



## Trinity River Restoration Program

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NC-152

### MEMORANDUM

To: Trinity Management Council

From: Mike Dixon, Executive Director  
Trinity River Restoration Program

Subject: Director's Report

Date: May 30, 2024

#### **Major TRRP activities between March 2024 and June 2024 include:**

Work continues to prepare for implementation of a restoration project at Upper Conner Creek this summer. The first in-person Science Symposium since 2016 was held in Weaverville. The house that we purchased in the floodplain in Junction City was removed.

#### **Organizational Updates**

- The solicitation for the Secretary position closed on April 29. A selection has been made and a tentative offer was accepted.
- The TRRP Data Steward remains vacant. Initial recruitment paperwork has been submitted and it is in queue for soliciting. It will be hired as a GS 7/9/11/12 Natural Resource Specialist.
- Veronica Yates, our riparian ecologist who works for the program office as a Hoopa Valley Tribe employee, is moving on. We will meet with the tribe in the coming weeks to determine the best path forward for that position.
- The lease extension for the current TRRP office in Weaverville ends on September 1, 2025. GSA, who manages the lease on behalf of Reclamation, failed to initiate the solicitation for a new space in accordance with the required timeline, so we may extend again in the current location but I am hopeful that we may yet be able to get a lease on more favorable terms for the public's money.

#### **Budget Updates/Adjustments:**

The initial FY24 budget that was approved in June and July of 2023 included a speculative amount of funding that would be available for channel rehabilitation activities, using that activity as a balancer because the Upper Conner Creek project had been planned to occur over the course of two years. However, the location of the project adjacent to Junction City Elementary School and at the site of a heavily used public river access raise the prudence of constructing the project in a single season to minimize disruption to the neighborhood. We have confirmed that the BIL TMC Executive Director's Report May 30, 2024

funding for the project will all be available this fiscal year (with the exception of a portion of the revegetation funding, which will carry over into the next year anyway). The Regional Director's office has committed to seek additional funding for the project, and in the interim, we are being advanced funding from the Central Valley Project Restoration Fund.

The FY25 budget proposal will be presented to the TMC for their recommendation on June 6.

## Implementation Updates

Sky Ranch Channel Rehabilitation Site: Little change since last quarter. The design is at 60% and the VE study was completed; and a right-of-entry with the private landowner was established. The land transfer between USFS and BLM is expected to be completed this summer, after which TRRP can initiate NEPA. Depending on the availability of funding and the land transfer, the project may be constructed in 2025 or 2026. This project is the priority after Upper Conner Creek, although the land exchange must be completed before TRRP can move forward with planning.

Evans Bar Channel Rehabilitation Site: No change since last quarter. The design remains at the existing conditions report stage.

Sawmill Gravel Processing Site: A 60% design was prepared by the Yurok Tribe and State design group and submitted to the TRRP design team for review in November. The EA for the project will be completed by June 2024, so this project will be ready for implementation if Sky Ranch and Evans Bar NEPA is delayed.

Upper Conner Creek Channel Rehabilitation Site: This project is scheduled for implementation in Summer 2024, and revegetation work will likely extend into FY 2025.

## EA Development

- Upper Conner Creek and Sawmill Environmental Assessment (EA)

The public comment period for the EA concluded May 31. The State Historic Preservation Office is reviewing potential effects to cultural resources, and after a 30-day review period, if no concerns are raised the EA will be ready for a FONSI.

- Gravel and Wood Augmentation EA

The State Historic Preservation Office is reviewing potential effects to cultural resources, and after a 30-day review period, if no concerns are raised the EA will be ready for a FONSI.

- Watershed Programmatic EA

A draft of the first three chapters is complete. The fisheries, terrestrial wildlife, and botany reports are in review. The public comment period could occur this summer depending on partner agency review of the draft documents.

## Public Outreach Update

### **Publications and Education Materials:**

Reach: 200 individual email addresses + Social

#### River Riffle – March

- Reading, Listening, Watching
- Current Conditions: Inundation and Drift
- Implementation Branch: Join us at our March 19 Open House
- [Featured Article: The River's Liver – the hyporheic zone](#)
- [Trinity River Watershed Animal Spotlight: Benthic macroinvertebrates](#)
- Upcoming Meetings and Events

#### River Riffle – April

- Reading, Listening, Watching
- Current Conditions: Snowmelt Hydrograph, Peak and Recession
- Program Update: [River Acres Demolition Complete](#)
- Implementation Branch: Thank you for attending our Open House!
- Featured Article: [The Trinity Watershed Basin's Water Year Forecast & Local Snow Surveys](#)
- Upcoming Meetings and Events

