

Water Resources Technical Advisory Committee (WRTAC) Meeting Notes
Fall Meeting, August 30, 2022
Noxon Multipurpose Room
10:00 a.m. (MST)

WRTAC representative attendees:

Avista – Eric Oldenburg
Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) – Ken Bouwens
Idaho Department of Environmental Quality – Bob Steed
Kalispel Tribe – Ken Merrill
Lake Pend Oreille Idaho Club – Dave Gillespie
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MFWP) – Jason Blakney
Montana Department of Environmental Quality – Keenan Storrar
Noxon – Cabinet Shoreline Coalition – Rick Robinson
U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Forest Service and Cabinet Ranger District – Chris Rossel
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) – Kevin Aceituno

Other Attendees:

Avista – Shana Bernall, Lisa Johnson, Paul Kusnierz, Arthur Potts, Sean Moran, Davina Brown, Andrew Ransom; Avista Grant Writer – Ruth Watkins; Elk Creek Watershed – Judy Hutchins; Lake Pend Oreille Idaho Club – Carter and Christine Sandahl; Lower Clark Fork Watershed – Brita Olson; Idaho Department of Environmental Quality – Kristin Lowell; Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks – Travis Rehm

Welcome and Introductions:

Eric welcomed those in attendance and discussed the purpose and format of the meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to update on the progress of the 2022 Aquatic Annual Implementation efforts (AIPs) and to identify whether there are any issues or actions that need to be forwarded to the MC for their September 21 meeting.

Other Business:

- Review of Consent Mails
 - Appendix T – Request for additional funding for the Cabinet Gorge Fish Hatchery Spring Water Collection System Upgrade was approved by the Management Committee on May 18.
- Instructions for the development of 2023 Project Plans and 2022 Annual Work Summaries
- Review of properties purchased and held by Avista in support of the CFSA at 10- and 5- year intervals – Arthur Potts
- Avista grant writer update – Ruth Watkins
- Clark Fork Heritage Resource Program (Appendix R) update – Lisa Johnson
- Choose winter meeting date
 - The group agreed on **January 18, 2023**

Summary of the 2022 implementation efforts and anticipated changes for 2023:

Appendix A: Idaho Tributary Acquisition and Fishery Enhancement Program

Tributary Habitat Acquisition and Enhancement

1. Habitat Restoration Scoping Allocation
 - Strong Creek- working on putting plan in place
 - Twin Creek- conceptual management/weed control
2. Habitat Restoration and Acquired Property Maintenance and Monitoring Allocation
3. Priority Native Salmonid Habitat Acquisition and Conservation Allocation
4. Idaho Field Station Construction, Furnishing, and Operation
5. Pack River Watershed Management Plan Addendum
6. Lower Clark Fork River Minimum Flow and Water Temperature Monitoring
 - Data have been reviewed and filed and we will continue to monitor.
 - Temperature monitoring- Bob Steed suggested we discuss memorializing this during or prior to MC meeting.
7. Trestle Creek Habitat Enhancement Project Phase I
8. Trestle Creek Habitat Enhancement Project Phase II
9. Rattle Creek Habitat Enhancement Project

Fish Resource Monitoring, Enhancement, and Management

10. Fish Resource Monitoring, Enhancement, and Management Plan
 - Report completed
 - BLT redd density

Appendix B: Montana Tributary Habitat and recreational Fishery Enhancement Program

Tributary Habitat Acquisition and Enhancement

1. Habitat Restoration Monitoring and Native Salmonid Abundance Monitoring Plan
2. Redd Surveys in Montana Tributaries
 - Discontinue Brown Trout redd surveys except East Fork Bull River
3. Sim Meander Stream and Floodplain Restoration Project
 - Completed film to share
4. Stream Gage Monitoring
5. Crow Creek Bull Trout Investigation
6. Graves Creek Pilot Habitat Enhancement Project
7. Upper Prospect Creek LWD Project
8. Lower Clark Fork Watershed Group Project Coordination
 - Brita updated the group
9. Habitat Restoration Monitoring, Maintenance and Contingency Allocation
10. Habitat Restoration, Property Acquisition, and Conservation Easement Contingency Allocation
 - No properties in Montana that currently being pursued
11. East Fork Bull River Morphology, Connectivity, and Habitat Enhancement Project

Recreational Fishery Enhancement

12. Cabinet Gorge and Noxon Reservoir Fisheries Monitoring Plan
13. Pilot Project: Modification of Eurasian Watermilfoil Beds on Noxon Reservoir for Fishery Benefits
 - The project proponent would like to discontinue this project after 2022.
14. Mountain Lake Fisheries Monitoring Project
 - Eight lakes stocked

15. Lower Bull River Day Use Boat Access Site Construction
16. Noxon Reservoir Boat Ramp Improvements
 - Allowed access 1 month earlier and at all but the lowest flows
17. Managing Aquatic Invasive Plants on Noxon and Cabinet Gorge Reservoirs
 - 70.3 acres treated
18. Dreissenid Mussel Sampling on the Noxon and Cabinet Gorge Reservoirs
19. Noxon Reservoir Bathymetry Update

