

Meeting Notes 8 April 2009

Location: Douglas PUD Auditorium, 1151 Valley Mall Pkwy, East Wenatchee
For more info contact: Casey Baldwin 509-664-3148 casey.baldwin@dfw.wa.gov

Attendance: Casey Baldwin, Steve Hays, Tom Kahler, Cameron Thomas, Michelle McClure, Tracy Hillman, Chuck Peven, Keely Murdoch, Dale Bambrick, Joe Kelly, Derek Van_Marter, Steve Kolk, MaryJo Sanborn, and James White

1) Updates: MaDMC: Keely presented the Wenatchee ISEMP implementation document and said that the MaDMC had reviewed it and provided input to Pamela Nelle. Keely asked the RTT if they wanted to review the document as well, before approving it for inclusion as an appendix to the *Monitoring Strategy*. Casey inquired about the process for that step, since the *Monitoring Strategy* is not officially an RTT document (though we contributed considerable effort to it). The *Monitoring Strategy* was prepared by Tracy Hillman for the UCSRB and paid for largely by BPA (as well as the agencies of RTT members who contributed their time to it). Tracy thought that the appropriate steps would be for the MaDMC, once satisfied with it, to make a recommendation to the UCSRB to adopt the document as an appendix to the *Monitoring Strategy*. The group agreed and Casey was willing to work with Keely to prepare a memo and make a presentation to the UCSRB for its approval. Keely suggested that RTT members not on the MaDMC, but with an interest in the document, should also read and provide comments during the next steps. The next steps are: 1) MaDMC final review 2) Pamela incorporate final comments 3) Keely/Casey prepare a memo and present to the UCSRB 4) add to *Monitoring Strategy* after UCSRB approval.

Methow Monitoring Coordination: Keely said the MaDMC had reviewed the Methow Monitoring Inventory and Gaps document prepared by John Crandall and the MRC. Individual MaDMC members were providing editing comments directly to John, and Keely has prepared a memo outlining the bigger picture concepts of the MaDMC review. It is believed this document is a pre-cursor to the monitoring implementation plan appendix for the Methow of the *Monitoring Strategy* (as described above for the Wenatchee).

MaDMC data gap analysis: Keely mentioned there may be a need to update the analysis, or at least to track items (gaps) that might need to be added to the list. Then, at some point, the group will need to add them in, subtract those that are filled, and re-do the prioritization analysis. It was suggested that having one person receive and archive potential data gaps during the year might be an effective solution (*after the meeting Casey talked to James and James was willing to be the person to receive and hold the draft data gaps*). Derek thought that it might make sense to incorporate the updates every other year, following the RTT analysis workshop.

MaDMC other: Casey mentioned that John Monahan had contacted him and wanted some time with the RTT or MaDMC to present initial ISEMP results and talk about the new monitoring design. Casey thought it was important as preparation for the RTT analysis workshop and as follow up to the Entiat planning for IMW that Derek had facilitated in early February. The group agreed and Keely suggested having it in the middle of the day at the May meeting, as a crossover item between the morning RTT meeting and the afternoon MaDMC meeting.

UCSRB. Derek said they had a successful and productive trip to D.C., meeting with elected federal representatives and leaders of the Action Agencies. Derek gave an update on the implementation schedule update process. He said the WATs were on track to complete the updates by May. Derek also gave an update on the federal stimulus package that the Board sent to the Governor's office. The request included 3 projects including the Pioneer Ditch Water Users project, Beebe Springs, and Bonaparte Creek.

Other: Casey said the USBR was planning a field trip to the Icicle Boulder field to evaluate the extent that it is a barrier, anthropogenic effects, solutions, etc. He said they want Wenatchee Habitat Subcommittee and RTT participation on the initial scoping meeting. Steve Kolk provided further details and mentioned that the potential dates were the afternoon of April 21 or the morning of April 23. A couple of RTT members thought that April 23 would work better for them. It was suggested that the Icicle Irrigation District should also be involved or invited as well.

Casey said the workgroup had completed the review of the Community Salmon Fund projects and that Derek and Casey were going to be on a conference call with the funders this afternoon. The facilitator and the NFWF representative seemed appreciative and satisfied with the technical review.

2) Nason Creek Tributary and Reach Assessments: Steve gave an update on the status of the assessments, provided a handout with an overview of their content, and provided hard copies and/or CD's of the assessments. A complete set of information is online: www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/fcrps/thp/index.html Derek thanked the USBR for their work and important contributions by providing this critical information for developing good projects.