#### River Riffle – May

- Current Conditions
- Reading, Listening & Watching
- 2024 Science Symposium
- Implementation Branch: Public Comment Period Open!
- Upcoming Meetings and Events

The [TRRP Facebook Page](#) is up 94 followers since our last meeting. We surpassed 1K followers just after the Science Symposium and are currently at 1019 followers. (749 followers June 2023 + 270)

- Top post in the last 60 days was a post about the 2024 water year B120 designation by CDWR. Photo credit to Aaron Martin (Yurok Tribe).
- Impressions: 4669 | Reach: 2880 | Engagement: 430
- Interactions: 85 | Comments: 0 | Shares: 13



### **Public Events and Environmental Education**

March 27: Science on Tap (60 ppl)

- Seth Naman, National Marine Fisheries Service, “*The Importance of Natural Flows on Trinity River Salmon and Steelhead Populations*”

April 24: Science on Tap (132 ppl)

- Ken DeCamp, photographer, author and naturalist, “*Klamath Mountain Wildflowers*”

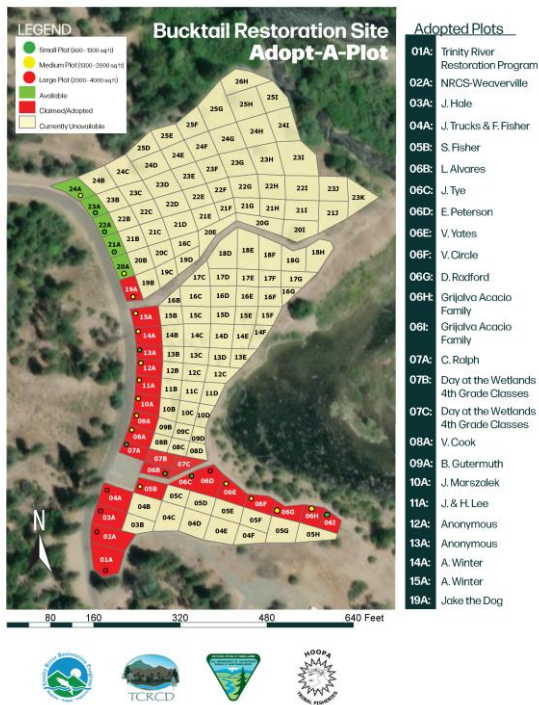
May 22: Science on Tap (60 ppl)

- Sarah Gomes, the Western Science Coordinator for Monarch Joint Venture, “*Monarch Monitoring: How you can make a difference.*”

April 6: Invasive Plant Pull Volunteer Event (xxx ppl)

April 13: Adopt-a-Plot (9 ppl & 3 plots adopted) 25/32 plots adopted





#### April 20: 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Trinity County Plant and Seed Exchange



#### April 30-May 3: [2024 Trinity River Restoration Program Science Symposium](#)

Presentation style event featuring local, regional, and international experts in the physical and biological science of rivers. Day one will focus on fish populations, day two's focus will be habitat, flow and temperature, and day three focus is on the physical channel form. Nineteen speakers from three countries representing, 4 Federal Agencies, 1 State Agency, 3 Tribes, 5 Academic Institutions, 3 Private Organizations.

- Tuesday Fish Populations: 107 ppl

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- Wednesday Habitat, Flow & Temperature: 113 ppl
- Thursday Physical Channel Form: 76 ppl
- Friday Field Trip: 25 ppl

April 10 - May 10: Annual Wildflower Scavenger Hunt

May 18: Big Flat Jamboree

### **Educational Outreach**

April 11: STEAM Career Expo at Weaverville Elementary

- 100 students participated
- Grade levels: 4-8

April 22: Earth Day 2024 at Burnt Ranch School

- Conducted six lessons 15 students per lesson
- Total students taught: 90
- Grade levels: K-8

May 9: Annual Day at the Wetlands – 52 kids this year!

- Lewiston Elementary School, Creekside Charter Arts and Education School, Weaverville Elementary School
- Trinity County Resource Conservation District, Watershed Stewards Program, Yurok Tribe, Wintu Educational and Cultural Council, TRRP, BLM, Ascend Wilderness



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May 15: Afterschool Ecology Lessons at Douglas City Elementary School

- Number of students: 45
- Grade levels: K-8

### **Landowner and Stakeholder Notifications**

2024 WY Hydrograph & Spring Release Notifications

Public Comment Period (May 1 -May 31) for two proposed restoration projects the Sawmill Gravel Processing Site and the Upper Conner Creek Restoration Project.

