

Methow Restoration Council

June 18, 2013

Participants:

Name	Organization/Affiliation
Charlie Snow	WDFW
Chris Butler	Yakama Nation
Chris Johnson	MSRF
Crystal Elliot	Trout Unlimited
Don Phillips	Local Landowner
Gene Shull	Forest Service
Hans Smith	Yakama Nation
Jarred Johnson	Yakama Nation
Jeri Timm	WWP-TU
Jessica Goldberg	MSRF
John Crandall	MRC
Joy Juelson	UCSRB
Lynda Hofmann	WDFW
Michelle Dewey	Dewey Consulting LLC
Richard Vacirca	Forest Service

Meeting Notes:

John Crandall—Outreach Update: we had National Fishing day, which was a wild success. Gene Shull—we had between 300 and 400 people including parents, the kids caught a few 9 pounders. John—the coordination came together late, but it did come together.

We also finished about 5 or 6 Watershed Watchers programs in May, mostly elementary school K-6; we are trying to mesh with the school's science standards, but they change every year. We have a curriculum guide that we are in the process of refining. It is a series of sessions or programs, activities that can be run so that different people can step in to teach. We also started doing programs at the North Cascades Base Camp. We are in a fundraising phase, with close to 10-12 days per year of programs. The teachers really like it, the kids run around with field guides that they fill in.

There is a date set for the Salmon Celebration in September; talk to Chris Johnson or Amanda Jackson for more info. TwispWorks and the Interpretive Center will have their own Harvest Festival, so there will be two separate events this year

I am almost done with the Twisp Ponds Discovery Guide; we will have stations for people to explore. There will be a map to follow; it will be a self-guided way to get information. I hope to have it done and printed by next week, they will build a kiosk near the entrance for the guides.

MRC calendar—we are working with Methow Arts, it will be an 18 month calendar that will start in August of this year. Each month will have a theme and a local youth art picture. This year will be a little different, will still be art with a blurb, but will each month will also have a link to the MRC web site; there will be more information in the web site that links to the calendar. I have gone through and sorted out the 18 months, emails have gone out to some; we're trying to have new content, ideas and themes have been suggested to the month sponsors, will not have all 18 months of the web site links ready at the beginning. Chris Butler—will you keep the fish info? People really liked that. John—yes

Chris Johnson—we participated in the Woodland park Zoo Living NW event; we went to talk about the relationship between salmon and bears. Didn't make a lot of contacts, a few educators took curriculum back. The weather affected turnout.

Gene—I have been getting a lot of questions about the large wood going in. ChrisJ—we are working with the YN on signage; Hans has been putting together signs that will be going up by the end of summer, will have consistent look and content, will put them at put-ins, will have a very consistent message. Jennifer Molesworth—it would be good to get some information at the FS Front Desk

John Crandall—Monitoring Update: the long anticipated Methow Monitoring plan to go into the Recovery Plan is really close to having a first draft. Still adding maps and tables, but the content is largely there. Eventually it will go to the Upper Columbia Board for approval and incorporation in the Recovery Plan. In Wenatchee and Entiat, they went a different route, primarily because ISEMP took over. We hope to have recovery metrics, get numbers that NOAA can use for delisting, VSP parameters of abundance, productivity, spatial diversity and structure. We can't have recovery in the Methow alone, has to be basin-wide, but the monitoring is at the subbasin level. In the Methow, we are looking at the core indicators and seeing if we are monitoring those, and we are pretty good except for bull trout—we don't have a good handle on the productivity of the population, redd surveys primarily. I hope to have a draft by the end of the month; then it will go to MaDMC of the RTT, and I hope to have the final draft by the fall. We are taking a different approach than Wenatchee and Entiat.

Within the monitoring plan, included a chapter on data management; it is kind of all over the place, and it is hard to imagine it occurring anytime soon, but we do have a lot of nifty databases that different projects are plugging into, USGS, WDFW, Ecology, all valid data depositories, but they are spread out. There are a lot of databases that house the Methow Data. The Bureau is working with the University of Idaho, which has a tool that can look at the different databases and extract information; it is specifically designed to extract data in relation to productivity in response to restoration. They are getting close—beginning to test it, and they will know in a few months what it is going to look like.

Jennifer—at the last IT meeting, WDFW's Jeremy Cram talked about something similar; is it redundant?

