



YAKIMA TRIBUTARY ACCESS & HABITAT PROGRAM

Core Team Meeting Minutes

20 September, 2006 9:30 am - Noon

PLACE: Kittitas County PUD, 1400 E. Vantage Hwy. Ellensburg

Attendance: Ed Harrell, Dave Myra, David Gerth, Carol Ready, Anna Lael, Ken Schuster, William Meyer, Jennifer Scott, Marie Zuroske, Rachel Little, David Child, Mike Tobin, Alex Conley, Richard Visser, Hank Fraser, Jack Clark, Pat Monk.

1. ADMINISTRATION

- a) Approve Agenda: Dave M. asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda. There being none the agenda was approved.
- b) Approve August Minutes: Dave M. asked if there were any corrections or additions needed to the minutes as Ed had e'mailed them. There being none the minutes were approved.
- c) FY-07 Funding, Contracts and preliminary budgets: Ed handed out a copy of a very preliminary YTAHP budget sheet showing both an Expense budget and a Capital budget. He also handed out a copy of the notice from NPCC regarding the public comment period on the draft funding recommendations and information about who to send comments to. Dave M. reported on a telephone conversation he had had earlier that morning with Tony Grover, of NPCC, regarding the question of whether the NPCC recommendation included funding for Capital costs or was only a recommendation for the Expense side of a budget. Dave said Tony believed the recommendation did not include possible funding for Capital costs. Alex reaffirmed that this was also his understanding of what the recommended funding level was to cover. Any funding provided by BPA for Capital costs would be in addition to that in the NPCC recommendation. Alex suggested that we provide Tony with an explanation of our anticipated total funding needs (FY-07-09), both expense and capital. Also, before the end of the comment period we need to provide Tony and Larry Cassidy a list of projects we will be constructing and the capital costs of each.

Richard said we should be sure to emphasize in comments to NPCC the benefits of proposed YTAHP projects to ESA listed species. Alex said we should also remind NPCC of the working partnership YTAHP is; between several state and federal agencies, the Yakama Indian Nation, local Conservation Districts and private landowners. Additionally it was mentioned that YTAHP partners have leveraged a lot of none BPA funds to get projects on the ground.

It was decided that individual members of the Core Team would send their comments directly to NPCC and send a copy to Ed.

Ed also mentioned that new Inter-local Agreements for fiscal year 2007 need to be in place within the next few weeks. The agreements will have to be conditional regarding funding level until final funding decisions are made.

2. UPDATE ON CURRENT PROJECTS and PENDING PROJECTS

- a) NYCD: David C. reported that the Shaw/Knox project is under construction. Ron Stiles is doing the work. The fish salvage was completed during the first week of September. Fishways are in place. Ron is ready to pour concrete for the new headgate. Completion is targeted for the end of September. David said the Cultural Resource study for the Diversion-31 project is finished. The Bid package has been distributed to contractors. A construction walk through will be held on September 25th. When the contract is let the start time will be determined by the completion of the permitting process. Jennifer said the permits are all in process and seem to be progressing as needed. David, Pat, and Jennifer have completed a snorkel survey of the construction reach and Jennifer sent the data to NOAA. She is also gathering Bull trout data that she will provide to USFW. Yakima County is providing an exemption to the Shoreline Development permit. David explained that some design changes concerning in stream work needed to be made in order to get the County Shoreline exemption. David reported that changes have been made to the Garretson project to correct the low flow passage problem as discussed at the Technical Work Group meeting last August 23rd. The Upper Lust permitting is progressing as needed. Water rights and change in diversion point issues are being worked out with the Cowiche Water Users Association regarding the Lower and Upper Lust projects.
- b) KCCD: Anna reported that the work on the Wilson Creek Habitat (Eaton) project will resume in October. She said that Brent is working on extending the HPA for this work. The Eslinger/Sorenson pump diversion and screening project is progressing to ward construction this fall. Some needed piping materials will be purchased this fiscal year. The Sorenson and Ludwick pump cranes are ready to be installed next month. These are needed in order to lift the pumps out of the stream during the off season. The previous cranes were not strong enough. All of the permits are done for the Ludwick pipeline on Lyle Creek. Anna said she still needs to get the design from the owners vendor. The Caribou Creek (Gibbs) design is complete. Need to coordinate construction with the City's work on the bridge. The last small project on Fogarty Ditch still needs to be designed. Both Ryan and Gina are too busy to get to it now. The Payne ring well permit is held up. More planting will be done at the Ellensburg Waste Water Treatment plant will be done this fall. The lower Reecer Creek engineering work has been out to bid. Five responses were received. The KCCD Board wants to review to bids. The Swauk Valley Ranch and Gallie-Miller pump screens have been installed.

c) Permits (Jennifer, Richard) Permitting issues were discussed during the project update discussion.

3. Project Monitoring (Pat, Jennifer, Richard): Pat said that; he, Richard, Jennifer, and David will be meeting tomorrow, so there was nothing to report at this time.

4. ITEMS OF INTEREST

a) Benton County Conservation District: Dave M. explained that he and Mike Tobin had visited with the Benton County Conservation District and had asked them to come and talk with the Core Team. Benton County Conservation District and South Yakima Conservation District, and USGS have been working together to study the lower 116 miles of the Yakima River. Marie Zuroske (SYCD) talked about the eutrophication study she has been working on in the lower Yakima river and the excessive growth of water star grass. Water star grass is very abundant in the lower Yakima and is resulting in low dissolved oxygen concentrations, high pH values, degraded spawning habitat for Fall Chinook, decreased boating and swimming opportunities, and altered hydrology.

Rachael Little (BCCD) explained that there is a lot of concern in the community about the water star grass. BCCD is pursuing a grant from the Community Salmon Fund to test how the problem can be managed. The reason for applying to the Salmon Fund is that the water star grass is hindering upstream migration and is crowding out spawning areas. One way to deal with the plant is to remove it from the river through mechanical harvesting methods. The purpose of the grant is to fund a test of this approach in a section of the river and see how feasible it is. They would hope to see an increase in the number of redds in the treated area.

YTAHP could help by assisting with preparation of the Biological Assessment and with permitting. Success in dealing with the water star grass problem will help connect the improvements YTAHP is making in the upper Basin with the route out for migrating salmon.

Richard talked about other issues in the lower valley; pump screens, riparian planting, and removal of barriers.

Mike said we would like to help by providing matching funds for the grant but we do not know what our funding looks like next year.

Dave said we will put SYCD on our mailing list for Core Team meeting notice and continue to look for ways we can work together.

5. Next meeting: October 18, 2006, 9am –noon
Location: USDA Service Center conference room,
1606 Perry St. Yakima