

MEETING SUMMARY

WESTERN OREGON STATE FORESTS

HCP SCOPING TEAM

Tuesday, April 2 2019, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

Oregon Department of Forestry, 2600 State St, Salem, OR

ATTENDEES

Participants: Jim Muck (NOAA/NMFS), Ken Phippen (NOAA/NMFS), Mike Wilson (ODF), Nick Palazzotto (ODF), Mark Meleason (ODF), Rich Szlemp (USFWS), Rod Krahmer (ODFW), Ryan Singleton (DSL), Julie Firman (ODFW), Gene Foster (DEQ) – *on the phone*

Technical Consultant: Troy Rahmig (ICF), Greg Blair and Aaron Gabbe (ICF) – *on the phone*

Facilitation Team: Debra Nudelman and Sylvia Ciborowski (Kearns & West)

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Deb Nudelman (Kearns & West) welcomed members and noted that two new members are joining the Scoping Team: Ryan Singleton (DSL) and Gene Foster (DEQ). Additionally, Mike Wilson (ODF) is attending today in place of Cindy Kolomechuk and Brian Pew (ODF).

Members introduced themselves.

Deb noted that in the future, if members are unable to attend a Scoping Team meeting, they may designate others from their agencies to attend on their behalf in order to maintain progress.

Deb reviewed the agenda and meeting materials. Key topics for today's discussion include:

- Update on Plan Area and Permit Area Discussions
- Covered Species Table Review
- Best Available Data for Each Species

The meeting packet includes meeting summaries from the March Scoping Team and Steering Committee meetings, Western Oregon State Forests HCP Work Plan, and draft covered species table.

The team clarified the role of OSU in the process. Dan Edge (OSU) is on the Steering Committee and provides an advisory role. Carl Schrek (OSU) will provide targeted review of key documents throughout the process. Members expressed some concern about technical review without the benefit of attending Scoping Team meetings, which could lead to backtracking. The preference would be for the OSU technical advisor to participate in Scoping Team

conversations along the way. Deb noted that the team will take this message back to the project team and Steering Committee.

Deb reviewed the meeting ground rules.

AGENCY UPDATES

Members provided updates relevant to the Western Oregon HCP process:

- **Updates from ODF:** 1) ODF has been in discussion regarding climate change approach for the stream network, but funding has fallen through. 2) ODFW is moving forward with the aquatic resource assessment that ST members reviewed at the March meeting. 3) The Forest Management Plan (FMP) process has been pushed back to be more in parallel with the HCP. Instead of providing an FMP update to the Board this fall, ODF will take the whole package to the Board in March 2020 with an analysis and comparison between the FMP and HCP approaches. 4) ODF submitted to FWS a Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurance (CCAA) fisher site plan. The draft is in review. 4) ODF is currently reviewing status listing for red tree vole.
- **Updates from NOAA/NMFS:** 1) NOAA Fisheries has been in conversation regarding how to approach the Elliott as a research forest and related climate change analysis. 2) NOAA Fisheries was successful in the final round of litigation related to the BLM RMP.
- **Updates from ODFW:** 1) The VELMA hydrological model is being used as part of the Elliott process and can provide water quality and quantity data. 2) ODFW is working on species distribution models that provide flow projections that can help project species distribution in the future. There is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between various agencies to use ODF's TRASK data to calibrate the model; it has great potential.
- **Updates from USFWS:** None.
- **DSL:** None.

March 21 Public Kick-off Meeting Report Out

Deb provided reflections on the Western Oregon HCP public kick-off meeting that was held on March 21, 2019. Members added comments and questions.

- Members asked how the stakeholders be engaged going forward. The project team noted that the stakeholder process is being developed currently.
- Members asked how the Forest Trust Land Advisory Committee (FTLAC) will engage with the Scoping Team and Steering Committee. The project team noted that the team will deliver information to the FTLAC with the same frequency as to the Board of Forestry. ODF representatives added that information usually is presented first to the

State Forests Advisory Committee (SFAC), then to FTLAC, and then the Board, so that the SFAC and FTLAC can learn about the topics and ask questions, in advance of providing testimony to the Board.

REPORT OUT ON STEERING COMMITTEE PROCESS

Deb reported that at the March Steering Committee meeting, the SC covered the following key topics.

- Reviewed and provided input on the Western Oregon HCP Mission, Vision and Goals.
- Reviewed and provided input on the Operating Principles.
- Briefly discussed the HCP permit area and plan area.