Joy—Jeremy said that he is trying to coordinate with Newsom.

John—they are aware, and it is unfortunate that it didn't happen earlier. They are both lifecycle efforts; the WDFW model right now is slated just for the Wenatchee, but a lot of the data collection is similar here to the Wenatchee

Joy—people seem to be really excited about it.

ChrisJ—we've been talking about developing a rapid monitoring of fish use in wood, both natural and placed; any plan to include that?

John—monitoring programs come and go, but you can use the different information to address VSP questions, some of the most long-term are hatchery based, but the data can be used. We don't have funding assurance for 10 years; I think we will need to update the monitoring plan every two years and incorporate things that have arisen and things that have dropped off. Need to relate the monitoring to the recovery plan. The large wood is proposed but not going, so it is too soon to incorporate it. It has to be occurring and have a study plan before it gets included.

ChrisJ—we are trying to create methods to communicate the monitoring with the public

Discussion—importance of getting the information out to the public in an accessible form, monitoring vs. outreach

Joy Juelson—UCSRB Update: SRFB/Trib funding process in a 6 step funding process, and we are currently in step 4 – the phase when sponsors are revising proposals . We had presentations last week. We have about a month until final proposals are due for regional review on July 12th. Project sponsors will get comments back from Trib/RTT/State Review panel this week. Trib comments are can be more direct regarding whether they will fund a project. Sponsors will get comments , because there are many reviewers the may seem contradictory and we may be able to help put them into context if needed, Some of the RTT members are also on the Trib Comm. . We had a great turnout in the Okanogan and Methow, two state review panel members, approx. 10- 12 RTT members, also had Don from the CAC at the presentations and tours; very helpful. We had 22 presentations last Wednesday, went quickly, RTT was impressed with some of the presentations. CAC presentations will be August 22nd to the Okanogan CAC.

ChrisJ—in the past, we have looked at the Trib as the 15% match to SRFB, perhaps we should look at the SRFB as the match to Trib?

Joy—only if you think that you have a golden project that Trib will love to fund. They do not have to spend their funds every year like SRFB and seem to save their funds for the higher priority projects that they believe will move the dial. There won't be any BPA funds left over this year for the open solicitation.

The state legislature has yet to pass a budget, the capital spending budget has passed but the budget to fund capacity has not yet passed. There is a potential for the State budget process to hold up funding for UCSRB funded efforts if the legislature doesn't pass a budget by July 1st

The annual Upper Columbia Implementation Schedule update is due Friday June 28th; we sent out an implementation schedule, project sponsors need to look at their projects and make sure that they are correct in the implementation table and update them in HWS if they are not by Friday June 28th. If you have projects in the HWS, make sure they are up to date, if you need help ask Joy. We will have training on HWS products in a few weeks; it can make maps, create graphs, identify metrics, etc. I will send out an update of when it will be.

Jennifer—in the past someone from MRC has coordinated this effort, is someone doing that this year?

Discussion—each project sponsor needs to coordinate with Joy, need to look at the results collectively as the MRC at the July meeting

Joy—last time I was here, there was a request for guidance on the landowner liability legislation from the board, but the conclusion was that they cannot do that without legal counsel. The state is working on a fact sheet, but it isn't ready yet. I have provided one viewpoint from David Price at WDFW; it is one viewpoint, and not necessarily the board's viewpoint. He and UCSRB staff suggests that we need to track benefits and detriments of the legislation to see how it goes.

Hans—is there a staff person at state level that is taking information on the effects of the legislation?

Joy—not sure who is tracking this at the state level; I will see if there is a point person

ChrisJ—we have modified our landowner access agreements to include information on the legislation, and we have also modified our projects to conform to the legislation. We are taking the conservative approach.

Jennifer—I will be interested to see if the RTT comments regarding the 100-year design standard affect projects and technical approval

Discussion—RTT role, targeted different than the open solicitation, a lot of discussion on the role of the RTT in the open solicitation on trying to reduce real or perceived conflicts of interest, clarify roles

Joy—I have been in meetings with with other lead entities around the state learning how different Lead Entities in other basins to see how they operate.

