

Methow Restoration Council

June 19, 2012

Meeting Notes

Roundtable

Gene Shull—Forest Service: we are moving ahead with the Chewuch Transportation Plan; hope to have a Draft EA this fall. We are working with Yakama Nation to put wood in the Chewuch this summer at Eightmile. Field season ramping up.

Brian Fisher—MSRF M2 update: we've awarded the contract for Whitefish Island, we are planning on construction at the end of July. Also will be doing construction on the WDFW Floodplain site at the river left part of the project and we will also be removing remnants of MVID East dam.

Chris Johnson—MSRF: we turned in four applications to SRFB/Trib/BPA; the comments back from RTT was that three were well received, one needs more information, and one needs another funding source for match because Trib not interested. Trib has been questioning funding conservation easements and acquisitions at full yellow book values; we are looking at possibilities of buying behavior rather than properties and easements.

Jennifer Molesworth—Reclamation: we had the expert review panel process in Wenatchee for projects funded by BPA and Reclamation (includes fish accords). We made it through the look back, but not the look forward. Have been working on the look forward—the spreadsheet for all the projects that we will work on through 2018. We have gotten information from WDFW, USFS, for those on the expert panel, there is a doodle poll out for the next meeting to convene the expert panel. It will be in Twisp.

James White—UCSRB: there will be implementation monitoring this year, Theo Burgoon will be contacting project sponsors to set up one-on-one meetings to set that up.

Michael Notaro—WRS: Reclamation is doing adaptive management on three irrigation weirs on Beaver Creek. Landowners appear to be on board, and we will be moving forward.

Derek Van Marter—Jessica distributed the updated implementation schedule from 2011 on; take a look and make sure that all projects from this year on are on the list, not funding delineated like the expert panel is. It's our official work plan to the recovery plan that we send to NOAA fisheries; we do it in the Habitat Work Schedule. If something is missing, it needs to get into the HWS; talk to Char or Paula, Derek, or Jessica if you need help with that. We will do the final data dump to NOAA in July, so you have until the end of June to get your project in. I also distributed a list of project that were completed in 2011; if you completed a project and didn't see it on the list, then it probably has the wrong end date in HWS, and it needs to be fixed. Need to have as accurate a representation as possible. Take a look at those two things, and if you see something missing, let us know.

Hans Smith—Yakama Nation: we have a suite of projects implement in Chewuch this year; have one project on the Methow at Cannon Beach; you probably have seen the wood. We have also staged wood on the Twisp River at the MSRF site. We are also lining up M2 projects for next year, looking at recently acquired properties on Beaver Creek in 2013-2014. We are still accepting comments on Libby RA until the end of the month. We have an open position; contact for details.

Roy Beaty—BPA: there is an agreement in the works between WDFW, YN, and BPA for work on WDFW land with accord funds; we will be distributing a copy to non-accord partners, and it could be used as a model. The nature of the agreement is that it will be a partnership, co-sponsor agreement, not a landowner type agreement

Char Schumacher—Okanogan County: on Monday, there is a tour for completed projects in the Okanogan. SRFB/Trib applications are due the 29th, and we hope to have SRFB comments today

Jeri Timm—Trout Unlimited: the second annual Feast of Field and Stream will be on September 2nd at the Methow Cider House, more info to follow.

Kirsten Cook—OCD has hired a new conservation planner, will start July 16th. It is looking favorable for CREP funding for next year, starting July 1. Looking for newsletter articles for next newsletter, will be fair edition, 500-600 words, lots of pictures; deadline is July 23rd.

Chris Butler—Yakama Nation: RM 10 projects on the Chewuch are also slated this year, hope to have the flows come down.

Ken Bevis—WDFW: on behalf of Jason Lundgren CCFEG, they will be getting another AmeriCorps, will be an intern type position.

New boss, Carmen Andonaegui is starting to clarify some of the roles for work on our land, hope to have things better organized.

September 30th is the second annual salmon celebration; looking for info on how to beef up the fish part
John Crandall—the fish guide is in final draft, will go to print in a few weeks.

Lee Hatcher—the Watershed Council is finishing the water storage feasibility study, will present in July; we have a capital grant from the state; it will be funded. We are proceeding with organizational development to become an independent entity of some kind.

The Chewuch pipe project sponsored by WWPTU is proceeding; it will be a series of pipes and screens around Pearygin Lake and completing ditch piping from Winthrop to Bear Creek.