UPDATE ON PLAN AREA AND PERMIT AREA DISCUSSIONS

Troy Rahmig (ICF) explained that the project team is working to identify the Western Oregon HCP permit area and presented a working-draft map of the proposed permit area lands. It is proposed that the permit area would include three sets of lands: 1) Board of Forestry lands, 2) Common School lands where ODF is conducting activities, except for the Elliott Forest, and 3) places where there could be land acquisitions or exchanges in the future. The project team is working with the Districts to identify all areas that have current land acquisition or exchange plans. The proposed permit area is nearly complete and would provide a finite boundary for analysis; ODF will work with the Districts to finalize the boundaries.

Troy noted there may be some variability in data availability for the different types of lands within the permit area, which the project team will address on a case by case basis.

Troy presented a map with the permit area under consideration. He noted the project team will develop an overall permit area map, as well as several zoomed-in maps to provide greater detail.

Troy described the difference between plan area and permit area. The plan area is a larger boundary where there might be new parcels of permit area acquired in the future. Analyzing the larger area now helps provide coverage later in case new parcels are brought into the HCP permit area. For NEPA, the action area would be comprised of the plan area.

Discussion

Members had the following comments and questions:

- Members asked whether the HCP will show whether the covered species occurs in each of the disjointed areas in the map and what will be done for the species within those areas. Troy noted that the level of specificity will depend on data availability. The project team will work with the ST on the challenge of lacking data for some land areas.
- Members had questions about how lands surrounding disjointed lands will be treated. Troy recognized that it will be a challenge to address the scattered tracts in developing

the conservation strategy, since the HCP cannot control what happens outside of the permit area lands. However, what is happening outside of the permit lands provides important context and can help describe the baseline condition for each tract of land.

- Clarified that population data can be layered on the permit area boundary. Ownership within each sub-basin will be identified on the map to indicate how ownership overlays on population and habitat.
- Members asked whether the Common School Fund (CSF) lands will be included in the permit area. The project team replied that ODF, DSL, and the Department of Justice (DOJ) are considering that question. It is assumed at this point that those CSF lands on which ODF is conducting activities are part of the permit area. If in the future, ODF does not manage the lands, this could change.

COVERED SPECIES TABLE REVIEW

Troy reviewed the draft Covered Species Table (handout provided at meeting), noting that the purpose of the table is to document how we arrived at decisions on which species to include in the HCP. The table shows a list of species of concern and screening across four criteria (range, status, impact, data). The notes column provides additional detail on the recommendation.

Discussion

Members reviewed and discussed the covered species table and made the following comments on the species:

- **Eulachon:** Troy noted that the recommendation is to not include eulachon because there is no to minimal overlap of these species on the HCP lands. These species would be managed through a take avoidance strategy. Members made these comments:
 - Within the action area, there could be affects regarding this species. Conservation plans for lower coast coho would provide all of the BMPs needed for eulachon. Therefore, it may be better to include eulachon as an inclusive approach in order to provide take coverage. Follow-on monitoring would likely not be any different if eulachon were to be included.
 - There are no basins that connect directly to the Columbia River, so it does not seem necessary to include eulachon. However, it would be a more inclusive approach to include eulachon: the conservation measures that will be done for salmonids will cover a lot of the species; so it is not a greater burden to include those species on the list. On the other hand, adding more species makes the HCP more complex.
 - **Recommendation:** Scoping Team members recommend including eulachon on the covered species list.

- **Lower Columbia river steelhead: *Recommendation:*** Scoping Team members recommend not including this species on the covered species list because their presence is on very limited tracts of land.
- **Bull trout: *Recommendation:*** Scoping Team members recommend not including this species on the covered species list because their presence is on very limited tracts of land. A member suggested considering including bull trout on the covered species list if the permit area or plan area is expanded to include more lands such as CSF parcels west of Crest. There are already protections in place for the species.
- **Green sturgeon: *Recommendation:*** Scoping Team members recommend not including this species on the covered species list. Note that the northern distinct population segment is not listed, but the southern population is.
- **Red tree vole: *Recommendation:*** Scoping Team members recommend including red tree vole (North Oregon Coast DPS) and not including red tree vole (Southern DPS). They noted there is not a lot known about Southern DPS tree vole. The decision can be revisited after there is more information in fall 2019 from the species status assessment (SSA) that is currently being conduct.
- **Silverspot butterfly:** Troy noted that this species was brought up at the Steering Committee level.
 - ***Recommendation:*** Scoping Team members agreed that the species does not need to be included in the HCP at this time.
- **Gray wolf:**
 - Members pointed out that there have been confirmed sitings on Clatsop County and south coast.
 - The project team suggests not including the species because the wolf population can move quickly, and it is difficult to make connections between covered activities and their potential effect on the species (i.e., it is difficult to discover dens). If in the future more is learned about wolf distribution in western lands, the HCP can be amended accordingly.
 - Wolves would still be covered through take avoidance strategies. If wolves are not covered, the HCP document should indicate how ODF plans to treat wolves (i.e., via take avoidance strategy. The public will want to know and will comment on wolf strategies. Troy noted that Chapter 2 of the HCP can include a section for species of special concern and can explain in detail why some key species are not included.
 - Forest strategies are not likely to be negative toward life history requirements of wolves, except for the impact of some activities on den sites.

