

# RESOLVE

Results Through Consensus

720 SW Washington Street, Suite 750  
Portland, OR 97205  
Ph: 503-228-6408 Fax: 503-228-6207  
www.resolve.org

October 25, 2002

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** NMFS Willamette/Lower Columbia River TRT Members

**FROM:** Paul De Morgan, RESOLVE and Paul McElhany, NMFS

**SUBJECT:** Brief Summary and Action Items from the October 22 TRT Meeting

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Thank you for your participation and efforts at the NMFS Willamette/Lower Columbia River Technical Recovery Team meeting held on Tuesday, October 22, 2002. This memo includes a brief summary of items discussed during the meeting including:

- Schedule for Finalization of the Next Draft Viability Document
- Viability Criteria Revisions
  - Habitat Criteria
  - ESU-level Criteria
- Water Quality GIS Project
- Lewis River Watershed Case Study

In addition, a list of the agreed-upon action items can be found at the end of the memo. Please feel free to contact either of us with any questions, concerns, or forgotten next steps.

### **Schedule for Finalization of the Next Draft Viability Document**

In brief, the schedule for finalization is as follows:

- October 25-November 4 – revised sections disseminated to all TRT members (varies by section)
- November 4 – critical questions to be considered in review disseminated to all TRT members
- November 7 – Major comments, from individual review, shared with the group (as possible)
- November 12-13 – two-day TRT meeting
- November 20 – Final versions to Paul M. (no editing after this point, just document production)
- November 27 – Due to Ex Comm

The group agreed that, as discussed previously, the goal is to have a completed next draft of the document by Wednesday, November 20 in order to then produce and disseminate the document to the Ex Comm by Wednesday, November 27. As such, the group reconfirmed the schedule for dissemination of the draft documents for review in advance of the next TRT meeting. In

particular, they agreed that, with the exception of a few sections, the Friday, October 25 deadline should be met by everyone. This means the following sections will be disseminated by email to everyone on the following schedule:

- Introduction – Paul McElhany/Jim Myers – October 28
- ESU-level Criteria – Paul McElhany/Selina Heppell – October 28
- Attribute Integration – Paul McElhany/Selina Heppell – October 28
- Adult Growth and Abundance – Paul McElhany – November 4
- Juvenile Outmigrant Production – Selina Heppell – October 25
- Spatial Structure – Craig Busack – October 25
- Diversity – Jim Myers – October 25
- Habitat – Cleve Steward – October 25

The group also agreed that for each section, it would be very useful if the lead author were able to identify critical questions he or she felt needed to be addressed at the next TRT meeting. It was suggested these would not only assist in focusing the next meeting but also in focusing the review of the documents by other TRT members, however members also agreed they did not want development of the questions to hold up dissemination of the revised sections. As such, the questions should be developed and sent out as soon as possible after disseminating the revised sections and no later than Monday, November 4.

The group discussed the issue of individuals sharing major comments on each section prior to the next meeting. Members suggested using DocuShare and JJ Westfall and Paul McElhany agreed to propose an approach that would facilitate this step. The group did not discuss a specific deadline, however at an earlier meeting the suggestion had been to share such comments by Thursday, November 7. The group agreed that sharing reactions and major issues prior to the meeting will be helpful, but is not necessary.

The next TRT meeting is **scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday, November 12-13**. The agenda will focus almost exclusively on the next version of the Viability document. The goal of the meeting will be to leave with as close to a final product as possible as there will be very little time after the meeting to revise the document further. Agenda specifics will be determined based on the revised version and the questions. It was suggested that the agenda also include an update on case study activities as well as an effort to run a risk matrix for the Lewis River.

### **Discussion of Viability Criteria Revisions**

Before discussing the specific criteria, the group spent time addressing the difference between ‘viability’ criteria and ‘delisting’ criteria and implications for their efforts. For some members, developing delisting criteria would imply a focus on achieving species delisting, while viability criteria implies a focus on recovery planning. In trying to reach agreement, a member suggested the question to be answered by the TRT in the Viability document is as follows:

What are the characteristics and the corresponding thresholds that imply an ESU is no longer in danger of extinction?

The group agreed this question was a useful way to capture the document's objective and could serve as their goal. However, the discussion also spurred members' interest in additional questions about the mission of the TRT and a desire for clarity. In particular, members wanted to know where the Viability document fits into the larger process and what role the Ex Comm and more importantly, NOAA Fisheries, envisions for the TRT as the process evolves. Paul McElhany and Patty Dornbusch agreed to explore this question further and to come to the November TRT meeting with additional clarification.

The group then began discussing the **Habitat** criteria. Cleve Steward briefly described the results of a meeting, including Tom Backman, Steve Kolmes, and Paul McElhany, the previous week to develop this section. He indicated he was drafting text but did not have any for review yet. TRT members raised questions about the 'predictive' ability of using Habitat criteria and how they would relate to Viability. In addition, questions about how to set thresholds were discussed. Some members felt criteria could be developed without thresholds and encouraged the group to consider this in developing the text. How the Habitat criteria 'interact' with the factors for decline was also raised as an issue to be addressed in the Viability document.

While the questions raised were not fully answered, the group agreed the next draft of the section will need to address them as fully as possible.

