



REGIONAL TECHNICAL TEAM MEETING FINAL JANUARY MEETING SUMMARY

Date: Wednesday, 11 January 2023

Time: 9:00 AM to 12:15 PM

Location: Webinar

Members Present: Amanda Barg, Brandon Rogers, Carlos Polivka, Catherine Willard, John Arterburn, John Crandall, Steve Fortney, Tom Kahler, Jeremy Cram, and Tracy Hillman (Chair)

Others Present: Tracy Bowerman/UCSRB, Ryan Niemeyer/UCSRB, Sarah Walker/UCSRB, Amee Bahr/RCO, Dave Hecker/UCSRB, Jason Lundgren/CF, Jeff Jorgensen/NOAA, Steve Kolk/BOR, Lisa Foster/TU, Mark Ingman/CCD, Phillip Klenke/CF, Scott Bailey/CCNRD, Aaron Rosenblum/CF, Joe Connor/BPA, Doug Knapp/BPA, Ted Gresh/BPA, Grace Doran/NSD, John Soden/NSD, Nic Truscott/NSD, Kelli Snodgrass/WDFW, and McLain Johnson/USFS

Upcoming meetings and potential topics:

- February: Gene Schull—Summary of Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest Aquatic Restoration Strategy
- February: John Crandall—Results from Methow Cold-Water Assessment Project
- 29-30 March RTT meeting: SRFB Project Presentations

Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the RTT meeting. RTT members reviewed and approved the January draft agenda and December meeting notes.

RTT and UCSRB Updates

2022 SRFB Grant Round Debrief Summary

Dave Hecker provided an overview of the SRFB grant round debrief, which took place on 9 January 2023. Main takeaways from that debrief meeting were:

- Sponsors expressed desire for more time between site tours and the revised application deadline. The 2023 schedule provides more than a week, which is a little more time than previously proposed.
- There was concern that with additional funding (currently ~\$3.5 million), sponsors may submit projects that are not fully developed.
- There was a request from sponsors for additional alignment between JotForm and PRISM to allow copy and pasting between the two forms to save time for sponsors. UCSRB will work on this.
- There was a request for additional guidance and feedback from the RTT after preliminary project review. Although the RTT sends out a summary of RTT comments, sponsors requested additional details where possible.

- Sponsors expressed preference for field-based tours and stated the value for RTT and CAC members to participate.

2023 Draft SRFB Schedule

Dave Hecker provided a draft of the SRFB grant round schedule (see Attachment 1). During the grant round debrief, there was a request for the Tributary Committees to provide feedback before the deadline for submitting revised proposals. Dates were adjusted accordingly, and those changes are reflected in the attached timeline.

Because of a conflicting workshop on 7-9 March, presentations from sponsors were moved to 29-30 March 2023. Pre-applications are due on 10 March 2023.

Regarding site visits, Tracy Hillman recommended that project tours occur on 8-10 May 2023 and not spillover into 11 May. This is because the Tributary Committees are meeting on the 11th to review draft proposals. That meeting cannot be rescheduled. In addition, Tracy Hillman asked that the 9 February 2023 Kick-Off Meeting be held in the afternoon. This is because there are other meetings on that day that will affect the ability of some members to participate in the Kick-Off Meeting.

Important dates for the RTT include:

- 10 March 2023 regional pre-project applications due in JotForm (applications will be available to RTT a few days later)
- 8-10 May 2023 project field tours
- 15 May 2023 Tributary Committees' comments are due
- 24 May 2023 UCSRB will post full proposals to web site for RTT review
- 7 June 2023 RTT review and scoring of projects
- 20 June 2023 CAC final ranking of projects

UCSRB Floodplain Restoration Workshop

Tracy Bowerman reminded the group about the upcoming Floodplain Restoration Workshop, which is scheduled for Tuesday, 24 January 2023 from 9:00 am to 4:45 pm at the Wenatchee Convention Center. There will also be a remote option and the plan is to run an adaptive hybrid meeting. The afternoon will focus on regional efforts and we would like to provide local restoration practitioners an opportunity to showcase their projects and discuss lessons learned from a range of floodplain restoration efforts in the region. Let Tracy B. know if you have any specific topics you would like to see covered in the afternoon discussion.

