REGIONAL TECHNICAL TEAM MEETING
FINAL DECEMBER MEETING SUMMARY

Date: Wednesday, 8 December 2021
Time: 9:00 AM to 12:30 AM
Location: Webinar

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Members Present: John Arterburn, Kate Terrell, John Crandall, Catherine Willard, Brandon Rogers, Tom Kahler, Jeremy Cram, Carlos Polivka, Joe Lange, and Tracy Hillman (Chair)

Others Present: Tracy Bowerman/UCSRB, Ryan Niemeyer/UCSRB, Dave Hecker/UCSRB, Sarah Walker/UCSRB, Jason Lundgren/CF, Kristen Kirkby/CF, Steve Kolk/USBR, Jamie Cleveland/BPA, Mark Ingman/CCD, Ryan Williams/CCD, Mike Kaputa/CCNRD, Aaron Rosenblum/CF, Joe Connor/BPA, Mark Pacold/RioASE, and Kyle Goeke/BPA

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Agenda Items for January Meeting:
- SRFB 2022 schedule (Dave Hecker)
- RTT review draft language for the Design Review process (Mike Kaputa)
- Approve RTT scoring criteria
- Review updated REI metrics
- Future: Overview of a spring Chinook bioenergetics model (Tracy Bowerman; maybe Jan)
- Future: Regional barrier prioritization update (Robyn Pepin and Kristin Kirkby; maybe Feb)

Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the meeting. RTT members reviewed and approved the draft agenda. There were no changes to the agenda. The November meeting summary was approved as drafted. Members reviewed actions items and provided updates.

Action Item Updates:
- Carlos Polivka and Tracy Hillman reached out to Jeff Kline and Robby Fonner. Jeff and Robby are in a holding pattern until Melody contacts them.
- Dave Hecker spoke with Tracy Hillman, Brandon Rogers, and others about possible agenda items for the joint debrief meeting. UCSRB staff will organize a joint SRFB grant-round debrief meeting with sponsors, RTT, and CAC (see below).
- RTT members reviewed the IP layers and Tracy Bowerman compiled comments. The next steps are to follow up with Damon Holzer at NOAA to make some slight modifications with the IP model.
- John Crandall reviewed the pool description in the REI tables and identified some larger questions/issues associated with pools.

New/Updated Action Items:
- John Crandall, Tracy Hillman, and Ryan Niemeyer will continue to contemplate how best to characterize the area/frequency of pools and bring back a recommendation to the group in January. Follow up questions to contemplate: are gradient and wood sufficient surrogates for

how much of the channel is composed of pools? Is it possible to use pool length given the data available? John Crandall, Tracy Hillman, and Ryan Niemeyer will continue their review of available data, literature, and background on this topic.

- John Crandall and Tracy Hillman will provide the RTT with the two papers regarding pools (Fox and Bolton 2007 and Peterson et al. 1992).
- Ryan Niemeyer will review reach assessments and provide a summary of what pool metrics were used.
- Tracy Bowerman will make sure updated RTT operating procedures are on the UCSRB website.

UCSRB Updates

2021 SRFB Grant Round Debrief Meeting

The 2021 Grant round debrief will take place in early January 2022. Dave Hecker will send out a new Doodle poll that reflects this. The meeting will take place in the evening so CAC members can participate (possibly 5:00-7:00 PM). Dave Hecker is working on the 2022 grant round timeline and will present that at the January RTT meeting.

Action Items:
- For those interested in attending the 2021 grant round debrief, please fill out that Doodle poll.
- Dave Hecker will send out the agenda and follow up with Tracy Hillman regarding the 2022 grant round timeline.

UCSRB Director's Meeting

The Directors meeting of the Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board will take place tomorrow (Thursday, 12/09/21) from 9:00 am - 12:30 pm. Agenda and packet materials can be found at: [Meeting Materials Archive – Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board (ucsrb.org)](#)

Review and Approve MaDMC's Prioritization Data Gaps

Ryan Niemeyer presented an overview of changes made to the MaDMC data gaps list. Changes to the format of the list included creation of separate tabs for prioritized data gaps (with the need for level 2 and reach assessments shown in notes) and a separate tab for all-Hs. The intention was to make the original list more streamlined and make specific types of data gaps easier to access. During the meeting, several data gaps were archived, but most were identified as gaps or progress toward filling them was ongoing. If there were updates toward filling specific gaps, those updates were written in the "Notes" column. The tiers of all projects remained the same.