Mike Anderson, Wilderness Society and Gene Shull, USFS: Chewuch Transportation Plan Update

Mike—we are continuing to partner with MV Ranger District on watershed restoration in the Chewuch, working on the Chewuch Transportation Plan, outreach for their plan to change their 600 miles of roads in the Chewuch. We have been doing outreach over the last year, completed a report, and this year we are moving into implementation of some of the roadwork. We received a second year of funding from EcoTrust, some of which came from NOAA, to begin decommissioning in areas that will help with high priority areas that will benefit fish. Work this year will focus on the Eightmile drainage in the Chewuch. Several roads have been selected for decommissioning work. There is also some funding for FS to do design work on the decommissioning. Hope to bid and contract this year and implement late this year or early next field season. We also will be finishing the Chewuch Transportation plan and doing outreach on that with the FS. Hope to continue moving forward on the areas that are priorities, FS has not made decisions about all areas of the Chewuch, so focusing on the areas where they have made decisions (Eightmile and cub creek drainages). We are looking for feedback, possibilities of a field trip, partnership opportunities.

Derek—are you continuing on the same outreach path as you've been doing through the scoping?

Mike—we did a kind of pre-scoping this year, now they are working on the NEPA and public comment, FS will be taking over on the public outreach part; we will do some, but not to the extent as last year.

Gene—If you submitted comments through the scoping period, you will be on the list.

(PowerPoint Presentation)

Buck Road Decommissioning, in area of the Buck Forest and Fuels Project, includes all of Cub Creek, and about a third of the Eightmile Creek sub-watershed. We will be decommissioning this year and next year.

We were awarded \$80,000; and about 30% will go towards dimensioning. We will be removing five stream crossings, 2.3 miles of roads. Conservation Northwest will pay for decommissioning 1.2 miles.

Derek—will it be after the timber sale?

Gene—we are doing the 8 miles that are ready now, and then another 19 miles after the sale is over.

Jennifer—for the roads that are only closed but not decommissioned, will they be accessible to ORVs?

Gene—no; our new ORV plan specifies that they can only use roads that are specifically designated for that use

Gene—in the Buck area, we will remove about 35% of stream crossings, and about 27% of roads in riparian areas, about 17% of all roads in the drainage. Models show that 65% of sediment in Cub Creek comes from roads.

Chris J—will you be doing reveg along the riparian areas?

Gene—yes; there is a reveg plan, and weed control to protect the surface is an important piece of the restoration; we will not be leaving raw banks out there

Discussion—fill removal during decommissioning.

Gene—we will remove fill to make slopes consistent with valley slopes.

Derek—is this part of the logging outfit's budget?

Gene—this is totally separate from the logging; they will do additional road decommissioning in other areas. We will probably do most of the decommissioning next year.

Watershed priority process—we originally identify a 5th field watershed; we now have a national process to standardize the prioritization of watersheds and they scaled down to a 6th field watershed. The process has a set of criteria, based on species, road condition, etc

Eightmile Creek is the priority sub-watershed based on habitat and temperature input to the Chewuch.

We have a Watershed Action Plan (WAP). Eightmile Creek is critical habitat for all three listed species, and is an important cold water influence to the Chewuch. There are about 130 miles of roads in the sub-watershed. The priority activities are to reduce impacts from roads, stream flow/water storage, and protection.

Derek—so Chewuch Minimum Roads Analysis is zeroed in on Eightmile Creek?

Gene—for the immediate time, yes. For some pots of the money, we will be focused on Eightmile, for others we will be looking at other areas.

Kirsten—will you be contracting out?

Gene—yes, they will have to have the equipment and be registered in the Federal Contracting database

Robert Warren, Bonneville Environmental Foundation, and Tripp Somerville, Pyramid Communications: Methow Watershed Communication and Outreach Plan

Robert—overview of the BEF Model Watershed project; it is a long-term relationship, with work on community watershed restoration goals. We recognize that there is uncertainty; we will be working at the landscape scale. In all of our partnerships, the social side is where there is a lot of complications, and it deserves as much of a look as the technical side.

We have two watersheds in this region, the Entiat and the Methow. This is the second year in the Methow, and the idea of outreach and communication keeps coming up, especially as the work is scaling up, communication is a broader issue to protect the gains that you have made, need to be integrated into the community.

Tripp—Pyramid Communications is a strategic communications firm; we have been working for two decades in the northwest, work only with nonprofits and public agencies. We have been working in the Methow since last year with Jennifer Molesworth, John Crandall, YN folks, and UCSRB.

