

Draft Agenda
TRINITY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Trinity County Library, Weaverville, CA
April 14-15, 2005

Thursday, April 14, 2005

<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic, Purpose and/or Decision to be Made</u>	<u>Discussion Leader</u>
<u>Regular Business:</u>		
9:00	Introduction: Validate agenda items; Approve TMC Minutes for 12/10/04, 1/31/05, 2/15/05	Mike Ryan, Chair
9:15	Open Forum: Comments from the public	Mike Ryan
9:30	Report from TMC Chair:	Mike Ryan
9:45	Report from TAMWG Chair: Nomination package	Arnold Whitridge
10:00	Report from Executive Director: Program updates	Doug Schleusner
<u>Action Item 1¹:</u>		
10:15	Proposed 2005 Flow Schedule <i>Accept or modify and approve the TMAG recommendation for Water Year 2005 Trinity River flow schedule.</i> • Summary of water year determination • Initial presentation of 2005 objectives, options, trade-offs, and recommendations	Andreas Krause, TMAG Rod Wittler, TMAG
10:45 Break		
<u>Action Item 1:</u>		
11:00	Proposed 2005 Flow Schedule (cont.) <i>Accept or modify and approve the TMAG recommendation for Water Year 2005 Trinity River flow schedule.</i> • Question and answer period for TMAG • TMC discussion and decision	Rod Wittler Mike Ryan
12:30 Lunch		
<u>Action Item 2:</u>		
1:30	Floodplain Structure Design Criteria <i>Accept or modify and approve the RIG recommendation for inventory criteria used in inundation modeling</i> • 10 year vs. 100 year tributary flood events • Status of current inventory, summary of structures, estimated costs, Gantt chart	Ed Solbos, RIG Denise Wiltse, RIG
3:00 Break		

¹ Refer to attached briefing papers for more information on each action item.

Information Item:

3:15	Update on CEQA lead agency determination <i>Internal coordination, formal requests, time schedule</i>	Doug Schleusner
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Information Item:

3:45	Update on May 18th Principals Conference <i>Agenda topics, field tour, other logistics</i>	Doug Schleusner
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4:15	Adjourn for the day	Mike Ryan
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Friday, April 15, 2005

<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic, Purpose and/or Decision to be Made</u>	<u>Discussion Leader</u>
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Action Item 3:

8:30	FY2006 Budget Process <i>Provide initial process direction to TRRP staff for FY2006 program of work</i> • Overview of budget picture	Doug Schleusner
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10:30 Break

Action Item 3:

10:45	FY2006 Budget Process (cont.) <i>Provide initial process direction to TRRP staff for FY2006 program of work</i> • TMC discussion and decision	Irma Lagomarsino
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11:45 Lunch

Information Item:

12:45	Status of Channel Rehabilitation Sites <i>Hocker Flat construction, Canyon Creek designs, Gantt chart</i>	Joe Riess, RIG
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Information Item: (if needed, TBD)

1:15

Regular Business:

1:30	Open Forum: Comments from the public	Mike Ryan
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1:45	Calendars: Confirm next meeting date and location (Tentatively June __ at Weaverville)	Mike Ryan
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2:00	Adjourn	Mike Ryan
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Briefing Paper for Action Item 1: Proposed 2005 Flow Schedule

Decision to be made: *Accept or modify and approve the TMAG recommendation for the Water Year 2005 Trinity River flow schedule.*

Background: The preliminary March forecast for the Trinity basin was at the low end to middle of the range for a normal water year classification due to dry conditions from January through mid-March. Recent storms have improved conditions to the point where the April water year determination will likely remain solidly in the normal range, with a total volume of 647,000 acre-feet available for release into the Trinity River. The TRRP staff, specifically the Technical Modeling and Analysis Group (TMAG), met with technical representatives of the TMC and TAMWG in February and March to discuss this year's objectives and develop preliminary flow release alternatives. On April 11, the group will use the final water year determination to refine preliminary alternatives, and provide additional input as the TMAG finalizes a recommendation for presentation to the TAMWG and TMC on April 12 and 14. The TMC will then recommend a flow release schedule to the Bureau of Reclamation to implement as closely as technically possible. Ramping of Lewiston Dam releases could begin on or about April 22.