Joy—the next UCSRB Board meeting in two days (June 20th) in Bridgeport after the Chief Joseph ribbon ceremony. I also wanted to mention that the Board staff was a chief collaborator in the forest health initiative that launched last week. There is a lot of potential to overlap the FS restoration priorities and the salmon recovery priorities.

Richard Vacirca—Presentation: Okanogan Wenatchee National Forest Whole Watershed Restoration: Concepts of natural process and assessing impairment at sub-watershed scales

Richard—in our region there is a big push by the regional office to move toward a more unified landscape approach, whole watershed concept. We are laying the groundwork for some of these concepts, next step will be working on the details, then will be looking at the procedures for developing the landscape planning arenas. Watershed Health and concept of impairment described by the EPA and the Clean Water Act. Essential Ecological Attributes all work together; we evaluate to try to tease out stressors and indicators.

The Forest Service has been focusing our management efforts using a Watershed Condition Framework process. It is a forest-wide assessment on a 6-code watershed scale. It has three basic steps: (1) watershed condition assessment, (2) develop and implement, and (3) tracking effectiveness (hasn't been developed yet). In the Methow, Eight Mile Creek on the Lower Chewuch was the watershed selected; we are trying to improve watershed condition class. The road piece is usually causing the majority of the process impairments in every watershed we look at. Roads drive the impairment on the hydro-geomorphic (physical) piece—we see artificial increases in drainage networks and negative effects on stream channels, which leads to negative effects on both water quality condition/function and biological condition/function.

We put the concepts together in a Watershed Restoration Framework—the principles

The channel is going to adjust to the input of runoff and sediment, and it probably isn't going to adjust for the better.

Climate Change considerations—predict hotter and drier, greater chance for more intense precipitation events, greater chance of more intense runoff events—so we don't want to have conditions that suffer from these increased events. We have developed a priority restoration scale model: adaptation for road cause impairments. Restoration methods priorities, and identified percent impairment reduced by the method. Decommission, relocate, hydrologic closing, and upgrading are the options for restoring depending on the options available.

We are choosing to engage active management on a section of land (watershed or sub-watershed) for the purposes of achieving restoration

Restoration planning process includes the following: subwatershed assessment; watershed objectives; identify actions

We will be using existing data sets to find the geomorphic indicators, look at the factors influencing the functions of stream power and sediment load, look at the relationships and the mechanisms, and then we will have a number of evaluation measures that show the responses, and then focus on the selection criteria. We want to use concepts and tools to break down the sub-watersheds

Water quality assessment; we need to talk about how much sediment is being produced, and we need to look at a scale of magnitude; we can look at subwatershed or catchment scale, a “look back” at 303d water quality standards.

Biological conditions—where have we altered these components. Tier 1 is to evaluate where the focal species are distributed, Tier 2 is to evaluate what is the condition of habitats supporting focal species life history.

Jennifer—is the human access on the roads, and the related issues of trampling, camping, driving in riparian, and more people all the time; is that addressed?

Richard—we are zoomed in, but we show that we have some of that data that we can put in there to feed back and help in the management decision

John—what about introduced species like brook trout?

Richard—that goes back to watershed action plans, may be essential projects in there that address that; it becomes a separate biological restoration piece.

Analysis tools—starts with a big data pull. NRIS AqS, Roads Data Layer, Fish Distribution all feeds into NetMap or something else in the future—processing and analysis system. If we put the assessment parameters together, we can identify where roads are causing these varying degrees of impairment.

If we put all these factors of concern together, can we prioritize restoration actions in the watershed?

The forest is working on the forest restoration strategy—it is really a vegetation strategy, they can look at fires, spotted owl habitat, and we are trying to look at that and see how it works on the hydraulic side. It is difficult to merge the fish data, which is linear, with the vegetation data, which is polygon-oriented

Crystal Elliot—if the restoration plan calls for vegetation restoration and road removal, how do you time the road removal if you need the road for access to maintain the plantings?

Richard—it is a management sequencing exercise to make sure that the needed things happen in the right sequence. There are also places where the fish and the vegetation restoration have nothing to do with one another. Currently, we are working on stratifying and prioritizing sub-watersheds across the Okanogan Wenatchee National Forest. We are also looking at integration opportunities between aquatic and terrestrial priorities for a landscape selection process; we are looking at where the appropriate level/points of integration are along the way

Next steps are to develop method for watershed selection, refine and test indicator metrics, identification of roads, analysis tool, develop validation procedures, internal and external steps, process for how to decide what to do with problem roads

Jennifer—seems like it will take a long time to work through it all, there are a lot of problems, millions of acres, hundreds of miles of problem roads. It seems like the scale of effort isn't there yet to make a difference. Does seem like it is coming together more?

