



REGIONAL TECHNICAL TEAM MEETING FINAL NOVEMBER MEETING SUMMARY

Date: Tuesday, November 10, 2020

Time: 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Location: Webinar

Members Present: Brandon Rogers, Carlos Polivka, Catherine Willard, John Crandall, Justin Yeager, Kate Terrell, Steve Fortney, Tom Kahler, Jeremy Cram, and Tracy Hillman (Chair)

Others Present: Greer Maier/UCSRB, Ryan Niemeyer/UCSRB, Sarah Walker/UCSRB, Maddie Eckmann/YN, and Hans Smith/YN.

Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the meeting and participants introduced themselves.

Members present reviewed and approved the draft agenda. The October meeting summary was reviewed, and Tracy reviewed the action items. Carry-over action items are listed below. The meeting summary was approved.

Carry-over action items:

- Tracy Hillman will update the scoring rules for AUs in the Upper Columbia Evaluation Criteria.
- Greer Maier will schedule a MaDMC meeting to update the regional data gaps list.

Agenda Items for Future Meetings:

- Upper Nason Fish Passage Study - YN (December)
- Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) Model - BPA and Cramer Fish Sciences
- Upper Columbia Annual Report Presentation - Greer Maier (January)
- Columbia River Treaty - Shane Bickford
- River Health - Joe Wheaton
- Entiat Floodplain Analysis Results - Paul Powers

UCSRB Updates

Wolf Creek Reach Assessment

Tracy noted that the RTT reviewed the Wolf Creek Reach Assessment and Tracy forwarded the comments to the Yakama Nation.

UCSRB Regional Evaluation

The UCSRB has contracted with the Ruckelshaus Center to conduct a regional evaluation. They have already interviewed Tracy Hillman and have requested an interview with the RTT. Tracy expressed his concern with that approach and would like to suggest that they interview individual members as an alternative. This approach would encourage more candid feedback and maybe allow for more

discussion. The RTT discussed this approach and agreed with it. Tracy will randomly select RTT members to pass on for interviews. Tracy will forward the flyer to the RTT members who will be interviewed.

Upper Columbia Implementation Schedule and Annual Report

Greer Maier provided a brief update on the development of the Upper Columbia Implementation Schedule and Annual Report. Board staff is currently working to draft these materials for NOAA per the UC Recovery Plan process. The draft will be rolled out at the 1 December Implementation Team meeting and is slated for approval at the December UCSRB Board of Directors meeting. Greer said she will discuss the report with the RTT during the January RTT meeting.

Prioritization

Step 2 - Restoration

Greer Maier and Tracy Hillman provided an overview of the Step 2 review package, review process, and outcomes. The Prioritization Work Group met on 3 December to discuss comments received (notes available here: <https://www.ucsr.org/prioritization-meetings/>). Steve Fortney was the only one to submit written comments and the PWG provided responses to those comments and discussed other minor updates to the Step 2 Prioritization Tool during their meeting.

The RTT discussed whether the new results are different from the current Biological Strategy. Tracy noted where there are differences and similarities – the most notable difference being a change in the AU boundaries and a change in the scale of priorities. Some priorities remain the same in some reaches; others are now considered a lower priority. The RTT discussed the consequences of changes in terms of some current or ongoing projects and sponsors that are pursuing those projects. Tracy remarked that there will need to be a period of transition as projects designed under the current Biological Strategy close out and sponsors shift their focus to current priority reaches and actions. This topic will continue to come up over the next several months.

The RTT approved Step 2 results. UCSRB staff will work to load the results into a web-based portal on the www.ucsr.org website. BPA is funding the development of that portal and the RTT will be asked for input at various stages of development. Currently, Step 2 restoration results can be found through this link: <https://www.ucsr.org/prioritization-products/>. The RTT agreed that if and when mistakes or data are located, the RTT will update the tool. There will also be annual updates through a more robust review and update process.

Decision:

- RTT members approved Step 2 outputs for restoration for spring Chinook and steelhead in the Wenatchee, Entiat, and Methow subbasins.

Step 1 - Protection

The RTT reviewed a draft map and list of tiers for Step 1 Protection Priorities. The RTT approved the Step 1 tool and scores for protection last year but has not reviewed or approved the tiers that will be used. Tracy and Greer looked at various options for identifying cut-off scores for different tiers. Based on their review, they proposed a cut-off of ≥ 75 for Tier 1, 60-74 for Tier 2, and < 60 for Tier 3. Similar for restoration, bull trout has a cut-off of ≥ 70 for Tier 1 protection. Greer presented a map showing Tiers 1 AUs with a cut-off of ≥ 80 and ≥ 75 . There are very few AUs that scored > 80 for protection so there would be limited priority protection projects. All protection scores can be found in the original Step 1 tool worksheet. The RTT decided to review the cut-offs for each tier and provide comments back to Tracy

and Greer by 1 December. The RTT will discuss this topic again at their December meeting and approve final AU tiers for protection. The link to the MAP (using cut-off of 75 for Tier 1) and TABLE of scores and tiers are at www.ucsrb.org and are also provided below for RTT members:

[Step 1 Watershed \(HUC12\) Protection Tiers – TABLE \(DRAFT TIERS FOR REVIEW 11-10-20\)](#)

[Step 1 Watershed \(HUC12\) Scores and Tiers – MAP \(DRAFT TIERS FOR REVIEW 11-10-20\)](#)

NOTE: Okanogan steelhead tiers were developed from EDT results and are not included in the table of results. Please refer to the map for those draft tiers.

Protection Tier 1 AUs will move into Step 2 to identify specific reaches within the priority AUs for protection. Greer described some of the discussion that took place at the 3 November PWG meeting related to Step 2 for protection. There will likely be two pathways that are similar to restoration—Habitat Quality and Limiting Factors. The goal would be to identify reaches with intact habitat and to protect high-quality habitat for high priority life stages. Reach-scale information such as ownership, connectivity of protected areas, risk of degradation, and other metrics will be used to prioritize reaches for protection. The 2019 UW GIS group compiled most of this information. Other necessary data are already in the Step 2 tool and will be used to prioritize reaches using specific scoring rules for protection.

Action Items:

- RTT members will review the Step 1 scores and draft tiers and provide feedback to Tracy Hillman and Greer Maier by 1 December.
- The RTT will discuss and approve AU protection tiers at their December meeting.

Bull Trout and Okanogan Steelhead

Greer Maier is scheduling a life-stage workshop for bull trout in the next few weeks. With the development of priority life stages, bull trout will be ready to run through Step 2. All the habitat data for bull trout and life-stage/habitat relationships have been drafted. The hope is to finish with bull trout restoration priorities by the end of the year, and bull trout protection will be included in the Step 2 process thereafter.

Prioritization of Okanogan Steelhead will be based on EDT results, which are currently being generated by Eric Doyle. The current schedule is to have EDT results ready by the end of the month.