John Arterburn thanked Ryan for making these organizational changes, which should help make the list more accessible and allow partners to search in the prioritization tab when applying for support of monitoring projects in SRFB grant rounds. John noted that as currently written, it is hard to chart a trajectory to address many of the large, unwieldy data gaps. It would be helpful to break them into manageable chunks so that people can be pointed to specific pieces that are fundable and manageable.

Ryan noted that the plan is to move to a model of having various tabs for broad topics and within those tabs that break out broad, overarching gaps into specific pieces that can be addressed as individual projects. The Data Gaps list is something that can be used by sponsors when applying for funding, primarily from SRFB, and to identify where data gaps exist and where sponsors should target their efforts.

Tom Kahler mentioned that some of the data gaps have been answered. Ryan said the best way to plug information into some of these gaps would be for folks to go through the list and identify which data gaps have been addressed (in notes in the spreadsheet) and then send the notes and any supporting information to him and Carlos.

The All-H data gaps are questions that were identified through the All-H summary process that Greer Maier completed and may be useful for folks to keep tabs on but would not necessarily be projects that sponsors within the UC region try to tackle. Many are well outside the scope of the UC region.

Action Items:
- Review the data gaps list and identify in the comment column which gaps have been addressed. Please send comments and supporting information to Ryan Niemeyer.

Decision:
- ***RTT approved the UC data gaps list version 2021.***

Project Design Review Draft Language and Process

Mike Kaputa (CCNRD) requested time with the RTT to discuss how the RTT would like to bolster review of design projects. Mike took this on because two CCNRD projects (Nason RM 9.4 and Nason RM 12) were projects that the RTT identified as designs they would like the opportunity to see and provide feedback on during the design process.

Mike said CCNRD will suggest a design review process and then pilot the process for the region. CCNRD will draft a proposal for RTT to review at their January meeting after discussing details at the upcoming Wenatchee WAT meeting. Mike came to the RTT to get more feedback about what the RTT is looking for. The RTT has expressed interest in reviewing the designs for the two Nason projects, but CCNRD would like to pin down some specifics.

Mike asked, when would the RTT like to be involved in the process (e.g., at the beginning, throughout, or at the end)? It would help CCNRD to get more clarity about where the RTT would like to be engaged in the design process.

Tracy Hillman suggested that the RTT could follow the general approach of the BPA process. Jamie Cleveland said typically, BPA does at least two check ins: one at the 15% first design concept and preliminary alternatives to explain the basis for the direction of the project; then another check-in at 80% design. Sarah Walker explained that the BPA process is folded into the HIP process. Under current guidance, RTT reviews designs at 15% and then again at 30% but does not score at these meetings. Then RTT does a final review and scoring at the permit-ready stage somewhere around 60-80%. Thus, BPA typically asks the RTT for two early reviews and then a final scoring at 60-80% design. Tracy Hillman recommended the RTT provide feedback during the early design stage (15%) and another around the 60% stage.

Mike asked, does the RTT want to apply the same approach to all projects in the region, or just those that involve SRFB funds? What about design projects that are funded by another source but then the sponsor applies for SRFB implementation funding?

Tracy Hillman responded that the RTT and/or CAC have indicated they will identify which projects they would like to review during the design process. Typically, large, complex projects will be selected. It is

unlikely smaller-scale projects such as culvert replacements will be identified by the RTT or CAC for review. As for design projects funded through other entities, it is up to the project sponsor to determine whether they want RTT input during the design process. If the sponsor intends to seek SRFB funding for implementing these projects, it would be in their best interest to seek input from the RTT even though the designs are funded by a different entity. And, as before, a sponsor can request RTT review of designs, even if the RTT (or CAC) has not identified specific design projects as ones they want to review. Tracy Hillman also reminded everyone that just because the designs receive RTT input, that input does not guarantee the project will receive implementation funding; however, it should improve the likelihood of receiving implementation funding.

Mike asked, is the RTT interested in establishing a formal or regular protocol when a sponsor asks only for construction money when the RTT has had no input on how the projects were designed? Do we as a region want to build this into a formal process?

Tracy Hillman responded it is probably not necessary to establish a formal protocol for reviewing designs that are funded by other entities. It is up to the project sponsor on whether they would like RTT input on those design projects. That said, it is beneficial to project sponsors to receive technical review of large, complex projects during the design process, regardless of who is funding the designs. He said the RTT encourages check-ins, as do the HCP Tributary Committees and PRCC Habitat Subcommittee.

Mike said the recommendation for design review did not come from the sponsors, it came from RTT. So, what is the expectation from the RTT?