Richard—think we will get more transparency of what decisions we are making and why. We will be able to go at a certain pace, and we hope to focus and pick up the pace more. On the vegetation side, their funding is bigger and more certain, so it is on us to make sure that we keep moving forward and

make the right decisions. Internally, we will have to deal with the needs for the roads, which is the gorilla in the room

Jennifer—those are the tough choices that we are going to have to deal with if we want to make a difference

Gene—we are getting direction to be more efficient, to work on one subwatershed at a time, to focus and make a difference there. Little Bridge Creek is probably our next one. We have a system where the high priority impaired watersheds surface and we go there next.

Jennifer—will there be a tie to prioritization with the Upper Columbia effort?

John—you can look at the restoration efforts that have occurred downstream on private land that will benefit the efforts on the forest upstream, like in Beaver Creek

Richard—it becomes complimentary, looking for weighting of areas in the recovery plan

Charlie Snow—it seems like roads are taking a lot of the blame, but what about adjacent land use, like a road through an intact forest vs. a road through a logged forest?

Jennifer—and roads have the added impact of the use that occurs because it is there

Richard—one problem with the NetMap program is that it doesn't pull in the road network that is non-forest; it is one of the problems that we don't like about it. If you can get us data, we can look at the mechanisms

Charlie—seems like adjacent land use would be a primary factor

John—base geology as well

Gene—one of the factors in the model looks at the percentage of non-forest land within the sub-watershed

Richard—some of the subwatershed is that we are trying to look at it from the process perspective; we need to manage it from the top end, then set it up to work on the adjacent pieces

ChrisJ—if you remove a road and the lands surrounding it are trashed, then you won't get the restoration that you expect and you will quickly lose faith in your model

Joy—one question is how the salmon recovery community can interface with this effort. I think you also need to come talk to the RTT; some education needs to happen. We need to educate our own community on these issues on how we can move together to get these things done. I'm also wondering if you have other funding sources to do this work?

Richard—we did a road decommissioning EA for the Upper Peshastin; now it is on the books, and includes around 55 miles. Because it is a priority watershed, we can use legacy road and trails funding, and have shifted dollars to there, but we will also need to look at other sources of funding. We are trying to step back and make sure that we are technically and procedurally sound in our decision making and processes.

Jennifer—road analysis is on all of the lists as a really high need. I hope the WATs and UCSRB process can help with the efforts. Does it also have to align with the vegetation management process at the same time?

Richard—veg doesn't necessarily manage on a subwatershed basis, but there are other ways to interact with them. I'm hoping to get feedback from the WATs on the planning

Lynda Hofmann—are you in dialogue with the private timber owners. Do you have road use agreements?

Richard—we do have to interface with them and figure out what the best approach will be. It will have to progress over time

Jennifer—Weyerhaeuser is a really robust potential partner too

Crystal—it seems like a prime opportunity to integrate this with the Forest Health Initiative. There are a lot of interests at the table, and it seems like a great opportunity to provide funding for this type of work, they also will get data for the private lands because the timber companies are also participating

Richard—I hope this will turn into a more proactive planning approach; it will help with collaborative efforts, and it helps put together the stories of these watersheds and be strategic also in not making things worse. There is definitely opportunity there.

Roundtable

Jennifer Molesworth—Bureau of Reclamation: we will have a busy summer. We have M2 on WDFW and on surrounding land, and we started the culvert part of the project yesterday. MSRF is project sponsor. Chris J—we started at the out of water upland culvert at the north end of that part of the project

Jennifer—we are also working with TU and MVID and Dept of Ecology to transition MVID out of the Twisp River. They are trying to line up the remaining bits of funding, management of water rights. It is a very tight timeline, big part of the funding from Ecology is the next biennium, and they will have a different system on the West side by early 2015; a mix of pipeline and wells.

Our other big project is Chewuch Pipe, looking good for construction this fall.

