

Meeting Date: September 16, 2020

Location: This meeting was conducted by teleconference

**Attendees via Zoom conference:** Brian Miller, RC&D, Ryan Anderson, RC&D, Mike Tobin, NYCD, Anna Lael, KCCD, Mark Crowley, KCCD, Cassandra Weekes, WDFW, Elizabeth Torrey, WDFW, Rebecca Wassell, MCF, Kevin Haydon, WWT, Katy Pfannenstein, USFWS, Erin Eaton, TU, Joel Hubble, KRD, Laine Young, Ecology, Marcella Appel, BCD

1. **ADMINISTRATIVE-**

- A. The meeting agenda was approved.
- B. The minutes from the August 19 YTAHP Core Team Meeting were approved.
- C. The FY 2019 YTAHP Annual Report was approved by BPA on September 11.
- D. The FY 2020 YTAHP Contract 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Status report is due to be submitted to BPA by October 15.
- E. The FY 2021 YTAHP Contract CR-344089 and SOW was initialized by BPA on September 10 and is available to update next years' projects.

2. **CORE TEAM PROJECT UPDATES-**

A. **NYCD- MikeTobin-**

- **Cowiche Creek – Naches Cowiche Canal Co. Siphon: fish passage-**
  - O & M ongoing.
- **Cowiche Creek – Lust/Stevenson Water Quality: riparian fencing, planting, spring development-**
  - O & M ongoing.
- **Cowiche Creek - Ingham On-Farm Improvement and Cowiche Trust Water Project-**
  - Yakima County interested in purchasing parcel north of the highway.
  - Trout Unlimited working on potential partnership with Yakima County.
  - Everything south of the canal will be converted to residential and developed this year.
- **Ahtanum Creek- Herke South: fish screening and floodplain reconnection/enhancement-**
  - Working with RCO on a time extension to finish the project fall of 2021.
    - Operator Agreement obtained and submitted to RCO.
  - Conducting O &M activities on Phase 1 this year.
  - Cultural Resources complete.
- **Wenas Creek – Priority passage and screening project-**
  - Putting together grant application through RCPP.
- **Wenas Creek – Purdin Ditch Passage and screening project-**
  - Putting together grant application through RCPP.
- **Wenas Creek – Chandler Riparian Enhancement-**
  - Cultural resource survey completed.
    - Finalizing report for submittal to BPA.

- Landowner Agreement obtained.
- Site prep and implementation this fall as soon as CR compliance complete.
- **Snake Creek – Passage and Screening Project-**
  - Project has been deferred by SRFB.
    - Will work with USFWS on follow up questions and potentially resubmit next year.
- **Rattlesnake Creek – Rattlesnake Ditch and fish screen improvements-**
  - Ongoing preliminary project development related to improving the open irrigation ditch and correcting issues with current fish screen.
  - Landowners/Irrigators working on easement issues.
- **Ahtanum Creek – Trust water-**
  - Landowner interested in trusting Wiley Springs and Ahtanum Creek water right.

#### B. KCCD- Anna Lael & Mark Crowley-

- **Ranch on Swauk Creek-** This project will be delayed until next fall. The cultural resources survey and report were extensive and then received a lot of comments in the review with BPA. Then KCCD requested additional funding from SRFB because the project cost estimates are way over the grant amount. That kicked the project into another level of review by the State Review Panel engineer who found that by his review we were not addressing the project goals. Work is underway to address his concerns.
- **Coleman at Olmstead-** KCCD is getting closer to bidding this project. All permits except the HPA and access permit from State Parks are in hand. They are hoping to have final changes on the designs by Friday. The Screen shop is currently working on the screen. KCCD has the design for the pivot and need to meet with lessees this afternoon to look at costs and how they can be lowered.
- **Bristol Flats-** Mark reported that the local vendor has a pile of posts for the river bank project at Bristol Flats. KCCD has been waiting for flip flop so the river levels will go down. Flip flop is now complete and Mark has been in contact with Landon at Mid-Columbia to schedule the work.
- **Naneum Creek and Coleman Creek-** Anna met with the landowner associated with the two lowest barriers on Naneum and Coleman Creeks. Work is underway to plan projects at these sites.
- **RCPP-** The fourth and final sign-up for EQIP under the current RCPP will occur this fall. There are pots of funding for riparian and instream work, livestock practices, and irrigation system upgrades. The sign-up will be advertised soon and the deadline will be November 20. KCCD is working together with the Yakama Nation and NYCD to put together a proposal for the current round of RCPP for a new project. That application is due November 4.

#### C. KCT- No report this meeting.

#### D. MCF- Rebecca Wassell-

- **Yakima RM 25 – Mast Farm-**
  - Wildlands Inc. continued maintenance on the new plantings this year. MCF and YN will install a PIT tag array later this fall.

