

TRINITY RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL

Mission Statement

To protect, enhance, restore and revitalize the watershed through collaborative efforts that leverage external resources, work toward common goals, educate and engage community stakeholders, address natural resource issues, and support healthy ecosystems for future generations.

Meeting Notes

Tuesday November 28, 2017

TCRCD Conference Room, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

In attendance: Galen Anderson (USFS), Sandra Perez(5Cs), Cindy Buxton and Josh Smith (WRTC); Donna Rupp and Tracy McFadin (TCRCD), Samantha Chilcote (TCFAGC), Marie Peterson (Down River Consulting), Andy Hill and Kate Blanchard (CDFW), Eric Wiseman (Yurok Tribal Fisheries Dept. and TRRP), Bob Morris (SAFE), Pat Frost (Trinity Center CSD), Leslie Hubbard (Trinity County Planning Dept.), Zia Schatz and Greg Poulton (Watershed Stewards Program).

1. Introductions.

Off agenda – Donna told group about TRRP flow meeting on the 30th regarding changes to winter flows. Eric clarified that the flow proposal is not to raise the level to 1800 cfs all winter, but only create some pulses to benefit fish and food supply. The release would not exceed the ROD allotment, if approved it would mean less released in the spring restoration flow releases.

2. Samantha said the Trinity County Fish and Game commission is working on a letter of support to change practice (not policy) of “nuisance” beaver. Currently they are killed rather than being relocated. Relocation is allowable, but it is not the regular practice. Suggestion made that we need to find and suggest relocation alternatives in this area so they have options in place when beaver needs to be moved. After meeting – BOS Bobbi Chadwick emailed that the letter of support was introduced to the Trinity County Board of Supervisors on 11-21-2017 for approval.

3. Presentation on West Weaver Creek rehab project. Project site about 1.5 miles west of Weaverville off Highway 299. Question regarding fish monitoring – the USFS research station will continue to tag and monitor fish at the site (on USFS property) for the foreseeable future. Vegetation will be monitored for five years. Slide show pdf will be posted on tcrd.net under the “projects” tab.

4. Bryan McFadin unable to attend. Will try to re-schedule for February.

5. Presentation on WSP/AmeriCorps program. Zia gave an overview of the program, a national service organization. Volunteers are working all along the California coast and are focused on salmonids. She and Greg were here to visit the Watershed Center and talk to them about the possibility of becoming a placement site.

6. TRRP 2018 watershed grants.

Watershed Work Group has nominated new work group coordinator – Eric Wiseman, Yurok Tribe.

Post Implementation Site Visits funded by TRRP WWG

The TRRP Watershed Work Group intends to tour projects implemented within the last 5 years using TRRP Watershed funding. The intention is to enable WWG members to see completed projects and also to better inform their decision making process when ranking future TRRP Watershed FOA applications.

FY 2018 - TRRP Watershed FOA (Information updated by Eric)

- A) The amount of funds available for the 2018 TRRP Watershed Grant has not been finalized yet.
- B) 2018 Priority areas are Weaver and Browns Creek Watersheds and priority project outcomes are improving summer low flow conditions in anadromous Trinity tributary streams.
- C) The project ranking criteria have been refined to reduce ambiguity and increase ranking transparency and consistency. There are a total of 110 points available within 6 categories for project ranking.
 - 1) Benefits to fish – increased from 0-40 to 0-50. Scoring is based on proximity to anadromous stream reach, addressing limiting factors, ecological function, FY priorities.
 - 2) Technical Merit – 0-30 points. Explicitly stated point breakdown. Scoring is based on sufficient information to evaluate project and feasibility of construction.
 - 3) Cost – Available points went from 0-20 to 0-10. Scoring is based on the budget detail and if the project is “allowable, allocable, and reasonable”.
 - 4) Qualifications – 0-10 points. Scoring is based on past project performance of applicant and qualifications/resume.
 - 5) Cost Share – bonus of 5 points. Bonus if project has cost share component.
 - 6) Project type – bonus of 5 points. Bonus points given for implementation projects but not planning projects.
- D) The revised version of the 2018 FOA has been completed and sent to the Bureau of Reclamation’s Sacramento office to be finalized and released.
- E) A “Post Implementation Report Template” will be included in the 2018 FOA so that post-project reports are standardized for all awardees.
- F) THE WWG intends to shift the date backwards that the FOA is posted by 3 months. This would allow the TMC to approve projects in April instead of June and better facilitate projects starting in the same FY as awards are given. This will not happen this year as the FOA would have needed to be released this past November versus this coming February.
 - 1) Comments were made, during the TRWC meeting, that past awardees have not been able to finalize agreements soon enough to implement projects in the same fiscal year. This is a pressing concern and there was a follow-up conversation at the TRRP office to relay those concerns. This issue will continually be brought to the attention of TRRP management until the problem is resolved.

