



## REGIONAL TECHNICAL TEAM MEETING FINAL AUGUST MEETING SUMMARY

**Date:** Wednesday, August 13, 2025

**Time:** 9:00 AM to 12:05 PM

**Location:** Webinar

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**Members Present:** Hans Smith (Yakama Nation), Steve Fortney (Gray & Osborne Inc.), Tracy Bowerman (USFWS), Shelby Fowler (USFWS), John Arterburn (CCT), Tom Kahler (Douglas PUD), and Tracy Hillman (BioAnalysts Inc., Chair)

**Others Present:** Ariel Edwards (UCSRB), Meghan Camp (UCSRB), Ryan Niemeyer (UCSRB), Steve Kolk (Bureau of Reclamation), Jason Lundgren (Cascade Fisheries), Ameer Bahr (RCO), Jason Lundgren (Cascade Fisheries), Jeff Jorgensen (NOAA), Ben Woodworth (Yakama Nation), Mickey Flemming (CDLT), Ken Muir (WDFW), Tim Hanrahan (River Sciences Center), Mike Kane (CCNRD), Mike Rafferty (Interfluve), Gardner Johnston (Interfluve), and Pollyanna Lind (interfluve)

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Tracy Hillman reviewed the August RTT meeting agenda, and the agenda was approved by all RTT members present. Tracy Hillman reviewed the June DRAFT meeting notes and all RTT members present approved the notes.

### RTT & UCSRB Updates

#### Update on CAC ranking of SRFB Projects

Ariel Edwards shared the final CAC rankings for 2025 funding. John Arterburn asked whether there was any news on monitoring funding. Ariel said the funding decisions for monitoring projects would be released on 2 September.

#### Update on Adaptive Management Process

Meghan Camp provided an update on the adaptive management workshop. She overviewed the synthesis document that was prepared following the workshop. Adaptive management actions were changed from “priorities” to “action areas” to avoid implying a ranking of the suggested actions. Over the coming weeks, these actions will be refined based on further review. The goal is to have a draft by December. Meghan shared that there will be an additional workshop in late January that will focus on salmon life cycle and bottlenecks. This workshop will potentially be scheduled around the time of the science conference but will be separate from the conference. This workshop is in the early stages of planning. Meghan will continue to share updates on the report and workshop with the RTT. This workshop is one of the action areas suggested in the synthesis report.

#### Permitting Meeting in the Methow (21 October)

Ryan Niemeyer shared information about the upcoming permitting meeting in the Methow on 21 October. This meeting will include Jim Fullerton from ORIA, who will overview their resources and updates to the JARPA form. During the second half of the meeting, MSRF will share lessons learned from permitting the Sugar Reach Project. This meeting will be part of the Methow Restoration Council

meeting, and the first portion of the meeting (9:00-9:30 am) will be MRC business. This meeting will be a hybrid meeting. Registration is open. Ryan asked folks to visit the website to register: <https://www.ucsrb.org/meetings-events/conferences-workshop/upper-columbia-permitting-meeting/>

### **Upper Columbia Science Conference 2026**

Ryan Niemeyer shared updates about the upcoming science conference, which will be held at the Festhalle in Leavenworth. The event will be held on 21-22 January. Ryan noted this will be different from past conferences. In the past, the conference was held at the convention center. Ryan noted that the Festhalle is one-third of the cost. He added that the Conference website is live even though it is still “under construction”: <https://www.ucsrb.org/meetings-events/conferences-workshop/2026-upper-columbia-science-conference/>. The Steering Committee has been formed and will have their initial meeting later this month.

#### **Decisions:**

- **None**

#### **Action Items:**

- **Ryan Niemeyer will reach out to tribal representatives to serve on the steering committee.**

### **Peshastin River Mile 3.2 – 3.8**

Mike Kane and Mike Rafferty presented on the Peshastin RM 3.2-3.8 conceptual design project. This project is on land recently acquired by CDLT. Steelhead spawn within this reach, mostly in the downstream end, although the focus of this project is on rearing. The project was funded in 2022 by SRFB. CCNRD decided to seek BPA funding, which requires a conceptual design, so the goal is to complete the design by the end of 2025. The highway cuts off roughly half of the floodplain between RM 1.4 and 5.0, which led to incision and plain-bed morphology. They have two groundwater wells from which they have collected one year of data. Proposed actions included large wood and boulder clusters in the main stem and side channel enhancements. The project did not consider road removal.