3) WHSC request for prioritization: Casey set the stage with an overview of the process and the RTT's involvement in a prioritization recommendation last April (2008). MaryJo explained that, during the March 2009 WHSC meeting, it was determined that the WHSC needed additional review and input from the RTT. While developing the request for the RTT, MaryJo and Casey thought that the recommendation memo from last year provided the WHSC with enough information to proceed without further-formal RTT input at this point. After some discussion the RTT agreed. Next steps: 1) the WHSC will adapt last year's RTT prioritization recommendations to the new USBR reach assessment format 2) Casey and/or other RTT members will review it to see if the translation makes sense and is consistent with the previous recommendations 3) the WHSC will apply a feasibility/social filter to the

prioritized list to come up with a sequenced implementation plan 4) WHSC will work with Casey and/or other RTT members to determine if there is a need for a phase 2 assessment by the RTT on a subset of the subreaches.

- 4) RTT executive session:** The group discussed the upcoming project review cycle and what they needed to do to be prepared for it. Casey will prepare more detailed procedures for project review and add it to the RTT Operating Procedures, which will help Derek and Casey communicate the “rules of engagement” with project sponsors.

The group discussed the Lead Entity proposed switch to having project tours before the presentations. The RTT did not agree that the switch would be more effective for all project sponsors, but from a technical review perspective thought it did not make much difference and were willing to accommodate the change.

The RTT talked through the issues and concerns raised by the Chelan Lead Entity and discussed at the 31 March 2009 debrief meeting. The RTT appreciated the insightful comments and commended the Lead Entity for suggesting solutions along with their concerns. The following highlights the major points of the discussion:

- 1) The RTT agreed that more time was needed for the review, and 10 days was ideal.
- 2) The 16 page appendix to the Biological Strategy is a clear description of the RTT’s criteria and the evolving detail over the last several years is a vast reduction in subjective review. Casey pointed out that the group needed to re-examine the design-only criteria to be sure we will be able to score those projects.
- 3) The RTT is happy with the past procedures during the formal project review meeting. Hiding scores from each other is not necessary or desirable and believes there is no unwanted pressure to change scores.
- 4) “No Score” designations are not desirable, but maintaining an off ramp for difficult proposals that do not fit our technical criteria is important.
- 5) The cost benefit graph is not an RTT product or used as part of the RTT review. The graph originates with the recovery plan (Chapter 8) and useful to the CAC and others; thus, it is beneficial to the region. Casey will not generate the graph as part of the RTT meeting but will create it at Derek’s request after the RTT meeting.
- 6) If an RTT member has a conflict of interest with a proposal they should recuse themselves from both the scoring and the discussion of the project.
- 7) The RTT confirmed that our criteria do not provide an opportunity for consideration of costs, outside of a small amount of points regarding technical aspects of the budget. The RTT agreed that more evaluation of project costs by some mechanism is a good idea and supported Derek’s efforts to come up with additional evaluation of project costs.
- 8) The RTT did not believe that there was a feasible and productive way to solicit input during or after the formal review of final proposals. Project sponsors have four opportunities for interaction with the RTT and the system is designed for feedback early in the process. Project sponsors need to be sure that important

- aspects of their project are clearly and concisely articulated in their final proposal, thereby minimizing confusion or missed information during the formal review.
- 9) Attachments: The RTT does not agree to read and review an unlimited quantity of information attached to proposals. Within the SRFB and Trib Fund processes word or space limits are associated with sections of proposals specifically to keep project sponsors focused and efficient. RTT members will read attachments at their discretion to the extent that they are convinced that reading the attachment is necessary to understanding and rating the proposal. Project sponsors should include brief synopses of Alternative Evaluation Reports (or other important detailed documents / assessments) within the main body of the proposal so that RTT members can understand what was evaluated, why the chosen alternative was selected and why the other alternatives were rejected. Such synopses should refer to relevant sections of attachments. In general, the more voluminous the proposal (and attachments), the more difficult it is for RTT members to effectively review the proposal and ascertain the salient details of the proposed action(s). Thus, it behooves project sponsors to seek brevity and precision in the preparation of their respective proposals.

Casey mentioned that he had been appointed WDFW's alternate to the Tributary Committees and wanted to be sure the RTT was supportive of that in conjunction with his RTT Chairperson duties. The group was supportive and thought that there were no conflicts of interest regarding participation between the groups for Casey or other members.

Meeting adjourned 12:30