### **Presentations**

March 27: Salmonid Restoration Federation (Eric Peterson)

- “Timing of periphyton scour and recovery for food web dynamics in a Mediterranean system.” Authors also included Chris Laskodi, Ben King, and Ken Lindke.

April 16: National Conference on Ecosystem Restoration (James Lee)

- “Science and flows in an adaptively managed, regulated river”. In the session titled: "A Laboratory for Learning: Large-Scale Ecosystem Restoration and the Legacy of Secretary Babbitt"

May 8: International Symposium on Ecohydraulics and Fish Passage (Todd Buxton)

- “Research on Thermal Stratification in two Trinity River pools”

May 30: California Land Surveyors Association Cascade Chapter (Eric Peterson)

- “TRRP Surveying”

### **Upcoming**

June (Spring Run Chinook/Riparian)

- June 7: Hoopa Fish Fair
- June 10: Douglas City Elementary School: Oregon Gulch Site Tour
- June 24: Ascend Wilderness Hatchery Tour
- Weaverville Farmers Market (?)
- River Days with Coffee Creek and Trinity Center
- BIL Funding Announcement (Press Release) in collaboration with BLM, Reclamation, Hoopa & Yurok

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## July (Temperature)

- July 9, 11, 16, 19: Weaverville Summer Day Camp Ecology Lessons
- July 24: Science on the River at Lewiston Hotel: Derek Rupert, USBR “Clear Creek Restoration Project”
- Upper Conner Creek Groundbreaking Ceremony (?)
- 2023 Annual Report
- 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade

## August (Fish and Fire Ecology)

- Aug 28: Science on the River at Lewiston Hotel: Todd Buxton, TRRP “Diurnal Pool Stratification”
- August 9: Hoopa Sovereign Day (?)

## TRRP Survey: Compilation for TMC and broader public

- Combine three years of data from the survey into four sections; demographics, impacts, mitigations and TRRP grade. Present to TMC at the mid-summer call-in meeting to review and illicit feedback for a potential presentation for the September TMC meeting.

## Science Update

- **Limiting Factors Analysis (LFA).** Phase 1 (study plan development) concluded at the last TMC meeting with the TMC moving to proceed with study plan option 3. NFWF drafted, and TRRP’s IDT edited, a Request for Qualifications (RFQ). [The RFQ was released May 15](#) with applications due June 14. If multiple applications are received, then the IDT is expected to review them in July. Award is targeted for August. The project will include quarterly meetings with the IDT (at a minimum). Total project timeline is 2 years with final deliverables due August 2026.
- **FY25 Science priorities.** The IDT put forward 4 topics over the last year. We received proposals covering 3 of these: Benthic macroinvertebrate (BMI) production in relation to inundation and scour, a start toward foodscape modeling for DSS, and riparian response to stage zero wetted width. These will be presented to the TMC in draft form with a request for funding that is contingent upon revisions.
- **Review of monitoring and DSS.** The IDT requested that workgroups review current Objectives and Targets as a basis for conducting this review. All workgroups have discussed these and the foundation is ready for IDT to move forward. This will be a major topic of an all day meeting at the end of June or in early July (in person preferred).
- **Cohort Reconstruction.** Code updates are expected to be complete by the end of August. CDFW (Ken Lindke) is anticipating to start the analysis in September with results available for the Limiting Factors Analysis in early FY25.

## In Review or Final Edits

- Adult Salmonid Spawning

## Final Publications and Reports

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- Cramer Fish Sciences. 2024. [Final Study Plan - Phase 1 \[Limiting Factors Analysis\]](#). Memorandum to Trinity River Restoration Program.

### Synthesis Reports – See Appendix II.

Incomplete:

- Adult Salmonid Spawning – in final edits
- Cohort Reconstruction – coding nearly complete, analysis pending
- Large Wood Management – rebooted, annotated outline out for review
- Flow Synthesis – regaining momentum
- Channel Complexity

Design Reports- See Design Workgroup Report below

### Environmental Reports and Findings

- U.S. bureau of Reclamation Trinity River Restoration Program (USBR-TRRP), North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, and U. S. Bureau of Land Management (USBLM). 2024. [Trinity River Channel Rehabilitation Sites: Upper Conner Creek Site \(River Mile 77.1 to 78.5\) and Sawmill Gravel Processing Site \(River Mile 108.9 to 109.75\) Environmental Assessment / Initial Study](#). April, 2024. DOI-BLM-CA-N060-2024-0008-EA and CGB-EA-2024-004. USBR-TRRP, Weaverville, California.