We are also working on the planning for Twisp River Floodplain targeted project; we are having regular meetings, starting to work on concept design and preliminary design. It will be a reach-scale project in the Twisp.

John Crandall—Monitoring: We've got surveys planned next week from Twisp to Carlton, the Silver Reach, developing the topo surface for modeling runs. This is the big first step in the Reach Assessment for the Silver Reach, working with the Bureau. We are also beginning to work on the Lamprey restoration guide, working on framework and partner development. John—if you get an email for me regarding the calendar, please let me know ASAP.

Gene Shull—Forest Service: we will do some road decommissioning this summer in Cub Creek. The YN Large Wood project is going in this summer. We also have the South Summit timber sale on the loup loup. The Chewuch Transportation plan is about half done, and we got some money to finish it; we hope to decommission about 120 roads in the Chewuch. We put in for funding to do road decommissioning in Eight Mile creek. Mission veg management project from Buttermilk to Libby creek. We will get all new management at the forest this fall. We are also advertising a fish bio position in Leavenworth.

We are planning two aquatic restoration projects with Treasured Landscape—on Goat Creek and Lower Early Winters Creek. We are looking for partners, especially on Early Winters—we hope to move campground away from the creek, put in some bioengineering. Chris J—as the adjacent property owner, keep us in the loop. Gene—we will. Goat Creek project is probably first, with implementation in 2015 and Early Winters implementation 2016-17.

Crystal Elliot—Trout Unlimited: I have started with TU's watershed restoration program. I am currently working on abandoned mines, looking for partners, information on abandoned mines, and interaction with fish bearing streams. My current focus is on Chelan, Okanogan, and Snohomish counties. One data gap is knowing where fish are.

Hans Smith—Yakama Nation: we have co-written a press release with MSRF for the signage campaign; it will go out when we meet with the towns on putting signs in the town river access points.

Jarred Johnson—Yakama Nation: if anyone knows people that recreate in the Big Valley reach, please ask them to go to the MRC web site to fill out the survey.

Lynda Hofmann—WDFW: if you are thinking of doing projects that need an HPA, please give me information about it early and often. ChrisJ—I recently suggested to WDFW that before we initiate a new project that we all sit down and identify a team that will work on the project, something that can be budget neutral

Chris Butler—Yakama Nation: we will be starting construction on the RM 11.75-13 project on the Chewuch second week of July; we have a short window for construction. We had a meeting yesterday where we released the conceptual design to the FS for the next stretch of the river

Charlie Snow—WDFW: we will start remote sampling and PIT tagging as the water comes down, and we can also help with fish removal for your projects. We will be putting in a PIT antenna on Early Winters Creek, need to coordinate on it with the planned work on the Campground. Gene—we will coordinate with you when the time comes.

Chris Johnson—MSRF: we have four construction projects in the M2 and Beaver Creek this summer; we are also working on two projects at Elbow Coulee on the Twisp River; also four acquisitions. We also will be taking on the Beaver Project from the Conservancy; we will be working on a 5-year funding plan. If anyone knows of any good matches; we are interested in taking it on in relation to the water quality and salmon restoration benefits. We have also been talking with the Colvilles on moving the project to the Tonasket watershed.

We have finally made it through the Adaptive Management Framework process with WDFW on the M2 project. It was an interesting process; it will take a few years to see how it works out and any unanticipated benefits.

We are also working on the Twisp River Floodplain property; the acquisition is moving forward. The larger project is a targeted project through BPA, will be working from the Reynaud property to the MVID fish screen. Jennifer—it is almost 8/10 of a mile of river

Next MRC Meeting July 16th.

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
CAC	Citizens Advisory Committee
CAO	Critical Areas Ordinance
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
FFFP	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
SEPA	State Environmental Policy Act
SMP	Shoreline Management Plan
SOAL	State Owned Aquatic Lands
SOW	Statement of Work
SPIF	Specific Project Information Form (used with the Corps ESA programmatic)
SRFB	(Washington State) Salmon Recovery Funding Board (pronounced "surfboard")
SRP	State Review Panel (for SRFB project applications)
STEM Database	Status, Trend and Effectiveness Monitoring database at NOAA's Northwest Fisheries Science Center
UCSRB	Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board
TRT	Technical Recovery Team (NOAA)
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
WDNR	Washington Department of Natural Resources
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.