

Willamette/Lower Columbia Technical Recovery Team Meeting
Oregon State Office Building, Room 120B
Portland, OR
October 25, 2004

Attendance:

- **TRT Attendees:** Paul McElhany, Steve Kolmes (11:30 – 1:30), Jim Myers, Ashley Steel, Tim Whitsel and Chuck Willis (after 12:30)
 - **TRT Members Absent:** Craig Busack, Dan Rawding, Cleve Steward
 - **Other Attendees:** Shane Capron, Patty Dornbusch, Mindy Simmons and J.J. Westfall
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Action Items:

- **ASAP** – TRT send November and December schedules to JJ to schedule next meetings.
 - **November 4** – Draft TRT synthesis comments on Willamette plan emailed from Paul McElhany to TRT for comments.
 - **November 8** – Comments from TRT members on revised LCFRB plan (these are not part of a formal TRT review, but provide informal individual comments to NOAA.)
 - **November 11** – TRT Response to draft Willamette Plan comments are due (email to Paul McElhany and entire TRT.)
 - **November 18** – TRT comments on Willamette plan transmitted to NOAA and WRI (depending on nature of comments that arrive by November 11, we may need to have another round of TRT revision before transmitting to NOAA and WRI. – This can probably be accomplished within the time frame of the November 18 deadline.)
 - **Late November –Early December** – Next TRT meeting.
 - **December 15** – Roll out ceremony for LCFRB plan.
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Brief Summary of Meeting Discussion

General schedule for salmon recovery: Overall goal – NOAA is planning to finish draft salmon recovery plans for publication in the federal register by December 2005. The strategy for completing draft plans by December 2005 has not been fully developed. The complete implementation strategy has also not been fully developed. NOAA Fisheries would like TRT advice on what technical products are needed to complete draft plans by the deadline.

Oregon Planning Update: NOAA has a small contract with the Willamette Restoration Initiative (WRI) to revise the Willamette subbasin plan in a manner consistent with an ESA recovery plan. Beyond this small contract, WRI has no funding to further develop the Willamette recovery plan. Patty noted that one stumbling block in developing a recovery plan in Oregon is that Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) cannot

commit resources to a recovery plan but does not want one to continue without their input.

Washington Planning Update: Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board (LCFRB) produced a revised draft recovery plan in October. The closing date on the public comment period for this revision is November 9. December 10 the plan will be submitted to the LCFRB Board, and on December 15 there will be a ceremony with Governor Locke and Administrator Lohn announcing the completion of the LCFRB plan. The level of involvement from LCFRB for the implementation of the plan is not clear, as the LCFRB's funding is not secure after December 2004. The mechanism for including components of the LCFRB plan as components of the ESA recovery plan is not fully developed.

TRT Comments on Revised LCFRB plan: TRT members had not had time yet to review the revised draft. When writing comments, the TRT should consider what are the most important things that they need to do to the plan before December 15 and what changes need to happen in the next five years. TRT members should write up comments on the sections they reviewed previously. *Paul* will talk with Cleve about reviewing the monitoring section. The WLC-TRT will not produce a group review of the LCFRB document, but NOAA would appreciate informal individual comments on the revised LCFRB plan from TRT members. *Comments are due to Paul by November 8.*

TRT Comments on WRI Willamette Plan: Preliminary comments from Paul, Jim and Tim were distributed prior to the meeting. Based on these comments and discussion at the meeting, *Paul* will draft the Willamette Plan review comments and send it around to the TRT. Steve noted that the TRT has made comments regarding EDT to LCFRB and suggested we incorporate some of those comments into the TRT's comments on the Willamette plan.

Discussion of suggestions for WRI contract work: One suggested approach to revising the plan centered on developing a recovery, monitoring, and evaluation (R, M, & E) plan as an organizing focus. TRT members noted that the evaluation of EDT needs to be done by NWFSC / Mobrand and is not a task appropriate to WRI. Evaluating capacity for increasing natural production above dams was suggested as a priority for the WRI contract. It was noted that the plan lacks a prioritization scheme for both within and among watershed actions. There needs to be an evaluation of what it would take to implement actions (especially lowland watershed process related actions). Developing ESU scenario options could be a useful activity of WRI in combination with the TRT and Steelhead and Chinook Above Barriers (SCAB) group. Another option for the contract is to develop a case study on watershed action prioritization by convening a group of technical experts to agree on freshwater habitat priorities in one basin, similar to the Lewis River Case Study. The WRI group might have done this to a degree already when they reviewed the EDT results. Developing more specific actions in one watershed would be useful, though eventually it will have to be done on all watersheds because there has to be priorities across those as well. Hatchery issues in general need to be included in the plan. Critical technical analysis is needed in the evaluation of prespawning mortality

issues as well as the issue of survival of juvenile above rivers and dams. The TRT discussed that simple life cycle models of the Willamette populations would be helpful and Paul McElhany agreed to explore these models.

EDT discussion: It was suggested that EDT not be used in any more watersheds until it is evaluated. Concern was expressed about the defensibility of conclusions based on an unevaluated EDT model. There is a need to understand how basic parameters influence the output and how they could be biased. Ongoing plans to conduct EDT analysis in additional Willamette subbasins was discussed.