

# MEETING SUMMARY

## WESTERN OREGON STATE FORESTS HCP SCOPING TEAM MEETING

Tuesday, February 2, 2021, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

By Webinar/Video Conference

### ATTENDEES

**Participants:** Rich Szlemp (USFWS), Rod Kraemer (ODFW), Ryan Singleton (DSL), Jim Muck (NOAA Fisheries), Tere O'Rourke (NOAA Fisheries), Jeff Young (NOAA Fisheries), Mike Wilson (ODF), Nick Palazzotto (ODF), Julie Firman (ODFW), Josh Seeds (DEQ), Brian Pew (ODF)

**Technical Consultant and Guests:** Troy Rahmig (ICF), Melissa Klungle (ICF)

**Facilitation Team:** Cindy Kolomechuk (ODF), Sylvia Ciborowski (Kearns & West), Michelle Bardini (Kearns & West)

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Sylvia Ciborowski, Kearns & West, welcomed Scoping Team (ST) members to the ST meeting. She explained the ST meeting has been shortened to provide ST members the opportunity to review the HCP chapters. Meeting participants introduced themselves.

Sylvia reviewed the agenda, which included: 1) Agency Updates, 2) Debrief January 28 Joint Steering Committee (SC) and Scoping Team (ST) Meeting: HCP Discussion, 3) Debrief January 28 Joint SC-ST Meeting: National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Process, 4) Review and Discuss HCP Chapters, 5) Review Upcoming Stakeholder Meetings, 6) Confirm Topics for SC Update, and 7) Approach Going Forward, Next Steps, and Summary.

### AGENCY UPDATES

Members provided the following updates relevant to the Western Oregon State Forests HCP process:

- Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) expressed appreciation for members' continued commitment to the HCP and their review of the draft chapters.

## **DEBRIEF JANUARY 28 JOINT SC-ST MEETING: HCP DISCUSSION**

Troy Rahmig, ICF, debriefed the joint ST-SC meeting and discussed the key components of the meeting. He noted that the meeting helped to distill the essence of the HCP. The project team is working to develop a document outlining key elements of the HCP to help ST and SC members better speak to the HCP and answer stakeholders' questions.

Brian Pew, ODF, noted it was beneficial for the SC to understand the details of the HCP and the collaborative nature of the ST process. It was also helpful to discuss the HCP's relationship to the Clean Water Act.

The ST noted that they were supportive of developing a key elements document for the HCP. Members were encouraged to provide any input as the project team worked to develop the messaging and talking points for the HCP.

## **DEBRIEF JANUARY 28 JOINT SC-ST MEETING: NEPA PROCESS**

Sylvia noted that the January 28 joint ST-SC meeting included a presentation on the NEPA process and prompted ST members to share any comments or questions. Sylvia noted that it will be important to communicate and clarify the NEPA, Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and alternatives processes to the public. We will also need to clarify the three parallel processes: the HCP, Forest Management Plan (FMP), and the NEPA process.

### **Discussion:**

The ST discussed NEPA and how best to communicate the various processes. Members provided the following questions and comments:

- Are there any specific topics to address during the upcoming recreation stakeholder meeting?
  - There will likely be interest in discussing recreation siting, the expansion of infrastructure, and how recreational access will be impacted by the HCP. Stakeholders will also likely seek to understand what recreation activities will be permitted in Habitat Conservation Areas (HCAs) and Riparian Conservation Areas (RCAs).
  - Some stakeholders have expressed concerned about river access. It was clarified that there would be minimal formal water access in an RCA and that any additional infrastructure would be located outside of the RCA.
  - The majority of input pertaining to recreation would likely be incorporated into the FMP and implementation plans.
- It was suggested to concentrate shooting lanes within a specified area and place them outside of RCAs to reduce garbage and to minimize effects in RCAs.

## REVIEW AND DISCUSS HCP CHAPTERS

Troy framed the discussion on the HCP draft chapters and noted the intent of today's meeting is to discuss any topics of interest from their review of chapters 1-3 and 7-10. Chapters 4 and 6 were recently sent out to the ST for review and chapter 5 will be sent out shortly.

Sylvia went around the virtual table and asked members to provide an update on the status of their review of the draft chapters.

The ST then discussed the draft HCP chapters and provided the following questions and comments:

### Chapter 7:

- A member sought clarification around salvage logging and requested information around the parameters for when salvage logging would be permitted in HCAs or RCAs.
  - ODF noted salvage is used mainly for public safety precautions and is intended to comply with Oregon Occupational Safety and Health standards. It was clarified that if trees are cut in RCAs, they will be left on site. ODF will confirm that the language describing ODF's salvage parameters is included in the chapter.
- It is important to get maximum potential wood to the stream and consider how to modify the road system to allow wood recruitment to continue to its full potential. Suggestion to add language in the HCP that is directive but not too restrictive.
- The chapter includes a trigger for the spread of invasive species of 25%. Where did this threshold come from? Does ODF have an emergency/rapid response process?
  - ODF works with the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) when responding to an invasive issue. Robbie Lefebvre, ODF, is able to provide further information on invasives.
  - ODF noted that the agency will move forward with the terminology "invasive" to align with ODA definitions.
- Suggestion to be more specific about how ODF would create high quality freshwater habitats to maintain smolt production.
  - It would be helpful to re-organize this section of the chapter to clearly state the goal and then describe the various efforts to meet that goal.
  - Suggestion to update the language to state the "measures *may* include" to be less prescriptive.