### Post-Implementation Reports

- Yurok Tribe Fisheries Department (YTFD). 2024. Oregon Gulch as-built survey technical report. Report for the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP) (Agreement number R22AV00011). YTFD, Arcata, California. Available: <https://www.trrp.net/library/document?id=2634>.

### Final Data Packages

- Yurok Tribe Fisheries Department (YTFD). 2024. [Oregon Gulch As-Built Orthophotography and Terrain Model](#). Data Package for the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP) (Agreement number R22AV00011). YTFD, Arcata, California.

## **Appendix I: Technical Workgroup Briefings June 2024**

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

**Workgroup:** Fish

**Coordinator:** Kyle De Juilio

The Fish Workgroup met May 15<sup>th</sup> for reviewing Science Proposals, review the Synthesis Report Recommendation Action Tracker that Kyle has developed, and to identify a future coordinator as De Juilio steps away. Chris Laskodi will be stepping back in as the coordinator for the group.

**Workgroup:** Design

**Coordinator:** Oliver Rogers

The Design Team met on May 16<sup>th</sup>, for a quarterly meeting and received updates from the State of California-Yurok Tribe Design Team, Hoopa Valley Tribe Design Group, and the

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Federal Design Team. Topics covered included an update on the Sawmill Gravel Processing Site Rehabilitation project, which is progressing to a Draft 90% design, and a presentation on the 100% design for the Upper Conner Creek Rehabilitation Site. The Design Team WG also continued discussing the remaining Incomplete Channel Rehabilitation sites and determined which Design Groups will scope existing conditions reports for each of the remaining sites, including sites deemed not likely to move forward in the Phase II Review. The scoping of existing conditions reporting for sites deemed not likely to move forward would serve as the decision document for selection of a no action alternative. Sites that are likely to move forward as determined by the existing conditions reporting scoping, may proceed with existing conditions analysis and project design as funding allows.

**Workgroup:** Flow

**Coordinator:** Ken Lindke

The Flow workgroup met once since the March TMC meeting. The group reviewed an FY2025 proposal for preliminary development of a foodscape model that would serve as a food ration input to the Stream Salmonid Simulator juvenile Chinook salmon production model and could be used in flow management decision making. Consolidated comments from the workgroup were provided to the Science Coordinator. The group also elected Patrick Flynn to coordinate the Flow workgroup for the next year.

**Workgroup:** Watershed

**Coordinator:** Justin Alvarez

The TMC allocated 1M for watershed work in this latest solicitation. NFWF flew the grant in January and preproposals were due on February 20<sup>th</sup>. There were 2 submittals, one for Floodplain restoration in Salt Creek (South Fork Tributary) and the other is a planning project in Upper Hayfork Creek (also a Southfork Tributary). The total budget request from the two proposals was about \$650k so less than the total made available by TMC. The Watershed Workgroup met on March 18<sup>th</sup> to go over their reviews of the pre proposals and recommended both be advanced to full proposals. The workgroup met again on May 22<sup>nd</sup> and will likely advance them both for funding. Below is the timeline of milestones.

2/20/2024	Pre-proposals Due
3/18/2024	Trinity River Restoration Program pre-proposal review meeting
3/20/2024	Invitations/declines to submit full proposals sent to applicants
4/23/2024	Full proposals due
5/22/2024	Trinity River Restoration Program full proposal review meeting

**Workgroup:** Physical

**Coordinator:** Smokey Pittman

The Trinity River Physical Workgroup met on May 13, 2024 to discuss: (1) Q1 Proposal Review, and (2) Physical Targets and Objectives Review. The Q1 Proposal Review was led by Eric Peterson and the review form was completed. Targets and Objectives were reviewed and action items were identified, including: develop sub-groups for (1) developing active bar area targets, (2) fine sediment monitoring and DSS development, (3) flow-discussion workgroup to discuss piggybacking versus the current spring flow release plan, and (4) assessing the ramifications of reducing the grain size of injected gravel augmentations.

**Workgroup:** Riparian and Aquatic Ecology

**Coordinator:** Veronica  
Yates

The Riparian and Aquatic Workgroup met on May 14, 2024 to discuss the 3 proposals that were submitted to the Science Planning team. Each proposal was discussed for approximately 45 minutes and evaluated using a rubric provided by the Science Coordinator. The RAEWG determined that all 3 proposals should be recommended to the TMC and suggested minor revisions to each of the proposals. These revisions and the responses to the rubric were supplied to the Science Coordinator.

