

Methow Restoration Council

August 21, 2012

Participants:

Name	Organization/Affiliation
Char Schumacher	Okanogan County
Charlie Snow	WDFW
Chris Butler	Yakama Nation
Chris Johnson	MSRF
Derek Van Marter	UCSRB
Don Phillips	Local Landowner
Gene Shull	Forest Service
Jessica Goldberg	MSRF
John Crandall	Wild Fish Conservancy
Ken Bevis	WDFW
Lee Bernheisel	Okanogan Wilderness League
Lee Hatcher	Methow Watershed Council
Michael Notaro	Watershed Resource Solutions
Michelle Dewey	Dewey Consulting LLC
Mike Anderson	The Wilderness Society
Torre Stockard	Van Hees Environmental

Notes:

Derek Van Marter—UCSRB Update:

The FCRPS Expert Panel: The Federal Hydropower system has to go through an evaluation process every three years to look at what they've funded and how much survival gap they've closed, evaluate credit for the actions. They also complete a look-forward to estimate, based on what they know now, if Reclamation and BPA fund future actions how much credit could they get. The Expert Panel is done with their process for the numbers we've given them, and they will give a presentation in the coming months, likely at an RTT meeting. They do this for all subbasins across Upper Columbia.

Judge Redden retired last year; he had accepted BiOp, but mandated that the action agencies needed to redo the BiOp by Jan 1, 2014. The new judge is Michael Simon; he will review the new BiOp, which will give us a picture of where he stands and his take on habitat implementation. It is important because 2/3 of implementation dollars in upper Columbia are mitigation dollars.

The Implementation schedule (IS) is complete; the board should approve it in September, then we will forward it to NOAA.

The NW Power and Conservation Council hosts an annual tour, rotating, this year was in WA state. They went to the mid and upper Columbia, and we had power council and congressional staffers out touring. There were many excellent conversations; they picked up a lot of the subtleties from our perspective, and we had many questions on our regional collaborative approach. There was a lot of interest in how to move things forward. Very productive, have set up meetings with delegations as a follow up in DC next year.

John Crandall—how does the IS merge with the Habitat Work Schedule (HWS)?

Derek—it is the same.

John—when sponsors enter information, do they enter it directly into HWS?

Derek—yes, IS is a snapshot data dump from HWS; then it becomes the official record for the year.

Derek—Lead Entity (LE) transition—we had meetings with all the project sponsors from Methow and Okanogan subbasins that traditionally participate in the SRFB process. We had Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings in Okanogan and Chelan. The SRFB's formal act on the transition process was to pass a resolution to accept the transition to a single LE in the Upper Columbia. This will take effect Jan 1st. The message to the CACs was that nothing changes from their perspective; there will still be two CACs, still the same process timeline. We didn't hear anything on the contrary from them for that approach. Don Phillips—we've been having joint meetings to make the final recommendations anyway. Derek—that final meeting is tomorrow in Chelan.

Char Schumacher—the top three are Methow projects right now, Beaver Reintroduction, Twisp River Poorman, then Riparian plantings (CCFEG)

John—what was the riparian?

Chris—CCFEG working with WDFW to do riparian plantings on state-owned lands

Discussion—coordinating with Ken Bevis on where the work will be done, potential conflicts with other work including monitoring, including active restoration on Wildlife Area properties, WDFW acting as a project sponsor and seeking/competing for outside funding

John Crandall—Monitoring Update: Flagging—we need to remove the flagging that is being stuck up everywhere. This is coming from landowner issues, an explosion of projects and monitoring, and there is a lot of flagging out there. I was snorkeling in M2 a few weeks back, and found a caddis fly that had incorporated a piece of pink flagging into its case. Somewhat alarming. Charlie Snow is using the more biodegradable flagging—it is a fabric, not plastic. I would encourage people to do that, but most importantly, **if you put flagging up then have a plan to take it down.** You can include removal in the contracts with the people who are doing the work. All of the flagging has an aesthetic impact on river use. Pass the word on to people that you're working with.

