



YAKIMA TRIBUTARY ACCESS & HABITAT PROGRAM

Core Team Meeting Minutes

21 March, 2007 9:30am- 12 Noon

Place: **Kittitas County PUD, 1400 E. Vantage Hwy. Ellensburg**

Attending: Henry Fraser, Richard Visser, Dave Myra, Jennifer Scott, David Child, Ken Schuster, William Meyer, Pat Monk, Carol Ready, Ed Harrell.

1. ADMINISTRATION

a) Approve Agenda – Dave M. asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda. William wanted time to remark on what is happening regarding Cooperative Compliance on Reecer Creek. Pat wanted to discuss a Naches River project he is working on. Richard wanted to bring up potential screening work on Batchelor and Hatton Creeks. Ken wanted to mention the Columbia River Program as a possible source of funds for YTAHP projects.

b) Approve February Minutes – Dave M. asked if everyone had received the e'mailed minutes of the February meeting and were there any comments or corrections to be made. There were none.

c) BPA Funding update – Ed said we have finally received signed contracts for the February March contract extensions. He had also checked the BPA website showing that our February invoice had been approved. So we should be getting that payment any day. And there should not be any delay in getting the March Invoice processed.

He said we have not had any official notice from BPA regarding ongoing FY-07 – 09 funding. So for now we are following the recommendation from Jay Marcotte at BPA to plan for an Expense budget of \$121,726 and a Capital budget of \$758,274.

A very simple Scope of Work has been submitted for the Expense contract. It covers the basic administration activities.

The Scope of Work for the Capital contract has been completed in draft form. Ed said he had sent that draft and the budget to: Anna, Mike, David Child, Hank, Carol, David Gerth, Dave Myra, Jennifer, and Richard, to take a look at. If they do not identify any changes he will ask Jay to consider it our final SOW.

Lastly Ed mentioned that the end of our interim contract is coming up March 31st. He did not think BPA would be able to get the April 07 through March 08 contracts approved before the end of March. But assuming they will be approved we do not technically need them in place until May when our April invoice is being processed.

2. UPDATE ON CURRENT PROJECTS, PENDING PROJECTS, PERMITS AND MONITORING

a) **NYCD** – David C. gave an update on the Schneider project. He said the Cultural Resources study will be completed in April. David said Jen will be taking Cathy Reed (DOE Shorelines) to look at the site next week (week of March 26 -30). As soon as the final design is ready Jen will start on the permitting. David said NYCD will begin purchasing materials for the project this month.

The Boyd Brown project is progressing. The Cultural Resource study will be completed next week. David said it is important to get the ring well installed before this irrigation season begins in May. High flows this winter have silted in Boyd Brown's gravity diversion and significantly altered Rattlesnake Creek. Because of this a great deal of instream work would be necessary to reactivate the gravity diversion. It is hoped that this instream work can be avoided by getting the ring well into operation in time to begin irrigating. The ring well needs to be dug by a certified well driller or the construction supervised by a licensed engineer. David said they are contracting with Rusty Gigstead to oversee the construction. All of the funding is in place. The only delay in getting started is DOE approval of the "change in point of diversion". David and Mike will be meeting with DOE to see what can be done to get this project underway. The gravity diversion will be removed in late summer.

Ken explained that the DOE staff working on "change of diversion" requests are swamped with work. It could take some time to get final approval. Carol suggested using a temporary pump system to replace the gravity diversion until the ring well can be completed. William asked if YTAHP had access to a pump that could do the job. David said that NYCD had one but he is still hoping to get the ring well done in time.

David reported that the Cowiche Creek Water Users Association pipeline is being held up by issues between the CCWUA and the Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District. The manager of YTID is not supportive of the project. Dave M. explained what is going on now between CCWUA and YTID. There are concerns about who will pay for potential future YTID operations emergencies. This has been an on going issue in discussions regarding this project. Pat Monk said he had attended a YTID Board meeting and his impression was that YTID considers the project "dead" because they think CCWUA is asking for too much. Richard and Dave M. mentioned that maybe it is time to get an arbitrator involved to facilitate an agreement. David said they are going ahead with the Cultural Resource study of the project area. They will continue exploring options to get the project done.

David reported that the Van Wyke off channel watering project is moving ahead. Most of the funding will come from NRCS/EQIP but YTAHP is helping with the permitting. Richard asked how far off stream the water troughs will be and what is the source of water. David said they will be well away from the creek and the source is existing springs.

David said the Technical Work Group met last week to review plans for the Fines diversion and the North Ahtanum Gauge barrier projects. The meeting was well attended and some good suggestions were brought up. The funding for the Fines project is coming together from several sources.

David said they need to get the contractor on the Garretson project to go back in and fix a problem with the water meter.

In closing David said he is continuing to work on several pump screen installations. The vegetation restoration work at the Upper Lust project is being completed. The Cowiche annual Tributary Team meeting will be held in April. NYCD will begin purchasing materials this month for the summer projects.

William asked David about the availability of plants from the NYCD nursery. David said there is a lot of information on the NYCD web-site.

b) KCCD – Anna was not at the meeting so there was no update on KCCD projects.