Mickey Flemming mentioned that CDLT is working on acquiring some of the property. Mike Rafferty commented that they do not plan any channel spanning structures, which is why they are proposing boulder structures instead of large apex log jams. John Arterburn mentioned there is some existing high-quality habitat and recommended not altering the good habitat. John asked about the Cascade Fisheries project and whether CCNRD is collaborating with them. He also asked about the status of the bridge. Mike Kane commented that the bridge is a main point between the two sides, and there is no intention of removing the bridge. Mike Rafferty commented that there is clear delineation in the projects and not any major hydrologic influence of one project on the other. He also commented that they will “not touch” any of the existing pools. Shelby Fowler asked whether there are any stormwater outfalls. Mike Rafferty responded that there is a crossing near RM 3.2. He added that the key would be to not completely backwater these stormwater outfalls but rather protect them.

Steve Fortney asked about historical channel dynamics and how the proposed project takes those dynamics into account. Mike Rafferty mentioned they have been working in Peshastin Creek for 5 years and believes this reach was likely an aggregation reach naturally. This may not be perfect for the current condition. Mike Rafferty said they are considering these dynamics and welcome suggestions. Mike Kane commented that this is the first place where there is some floodplain within the channelized reach.

Meghan Camp asked whether the proposed boulder clusters will create gravel bars. Mike Rafferty responded that it would be difficult to create a gravel bar with just boulder clusters. Meghan asked about replacing riprap with bank buried large wood. Mike Rafferty mentioned that this will likely not

happen. Mike Kane added that the downstream properties would need to be acquired before major downstream floodplain work can be completed.

Steve Fortney asked about WSDOT coordination and Mike Kane shared the next step will be to coordinate with WSDOT. Hans Smith commented that the goal should be to keep the project as cheap as possible because there will be small biological benefit from the project. Mike Kane commented they do not want to overbuild the project but intend to use a light touch. He encouraged folks to share any comments with him directly.

**Decisions:**

- None

**Action Items:**

- None

### **WDFW Riparian Data Engine**

Ken Muir shared that his position at WDFW includes Priority Habitat and Species. He said the riparian management zone (RMZ) delineation is within the site-potential tree height of a 200-year-old tree. The Riparian Data Engine (RDE) used the extent of observed water, riparian management, and the FEMA floodplain mapping. Ken provided a live demo of the RDE including how metrics are summarized, which include vegetation metrics. There was some discussion about the issue of logging in the RDE. John Arterburn asked about when new land cover data would be incorporated. Ken described that currently they wanted to release the RDE and are seeking additional funding for incorporating new land cover data. John Arterburn asked about the floodplain. Ken shared that the tool includes channel migration zones and FEMA floodplain.

**Decisions:**

- None

**Action Items:**

- None

### **Icicle Reach Assessment Review**

Hans Smith provided an overview of the Icicle Reach Assessment and introduced Gardner Johnston and Pollyanna Lind with Inter-Fluve. Hans noted that the Icicle Work Group provided funding and is also providing comments on the draft assessment. The reach assessment covered the lower and middle Icicle River Assessment Units/HUC12s. Gardner gave an overview of the several reaches included in the assessment. This included describing the major sections of the stream including the lower section that is more unconfined and open but most impacted by humans. The middle section is steep with coarse substrate, while the upper section (RM 15 – 20) is a mix of geomorphic units. Gardner said they completed USFS Level 2 surveys in Icicle Creek. He described large wood dynamics as well as identified several project opportunities.

There was a question about inclusion of fish surveys in the assessment. Gardner noted that the RA did not include fish surveys, although a PIT-tag array captures movement of tagged fish upstream from the boulder field. Ken Muir asked about whether climate change resiliency was explored. Gardner indicated that they are exploring climate change resiliency. Tracy Hillman asked whether there is a natural fish-passage barrier in the gorge. Gardner said nothing in there is a barrier, it is mostly a boulder step-pool channel. Tracy Hillman also asked about the upstream diversion and its effects on groundwater

recharge. Gardner shared that there are several possibilities about how the diversion could be engineered. They did not evaluate the claim that the water running down the hatchery diversion channel is recharging the groundwater.

Tracy Bowerman mentioned that the PIT-tag array was down for several years. She also highlighted that the spring Chinook Salmon in Icicle Creek are not ESA listed and therefore not considered in the recovery plan; steelhead in Icicle Creek are ESA listed. Tracy Bowerman also shared that the section of Icicle Creek downstream is considered world-class white-water rafting. John Arterburn commented that it seems the lower reaches are where fish primarily occur and highlighted the need to add in-stream complexity. He also commented that getting landowner willingness would be a priority.

Mike Kane commented that Chelan County is working on conceptual designs within the historical channel. He also highlighted the question about fish movement above the boulder field. Jason Lundgren indicated that CF did fish passage barrier analysis in Icicle Creek and that information should be included in the state fish-passage data. Steve Fortney mentioned that Inter-Fluve did a good job describing geomorphology and historical impacts; although, more work is needed to describe how the dam influenced geomorphology in the lower reaches of Icicle Creek.

**Decisions:**

- **None**

**Action Items:**

- **RTT members: share comments with Tracy Hillman by the end of the week**

**Meeting adjourned at 12:05 pm**