Other Upcoming Workshops

Tracy Hillman reminded the group that the NOAA Restoring Riverscapes virtual workshop has been re-scheduled for 7-9 March 2023. The [RCO Salmon restoration conference](#) will take place on 18-19 April 2023 in Vancouver, WA. River Restoration NW conference registration is full; that conference is at Skamania Lodge on 7-9 February 2023.

RTT Approved MaDMC Data Gaps

The MaDMC data gaps list was sent to RTT members on 12 December 2022 for review and approval. The RTT discussed the list at their December RTT meeting and although some members approved the list, others asked for additional time to review the data gaps. Steve Fortney indicated that rather than placing an arbitrary 10-year interval on the review of prioritization data, we should probably be more

discriminant about how often we evaluate reaches. He suggested that the group come up with criteria that trigger a re-evaluation, such as a major disturbance like wildfire, major flood event, etc. We should also try to track how restoration is changing reaches where substantial restoration work has taken place. Ryan Niemeyer clarified that large disturbances can trigger a reevaluation. Ryan reached out to WATs to ask them to provide feedback on reaches that have been substantially altered by recent disturbances (mostly wildfires). The reaches identified during this query were included as prioritization data gaps. There may have been omissions from the Methow sub-basin, which was not thoroughly queried.

Some RTT members noted that the data gap list is often underutilized. Projects are often developed without consulting the list and sponsors then look for a nexus with the list during a funding cycle. The MaDMC should think about ways to increase the utility of the list and how it can be used in a different way than it is currently.

Decision: The remaining RTT members who had asked for more time to look at the MaDMC list voted to approve the MaDMC data gaps list as is.

Other RTT Business

Tracy Hillman reported that Keely Murdoch is moving into a new position within the Yakama Nation and she requested to go on inactive status until further notice.

Wenatchee Floodplain Reconnection Project

In December, the 60% design package for the Upper Wenatchee Floodplain Reconnection Project was sent to the RTT for review. Scott Bailey from CCNRD and John Soden and Nic Truscott from Natural Systems Design (NSD) presented this information to the group. Both presentations are included with these notes.

Questions/Comments from the RTT:

John Crandall expressed appreciation for how this project has developed, especially for winter flows. The approach and models appear sound.

Steve Fortney expressed appreciation for the approach to develop scenarios to guide hydraulic designs, and an explanation of the evolution of the logic behind the designs. He asked whether NSD ran models at higher flows and what did the inundation extent look like? NSD responded that models were not run above the 2-year return interval because that's when they start to see overbank flows and more similarities to existing conditions. NSD did run 10-, 25-, 100-year flows for the proposed design (see Appendices in the Design package for results).

Amanda Barg observed that the extent of beaver habitat downstream of this area was more extensive than previously realized. She asked about consequences if beavers move into the pilot channel and how might that affect the designed channel? NSD said there is a lot of beaver activity in the downstream section of the ponded site. Within the pilot channel, velocities should be high enough to blow beaver dams out at high flows. The entire floodplain surface is a network of channels, and water will find a different path to flow through, even if beavers build in new locations.

John Arterburn expressed appreciation for the models. He noted that not all similar projects have been successful; some have disconnected over time. He had some concerns that the sediment modeling focused on sand and not other larger grain sizes. At high flows, the Wenatchee mobilizes much larger sediment sizes, which could disconnect the pilot channel. NSD responded that the modeling focused on

smaller gravels because the inlet is 2-3' above the main channel grade. The design is meant to increase scour velocities along the left bank; it would be ideal if the bank eroded a bit and scoured the entrance to the channel.

It was asked whether the design team did any work to evaluate using other grade control structures such as rocks, boulders, etc. or a complete cross-channel feature. NSD said the team did not look at a complete cross-channel feature to raise the channel bed, which would be the best bet to raise channel stage. The team said they weren't sure this was ever on the table, in part due to recreation concerns. The primary goal was to increase velocity on the left bank. An RTT member suggested that a grade control structure that is sloped can direct water to the other side of the channel and he encouraged an evaluation of other alternatives to raise the stage. He encouraged the design team to build certainty that the design is going to sustain itself over time. NSD stated that the size of structure needed to raise the stage across the entire channel would be logistically very difficult to pull off and it would be very expensive. They added that the streambed would likely need to raise about 3 feet, which isn't feasible at this site.

