



REGIONAL TECHNICAL TEAM MEETING DRAFT JUNE 2023 MEETING SUMMARY

Date: Wednesday, 14 June 2023

Time: 9:00 AM to 2:45 PM

Location: Webinar

Members Present: Shelby Fowler, John Arterburn, Steve Fortney, John Crandall, Amanda Barg, Tom Kahler, Catherine Willard, and Tracy Hillman (Chair)

Others Present: Tracy Bowerman/UCSRB, Dave Hecker/UCSRB, Ameer Bahr/RCO, Keith Truscott/CAC, Amanda Ward/UCSRB, Sarah Walker/UCSRB, Bruce Merighi/CAC, Sam Israel/CAC, Leah Hemberry/CAC, and Larry Hill/CAC

Upcoming meetings and potential topics:

- July: Prioritization updates, including PWG, MaDMC, IP, and Barrier Prioritization Tool.
- July: CCNRD Nason RM 9.4 thermal refuge project.
- August: HARP-model work in Upper Columbia.

Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the RTT meeting. RTT members reviewed and approved the June draft agenda and April meeting notes as edited.

RTT and UCSRB Updates

UCSRB Staff Changes

Tracy Bowerman reported that she is leaving UCSRB on 21 June. Ryan Niemeyer will be the new Science Manager. Tracy B. thanked RTT members for the opportunity to learn from and work with them. RTT members thanked Tracy B. for her involvement with the RTT. Tracy B. will be greatly missed.

Prioritization Work Group Meeting Updates

The PWG met in May to discuss methods for delineating floodplains throughout the region. Delineation is fundamental for establishing floodplain metrics in the Prioritization process. Ryan Niemeyer coordinated follow-up meetings with Robyn Pepin and Steve Fortney to solidify how these floodplain metrics will be estimated. He will give additional details after a method has been established.

UCSRB-SRFB Amendment Request Discussion

Dave Hecker recommended a change to UCSRB's current protocol for how the region handles an amendment request for a SRFB project. Currently, there are two types of amendment reviews. A Level 1 is a minor cost/scope increase and only requires approval by RTT and CAC chairs. A Level 2 review is triggered by significant change in cost, location, or scope, and requires review by a subgroup of RTT and CAC members. Currently, the RTT randomly chooses 5-6 individuals to participate in a Level 2 review; the subgroup makes a recommendation and then passes it along to the CAC subgroup to review. The

current threshold for what is considered a significant cost increase is 25% of the original cost. Given that the region is starting to see a large number of cost amendment requests and the process is time consuming, Dave and Tracy Hillman requested that the RTT consider increasing the cost increase threshold for a Level 2 review or changing the protocol so that a cost increase of any size no longer requires a Level 2 review and can be approved by the two chairs.

Amee Bahr contributed some input from her perspective working with other regions. The biggest impact/consideration regarding this process is time. It takes a lot of time to conduct these reviews and sending it through multiple groups means it can take a month or more for an amendment to go through the process. Any cost increase already requires a review from RCO. The Lower Columbia decided to do away with cost increase review altogether.

Tracy H. suggested doing away with subgroup review for cost amendments and just require approval by the RTT and CAC chairs. Keith Truscott (Chelan CAC chair) said he was fine with straight cost increases being handled by chairs as long as a cost increase was not related to a change in scope. Amee clarified that RCO does not allow cost increases for change of scope, so any cost amendment would only be reviewing cost increases for a scope of work that is already in the grant agreement.

There was some discussion about a cost percentage or total cost amount that could trigger a review. There is always an option for the chair(s) to convene a subcommittee if they feel an amendment is an unusually large cost increase or requires greater review. Amee stated that State SRFB cost increase funds are set aside annually by RCO, and typically cost increases come out of a separate fund that RCO administers (although this was not the case in 2023 owing to the additional funding that was applied during the 2022 grant round; this was likely a unique situation). RCO requires that any cost increase >\$100,000 requires sponsors to re-submit the project for consideration in that year's ranked list. The cost increase goes onto a ranked list that is submitted to SRFB even though sponsors do not have to submit a new application. How a region goes about approving that cost increase as part of the ranking process is up to the region. This scenario is very rare and policy has just been developed because this situation has just come up for the first time.

Decision: The RTT members present approved the decision to change the amendment protocol so that cost amendments no longer require a Level 2 review. Cost amendments of any size (<\$100,000) can be approved by the RTT and CAC chairs. The chairs may request that a subgroup review the amendment if they desire additional feedback from their respective committees to make a final decision. RTT members suggested that it would still be a good idea to track and report which projects have requested cost increases so RTT members can learn why budgets are increasing and identify underlying reasons for the increases.

Action item: Before this change is enacted, it requires approval by both CACs. Dave Hecker will facilitate this discussion with both CACs and adjust the amendment protocol according to their final decisions. [Both CACs approved the change on 20 June 2023]

SRFB Project Scoring

Eight RTT members participated in the scoring and discussion. This was a closed session. RTT notes and scores will be distributed separately.

Tracy Hillman adjourned the meeting at 2:45 pm. The next RTT meeting will be July 12, 2023.