AREMP, one of three USFS habitat monitoring programs in the Methow, is coming here in September. They will be sampling upper portions of Gold Creek. That program is coming here, it's a NW Forest Plan-wide monitoring program in the range of the spotted owl. The Methow is one, and they coordinate with Gene, they are trying to let people know what they're doing and where they're doing it.

CHaMP is also up and running on their second annual panel.

Ecology's monitoring program is also going.

All told we have 5 different habitat monitoring programs in the Methow; it is a lot. All of the information goes into separate databases, so we are trying to collect the data here in a single location, Torre Stockard is working on that, everyone is pretty much cooperating. It's a massive amount of information being collected, and we're trying to get it into a format that makes it easier to get at.

Gene Shull—we only have paper copies of the older surveys; it would be great to have someone come in and scan to pdf, get available. Is that something Torre could do?

John—not right now, she is at capacity with what she's doing now trying to standardize and collect the data.

Chris Johnson—can you guess how many hours it would digitize that archive?

Gene—maybe two days.

Derek—how many years worth?

Gene—since the early 90's

Chris J—I think that two days of labor should be findable.

John—sediment sampling is also happening in the Methow; it's a partnership with Wild Fish Conservancy, USFS, WA Conservation Corps. Have three groups of sites on Chewuch, Twisp rivers, then third year on the Methow. Looking at small particles out there that would be bad for redds. The longer you go the better the data get. McNeil core samples in spawning areas. Same protocols across the different teams.

Gene—we are starting to get snapshots on larger tributaries like Beaver Creek, would be interested in partnering.

Chris J—can coordinate with Michael Notaro on potential landowner issues, happy to give access on MSRF properties on Beaver Creek

John—we are getting close to an informal data sharing agreement, will have a call today. The challenge is in dealing with the large government agencies in these agreements. We will come up with a set of

written criteria on requests for data in the central database, a series of steps we move through. This provides the group that provides the data an assurance that we won't use the data without their knowledge and that we will let them know what it would be used for. We will give data providers the ability to put a caveat on the information on type of data, like whether it is provisional, etc.

Chris J—each of us uses a different standard/way of doing photo point documentation; we need to coordinate with landowners so that they understand the difference between photo point markers and outdated survey marks

John—you can make them so that you can't really see them, which is the best way to make sure that they last over time. We need to have a consistent protocol, document site with directions, GPS coordinates, etc.

Chris J—it is an education opportunity to let landowners know what they are and what they're for

John—we are talking about a 1-page rap sheet on the different monitoring activities, different fact sheets that describe what monitoring is. This will help landowners because there is a lot going on. Some replication, a lot of crews, and sometimes a lot of them showing up in tight areas.

Chris Butler—Yakama Nation Update: Twisp Ponds left and right bank are done, at the intake canal for the ponds on the right bank we had challenging fish removal, trying to improve techniques for this type of situation—problem was in the three culverts. We had 15 hours of fish removal. John—you need a custom net. Chris B—we got Chinook, sculpin, rainbows, maybe one coho. Chris J—it showed how much utilization of the habitat there was. Gene—could throw food out there for them to get them to come out.

Chris B—we were also successful in getting a new hire, Jarred, who is out with Hans at Eagle Rocks (M2) today.

YN Chewuch updates—we began construction in the last week of June at Eightmile Ranch, and we finished that and the RM 10 project on July 28th for the instream work. We had another week of cleanup. Flows were very high, but workable, and we started in side channels and as flows dropped moved to other sites. At RM 10 we were permitted to move the river from one side of the structure to the other side, but were unsuccessful on one side, so pulled the bulk bags and changed tactics. Instead of three ELJs, have two now, there was just too much flow, 300-350 cfs, saved it for the end, and it was the best we could do. Derek—how many sticks in two projects? Chris B—somewhere in the realm of 800-900. We also incorporated a few trees that blew over on the site in windstorms, which was a great opportunity to get really long trees with limbs.

John—will any of these logs move?

Chris—rotting is the first thing that will take place, tribe doesn't want them to move. They are heavily ballasted.

Derek—river left at Twisp Ponds is the same

Chris J—these are designed to provide habitat in place, not to replace process

Chris B—they are also designed to shed wood and boaters, and have "bumper" logs where current pulls you in and then pulls you back out.