We were trying to understand how the community, particularly landowners and opinion leaders, view the work you are doing, to understand how it will be perceived over time.

Summary of research findings and implications—we spent a lot of time on qualitative research with the understanding that you are interested in data; really matters in the next step.

You folks speak a language that people on the outside are not as fluent in.

We looked at how groups are communicating about this work in the community and we looked at your communications materials; we also looked regionally.

We were trying to understand how others understand the work that you are doing. The findings were relatively consistent across the different people we talked to.

Summary of Research Findings

- When you talk about the work that you do, you talk about fish restoration, water quality, and job creation
- Communications are often technical and filled with data
- Focus is on project characteristics and cost—often at the expense of outcomes—tells a story that only a very sophisticated group can understand.

Tripp—we saw this in every source we looked at, but this builds a barrier

There are a lot of groups doing a lot of work with a lot of partners, but stakeholders are not getting a clear, consistent understanding of what is going on—seems fragmented from the outside, this causes people to draw their own conclusions

Consistent positive impacts of watershed restoration:

- Economic benefits
- Reducing erosion
- Improving water quality

Tripp—when you ask, them about the benefits, “fish” does not come up. Do they care? Fish restoration and fish recovery are a fact of life in this area, does not rise to a priority level when you look at the benefits.

Stakeholders recognize the collective effort; however, there is confusion about who is in charge
Interview participants can identify four or more groups at the table—they see a fragmented world. Three came up the most:

- Yakama Nation
- Methow Conservancy
- Bureau of Reclamation

Some people know about some things, but not seeing the big picture

Implications:

- Need clarity of who’s “in charge” of a collective effort
- Expand the frame of the positive impacts of watershed restoration
- Simplify the language
- Focus on the results of restoration
- Strengthen the consistency of the communication
- Recognize how funding and timelines make collaboration more important than ever
- Build relationships with key audiences (e.g landowners, media) for the long-term

Projects are viewed as transactions—deals have to be done with landowners, etc., then move on to the next one. But the more that people are with you for the long-haul, the better you will be over time. Need to strengthen long-term relationships. This can help forestall bad things and open up opportunities for new things.

Identifying who’s “in charge” is not about one person or organization having authority over others, but having someone who can get people the information they need, so they can understand and engage in the work if they want to

Communication and Outreach Plan:

Takes advantage of the cycle of restoration; people need to understand the cycle and it gives an opportunity to communicate, from design to monitoring.

What are we trying to accomplish? We want the audience to experience clear consistent communication, and to allow them to engage if they want to.

We don’t have to reach everyone—we just need our target audience, then they can carry the information for you and do some of the work for you.

Components of the Plan:

- Strategic assumptions
 - Recognize what people care about and start there—bridge the gap between what people care about and watershed restoration
 - There will always be problems, but anticipate concerns before they become bigger problems
 - Recognize that not everything can be controlled
 - Landowners require ongoing connections
 - An organized partnership is an effective partnership—things that are good for one organization are good for other organizations
 - Make the Upper Columbia effort a friend—take advantage of the regional resources
- Goals
 - Target audience: Build support for watershed restoration among landowners, opinion leaders, and the media
 - Increase benefits of the larger benefits

- Strengthen collaboration among watershed restoration partners
- Key audiences and messaging. Public relations events are not sufficient to maintain the relationships. Don't let activities govern things
 - Tier 1 Audiences (spend 75% of time communicating with these)
 - Landowners
 - Business owners
 - Local elected officials
 - Chamber of commerce, tourism, and real estate leaders
 - UCSRB
 - Tier 2 (25% of time)
 - Media
 - Local residents touched by restoration and conservation issues
 - Fishing, hunting, hiking, and outdoor recreation affinity groups
 - Message—plan is anchored in a message platform. Clarifies who you are talking to, get their attention, and allows you to have a more productive conversation
 - Treat the multiple personality disorder; decide and agree whose voice is really in charge
 - Reduce the technical information
 - Cut the clutter—say it and say it like you mean it
 - Prioritize your audiences. Meet them where they are. Pay as much attention to what they don't care about as what they do
 - “help me help you”—what's good for one is good for everyone

Elevator Statement: you have two minutes to get their attention so that you can have a longer conversation. Suggest something like this:

- Region is legendary for its natural beauty and strong sense of community. We all know someone who came for a visit and left dreaming about one day locating here.
- Healthy rivers are a fundamental part of this area. They're more than just pretty to look at; they are a critical economic engine.
- That's why dozens of groups and individual landowners are working together to protect and restore the Methow. Our economy and way of life depend on it.