Steve Fortney commented that he thinks the ELJ placements look good and are likely a good compromise for what can be attained given constraints at this site. He expressed less certainty about the effects of boulder clusters because they are small relative to the width of the channel at this location. NSD responded that the channel is plane bed with almost no adult holding habitat. Because the team is going to have a helicopter on site, they wanted to take advantage of the helicopter and use it to add the boulders to increase habitat complexity and adult holding habitat in this reach. Those boulder clusters are mostly meant to provide microhabitat and sort sediments; they are not intended to have large geomorphic effects.

Tracy Hillman said he expects beavers to continue to use the floodplain habitat and as long as upstream and downstream connections are maintained, beavers will improve habitat conditions for salmonids. As Jack Stanford's work has shown, potential issues occur with beavers when you have no upstream connection (e.g., Silver Side Channel). He added that the design team appears to have addressed comments that the RTT provided during previous iterations of the design. He did ask about the stability of the ELJs and boulder clusters at really high flows. NSD stated that the typical standard is to look at the 100-year event. The reach in question has a really wide floodplain that acts as a relief valve for some of those high flow events. The design team did look at 100-year velocities, which is why huge piles of rocks are in the design—these should be resistant to movement at high flows. However, wood in the ELJs will decay over time, so the long-term life of these structures is hard to predict. The structures include a lot of racking material, which could be lost. There is not a huge risk associated with large amounts of wood getting racked somewhere else, and they always look at risk to downstream infrastructure. For example, the downstream bridge [near Tumwater Campground] has no middle pier and is not racking debris currently. The design does not include a lot of large wood; it is mostly large rock.

Kelly Snodgrass said she had previous concerns about avulsion, but those are mostly allayed with the current design. She asked whether the team considered adding complexity in the side channel. NSC stated that the design team wants water to flow through the pilot channel and not be hindered with structures. The goal is to get water flowing onto the floodplain. In addition, they limited the excavation width to 40' because they will be digging through a fully forested floodplain with lots of cottonwoods and wanted to limit the amount of disturbance. They are likely to see inputs from natural processes as time goes on.

Doug Knapp commented that the design looks great. He wanted something to push flow away from the right bank and the focus of this project should be pushing the river back toward the left bank into floodplain habitat. He is pleased with how this project has turned out.

Tracy Hillman summarized the RTT comments and noted that it seems the RTT is mostly pleased with the current design. There were a few comments/questions offered that you should consider as you move the project to final design. Overall, the RTT supports the project and believes it will have a relatively large biological benefit.

Scott Bailey said the design team has made a conscious effort to incorporate RTT input and that has resulted in a better project. CCNRD is looking at approaching the implementation phase of this project in 2024, so they are moving toward the final design phase. The plan is to submit a SRFB proposal for matching funds in the upcoming 2023 grant round.

RTT Document Review and Approval

Prioritization Tool Updates

Ryan Niemeyer described that one goal for the 2024 SRFB grant round (i.e., before next year) is to finalize major updates to the Prioritization Tool and “freeze” prioritization scores for five years (this timeline was approved previously by RTT). This is with the understanding that if there is a major event that changes habitat conditions, they could revisit and update scores for those affected reaches at any time. UCSRB will continue to update continuously the data that go into the prioritization tool. This means the best available data are in the tool and available to sponsors, but the UCSRB and RTT will only re-rank reaches and AUs at specific intervals to avoid confusion and to be fair to sponsors developing projects.

Ryan showed a summary of what would change if the addition of recent riparian, substrate, pool, and wood data are added and the model is re-run. This would add 47 reaches to the priority reach list. He wasn't sure how many received a rank that did not previously have one, but he did specify which reaches had been added to the priority reach list (some of these are still missing data so were still not ranked).

Results from re-running the model showed that 88% of the original 192 reaches would not change rank; only 7 reaches would change rank. Of those 7 reaches, 3 decreased in rank and 4 others increased in rank (e.g., shifted from a 3 to a 2). With additional data being collected in 2023, an additional 34 reaches in Tier 1 AUs can be prioritized.

The RTT discussed whether they should run the model now and update the rankings with the additional data or wait until later this year when the additional data to be collected in 2023 can be included in the model. Waiting to run the model later this year would result in only one change in reach rankings before the 2024 grant round. The RTT discussed the following points:

- One benefit to re-running the model now is that more reaches will receive ranks that previously had no ranks due to missing data; this could benefit sponsors that propose projects within reaches that are not ranked currently. However, it might not make a big difference because reach rank scores are a small fraction of the overall biological benefit score.
- We don't want reaches to change ranks frequently because sponsors are trying to plan future projects. It also creates the need to keep track of when projects were initially designed so they can be grandfathered into a previous ranking.