John—would you remove any wood that does accumulate?

Chris B—wouldn't want to touch it

Gene—FS would want it to stay also

Chris B—as we pulled the cofferdams, within hours we had fish in the ELJs immediately, steelhead juveniles, a variety of sizes

At Eightmile, we have almost 7 acres to replant, FS has some work to do first, and we will start the process this week with hog fuel (bigger pieces of wood chips), planting will take place in October at both sites, then they'll be essentially done.

Chris J—we have a free source of wood waste that we would like removed from one of our properties. It is wood waste from Wagner Mill, and we have done grow and chemical tests and it's good clean material.

Chris B—we will have a tour at the Bromas Creek road decommission, Eightmile Creek, and RM 10 time permitting,

Mike Anderson—the tour will also be looking at the road decommissioning work in the same vicinity, a good package for a tour in the area.

Gene—it is a good opportunity to come out and see some of the roads that we're taking out, and one that we've done already (Bromas).

Chris B—October 4th is the date

ChrisB—would be a full day

Gene—would also like to talk about possible funding sources, will need to be creative, FS dollars are dwindling, possibly partnerships

ChrisB—will be replanting the Eightmile Ranch and RM 10 sites at that time.

Chris J—Upper M2 update: MSRF and Reclamation are implementing two projects this year. One is at Whitefish Island (WFI) on Witte road on property acquired through SRFB funds. WFI starts today; there will be work in side channel, with one structure at the head of the island that is in DNR jurisdiction. We also have Okanogan County and DOT Right Of Way. KRCL LLC from Wenatchee is the prime contractor for the project. The site will be closed to the public, closed to the best of our ability, but we can schedule tours to see the site, will provide contractor notice.

The other project is smaller, the left bank portion of the WDFW Floodplain project. We will be placing wood on the left bank in anticipation for the larger project next year. A fair amount of staging is occurring on the right bank on the WDFW property off Old Twisp Highway; we will start reveg and weed control this year. Brian Fisher is the project manager for the projects for MSRF. We will be putting up signage this week at formal and informal put-ins. We are also coordinating with guides on locations and times.

Discussion—reminding people to pack out their trash when on the river.

Chris J—when people go out to look at the Chewuch and Twisp ponds wood placements, you will notice that they look very different than the ones we are putting in at Whitefish Island and WDFW. Ours are designed to shed wood and pick up wood, they do not have “bumper” logs, and they have very different design criteria that relies on sight distance and location for safety; they are also designed to break apart if they “fail”. It will be interesting to watch the different structures over time.

Chris J—on the M2, we are doing time-lapse photography as we build the WFI project. The intended audience is the legislature, UCSRB Board, public meetings, etc. Will be helpful in showing how these things go together.

Please coordinate trips to the work site rather than interrupting the contractor.

Charlie Snow—we will be doing surveys this week. How should we coordinate?

Chris J—KRCL is doing a Monday through Thursday workweek, call Brian to coordinate for both sites.

Presentation: Draft MRC Website

Chris Johnson—the Pyramid communication and outreach report said that we could do a better job of communicating with the public, that we need to strengthen the coordination among participants, and also have a central place where people could go to get information.

At first, we came up with a very ad hoc group for the MRC that worked very well for the first 9 years, but Tripp Somerville's report pointed out that the public is confused by our group.

We hired Michelle Dewey to come up with a straw dog for an MRC website with the idea that we want a central location that is a portal to other people's information. Information can go on the MRC site and people can go there to find out who to call to get information. MSRF has a source of funding and is happy to use the funding, and the web site is now up for comment,

Michelle Dewey—Chris brought me on to see if we could put some reality around one of the ideas in the Pyramid report, namely, to start establishing the MRC brand. Right now everything on the site is up for comment. I want to thank everyone who helped me get content for the site. Chris Butler did a great job of getting a lot of content, and many hands went into helping on this. I have tried to stay true to the recommendations in the report.

On the first page, I envision a porthole that gives a look at a rotating group of current projects.