Issues: This is the first year since the ROD was signed that water volume allocations have been unencumbered by legal constraints. The consensus of technical specialists to date is that the normal water year hydrograph described in the ROD should be implemented. Several options or technical modifications to that schedule have been identified and will be presented in more detail on April 12 and 14: 1) a three day delay in ramp-up to minimize impacts on opening weekend of fishing season (this has been implemented in prior years); 2) a hydrograph with an extended spring flow bench that would ramp up a week earlier, and ramp down to a 1500 cfs bench rather than 2000 cfs in order to test hypotheses associated with yellow-legged frog reproductive success; and 3) a modification to the peak release from five days at 6,000 cfs to four days at 7,000 cfs for the purpose of model calibration (HEC-RAS, GSTARS, SALMOD, etc.). In addition, fish biologists from the TMAG staff and partners have been reviewing monitoring data collected during and after the fall flows released in August and September of 2003 and 2004 to assess biological implications of the fall releases on population genetics and possible mixing of the spring and fall runs of Chinook salmon. This will assist in more informed decision making if the subject comes up in future years.

Recommendation: The TMAG recommendation, based on current water year information and subject to further discussion on April 11, is to implement the normal year hydrograph with a three day shift to minimize impacts to the opening weekend of fishing season.

Briefing Paper for Action Item 2: Floodplain Structure Design Criteria

Decision to be made: *Accept or modify and approve the RIG recommendation for inventory criteria used in inundation modeling (10 year vs. 100 year tributary flood events).*

Background: The TRRP has been working to prepare the Trinity River floodplain from Lewiston Dam to the North Fork for higher releases from Lewiston Dam specified in the Record of Decision (ROD). Construction is nearly complete at the four river crossings (Salt Flat, Bucktail, Poker Bar, and Biggers Road), with all new crossings open to traffic by May 1, 2005. The one house subject to inundation identified in the ROD has been purchased by the TRRP, and an agreement signed with the owner to vacate the premises by May 15. All structures impacted by wet year releases of 8500 cfs have been identified, and plans formulated to insure those structures would be addressed in time to allow unimpeded wet year ROD releases in the spring of 2005. Inventories are ongoing to identify and develop cost estimates for structures impacted by extremely wet year ROD releases, with a goal of accommodating peak flows of 11,000 cfs by the spring of 2006.

Issue: Creating an inundation line along the river to identify structures at risk requires an assumption about the magnitude of natural tributary accretions that will be occurring while ROD flows are being implemented. The initial planning assumption has been to use 100-year spring tributary accretions where all tributaries would experience a 100-year spring event simultaneously while the extremely wet year ROD flow of 11,000 cfs is being released. This conservative approach was originally used because it gives the program maximum flexibility to potentially implement releases higher than 11,000 cfs, perhaps up to the maximum release capability of Trinity Dam (13,750 cfs) if so indicated by AEAM monitoring. This method works well in providing flexibility through the highly developed sections of the river between Browns Mountain Road and Indian Creek, but to a much lesser degree upstream of Rush Creek where tributary accretions are minimal.

Recent inventories with more detail indicate that using this planning assumption considerably increases the complexity and cost of implementing the ROD. In the Indian Creek area, for instance, the 100-year event (15,417 cfs) results in about 9 major structures being inundated up to two feet deep. The 10-year event (13,096 cfs) results in three structures being inundated, one of which is the house already purchased, plus two others with inundations of 0.5 feet or less. Accommodating one foot of freeboard into the design criteria for the 100-year tributary assumption has caused the RIG to look at a variety of creative but costly alternatives. Assuming 10-year tributary accretions would dramatically reduce costs as well as reduce potential controversy with affected landowners, thus increasing the likelihood and rate of implementation.

Recommendation: The TRRP recommends a phased approach to floodplain structure implementation, similar to what has been done to prepare for the potential release of 8500 cfs this spring. Private structures will be analyzed to determine if they have one foot of freeboard above the 11,000 cfs plus 10-year tributary inundation line, and mitigation measures will be implemented. Opportunities will be pursued during development of mitigation measures to accommodate higher flows, up to a maximum of 13,750 cfs plus 10-year tributary accretions. For facilities used by multiple landowners (roads) with significant design and financial implications, extra effort will be employed to accommodate the higher flows. After implementation of any floodplain modification, design flows will be documented and tracked so that a clear picture will be available of what it would take to modify the channel to accommodate a higher flow. If AEAM findings indicate that a higher release than 11,000 cfs is necessary, a new phase of floodplain modification work, including supplemental NEPA/CEQA compliance, could be initiated.