- If wolf species is included, some type of monitoring would be required.
- If there is a general carnivore monitoring approach that we are already doing for coastal marten, then maybe it is worth covering wolves if that monitoring approach is reasonably scaleable to wolves.
- **Recommendation:** Members recommend not including the species in the covered species list because of the difficulty of making a nexus between covered activities and the impact on the species. This is due to uncertain information at this time.

After the species-by-species review, Deb gauged the Scoping Team members acceptance of the list. Members expressed agreement with the covered species list and interest in moving forward with the suggested changes.

Troy noted that he would send out the Covered Species Table to Scoping Team members.

BEST AVAILABLE DATA FOR EACH SPECIES

Troy and ST members reviewed data updates on fish and stream information, as well as terrestrial species.

Julie Firman (ODFW) provided information regarding VELMA data.

ODFW Scope of Work to Assess Stream Habitat Quality

Mark Meleason (ODF) reminded members that ODFW is conducting work to assess stream habitat quality in the state forests, at ODF's request. Mark provided various handouts on the effort that represent the work conducted so far by ODFW. The handouts include habitat variables summarized for select forest districts and species, and maps showing different analysis extents. The handout helps illustrate the type of metrics that will be delivered to the ST as a result of the ODFW resource assessment. The study team is now ready to move forward with quantitative base on what is known of state forest habitat conditions. Mark suggested conducting a habitat limiting factors model, as well as a large wood volume model, because it is a key habitat variable. Mark also suggested combining the three main districts, then combining the other districts into one, and conducting the trend analysis on those three main districts plus the combined districts.

Troy added that the study will help provide the rationale for the conservation strategies for the Western Oregon HCP.

Members discussed and had the following questions and comments:

- Clarified that a trend analysis can be conducted with this data. Members suggested combining the three main districts, then combining the other districts into one, and conducting the trend analysis on those three main districts plus the combined districts.

- Members had questions about why combining districts would be useful. They noted that aggregating data in this way might not reveal differences between districts. Mark responded that there is not a sufficient sample size for some areas; by looking at a broader combined-district level, the study can make more statically-valid findings. In the study, ODFW will provide a database of all data, so the ST and others can use the data and summarize as they see useful. ODFW asked to review any data summaries to ensure accuracy.
- Members recognized that there is a challenge in drawing conclusions when there is limited data on some species. It will be important to define limitations when data is used and interpreted.
- Members noted that it will be important to spacially describe key variables.
- Members generally supported the suggestions made by Mark for the study.
- Members suggested describing baseline conditions for the populations, as well as describing desired conditions (i.e., desired benchmark).
- Members suggested adding number of pools as a variable.
- Members suggested delineating limiting factors for each species; and demonstrating how the conservation strategy addresses those limiting factors.
- Members noted that different variables are more or less important dependent on species. For example, pool frequency, large wood, and FHLM are aspects that are important to coho, but might not be so important for other species. Depending on species, the effort should consider appropriate variables and factors. Members discussed how the ST could be involved in the technical details of deciding which factors to bring in when making decisions on different species. They suggested developing distinct terrestrial and aquatic subgroups of the ST, tasked with responding to some ideas and suggestions provided by the HCP project team.
- Members discussed whether Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) data should be included in the HCP analysis. They suggested looking into readily available TMDL data and determining if and how to fold it into the HCP analysis. Gene Foster (DEQ) said he would see which TMDL reports have overlap with HCP areas and send that information to ICF.
- Members discussed the implications of using TMDL data. They noted that the HCP is not the right tool to use to TMDL responsibilities; other tools, such as the FMP, are the appropriate mechanism for ODF to demonstrate how it is meeting TMD obligations. The HCP is focused on species; many strategies intended to help species have the added benefit of alleviating TMDL issues. The HCP will include strategies that incidentally help with recovery in those TMDL streams; but that is not the purpose of the HCP. Others noted that when the public and agencies comment on the HCP, they may bring up

comments regarding meeting TMDL responsibilities, so that should be considered as the HCP is written.