- Some members expressed concern about using the output from Cramer’s random forest model to update the rankings. This approach was approved previously by the RTT as placeholder data, but those reaches with the random forest data are still considered data gaps in the MaDMC list.
- Project sponsors could become frustrated by reaches changing ranks because proposals take so much time to develop. Previous decisions included re-running the reach rankings at 5-year intervals; however, lots of new data have come in since the model was last run and re-running the model would rank reaches that previously had no rank.
- From the sponsor’s perspective, if a given reach in which the sponsor proposes work increases in rank, the sponsor will likely want the RTT to score the application based on the updated rank. In contrast, if the rank of the reach decreases, the sponsor will probably want to be grandfathered into the older rank.

Decision: All RTT members present agreed to update all data in the prioritization tool but not re-run the model to rank reaches until additional data are collected in 2023. Thus, reach ranks from the last model run (last year) will carry through until updates are completed for 2024.

Action item: Ryan Niemeyer will evaluate how extensive the Random Forest model data were and summarize which ones received new ranks based on those data.

Barrier Prioritization Tool

Tracy Bowerman gave an update on the Barrier Prioritization Tool progress. Notes from the Barrier Prioritization Subgroup meeting held on January 4 are included with these notes. The current scoring spreadsheet is attached with these notes and the web map showing the results can be found here: <https://ucsrp.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=f8bf31a92b634e1ab767bf0858770886>

When viewing the results, bear in mind that the current scores are relative, and tiers are currently arbitrary (just shown on the map for visual reference). If the map has been viewed previously, users will need to update bookmarks and/or hit refresh on the web map to see the most recent results.

Tracy B. provided the following brief summary of major changes to the tool compared with the previous version (last published in 2020):

- Substantial updates have been made to the underlying data
 - Barrier data (substantial field verification by Cascade Fisheries and data scrub)
 - Numerous barriers that previously had unknown passability now have a passability ratings based on WDFW criteria
 - IP layer updated across region for all species
 - Distribution, core population area
 - Greater accuracy for numerous metrics (counts of barriers, stream miles, and others)
- Separate scores by species: color coded by species; scores are relative within species and tiers currently arbitrary (included for visual separation)
- Habitat potential = total habitat quantity to end of IP calculated in total miles gained.
 - Addition of steelhead marginal habitat score adjustment (IP<1 mi marginal >1 mile) and Bull trout FMO scoring adjustment (SR <1 mi and FMO >1).
 - Barrier gets a “0” if no IP

- Count of downstream barriers is now binary (previously there were 4 scoring tiers). Now, a barrier receives a 5 if there are no downstream barriers with low passability and a 0 if there are 1 or more low passability barriers (0 or 33% passable)
- Net Upstream Gain: Distance of IP to nearest upstream low passability barrier (excluding marginal and FMO). This is a new metric suggested by the group in a previous meeting. Potential in this calculation for upstream barriers to get a higher score than a downstream barrier, so worth considering if this metric is acting as we want it to.

Next steps identified by the subgroup are to:

- Remove the colonization potential metric, update scoring, and send that out to the subgroup for review.
- Run the model without the net upstream gain metric and evaluate how this affects scores.
- A separate group will meet to review the current IP layers and to review watersheds that are human impaired and review if getting high scores.
- A revised version of the scoring tool will be sent around for review by the end of January.

Data from the updated tool will be available for public use via the web map, but changes to scoring related to these updates will not be formalized into the prioritization process until before the 2024 SRFB grant round, matching the updates to habitat prioritization described above. Prior to that, the RTT will discuss how these barrier data can be integrated into the habitat prioritization framework, as the original intent was to combine them.

Tracy Hillman adjourned the meeting at 12:15 pm. The next RTT meeting will be held on 8 February 2023.

Happy New Year!