The group then turned to discussion of the **ESU-level** criteria. To begin, Paul McElhany distributed a document he worked on since the last meeting to assist in focusing the conversation. Two overarching issues were discussed by the group: how to obtain an overall number for the ESU strata? and how to develop a threshold for each criteria for each population? Regarding the first issue, the question of what is the acceptable level of risk was raised. In particular, whether or not to include any 'non-deterioration' language was considered. Ultimately, the group agreed that while it is acknowledged that current population might be extirpated and an ESU could still be delisted, the goal is not to lose any populations. Further, the system developed must ensure that losing a population will result in a higher 'bar' to cross. Regarding the second issue, the group agreed that each criteria would need to include thresholds to the extent possible in order to allow for standardization and eventual 'attribute integration.' At the conclusion of the discussion, the group asked Paul McElhany to continue developing a proposed approach with their comments in mind and agreed this subject would require additional conversation at the next meeting.

## **Water Quality GIS Project**

Jim Hatten, USGS, who works with Alec Maule, presented the results of their efforts to obtain and evaluate data regarding water quality in the basin. The presentation focused on approach as it appears that over the next three months the amount of data will increase four-fold. Jim indicated that they have been working with a variety of federal and state agencies as well as other organizations in this effort. He also noted they are attempting to develop a matrix, incorporating contamination/water quality factors by life stage, that might be useful to future TRT efforts. Questions/suggestions by the group included, making sure the data is ranked according to quality and consider looking for local level data through, for example, a web portal collection system. In

addition, it was suggested the project look to the sub-regional planning processes taking place for additional funding as they may have some available from the state of Oregon.

### **Lewis River Watershed Case Study**

The group spent time discussing the case study at two levels: first, regarding the efforts underway to develop the freshwater habitat component; and second, as an overall project. To begin the conversation, Dave Somers and Pat Olson with the Pacific Watershed Institute (PWI), walked through the steps they intend to go through over the next six months and the products they intend to develop (this was also included in a memo distributed at the beginning of the meeting). Members engaged Dave and Pat in conversations about the proposal, in particular noting their approval of looking a different ways to develop analyses (e.g., EDT and ‘matrix’). Members did note that ultimately, once the case study has delivered additional data, someone should rerun EDT for the Lewis River.

The group thanked PWI for their efforts thus far and asking to be kept up to speed over the next few months. It was noted that a subset of TRT members is working with PWI in order to assist with on-going efforts to coordinate with other groups doing similar work in the basin (i.e., URS/Steward and Associates and White/Cramer). To the extent these groups meet in between TRT meetings, it was requested that they inform the rest of the TRT on results.

During the discussion, and building off of the previous presentation, the group agreed it would be worth asking USGS to assist with work on the nutrient and chemical loading analyses. Paul McElhany agreed to speak with Alec Maule about this issue. The group discussed the March 2003 timeframe for products and noted this deadline was being driven by the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board goal of completing their recovery plans by the end of 2003.

The issue of timing caused the group to transition into a broader discussion of the overall case study and the amount of work to be accomplished in addition to the freshwater habitat analyses. The group recognized a lot of work will be necessary but agreed that their primary focus for the next month needs to be finalization of the next draft Viability document. The TRT agreed that the December meeting will focus on the case study.

### **Documents Distributed at Meeting:**

- Draft ESU-Level Criteria Guidelines – Paul McElhany
- Integrating Attributes and Assessing Population Risk of Extinction – Paul McElhany
- Draft Within Population Diversity Criteria – Jim Myers
- Case Study Overview (September 18, 2002) – WLC TRT and LCFRB
- PWI Action Item Reponses Memo (October 21, 2002) – Patricia Olson and Dave Somers

## Agreed Upon Action Items

Action Item	Who	When
1. Finalize and distribute revised sections of the Viability document.	Various TRT members	Varies (Fri., October 25 – Mon., November 4)
2. Propose approach for commenting on draft documents.	JJ Westfall and Paul McElhany	Friday, October 25
3. Distribute ‘critical’ questions regarding each section of the revised Viability document.	Lead drafters of each section.	Monday, November 4
4. Submit comments on each section via Docushare process (see #2).	All TRT members (as possible)	Thursday, November 7
5. Clarify NOAA/Ex Comm/TRT future interactions regarding the Viability document and recovery planning efforts	Patty Dornbusch and Paul McElhany	Tuesday, November 12
6. Talk to Alec Maule regarding USGS assisting with Lewis River case study.	Paul McElhany	ASAP
7. Talk to Phil Trask regarding TRT timeline for Lewis River case study.	Paul McElhany	ASAP
8. Distribute email requesting information regarding the water quality GIS project.	Jim Hatten	ASAP

### TRT Members in Attendance:

- Steve Kolmes
- Alec Maule
- Paul McElhany
- Jim Myers
- Dan Rawding
- Cleve Steward
- Tim Whitesell

### Others in Attendance:

- Thomas Batt, USGS
- Paul De Morgan, RESOLVE
- Patty Dornbusch, NOAA
- Jim Hatten, USGS
- Pat Olson, PWI
- Mindy Sheer, NOAA
- Dave Somers, PWI
- J.J. Westfall, NOAA