Mark summarized by stating that ODFW's study product will be delivered soon. A small group of the ST will be pulled together to look at outcomes.

Update on Terrestrial Resources

Nick Palazzotto (ODF) provided an update on acquisition of data for terrestrial species. Updates included:

- Amphibians: Good occurrence data is not available. For purposes of the HCP, the assumption is that amphibians are ubiquitous for the species and area in consideration. If that assumption becomes problematic going forward, then work can be done to identify amphibian actual locations.
- Owls: Good occurrence data exists. The model being proposed for owl data shows very high correlation with the other models.
- Marbled murrelet: A good model and good data exists for the species.
- Red tree vole: ODF is working on getting access to a good model that is available and making sure we have 2017 and 2018 occurrence data.
- Coastal marten: There is not a good model and occurrence data is sparse.

WORK FLOW AND PROGRESS UPDATE

Troy provided an update on the HCP work flow and progress. A draft of Chapter 1 is complete and the project team is finalizing the plan area. The ST will review draft Chapter 1 and the draft plan area at the May ST meeting.

Today's discussion is feeding into Chapter 2 and the Covered Activities Chapter.

Small Group discussions would be useful to help build Chapter 2.

Troy will send out an invite for meetings to develop the biological goals and objectives. It may be useful to conduct the biological goals and objectives workshops in small group settings.

NEXT STEPS AND SUMMARY

A SharePoint site has been set up and will be the primary way to share data and drafts for ST review. SharePoint will help with tracking comments and sharing information. Troy will send out an email to ST members to get them set up on SharePoint.

Mike Wilson (ODF) provided an update on how ODF is engaging with the Department of Justice for the HCP Process. Anika Marriott will be the representative for all state agencies. Cindy

Kolomechuk (ODF) will reach out to schedule meetings soon. If there is a legal question, the preference is to go through Cindy to Anika, rather than to Anika directly, to be able to track questions and avoid duplicate requests. Anika will review draft chapters and work with federal counsel on that review.

Troy noted that the project team is interested in bringing ST members on a field tour of the forest. Troy will reach out to members to gauge interest levels and locations to visit on the tour.

ACTION ITEMS

The following action items were identified throughout the meeting:

- ODF – Attempt to hold the Santiam Room for future Scoping Team meetings.
- KW – Continue discussion on role and attendance of OSU technical review member.
- KW – Update February Scoping Team meeting summary with clarification on NET Map.
- ICF – Update Covered Species Table based on Scoping Team members' recommendations and send to the Scoping Team.
- Gene Foster (DEQ) – Find TMDL reports that have overlap with HCP areas and send links to ICF.
- ICF – Send invites to ST members for biological goals and objectives workshops.
- ICF – Send out an email to ST members to create an account on SharePoint.
- ODF – Reach out to ST members regarding interest in the forests field tour.

RECORD OF AGREEMENTS AND GUIDANCE

Updated 3/11/2019

This record tracks agreements, guidance, advice, and levels of support of key milestones and elements of the Western Oregon HCP. It includes major outcomes and guidance provided by the HCP Steering Committee, HCP Scoping Team, and Board of Forestry.

Date	Group/ Body	Action	Relevant Milestone/ HCP Chapter
November 8, 2018	Board of Forestry	Unanimously voted to move forward with Western Oregon HCP Phase 2: Strategy Development and Stakeholder Engagement	Phase 1 Completion
February 7, 2019	Steering Committee	Expressed support for the Western Oregon HCP Phase 2 Scope of Work and Work Plan	Phase 2 Beginning
February 13, 2019	Scoping Team	Provided support for the proposed covered species list	Covered Species List (Chapter 1)
February 13, 2019	Scoping Team	Agreed that the current data on the covered species is sufficient to move forward with developing an HCP, and there is not a need to collect additional data at this time. Expressed support for ICF's approach to identifying best available data for each species.	Approach to Gathering Best Available Data
April 2, 2019	Scoping Team	Provided support for the covered species list presented by ICF, including an agreement to drop Lower Columbia steelhead. They also recommend not including Southern DPS red tree vole but revisiting that species when more information is available in fall 2019.	Covered Species List (Chapter 1)