Dave M. asked Carol if she had anything to report. Carol reported about her work on the Reecer Creek Floodplain project. She, Anna, and Gina McCoy (WDFW) had met with John Acres and the City of Ellensburg Parks person. Anna is working on the Durand and Fagalde diversion removals so they will be taken care of. Gina has prepared a plan to move the existing dike to the east, farther away from Reecer Creek. A new Reecer Creek channel will be dug in the floodplain area opened up by moving the dike. There will also be some side channels created, some habitat complexity built into the new channel and revegetation of the new floodplain area. All this will be done in the dry and given a couple of years to mature before the existing dike is removed or breached. Part of the plan is to build a trail through the floodplain area that will link West Ellensburg Park and possibly the John Wayne Trail with Irene Rinehart Park south of I-90. The City has an easement from WS-DOT to route the trail under I-90 at the bridge over Reecer Creek. Carol has been researching possible funding sources to help with the trail construction and creation of wetland habitat in the new floodplain area. William suggested a couple of possible funding sources.

c) KCT – Dave M. asked Hank if he wanted to say anything about projects he and David Gerth are working on. Hank said the Pott and Pautzke projects were in a holding pattern until the landowners made decisions about what they want to do with the land. Hank said, he and David G. are working on transferring funding that had been directed to the Pott and Pautzke projects to a couple of projects that can be done on Green's property on Currier Creek.

Regarding the screening projects on Deneen's property on Swauk Creek, they are waiting to get the Cultural Resource study done. This is the last thing to do before they can install the screens. Ken asked if Deneen was thinking about flow measuring meters on the two diversions. Hank said that Deneen wanted to have meters installed.

On the Taneum and Bruton diversion study, Hank said he and David G. will be meeting with the USBR on March 29th. to find out which alternative the Bureau wants to pursue.

3. PROJECT MONITORING (OVER ALL PROCESS) – Jen said not much has been done lately because we still do not have the 4-D permit for monitoring. Jen says there is time before we really get into monitoring for the 4-D permit review process to be completed and the permit issued to us.

4. ITEMS OF INTEREST

a) Update on Strategic Plan – Dave M. mentioned that Jen has e'mailed the draft Plan to several people for review. Jen said she is waiting to get those comments back. Hank asked about the accuracy of the section in the Plan on tributary teams. Jen said she has talked with Anna and David C. They are using trib teams but not to the extent suggested in the Strategic Plan. Richard said that maybe we should better define how the Trib teams are being used. Ken asked if we could include a little bit about working with the DOE water metering program. Dave M. said we could and Jen will insert that into the Plan.

b) Potential screening work on Batchelor and Hatton Creeks – Richard reported that he has learned that screening will now be required on diversions from Bachelor Creek and Hatton Creek. He said that NYCD, YTAHP, and WDFW can probably expect some requests for help from people diverting from these two creeks.

b) Cooperative Compliance on Reecer Creek - William explained that WDFW has a draft process for initiating Cooperative Compliance on Reecer and Currier Creeks. They do not have funding allocated to the process but for now will be using existing staff. William has contacted people along both creeks, he has put together a Power Point presentation explaining the regulations and informing them of several programs, including YTAHP, that can provide assistance in correcting passage and screening problems. If people do not take advantage of these programs to correct problems then WDFW will be more assertive in enforcing the regulations. When William met with the Pautzke representative the message was favorably received but there is some hesitance on their part to address the issues now because they may be selling the property. William said we need to figure out a way to deal with properties in a state of uncertainty because of potential changes in ownership. William said that WDFW's contacts with landowners may create more demand for YTAHP assistance.

Richard said WDFW is going through a major review of how it handles enforcement of regulations. He said a new policy will be coming out. But as William said they have already started to get the message out to landowners along Reecer and Currier Creeks about compliance and assistance programs available.

Hank said he has found that there is reluctance among some landowners to put saved water in trust because they fear it will be gone forever.

c) Pat Monk's Naches River project – Pat explained that he was contacted by a landowner along the Naches River. This site is in need of some bank protection. Pat said he is working with Rusty Gigstead to try to incorporate some fish habitat features into the bank protection work. He was wondering if there

was any funding assistance that might be available to the landowner for these fish habitat features. Richard said that if the habitat element of the work could be identified separately from the overall bank protection work then the Regional Fish Enhancement Group may be a source of funding assistance.

Jen explained that the ACOE “nation wide” permits are being re-evaluated now and this is causing some delay in processing JARPA’s.

d) Columbia River Program – Ken provided a brief explanation of the Columbia River Program. One goal of the plan is to stop all of the water diversions by people with interruptible water rights. One way to do this is to have those with interruptible water rights purchase non-interruptible water from people up stream who have extra water because of installing water conservation measures. Ken said this market for selling saved water may be a source of additional funds for some YTAHP projects. It will benefit fish because the saved water will stay instream through the Yakima basin, not being diverted until it’s someplace in the mid-Columbia reach.

5. **NEXT MEETING: April 18, 2007, 9:30 a.m. – noon**
Location: USDA Service Center conference room,
1606 Perry St. Yakima (509-454-5736 Ext. 129)