- **Mercer Creek-**
  - Design, permitting and landowner coordination is proceeding smoothly. However, MCF only received one bid that was significantly higher than they had hoped. MCF is working with the contractor, their partners and funding agency to consider options to move forward. The project was scheduled to begin in mid-October, but they may postpone it until next year.
- **NF Teanaway-**
  - MCF, YN and Thayer Excavating completed construction of three wood trapping structures, one levee removal, seven splitter/deflector structures, one side channel excavation, loose wood placements, thousands of live stake plantings, and site rehab (seed, straw, and brush on exposed surfaces) between August 10 and September 1. They are continuing work on the upstream wood placements, currently operating under Industrial Fire Protection Level (IFPL) 3.
- **NF Ahtanum-**
  - Connor and the Rest Tech Crew installed 600 ft of buck and rail fencing along the Middle Fork Ahtanum Creek at Treephones Campground. DNR assisted by placing ~25 rootballs in the floodplain. Pine Mountain Excavating began work in mid-August at a dispersed campsite along NF Ahtanum Creek. ~ 50 trees and 125 boulders were installed to restrict foot traffic and ORV use in undesired riparian and upland areas. ~.3 acres were graveled to allow for camping but improve soil drainage and ~.2 miles of user-built roads/trails were decommissioned. All disturbed areas were seeded with native grasses and covered with straw. In October, bareroot plants will be installed once soil conditions are appropriate.
  - All of these activities will help minimize the impact of recreation on the struggling bull trout population in the tributaries of Ahtanum Creek.
- **Cottonwood Forest Assessment (CFA)-**
  - The CFA crew completed 44 forest survey transects along the 30 mile reach, which will provide an estimate of cottonwood forest stand ages that are tied to floodplain topography and soils, Marissa
  - One result of the field work was numerous positive landowner contacts, with opportunities for fall follow up and the potential for additional project identification.
- **Quartz Creek-**
  - MCF contracted with Mt. Stuart Restoration who felled 63 trees in early August. The crew then spent a week working on the project, moving wood into the stream. The project was paused on August 18th due to the nearby Jungle Creek fire. As of September 10th, MCF was given permission to re- start work, which they hope to do later this month.

**E. Yakama Nation- No report this meeting**

**3. WDFW- Cassandra Weekes-**

- A. The past month has super busy with the Coleman at Olmstead and Swauk Creek fish passage and screening projects.
- Coleman is nearly fully permitted; the only permit we're still waiting on is the Access permit from State Parks. This project will go to construction in late October or early November.

- Permitting is still underway for the Swauk project. HIP review and NHPA 106 are in progress. The CWA 404 & 401 WQC have been submitted. We are on an ambitious timeline but are still hopeful to construct this fall.
- B. On September 15, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers formally announced that it has prepared its proposal to renew and revise 52 nationwide permits for work in wetlands and other waters that are regulated by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and/or Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act. The proposal is published in the Federal Register and the public comment period ends on November 16, 2020:  
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/09/15/2020-17116/proposal-to-reissue-and-modify-nationwide-permits>
- The NWP we use most frequently for our YTAHP projects is NWP 27 for aquatic habitat restoration and enhancement activities. Updates to the NWP 27 include:
    - To change the second sentence of the second paragraph to state that an ecological reference may be based on the characteristics of one or more intact aquatic habitats or riparian areas. The design and evaluation of ecosystem restoration, enhancement, or establishment projects may involve the use of more than one reference site.
    - New authorized activities:
      - Add reservoir sediment management to provide continuity in sediment transport through reservoirs.
      - Add coral restoration and relocation.
- C. The updated YTAHP active projects spreadsheet was sent out last week. If you have additional updates to add, please let Cassandra know.
- D. The monthly check-in call with BPA is Tuesday, Sept. 22. If you'd like to join, please let Cassandra know and she'll share the call-in information.

#### 4. ITEMS OF INTEREST-

- A. Laine Young, Ecology, presented downloaded excerpts from the BAER website as a summary of their services so that YTAHP folks would know about this program (attachment included excerpts from the huge BAER website at <https://www.nifc.gov/BAER/>). Ryan Anderson, Washington RC&D, and Fire Resilience expert, then talked about the BAER program in general, how teams are assembled, and the fact that most of the Evans Canyon fire occurred on private and state lands. BAER wildfire response teams are federally funded and organized. Non-federal lands only qualify if the fire started on fed lands. Mike Tobin, NYCD, is waiting to see if the Evans Canyon fire qualifies for BAER response. BLM is the primary active federal agency in the Yakima Canyon, so they likely would organize a team if so. States can also request a team through NRCS or BLM. Right now NRCS is considering assessing percent remaining vegetation and hydrology analysis for Wenas and Umtanum. Laine requested that Ryan and Mike consider including Ecology WQP on a BAER team if one is organized.
5. The next Core Team Meeting is scheduled to be held in Yakima on Wednesday, October 21 at 9:30 a.m.

# **YTAHP Core Team Meeting Appendix**