Discussion—how to use the elevator speech, how not to talk like a scientist

Talking point Pillars:

- Restoring the Methow is more than an environmental imperative; it's an economic imperative
- Landowners are our most important partners and we want to protect them.
- Our work is making a positive impact.

Strategies:

There is a need to formalize the collaboration with partners for outside groups and stakeholders.

Collaborative has a larger common purpose

- Brand the partnership in a simple, straightforward way
- Train partners on messaging
- Create ways for UCSRB to solicit feedback and identify support/assistance needed

Create clear, plain language communication tools

- Review existing digital/print materials used by partners; align with message platform
- Build a library of reusable content to use and share with partners
- Work with UCSRB to identify additional data points demonstrating local economic impact

Strengthen ongoing relationships with landowners

- Collect contact information at every point of communication
- Conduct light but consistent communication
- Train three landowners as media spokespeople

Educate opinion leaders on positive benefits of restoration

- Conduct briefings
- Identify and train media spokespeople
- Collect quotes and recruit to write op-eds, letters to the editor, blog conversations
- Invite community leaders to speak at restoration events

Forge strong relationships with the media

- Conduct briefings and project site tours with key reporters
- Create press materials and rolling list of story ideas

- Strategies and tactics
- Timeline

Next steps:

John Sunderland—we are a very disparate group; we all have our own communications plans, it's very difficult for any government agencies to be strategic in a specific area

Tripp—the disparate nature, with multiple voices, is a huge strength. We are suggesting that there is a way to strengthen the partnership and orchestrate alignment of the messages where you need to with support, without losing the individual. It's about orchestrating an alignment without losing the individuality.

Derek—each member has a strength in their messaging; here we see the sweet spot of opportunity to strengthen the overall message

John S—we need to make sure that the strategic steps that are needed are not missed. Have an opportunity to reinforce each other's message and leverage the opportunity to communicate with landowners.

John C—there is an overall consistency in what we are doing, which is improve the ecological function and health of the watershed. I hope that through this communication groups are able to help each other.

Robert—there is precedence for this in other areas, and that offers some hope

Tripp—the plan makes clear that you don't have to do everything at once; you can put the pieces together, sequence matters and makes it more manageable. Need to build momentum for the larger group. Need to be coherent in the approach. Need to have consistent messaging as a baseline.

- Convene partner meeting to launch unified approach
- Identify roles for partners and get on the same page
- Hold message training—people need support to be able to communicate effectively; tangible value-add that we can give each other; could do it in half a day, learn to say it in your own words, embed it in the consciousness. Michael—is this assumed to be the existing group?

Tripp—assume that it is fluid, could include a number of groups

- Review and refine existing communication materials

Tripp—would like to get a group where we do the first steps

Volunteers:

1. Chris J
2. John C
3. Jennifer
4. Michael
5. Hans
6. Lee
7. John S
8. Don
9. Chris B
10. Char
11. Jeri
12. Ken

Tripp—want this group to solve problems and do things. Jennifer will convene the group within the next month. When you come to the meeting with a statement of what your role in outreach and communication is currently, and how you think that the work you do can add to the collective work.

Derek—would encourage people to think about what your interest in communication is and share so that people can get a sense

Tripp—encourage everyone to come to the meeting with the spirit of common purpose to articulate that common purpose differently than we have, build on what has worked and forgo the other. Then, you can work on the other next steps.

Robert—do you see value in outside facilitation for the meeting?

Jennifer—yes, especially to help us with the first meeting to get past what we've done before.

Chris J—should it be separate from the MRC?

Tripp—yes, look at it as another project that needs to be done.

Chris J—think it should be before the next MRC

Robert—would there be value in bringing in an outside person with experience in this?

John S—think that would really help us take it from the abstract to the concrete on the ground.

Ken—see this as identifying a role for the outreach committee

Robert—will talk about bringing in the facilitator and/or outside expertise

Mike A—will talk to FS about getting district representation at the meeting

Tripp—in the meeting poll, giving permissions for organizations to delegate participation

John S—need it to be a manageable group in order to get things done

Communications Plan and PowerPoint will be available for those who are interested

Adjourn

Next MRC July 17th

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.