Briefing Paper for Action Item 3: FY2006 Budget Process

Decision to be made: *Provide initial process direction to TRRP staff for FY2006 program of work.*

Background: The TRRP staff and technical representatives of the TAMWG and TMC (informally known as the “B-Team”) hold a series of meetings, usually beginning in May, to discuss work priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. These meetings provide the foundation for a TRRP recommended program of work which is reviewed, modified, and ultimately approved by the TMC. Except for 2004, when the process was extended because of a concurrent review of the TMC’s Subcommittee Report, the budget has been approved in mid to late June. The situation in fiscal year (FY) 2005 was further complicated by an unanticipated second quarter reduction in available funding. Collectively these circumstances made it difficult to plan and execute funding agreements and award contracts. Perhaps most significantly, FY2005 was characterized by lengthy and sometimes contentious debates about project priorities, and the process/criteria for establishing priorities and ranking/selecting one project over another.

Issue: Fiscal Year 2006 has the potential to be even more difficult than FY2005. The President's Budget released on February 7, 2005 calls for virtually all domestic programs to be reduced by 1% in FY2006 and held at that level for the next four years. As the Scientific Framework moves toward completion and an integrated monitoring plan evolves, preliminary findings suggest some realignment of TMAG tasks will be necessary. In order to fully implement unimpeded peak releases outlined in the ROD (8500 cfs and 11,000 cfs), sufficient funding must be provided to remove or modify the remaining floodplain structures at risk. At the same time, significant construction contracts that were deferred from FY2005 into FY2006 (\$2 million) must be addressed in order to prevent the rehabilitation site schedule from slipping. These competing “top priorities” must be managed in the context of flat or potentially declining budgets, and in a way that gets funding to implementing agencies and tribes as early in the fiscal year as possible, while retaining flexibility for unforeseen mid-year adjustments. With this challenging set of circumstances, it is critical that the TMC provide direction to the TRRP staff and B-Team before they begin this year’s deliberations.

Recommendation: The following items are offered as a starting point for this discussion:

- Strive to meet key dates (working backwards)
 - Primary goal: July 1 notice to Congress for Tribal Annual Funding Agreements in order to allow for early October award of funds
 - Approve budget by mid-June (24th?)
 - Schedule April-May budget team meetings as soon as possible
- Look at both technical and policy implications
 - Consider sequence requirements, what has to happen first
 - Emphasize importance of “visible accomplishments” to success of program
 - Determine what is an acceptable rate of implementation for rehab sites
 - Identify and budget according to different monitoring frequency requirements
 - Every 1, 3, 5 years; After major changes to system
 - Don’t assume everything has to be done on annual basis

- Use “0-based” approach (set aside/disregard FY2005 tasks and dollars for starters)
 - Identify mission-critical parts of the program
 - Identify criteria for determining the above, and their relative ranking
 - TMAG examples
 - Required to evaluate progress towards ROD goals
 - Required for regulatory compliance
 - Required to evaluate effectiveness of management actions
 - Prerequisite for one of the above (e.g., stream gaging, staffing)
 - RIG examples
 - Cost vs. responsiveness for rehab site construction
 - Faster response = higher cost (Hocker Flat)
 - Lower cost = slower response (let river do most of the work)
 - Fewer sites : more intensive designs
 - More sites : less intensive designs
- Learn from FY2005 problems
 - More discipline in TMC budget meetings, come to decisions sooner
 - Shorten time frame between meetings – so we don’t forget
 - Be realistic (conservative?) in estimates of available funding
 - Develop and agree on a process – then stick with it
 - Don’t do 1st quarter approvals again, constrains later decisions
 - Don’t use ATB % reductions – be specific
 - Clarify risk associated with conducting work prior to having signed grants or agreements – need for clear communications
- Other considerations
 - Reexamine current cost of doing business (e.g., increased complexity due to floodplain infrastructure, realty issues, etc.) and compare that to original assumptions that went into the ROD, and make the results of that evaluation available as part of the FY2008 budget proposal process later this year
 - Continue to develop and submit work plans and funding requests for CVPIA Restoration Funds
 - Submit grant proposals to DFG Coastal Salmon Recovery Program this year for a combination of watershed restoration and mainstem rehab projects
 - Encourage FWS to streamline their budget process so that funds would be available earlier in the fiscal year, rather than June or July, to improve our cash flow
 - Make a greater effort to describe appropriate linkages to the Klamath system in a way that improves chances for related funding