value Planning Study. The study was conducted on October 24-28 and a draft report and findings were presented to the project designers. A final report is anticipated to be completed for distribution by December 15.

Design Team Meeting Calendar

- Friday, December 16, 2022 @ 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
- Friday, February 10, 2023 @ 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 10, 2023 @ 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
- Friday, August 11, 2023 @ 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Workgroup: Flow

Coordinator: Seth Naman

Flow Workgroup did not meet in the last quarter.

Workgroup: Watershed

Coordinator: Chad Abel

Watershed Workgroup did not meet in the last quarter.

Workgroup: Physical

Coordinator: Todd Buxton

The workgroup held a meeting on November 29. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss a gravel augmentation project conceptualized by the TRRP Implementation Branch for Cableway near Lewiston. Reasoning for the augmentation at this location is the observation that sediment placed in this reach during a rehabilitation project undertaken in 2008 appears to have been transported downstream, leaving the channel coarsened and relatively devoid of sediment sizes needed for redd building by spawning salmon.

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

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The IDT scheduled a meeting for December. Agenda items to be discussed include: WY 2023 Flow Scheduling, FY 2023 science proposals, FY 2024 science planning, SAB staffing, and workgroup coordinator changes.

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	Published in <i>Ecohydrology</i> 2022;e2463
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 Posted
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 final edits
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/>.