Tracy Hillman said the expectation is that the RTT will have an opportunity to provide feedback on design projects they (or the CACs) have identified as projects needing review or input. Again, the RTT focus is on larger more complex projects. It would be unfortunate if a large project did not receive implementation funding because the design was inappropriate. The goal of the RTT is to help the sponsor develop the best project possible given the many constraints to implementation. At the same time, the RTT does not want to overextend themselves with endless reviews of designs. This is one reason why the RTT recommended identifying specific design projects for review.

Mike suggested that it would be helpful to have RTT members be a part of the design team. Isolated check-ins don't allow for engagement with the other various drivers involved with building a design. If the process relies solely on sponsors to be intermediaries between the design team and RTT, lots of information could be lost. What is the best way to paint the whole picture for the RTT? Would it be beneficial for RTT to be engaged throughout the design process?

John Crandall responded that it would be a challenge for RTT members to be involved throughout the entire design process, and it also presents issues with a single member representing the entire RTT, when the RTT is comprised of many people, and individual members do not speak for the RTT as a whole. He is not fully supportive in developing more formal constraints to getting projects on the ground but encourages sponsors to make presentations early and often. These don't have to be full blown presentations, but just engage the group during the evolution of the design so the RTT has opportunities to provide input and learn about the decision process and constraints. Tracy Hillman agreed and added that RTT members can participate on design teams, and some do; however, they do not represent the RTT. They could serve as a liaison between the design teams and the RTT.

Mike noted that the CAC may never see a project until the very end and it would be good to engage them earlier, so they have more understanding of the evolution of the process. Mike noted that the

region will need to figure out the best place to "house" this process (e.g., in SRFB contracts, UC process guide, or elsewhere).

In the chat box, Jason Lundgren agreed that not all design projects should undergo RTT review. Simple projects, such as fish passage should not go through RTT/CAC review. There are several mechanisms in place for passage review that ensure they are adequate to pass all species and life stages. He noted that CF wants the RTT to be familiar with any designs they will bring forward for implementation funding.

Action Items:
- There will be additional discussion about the Design Review process at the December Wenatchee WATs meeting (RTT members are encouraged to attend).
- Mike Kaputa will prepare a "straw proposal" for RTT review during the January (or February) RTT meeting.

RTT Document Review and Approval

Scoring Criteria Document

The RTT discussed some proposed changes to the scoring criteria document. There was some discussion about scoring criteria for temporal effects of proposed restoration actions. Jeremy noted that it's possible that proposed scoring has false precision. The basis for scoring comes from Roni (2002, 2013) papers (these papers identify typical response times for various restoration techniques). In the end, the group agreed to keep the categories broad. See scoring document for specific changes.

Climate risk ranking will be left as is, but Ryan Niemeyer will look into whether this can be informed by data in the prioritization process. Ditto with the disturbance risk (threat rating).

For assessment and monitoring projects, the group agreed to add a criterion that includes scoring for **how** dissemination of data and results will be made publicly available. This is a new criterion in the scoring process.

Action Items:
- Ryan Niemeyer will investigate whether any data in the existing prioritization tool (or underlying data) can be used for RTT scoring of climate risk.
- Ryan Niemeyer will follow up with John Arterburn about disturbance risk and will evaluate whether the existing disturbance layer that was used in prioritization could inform the scoring.
- Tracy Hillman will make revisions discussed during the meeting and send back out with changes for approval at next RTT meeting.

Review of Cascade Fisheries Merritt Oxbow BPA Programmatic Project 80% Design

Aaron Rosenblum (CF) gave a presentation on the Merritt Oxbow project located on Nason Creek at RM 10.8-11.0. Most of the changes from the 30% design included adding details associated with the constructed riffle. To proceed with this change, there were many criteria from USFWS and NMFS that the design had to meet. Low-flow criteria in particular were challenging to meet (1' depth criteria at 95% annual exceedance prob for Aug-Sept. = 16 cfs). In the end, the design team decided to provide a shut off for the side channel at low flows (<16 cfs), which allows a 1' riffle depth. At these flows, pools in the side channel remain connected to groundwater. As such, they will continue to provide rearing habitat once the side channel is disconnected from the riffle. The project has a $562,500 estimated construction cost. They are currently about $200,000 short. The funding shortfall is primarily related to the

constructed riffle. Most of the material for the constructed riffle is large and will need to be imported, resulting in most of the cost increase.

Following questions and answers, the RTT went into Executive Session to score the design project.

Next Steps

The next RTT meeting will be on Wednesday, 12 January 2021.