## Chapter 8:

- Suggestion to update ODF's annual reports to include a "take statement" and include an estimated harvest acreage and volume for the next decade to effectively track take.
  - It was clarified that when reporting the acres harvested, it is important to understand the type of habitat harvested, rather than just the volume.
  - The low flow analysis includes the harvest age for the watershed and from that, we could determine the percentage of harvest per year.
  - In terms of road construction, ODF's projections are not broken down by decade. The project team will discuss how to address this.
    - NOAA Fisheries noted that ODF will need to report how many roads were built in the annual report.
- It was clarified that the chapter includes an annual meeting with the Services to review submitted information and address any issues or concerns.
  - It was suggested to extend the timeframe for when the meeting is to occur to allow more flexibility.
- It would be helpful to subdivide how habitat loss would be reported and to include geographical reporting (i.e., by HCAs, geographic regions, or districts). Reporting by geographic region was preferred.
- Suggestion to modify the language under the exceptions to the stay ahead rule to clarify that natural disturbance would reset the baseline. Additionally, the language should be modified to state that natural succession would occur in disrupted areas and ODF will work to ensure the baseline is not degraded by activities.
  - The intent of the HCP is to develop higher quality and increased habitat over time. The exceptions to the stay ahead rule aim to acknowledge that natural disturbances will most likely occur and there will be events that reset the baseline. After a natural disturbance, ODF would begin management for continued improvement of the affected area with the intent to build back habitat over time.

## Chapter 9:

- Suggestion to clarify the section discussing the continuation of aquatic conservation actions.
  - The intent of the aquatic conservation actions is to provide flexibility to address issues that might arise during the permit term and provide funding to address these issues.

- How do the aquatic conservation actions differ from NOAA Fisheries' watershed conservation strategy?
  - Examples of aquatic conservation actions include culvert upgrades or activities to benefit lamprey. The conservation actions would be used to encourage more funding.
- It was clarified that the strategic actions aim to provide benefits to the covered species, while also supporting species not covered in the HCP, such as beavers or lamprey. The HCP seeks to demonstrate that a strategic action has a mutually beneficial relationship between the covered species and other species. This will also provide an opportunity for more research, restoration, and collaboration with the Tribes.
  - Numbering strategic actions implies prioritization. Suggestion to list the strategic actions using a different method, rather than numerically.
- For Table 9.3, a member noted that in addition to the contribution to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) aquatic inventory program, there must also be implementation monitoring.
  - ODF worked with ODFW to develop the numbers in Table 9.3. ODF will work to make the compliance requirements clearer.
- It was clarified that the upgrades to culverts would be in areas that ODF would not otherwise be managing during harvest. ODF does not plan to maintain culverts for commercial products.

Troy noted that ICF/ODF will work to incorporate ST edits and comments to the draft chapters. These updated chapters will be then sent to the ST for another review. The project team thanked the ST for their review of the chapters.

### **Modeling:**

Mike Wilson, ODF, then provided an overview of the TerrainWorks modeling presentation that Dan Miller, TerrainWorks, presented to the ST in June. Mike noted he would circulate TerrainWorks' presentation to the ST for review and noted that if the ST had any questions on the modeling, ODF could connect members with TerrainWorks.

The ST discussed the modeling and provided the following comments:

- It would be helpful to have a discussion around the model assumptions and to receive further information to better understand the analysis.
- It would be helpful to understand the percentage of wood around riparian reserves.
- Suggestion to show the different management paradigms.
- Suggestion to clarify how TerrainWorks defined steep slopes and landslide initiation sites.

- Members noted they seek to better understand the model and the assumptions to better speak to the modeling used in the HCP and to answer any questions.

ODF may add more detail around how the agency plans to address steep slopes and sedimentation. ODF seeks to minimize triggers but also recognizes that they will not be successful at avoiding every landslide.

Troy will send out an updated version of chapter 4 that includes a revised section on steep slopes. There will be additional information included in the appendices.

## **REVIEW UPCOMING STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS**

Sylvia reviewed the upcoming stakeholder meetings which included:

- Recreation stakeholder meeting on February 3, 2021 from 12:00-2:00pm
- Industry stakeholder meeting on February 4, 2021 from 2:00-4:00pm

ST members were encouraged to attend to listen in if they are available. Sylvia noted that these meetings would be a helpful time to hear stakeholders' thoughts and concerns and identify any topics that may come up during NEPA. These meetings will include a discussion on the HCP progress to date and a presentation on the NEPA presentation.

## **CONFIRM TOPICS FOR SC UPDATE**

The next SC meeting is scheduled for March 4, 2021. This would be the last SC meeting before NOAA Fisheries releases the Notice of Intent (NOI) to start the NEPA process.

## **APPROACH GOING FORWARD, NEXT STEPS, AND SUMMARY**

Sylvia thanked the members for their participation and reviewed upcoming meetings. The next ST meeting is scheduled for February 9, 2021 from 1 – 4 pm. The focus of the meeting is to discuss the draft chapters. The ST was encouraged to send any topics or agenda items they would like to discuss at the meeting.

It was noted that some ST meetings will need to be rescheduled or moved to an earlier time due to a conflict for several ST members. A member commented that it would be preferred to end ST meetings by 11:30am.

Cindy provided closing remarks and thanked ST members for their feedback on the HCP.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

The following action items were identified throughout the meeting:

- ODF: Send the TerrainWorks modeling presentation to the ST.
- ICF/ODF: Distribute revised chapter 4.
- ODF/ICF: Distribute chapter 5 to the ST.
- Project Team: Reschedule ST meetings to accommodate members' schedules.