

Meeting Summary
INTERDISCIPLINARY WORKGROUP

Wednesday September 11, 2024
USFWS Office, Arcata / MS Teams

Wednesday, September 11, 2024: 09:00 – 17:00

Participants

In person: Ty Wallin – USFWS, Jason Hall – CFS, Joe Merz – CFS, Kai Ross – CFS, Scott McBain – ARS/HVT, Ken Lindke – CDFW, Morgan Knechtle – CDFW, Brad Nissen – USFWS, Taylor Daley* – USFWS, Justin Alvarez – HVT, Seth Naman – NOAA Fisheries, Eric Peterson – TRRP

Online: Smokey Pittman (ARS/HVT), Patrick Flynn (TC), Kiana Abel (TRRP), James Lee – TRRP, Mike Dixon – TRRP, Oliver Rogers – TRRP, John Buffington – SAB, Kurt Fausch – SAB, Andrew Paul – SAB, John Hayes – SAB, Chris Laskodi – YT, Shane Quinn – YT, Trevor Morgan – CDWR, Galen Anderson – USFWS, Steve Gough – USFWS, Todd Buxton – TRRP, Don Ashton – ARS/HVT.

Note: CFS participated only for the LFA session in the morning.

* = note taker

Consensus

The IDT concurred with:

- Flow Workgroup Flow Strategy for Water Year 2025 (and will forward to the TMC)
- Fish Workgroup adjustment to adult temperature target

Action Items Derived During the Meeting

- Peterson to notify TMC that IDT concurs with the Flow Workgroup and forwards their proposal.
- Peterson to send Annual Work Plan template to workgroup coordinators with request to complete before November IDT.
- Laskodi to clarify two of the target adjustments with the Fish Workgroup.
- Peterson to distribute monitoring/DSS activity review assignments and rubric.

Meeting Summary

Limiting Factors Analysis

The summary for this portion of the meeting will be provided separately from Cramer Fish Sciences.

Lunch

Introduction and Agenda Review for Afternoon

TMC Agenda Review

Peterson walked through the draft agenda. Primary points and discussion:

- Flow workgroup recommendation if there is consensus from today's meeting (decision on if moving forward needs to be made)
- Still time to add to agenda if someone wants to present

Flow WG Water Year Plan (Patrick Flynn Flow Workgroup Coordinator)

Flynn presented the Flow Workgroup's proposal, recognizing the TMC timeline motion and the County's requests/conditions.

Trinity County Proposal/Conditions

- TR County initial proposal presented 19 July
 - Based on fishable days lost inspired by winter flow report
 - Flow WG met July 22 to review recommendations and drafted a set of questions to refine and clarify recs
- County final proposal
 - presented August 9
 - losses of a max of 10 boat days during the synchronization period 9 (Dec 15-Feb 14)
 - some years there will be a high impact in March but has only happened 1 out of last 20 years. Happened in 2004.
 - Robust outreach requested if there is a year with high impact
 - Requested advance notice (min of 4 days before flow event)
 - County supports flow sync provided only one period happens
 - See memo from County on August 8th -supports implementation as long as requests are accommodated
 - Outreach is being developed by a subcommittee

Flow WG consensus: Winter Variable Flows with accommodations for County

- Alternative synchronization peaks
 - Peaks that rise and fall quickly (steep)
 - 4 alternative hydrographs that adjust peak length to meet water volume objectives
 - Return to base is variable too.
- Elevated Baseflows
 - Move peaks away from weekends to accommodate recreation on river
 - Where graph overlaps flows will be additive
- Final flow WG
 - Implement winter flow variability with accommodations made to meet TR County requests
 - Implementation of typical spring snowmelt hydrograph, TBD come March
- Discussion after presentation
 - Lots of discussion on overlap period
 - In future maybe not have overlap in peaks because it is messy
 - Gives some floodplain inundation

- Flow sync peaks overlap with elevated base period, each period two months, elevated period has two check-in points. Flows set in February but there could be some increases in elevated base period if there is a synchronization event
- TMC has received memo need to make sure IDT and TMC talk about details about flows and everyone understands
- New part this year is there are 4 versions of the hydrographs
- **Would be additive**
- Never gotten extremely wet forecast in February and maybe once for wet forecast
- Not median forecast it's 90% forecast so it is conservative
- Figure would be confusing for public recommendations to clean up
 - Idea to run through a few scenarios instead to show examples
- Keep in mind for future number of fishing days is not an objective in TRRP objectives and if it is going to be used should discuss with TMC and work groups if it will be used in future hydrograph planning
- James will post presentations when they are ready and sent to him

Communication plan (**Kiana Able**)

