

MEETING SUMMARY

WESTERN OREGON STATE FORESTS HCP SCOPING TEAM

Tuesday, September 6, 2022, 9:00 am – 11:00 am

By Webinar/Video Conference

ATTENDEES

Participants: Kate Wells (NOAA Fisheries), Jeff Young (NOAA Fisheries), Rod Kraemer (ODFW), Julie Firman (ODFW), Josh Seeds (DEQ), Jiajia Lin (DEQ), Joe Zisa (USFWS), Sarah Dyr Dahl (ODF), Vanessa Petro (ODF), Nick Palazzotto (ODF)

Technical Consultants and Guests: Melissa Klungle and Jordan Mayor (ICF), Amy Defreese (USFWS Portland Regional Office)

Facilitation Team: Sylvia Ciborowski and Ellen Palmquist (Kearns & West), Cindy Kolomechuk (ODF)

WELCOME AND AGENDA REVIEW

Sylvia Ciborowski, Kearns & West, welcomed Scoping Team (ST) members and reviewed the agenda, which included: 1) Welcome and Agenda Review, 2) Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Components and Chapters, 3) HCP Public Comments, 4) HCP Finalization, 5) Meeting Cadence and Expectations Going Forward, 5) Report Out to HCP Steering Committee (SC), and 6) Approach Going Forward, Next Steps, and Summary.

AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT UPDATES

Members of the ST provided the following updates relevant to the Western Oregon State Forests HCP and introduced themselves:

- **DSL:** No updates.
- **NOAA Fisheries:** 1) NOAA Fisheries is working on processing Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) comments. 2) There was a recent listing petition for Chinook for the Oregon Coast and Southern Oregon area. The Protected Resources Office is reviewing the petition and preparing a 90-day finding. If the finding is positive, there will be a Status Review to decide if the listing is warranted. If the finding is negative, no process will follow.
 - **Melissa Klungle:** The two species in the petition are included in the Western Oregon HCP.
- **ODF:** 1) The next Board of Forestry (BOF) meeting is scheduled for September 7 at 2:15pm. This is not a decision point for the BOF, but they may provide direction on the

Proposed Action. Kim Kratz is scheduled to provide a NEPA update during the meeting. 2) The Rum Creek Fire on the Rogue River has burned through a parcel about 400 acres in size that is not fully forested next to Galice. ODF is determining what a salvage operation might look like. This is not in a Habitat Conservation Area (HCA). 3) Vanessa Petro is the new staff wildlife biologist and previously worked with Oregon State University as a wildlife researcher. 4) Sarah Dyrdaahl is leaving ODF and has taken a new position with American Rivers.

- **DEQ:** Jiajia Lin was hired as a water quality expert and previously worked with the EPA on nutrient issues.
- **ODFW:** No updates.
- **USFWS:** Amy Defreese is an HCP coordinator in the Regional Office for USFWS working with Joe Zisa on the HCP and with NOAA Fisheries on the related NEPA process.

Stakeholder Engagement Updates

Sylvia Ciborowski shared that ODF is working on scheduling meetings open to the public in January and February 2023. Meetings will include updates on the HCP and FMP, including the Draft FMP and modeling outcomes for the plans.

Sylvia shared that at the past SC meeting, ODF reviewed the plan for Kim Kratz's presentation to the BOF and discussed SC support for the process. ODF provided an update on HCP topics, including ST alignment on roads, recreation, and trails, and discussed long-term planning for meetings in 2023.

HCP COMPONENTS AND CHAPTERS

Road and Trail Updates

Melissa Klungle, ICF, reminded the ST of past discussions and alignment on roads and trails before providing an update. ODF has been working with NOAA Fisheries to make sure the values in the HCP are consistent with the values reported in the biological opinions (Bi-Ops). ODF is using harvest volume and the Districts to calculate the District percentages by evolutionarily significant units (ESUs) in five-year increments. ODF wants to ensure that values are accurate and provide enough flexibility to develop roads and trails within the ESUs boundaries. ODF anticipates applying a 20% increase across the board to account for the buffer. This would increase the trail miles by approximately 100 miles over the permit term. ODF is also revisiting trail miles by ESU for the Bi-Ops. ODF will distribute updated road and trail numbers to the ST for awareness when they are ready and does not anticipate any major changes. Melissa noted that the updates will not impact the NEPA analysis.

Discussion

Question: Is there a particular split, like ESU, that USFW would like to use for the Bi-Op?

- **Joe Zisa:** USFWS will need to wait to see who is writing the Bi-Op. Having numbers by ESU and by District is helpful.

Monitoring and Adaptive Management

Melissa Klungle shared that ODF received comments from NOAA Fisheries on monitoring and adaptive management. ODF made minor updates for clarity to address the comments, including:

- Making compliance monitoring consistent with other language in the document that the ST has discussed and agreed on.
- Updating metrics for effectiveness monitoring to be more consistent with what was anticipated to occur.
- Making it clear what the metrics are for stream enhancement and how implementation will be carried out.

ODF will share additional minor updates with the ST when they are ready. Melissa noted that changes will not impact the NEPA analysis.