Appendix C: Fish Passage/Native Salmonid Restoration Plan

Annual Operations

1. Upstream Fish Passage Program
 - Shana provided update on new fish passage facility – a few challenges
 - Dave Gillespie requested additional information to include in the LPOIC newsletter on CGDF. Shana suggested reaching out in a year from now, still working out the bugs and troubleshooting the facility.
2. Westslope Cutthroat Trout Transport Evaluation
 - Travis provided an update
3. Tributary Trapping and Downstream Juvenile Bull Trout Transport Program
4. PIT-Monitoring Station Operation and Maintenance
5. Non-Native Fish Suppression Project in the East Fork Bull River
6. Evaluation of Potential Actions for Reducing Non-native Threats to Native Salmonid Populations

Facilities

7. Fish Capture Facilities Operation, Development, and Testing
8. Graves Creek Permanent Weir Trap Enhancements

2023 Proposed project:

- New project proposed for 2023 Graves Creek Bull Trout Translocation Project supported by outside agencies, excited to see it move forward. Large increases in redd counts in years and densities are high enough use surplus juveniles upstream of Graves Creek falls and see if they do well in the upstream rearing habitat. Funding to develop plan, monitoring, and evaluation, 2024 for translocation. Eric provided additional information on the proposed project plan. Travis noted brook trout are extremely low densities above the falls. Discussed.

Appendix D: Bull Trout Protection and Public Education Project

2022 Project Plans

1. Idaho Bull Trout Protection and Education Officer Support
2. Montana Bull Trout Education and Communication Support
3. Montana Bull Trout Education Outreach Support
4. Montana Game Warden Support
5. Trout Unlimited Outreach Coordination
6. Pend Oreille Water Festival

Appendix E: Watershed Councils Program

2022 Project Plans

1. Pack River Watershed Council, Bonner Soil and Water Conservation District
2. Lower Clark Fork Watershed Council Projects

Appendix F1: Clark Fork River Water Quality Monitoring Program

2022 Project Plans

1. Clark Fork River Water Quality Monitoring Program

Appendix F2: Monitoring of Noxon Reservoir Stratification and Mobilization of Sediment

Nutrients/Metals

2022 Project Plans

1. Monitoring of Noxon Reservoir Stratification and Mobilization of Sediment Nutrients/Metals
 - o Increased cost for 2023 project plan

Appendix F3: Aquatic Organism Tissue Analysis

2022 Project Plans

1. Noxon and Cabinet Reservoir Fish Mercury Study

Appendix F4: Water Quality Protection and Monitoring Plan for Maintenance, Construction, and Emergency Activities

2022 project Plans

There are no 2022 Project Plans associated with Appendix F4.

- o Oldenburg updated the group that there was an accidental exceedance of Noxon Rapids Dam daily draft rate on March 11. This was caused by human error and resulted in drafting $\frac{3}{4}$ inch farther than the General Operating Limit. Avista self-reported the incident to FERC and MC and committed to implementing measures to ensure it will not occur again.

Appendix F5: Dissolved Gas Supersaturation Control, Mitigation, and Monitoring

TDG Monitoring

1. Total Dissolved Gas Monitoring
 - Bob requested a TDG subcommittee meeting to discuss the TDG data, prior to the September MC meeting. Paul will schedule a TDG subcommittee meeting and will send out the annual TDG memo.

TDG Mitigation and Monitoring Program

2. Project Scoping Allocation
3. Analysis of Gas Bubble Disease Monitoring Data
4. Mapping the Potential for Fish to Compensate for TDG in Lower Clark Fork River
5. Nutrient Level Impacts on Salmonid Populations in the Lower Clark Fork River
6. Temperature Monitoring Data Compilation
7. Walleye Geochemistry Study
8. Trophic Monitoring in Lake Pend Oreille and Pend Oreille Idaho
9. Box Canyon Reservoir Northern Pike Suppression
10. Lake Pend Oreille Experimental Walleye Angler Incentive Program
11. Lake Pend Oreille/Clark Fork River Walleye Population Assessment
12. Lake Pend Oreille Lake Trout Angler Incentive Program
13. Lake Pend Oreille Lake Trout Netting Program
14. Demography of Adfluvial Bull Trout in Lake Pend Oreille
15. Lake Pend Oreille Bull Trout Population Monition and Evaluation
16. Lake Pend Oreille Nearshore Index Netting
17. Idaho Protection and Education Officer Support
18. Lake Pend Oreille Tributary PIT- Monitoring Station Installation

19. Lake Pend Oreille Tributary PIT- Monitoring Station Operation and Maintenance
20. Clark Fork River Population Monitoring
21. Lightning Creek Delta Connectivity Project
22. Lower Clark Fork River Flow Model
23. Lake Pend Oreille and Pend Oreille River Creel Survey

GSCP Alternative:

24. Gas Supersaturation Control Program Total Dissolved Gas Abatement

Appendix T: Project Operations Package

2022 Project Plans

1. Project Operations and Coordination
2. Cabinet Gorge Fish Hatchery Spring Water Collection System Upgrade
3. Clark Fork River (Derr Island) Boating Access Site Improvements

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 pm (MST)