Next, a discussion was led by James Lee regarding a recommendation in the Riparian Encroachment Synthesis (Section 10.7, page 92, HVTFD & McBain 2021) to evaluate variable summer baseflows and conduct flow experiment. Lee suggested that there was no known policy requiring the current summer baseflow regime, and it was based on a recommendation to maintain 60oF at Douglas City by maintaining 450 cfs flow. The group discussed the potential benefits of variable summer base flows, including pool stratification, reduction of narrow leaf willow establishment, improvement of temperature conditions for other aquatic species (foothill yellow-legged frogs and Western pond turtles), and a more resilient root depth for riparian vegetation species. A modeling exercise was proposed using TARGETS, FYFAM, and RBM10 to evaluate potential impacts and submit with the FY26 Science Proposals. Group members were requested to review the Encroachment Synthesis report prior to the next quarterly RAEWG meeting.

**Workgroup:** Interdisciplinary Team

**Coordinator:** Ty Wallin /  
Eric Peterson

The IDT met twice during this quarter. First in April to discuss moving forward with Phase II of the Limiting Factors Analysis through NFWF and clarify the level of involvement needed by the IDT. The second meeting May 29<sup>th</sup> to was primarily to work on the FY25 Science Proposal to the TMC that Peterson will present during this TMC meeting. Also at this meeting, the Flow Workgroup made a request to the IDT with the intention of it being forwarded up to the TMC. However, the IDT did not have consensus on how to make it a formal request. Thus, there is no agendized topic for this. However, there was consensus that it be noted in the workgroup reports that the Flow Workgroup is concerned that there will be a repeat of last year's flow scheduling challenges.

## 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	<b>Published in <i>Ecohydrology</i> 2022;e2463</b>
TRRP-2018-003	Fish Habitat	<i>HVT, USFWS, YT, USBR TSC (POC: Damon Goodman, USFWS)</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Q 2019	<b>USFWS portion Posted; YT portion Posted</b>
TRRP-2018-007	Juvenile Chinook Production	<i>USFWS, YT, HVT (POC: Bill Pinnix, USFWS)</i>	July 2017	<b>FINAL POSTED</b>
TRRP-2018-009	Cohort Reconstruction	<i>HVT, USFWS, CDFW (POC: Ken Lindke, CDFW)</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Q 2019 Cur.ETA mid-2024	In progress
TRRP-2018-011	Adult Salmon Spawning	<i>USFWS, HVT, YT, CDFW (POC: Steve Gough, USFWS)</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Q 2019 Possibly before the TMC meeting.	In final edits
TRRP-2018-018	Bed Mobility and Scour	<i>HVT, USFWS (POC: Geoff Hales &amp; Scott McBain, McBain Associates)</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Q 2018	<b><u>FINAL POSTED</u></b>
TRRP-2018-019	Cottonwood Seed Dispersal	<i>HVT (POC: John Bair, McBain Associates)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Q 2018	<b>FINAL POSTED</b>
TRRP-2018-021	Riparian Encroachment	<i>HVT (POC: John Bair, McBain Associates)</i>	4 <sup>th</sup> Q 2018	<b>FINAL POSTED</b>
TRRP-2018-022	Sediment Storage	<i>HVT, USFWS (POC: Geoff Hales &amp; Scott McBain, McBain Associates)</i>	4 <sup>th</sup> Q 2018	<b>FINAL Posted</b>
TRRP-2018-025	Channel Complexity	<i>HVT, USFWS (POC: Smokey Pittman &amp; Scott McBain, McBain Associates)</i>	August 2019 Cur ETA ?	Delayed- uncertain timeline
TRRP-2018-027	Fine Sediment	<i>Program Office, NMFS, HVT (POC: Todd Buxton, TRRP)</i>	July 2020	<b>FINAL POSTED</b>



TRRP-2018-032	Water Temperature	<i>YT, USFWS, HVT, USBR, NMFS (POC: Eli Asarian, Riverbend Sciences)</i>	May 2019	<a href="#"><u>FINAL POSTED</u></a>
TRRP-2018-033	Large Wood Management	<i>NMFS, YT, HVT (POC: Scott McBain)</i>	April 2018 Cur.ETA 2024	In progress
NA	Flow Synthesis	<i>HVT et al. (POC: Justin Alvarez)</i>	Mid FY 22 Cur.ETA: July 2024	In Progress

Completed reports at <https://www.trrp.net/restoration/adaptive-management/synthesis-reports/>.