There is a list of participants with links to all participating agency web sites, activities, resources, contact information.

The test version of the site is at www.methownet.com/mrc. Here, you can see the site, but it is only available through this link.

Chris—we need to know how people feel about having an MRC web site, about being listed as a participant, etc. Whether there is a general feeling that this is okay or not.

John—seems very innocuous, nothing controversial. Seems like we should proceed and see how it goes, have guidelines for the material that goes up

Chris B—it is a great way to get information to answer people when they ask us questions about other projects, have passed it around, folks in Toppenish are very supportive. It's a great extension of what we're doing.

Ken Bevis—people still have control over their own content

Michelle—can have a consistent format, but the specific content is provided by the implementing entities
Discussion—linking to HWS, difficulties in keeping it current, keeping things consistent, linking to HWS to show people projects vs. giving people information to use right now,

Michelle—I found the “so what” factor is missing for layperson in HWS, missing the compelling information

Derek—hearing that there is general support for the project

Chris J—will send out an email with the beta link, will solicit comments until the end of the month.

Roundtable

Char Schumacher—We have the next step in the SRFB process in Chelan tomorrow, joint CAC will present ranked regional list. Sponsors have to “submit” SRFB applications in PRISM by Friday

Ken Bevis—steering committee for Salmon Celebration is working hard, meeting this afternoon.

I went to bull trout working group on Olympic Peninsula. I also went to the Elwha; they have an amazing monitoring program there. It is always good to go to other areas to see what is working there.

Discussion—steelhead reintroduction in the Elwha, lawsuit to prevent an inbred stock from being reintroduced there, now they will wait at least a year, complicated situation

John Crandall—lamprey 2012: completed Chewuch and the Twisp, the lamprey seem to be getting bigger, which means they are older, and that there are not as many younger ones, likely from fewer spawning.

The Methow Fish Guide is in press; we will have them by the next meeting

Group Discussion—DNR surplus land sale, unfortunate that protection options were not explored prior to sale decision, see if it makes minimum bid.

Gene Shull—Chewuch Field Trip on Chewuch road decommissioning on October 4th

Mike Anderson—we went on an interesting field trip in the Chewuch with Regional and Forest Fish bio, Regional Hydrologist, talked about the restoration opportunities there.

Gene—they are excited about the way we are doing the watershed wide road management plan, looking for funding for the watershed restoration process, good to meet folks out of the regional office

Mike—They are focused on the Eightmile watershed.

Also, last week I was on a trip on the west side with some of Senator Murray's office on a similar tour.

We are concerned about the departure of congressman Dicks, so we are trying to get Senator Murray ready to support regional restoration priorities. We are getting a number of her staff people out looking at various watershed and salmon recovery work.

Charlie Snow—we are in the heat of doing spring Chinook surveys. When you are doing fish removal projects, we would like to sample, and we can provide crews, equipment, etc
John—it is great link to get the WDFW and USGS to do this, they know what they're doing
Charlie—we would like to use these opportunities to tag the wild Chinook and steelhead

Chris Butler—in regard to lamprey—at every single site at the Eightmile Ranch project, we found lamprey, including large boulder habitat and other places where we didn't expect them.
New hire for Yakama Nation came from WDFW in the Hanford reach; he has a strong fish background.
Eagle rocks M2 project started this morning; they started fish removal early.

Michelle Dewey—please send MRC website comments/ideas by August 31st. Send comments to dewey@methow.com or call 509-699-9821. Website link: <http://www.methownet.com/mrc/>

Chris Johnson—MSRF Twisp Left update: the Interfluve/ Yakama Nation project resulted in the construction of three wood structures that are complete. We also were able to create a remnant oxbow wetland complex—we created a very interested structure on the previously hammered field that will be used for Watershed Watchers. We will be putting 600 plants in October. The complex is between the yellow barn and the upper end of the project site.

On MSRF Twisp right (Twisp Ponds), MSRF and Reclamation had previously worked on reconnecting the ponds, but we didn't have access to the intake ditch. This year we worked with YN and the landowner to rehab the site and removed 300 cy of material from the intake canal. The landowners are very happy with the work and the experience of working with the YN and MSRF. Their biggest complaint was the survey tape, but Hans went through and picked it up. Lloyd Logging was the contractor. The project went very well.