Beaver Language

Vanessa Petro, ODF, shared changes made to beaver language in the HPC, including:

- Clarifying that within the permit area most of the modeling exercises are focused on the dam habitat of beavers, not all habitat.
- Citing more recent research that reflects management implications based on live-tracking and genetics. For example, beaver mobility isn't a limiting factor in the Oregon Coast range; there are more elements that could potentially limit beavers from occupying certain areas.
- Clarifying where the modeling information came from and updating citations to reflect more recent work.
- Using updated beaver relocation guidelines of 2,000 ft for a home range.
- Updating and aligning text with the Private Forest Accord to suggest that ODF would implement a non-lethal approach to instances of human conflict before using a relocation approach.

Discussion

Comment: All of this is an improvement, thank you.

Question: Why is 2,000 ft used for the beaver home range?

- **Vanessa Petro:** ODFW suggests using 2,000 ft (.75 miles) for a potential release site. Typically, a beaver home range is about 1 mile, but 2,000 ft matches the relocation guidelines.

Habitat Modification Language

Nick Palazzotto, ODF, shared minor updates to habitat modification language. Nick proposed removing language in Chapter 5 Effects Analysis:

“Any management that does occur in nesting, roosting, or foraging habitat within HCAs will not reduce the habitat quality of the stand as specified in CA 7.”

Nick noted that the text may hinder ODF’s ability to complete work and may create an unintended conflict. Nick asked the ST to share any concerns with the language after it is shared with the ST via email.

Discussion

Sylvia Ciborowski asked the ST if they were comfortable with removing the sentence. ST members were generally comfortable with removing the language and wanted to review the text in the context of the document.

HCP PUBLIC COMMENTS

Melissa Klungle shared an update on HCP public comments. The NEPA Team received 460 comment letters for the EIS and HCP. Each letter was reviewed, and individual comments were pulled out and coded for the HCP, the EIS, or both. The HCP received 250 individual substantive comments that required a response. Comments were grouped and summarized into 85 total comments. Comment themes include process and scope, existing setting, covered activities, conservation strategies, effects analysis, and monitoring and implementation. ODF received an additional 100 comments that were not substantive. These comments will receive a consistent response acknowledging the comment was received. A draft response to comments that may warrant additional detail in the HCP was sent to USFWS and NOAA for review the beginning of September. ICF will work with ODF to review and formalize responses included in the NEPA document. During the October ST meeting, ODF will discuss any minor changes made to the HCP resulting from comment responses. Major issues, like roads and adaptive management, have already been identified and discussed.

HCP FINALIZATION

Melissa Klungle shared that ICF is working with ODF planners to complete a consistency review of the HCP and to make sure implementation is clear. Cindy Kolomechuk shared that ODF Operation Coordinators are considering how to connect commitments to the monitoring programs and what type of data the Services may want to see. Monitoring and adaptive management will be a topic of discussion leading up to the November deadline for finalizing the HCP. ODF will release the final Draft HCP to the public when the Final EIS is available. A summary of changes to the HCP will be available on the website before then.

Discussion

Question: Could the consistency review result in changes to the HCP?

- **Cindy Kolomechuk:** The HCP planners have already started to review the HCP for consistency. This review will focus on implementation. There will be no changes to the commitments and limited changes to language. The review will focus on understanding implications and the data that ODF will have for the five- and ten-year review processes.

Comment: ODF and USFWS need to discuss the timeframe for USFWS's review of the document. Recommend setting up a discussion between ODF, ICF, and the Services to discuss the final timeline.

- **Cindy Kolomechuk:** ODF anticipates that USFWS will coordinate timelines with NOAA Fisheries and integrate agency reviews.

MEETING CADENCE AND EXPECTATIONS GOING FORWARD

Cindy Kolomechuk shared that the HCP will be finalized in November 2022. The ST will continue to meet monthly until the BOF meeting in September 2023. The ST's focus will shift to the FMP once the Draft FMP and outcomes analysis is complete. ODF will bring the Draft FMP and outcomes analysis to the BOF in March 2023. Cindy noted that in July, ODF will ask the BOF to allow ODF to begin a rulemaking process for the FMP that would go through January 2024. The rulemaking process will begin before the NEPA process is complete.

Sylvia Ciborowski noted that the SC is aware of the plan for 2023 and understands the importance of continuing to meet. The SC is committed to checking in around decision points with BOF and staying engaged in the process.

REPORT OUT TO HCP STEERING COMMITTEE

Sylvia Ciborowski asked the ST if they had anything to report to the SC. The ST did not provide anything to report or share with the SC.

APPROACH GOING FORWARD, NEXT STEPS, AND SUMMARY

Sylvia Ciborowski shared appreciation for the ST's engagement in the HCP process and review of language. Sylvia shared upcoming meeting dates before closing the meeting:

- Tuesday, September 20 9-11am – *HCP Steering Committee Meeting – cancelled*
- Tuesday, October 4 9-11am – *HCP Scoping Team Mtg*
- Tuesday, November 1 9-11am – *HCP Scoping Team Mtg*
- Tuesday, November 8 9-11am – *HCP Steering Committee Mtg*