Pat said he would “channel Tom Stokely” and mention that the ROD says TRRP will spend \$2 million per year in trib watershed work and this has never been done.

7. 2018 Meeting dates; Group voted and approved the 2018 meeting dates as the last Tuesday of February, April, September and November. Please mark your calendars: February 27, April 24, September 25 and November 27, 2018 at 10 am.

8. Program updates

NRCS – Heidi Harris resigned. Acting District Conservationist, Jenna Ganoung, could not make the meeting.

CDFW – Andy reported that the fall Chinook spawning survey was good, with lots of Jacks returning (bodes well for next year). They had more return than predicted. Eric mentioned that Hoopa are harvesting hatchery coho.

TCRCD – Cynthia is looking for out-year funding for road projects. Some USFS projects are tied up right now. The Community Forest retained receipts from USFS are still pending; the 319(h) non-point source funding announcement has not come out yet and the RCD is looking at OHV and CDFW funding.

Yurok – Eric reported that they will be working on a project on Indian Creek to create more surface flow. Bob mentioned that the BLM is also planning work there and they could possibly tie in with them. (No BLM rep present to answer if this is possible.) Cynthia mentioned that work done in that same reach in 1994 was completely wiped out by 1997 flood. Yurok is also working on heli-wood project on South Fork with Watershed Center. They are having some permitting issues.

Watershed Center – Josh said the Hayfork wetland project has had a lot of work done on it this year and that they had an “opening” in October. He said they are going to be working on some riparian plantings on Barker and E. Fork Hayfork Creeks based on the FRGP South Fork Watershed assessment. They still have work to do on the native pollinator planting sites due to staff changes. They will be working on some South Fork Trinity River trail maintenance with OHV funding (erosion caused by OHV going off-trails). Good trails out there. Working with Nature Conservancy on water transactions and conservation – looking at several big users that are having biggest impacts on Hayfork Creek watershed. IERC received funding (about \$1 million) from CDFW to rehab trespass grow sites in Trinity River watershed. Both WRTC and TCRCD will be working with them on this project over next two years.

Down River Consulting – Marie reported that the State Water board has set new diversion requirements and setbacks for Cannabis cultivators who use surface water. Growers will be required to store water (if using surface water) during the growing season (May – November) starting in 2019 – for those who are already enrolled in program. For those just enrolling, they have to store starting in 2018. She has two site visits this week to help growers with this requirement. This will have big (positive) impact on instream flows. Discussion around making it too expensive to be legal growers and may not work as well as intended if it is too expensive.

SAFE – Bob reported that they are also working on Cannabis issues and working with CalTrans on their herbicide spraying policies. He is working on TC Collaborative and seeing that work is getting done in Mad River, but things are still difficult in the Shasta-Trinity. They have been involved with Rep. Huffman’s legislation on wilderness and forest development and the Cal Wild Wilderness Society.

Trinity County Planning – Leslie reported that they expect the reports on from IERC on trib pollutants early in 2018. She thanked the group for the comments on the Cannabis CEQA. It was shelved based on the comments received. She said individuals will need to prepare their own CEQAs to move forward with their grows. There was contention over the “disturbed area” impacts vs. the “cultivated area” impacts. People need to look at total disturbed area for cultivation sites.

USFS – Galen reported that they are working on the 2015 Fire salvage roads projects. Work is also happening in Burnt Ranch. Dave Meyers is retiring and Terri Simon Jackson will be the Acting Forest Supervisor until a replacement is found.

Adjourned at 12:05 pm.