We have had some level of difficulty in showing people what restoration looks like. We are working with the MC stewardship committee on regular project tours to look at work sites, if others want to participate, bring others in, let Chris know and we can get more of these together.

Gene Shull—we have a bunch of wood available for salmon restoration, War Creek slide, likely everything within 50 ft of the road. Is in Late Successional Reserve (LSR), so no saws. Don't know if it will have to do a timber sale process.

Next MRC September 18th

Definitions of Commonly used Acronyms	
ANS	Aquatic Nuisance Species
AREMP	Aquatic and Riparian Effectiveness Monitoring Program
BEF	Bonneville Environmental Foundation
BO/BiOp	Biological Opinion
BPA	Bonneville Power Administration
CBFWA	Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority (pronounced "cubfwah")
CCFEG	Columbia Cascade Fisheries Enhancement Group (formerly Upper Columbia Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group)
CHaMP	Columbia Habitat Monitoring Program
CMZ	Channel Migration Zone
CREP	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
CSF	Community Salmon Fund
EDT	Ecosystem Diagnosis and Treatment
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FCRPS	Federal Columbia River Power System
FFFPP	Family Forest Fish Passage Program
FIA	Forest Inventory and Analysis program (USFS)
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
HGMP	Hatchery Genetic Management Plan
HPA	Hydraulic Project Approval
HSRG	Hatchery Scientific Review Group
HWS	Habitat Work Schedule
IMW	Intensively Monitored Watershed
IS	Implementation Schedule
ISEMP	Integrated Status and Effectiveness Monitoring Project
ISRP	Independent Scientific Review Panel
IT	Implementation Team
LW/LWD	Large Wood/Large Woody Debris
M2	Middle Methow (a project area defined as the reach between Winthrop and Twisp)
MaDMC	Monitoring and Data Management Committee (pronounced "madmac")
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRC	Methow Restoration Council
MSRF	Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation (pronounced "em-surf")
MVRD	Methow Valley Ranger District
MWC	Methow Watershed Council
MYAP	Multi-year Action Plan (also sometimes called the 3-year workplan)
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NPCC	Northwest Power and Conservation Council
OBMEP	Okanogan Basin Monitoring and Evaluation Program
OWL	Okanogan Wilderness League
PCSRF	Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (pronounced "Pacsurf")

PIBO	PACFISH/INFISH* Biological Opinion
PNAMP	Pacific Northwest Aquatic Monitoring Partnership
PUD	Public Utility District
QAQC	Quality Assurance, Quality Control
RA	Reach Assessment
RCO	(Washington State) Recreation and Conservation Office
REI	Reach-based Ecosystem Indicators (used in Reach Assessments)
RFEG	Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group
RM	River Mile
RPA	Reasonable and Prudent Alternative(s)
RTT	Regional Technical Team
SOW	Statement of Work
SPIF	Specific Project Information Form (used with the Corps ESA programmatic)
SRFB	(Washington State) Salmon Recovery Funding Board (pronounced "surfboard")
STEM Database	Status, Trend and Effectiveness Monitoring database at NOAA's Northwest Fisheries Science Center
UCSRB	Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board
USFS	US Forest Service
USGS	US Geological Survey
VSP	Viable Salmonid Population
WAT	Watershed Action Team (the MRC is our WAT)
WDFW	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
WNFH	Winthrop National Fish Hatchery
WWP-TU	Washington Water Project of Trout Unlimited (formerly Washington Rivers Conservancy)
YN	Yakama Nation

*PACFISH/INFISH The PACFISH/INFISH Biological Opinion (PIBO) Effectiveness Monitoring Program was initiated in 1998 to provide a consistent framework for monitoring aquatic and riparian resources on most Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands within the Upper Columbia River Basin. This 7-year status report gives our funding sources, partners, and the public an overview of past activities, current business practices, products and publications, and future program directions. It is designed to increase accountability and summarize our accomplishments during the initial phase of the program.