Attachment 1

UPPER COLUMBIA SRFB/ TRIB 2023 FUNDING SCHEDULE				
DATE	ACTIVITY/MILESTONE	PARTICIPANTS	LOCATION	FACILITATOR/ COORDINATOR
FEBRUARY/MARCH				
February 9 (afternoon)	Meeting: UC Region SRFB Kick-Off Meeting	LE, RTT, TRIB, Sponsors, RCO	Virtual	LE/RCO
March 10, COB	DEADLINE: Regional Project Pre-application (JotForm) submitted to Lead Entity	Sponsors	Online/Email	LE
March 29, 30	Meeting(s): Sponsor Presentations to RTT	Sponsors, LE, RTT, TRIB, SRFB Review Panel, CAC	TBD	LE/RTT/CAC
APRIL				
April 20, COB	DEADLINE: Complete applications due in PRISM	Sponsors, LE, RCO	PRISM	LE
MAY				
May 8, 9, 10	Tours: SRFB/TRIB Project Tours	Sponsors, LE, RTT, TRIB, SRFB SRP, CAC	TBD – Field tours & presentations	LE
	Wenatchee			
	Entiat			
	Methow			
	Okanogan			
May 11	Action: TRIB reviews draft proposals	TRIB	TRIB	TRIB Chair
May 12	Lead entity feedback (optional)	LE	PRISM	LE

UPPER COLUMBIA SRFB/ TRIB 2023 FUNDING SCHEDULE

DATE	ACTIVITY/MILESTONE	PARTICIPANTS	LOCATION	FACILITATOR/ COORDINATOR
May 15	TRIB provides comments	TRIB	Email	TRIB Chair
May 17	Action(s): SRFB Review Panel reviews proposals;	SRFB Review Panel	N/A	N/A
May 19, COB	DEADLINE: Revised proposals due for regional RTT scoring and CAC ranking	Sponsors, LE, RCO, SRFB Review Panel, RTT, CAC, TRIB	PRISM	LE
May 24	First Comment Form: Sponsors receive SRFB Review Panel project status (<i>Clear, Conditioned, NMI or POC</i>)	SRFB Review Panel, LE, Sponsors	Email/Prism	LE
JUNE				
June 6 (afternoon)	Action: (optional) Discuss projects identified as conditioned, NMI or POC	Sponsors, RCO, SRFB Review Panel, LE	Conference Call	LE/RCO
June 7	Action: RTT review/scoring	RTT, CAC, LE	RTT Meeting	RTT
June 8	Action: TRIB reviews final proposals	TRIB	TRIB Meeting	TRIB Chair
June 12 & 13 (evenings)	Presentations to Citizens: Okanogan/Chelan CAC's	Sponsors, CAC's, RTT, LE	TBD	LE
June 15	Action: TRIB Decisions	TRIB	Email	TRIB Chair
June 20 (evening)	Joint CAC SRFB final ranking	CAC's, LE	TBD	LE

UPPER COLUMBIA SRFB/ TRIB 2023 FUNDING SCHEDULE

DATE	ACTIVITY/MILESTONE	PARTICIPANTS	LOCATION	FACILITATOR/ COORDINATOR
June 26, Noon	DEADLINE: Final revised applications due in PRISM	Sponsors, LE	PRISM	LE
JULY				
July 12-13	Action: SRFB Review Panel completes comments	SRFB Review Panel, RCO	N/A	RCO
July 20	Final Comment Form: Sponsors receive final SRFB Review Panel comments	SRFB Review Panel, LE, Sponsors	Email/Prism	SRFB Review Panel
AUGUST				
August 3	Deadline: Sponsors must accept SRFB Review Panel conditions	Sponsors	Email/Prism	LE/RCO
August 4	Deadline: Regional Ranked List submitted to RCO	LE	PRISM	LE/RCO
August 11	Deadline: Regional Submittal	LE	Email	LE
SEPTEMBER				
August 30	Final grant report available for public review	RCO	Email	RCO
Sept 13 & 14	Action: SRFB Funding Decisions	SRFB	Olympia, WA	RCO

Acronyms

CAC- Citizen's Advisory Committee
 LE- Lead Entity Coordinator/Program
 PRISM – RCO's Application portal/ database
 RCO - Recreation and Conservation Office
 RTT- Upper Columbia Regional Technical Team
 SRFB - Salmon Recovery Funding Board
 SRFB Review Panel - State Review Panel
 TBD – To be determined
 TRIB- Tributary Committees
 UC- Upper Columbia Region
 UCSRB - Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board

Timeline Legend

Meetings	Blue
Deadlines	Red
Actions	Black