- Plan if more than 10 fish days lost
- Notify if there are synchronized events
- 5 communication events planned
- Educate people on different components and how to be notified
- Social media, press release from USFWS and BOR, newsletter, email list for TR release, reclamation emergency text group (learning about tomorrow)
- Vote next week but action has to be approved by DOI
- Oct 5 salmon festival would be good to have people come and volunteer also the boat event could use volunteers
- 4 day notification on synchronization flows is tight. There was some discussion if a trigger less than 4 days out in the forecast could still be acted upon along with a 'best effort' on communications.
 - Peterson pointed out that it is a County stipulation that we have been saying we can accommodate and that analysis of past triggers showed that if we get one, we nearly always get more. So risk of missing a sync flow entirely is minimal; most likely it might only be delayed. If not, then we have an argument to make on Adaptive Management for this topic.
- Graph doesn't show baseflow

Eric asked if there were any objections to IDT concurring and forwarding the Flow Workgroup's Proposal to the TMC. There were none.

Workgroup annual plans

Meeting timing was behind relative to the agenda, so this topic was abbreviated.

- See diagram
- In future, riparian group will provide wood recommendation

- Have workgroups develop annual work plans using template (future) have workgroup plans by August/ September
- **Eric to send Annual Work Plan template to workgroup coordinators with request to complete before November IDT.**

FY26 Science Planning

Peterson gave status of FY25 approved projects

- 2025 TMC agreed to fund benthic invertebrate projects going through Humboldt through USGS
- BMI funding for Yurok technician in 2025
- Riparian response Hoopa AFA calendar year 2025

Peterson listed the proposed topics for FY26

- Nutrient Flux: foodscape modeling to support S3.
- Fish Production (impacts): effects of suspended sediment and deposition on bed in the mainstem due to fires and channel rehab in the absence of synchronized flows.
- Fish Production: salmonid life history diversity.
 - Related to limited factors analysis
- Temperature: effects of temperature on periphyton and BMI (incl. potential models from John Hayes).
 - Ideas on potential models
- Temperature: temperature for turtles. possible listing of Northwestern Pond Turtle likely topic will become even more relevant over time
 - Might need to develop metric first
 - Is temp the best metric for turtles

Discussion of temp target on pond turtles (would fit in existing objective but it's own target trying to happen by November) start with broad target and use modeling to make more specific target

Peterson briefly reviewed some discussion of other topics (RAE Workgroup)

- Predation of mergansers on fish
- Fire as management technique in management zones

How many priorities do we want to take on this year?

- Nutrient Flux: foodscape modeling to support S3
 - Fish Workgroup
- Fish Production (impacts): effects of suspended sediment and deposition on bed in the mainstem due to fires and channel rehab in the absence of synchronized flows.
 - Physical Workgroup along with Fish WG
- Fish Production: salmonid life history diversity.
 - Defer by 1 year (LFA to guide)
- Temperature/Flow: effects of temperature and flow on periphyton and BMI (incl. potential models from John Hayes).

- RAE WG
- Temperature: temperature for turtles.
 - RAE WG
- Are there ways of bringing in experts from outside TRRP and cal poly?
- Consensus was to ask workgroups for volunteers to develop specific questions. Deadlines for 2 pager November IDT. **Peterson to send assignments to workgroup coordinators.**

Objectives and Targets

Laskodi presented targets refined by the Fish Workgroup over the last couple years (two on temperature, one on habitat).

Juvenile target 7 day average to cumulative daily river miles between Lewiston Dam and the North Fork. Get a number that will be either positive or negative based on an ideal range. When below 13 get negative and above 13 C get a positive. Originally set up as a range. When RBM10 is complete can get better resolution. Uses river miles not degree days.

Group discussed if this was a target or a way of measuring. Consensus was that Fish WG should revisit to distinguish a clear target.

Adult temp target changes

Target is 56 F which gets around 60 F degrees by Douglas City but gives some flexibility. Help prevent disease in upper TR. Change over to Celsius.

IDT concurred with this target adjustment. Target may be considered 'active'. Peterson said likely to make revisions to Objectives and Targets document annually, so will wait for further changes before revising document.

Habitat target. Compare 2022 hydraulic models vs. future model. Discussion raised questions and clarification was requested for later.

Monitoring and Modeling Review

Peterson discussed the task at hand, including Science Plan assignment, previously discussed review rubric, and scope of review.

- list out the tasks and start dividing them up
- discuss how to handle targets without specific monitoring projects (e.g. how should Fish 8 be reported on, and many others)

Wallin displayed a spreadsheet of monitoring and DSS activities previously prepared by Peterson. The group went through the list assigning a workgroup to each activity and in some cases, identifying a secondary workgroup to be involved. Suggestion was made to allow workgroups to decide if they wanted to do reviews as a group, a subcommittee, or simply assign individuals to take lead.

Peterson to distribute list of assignments with review rubric.