

Wood for Salmon Working Group Meeting Summary

Date: September 3, 2015
Location: North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, Santa Rosa, CA

Attendees: Jonathan Warmerdam, NCRWQCB
Dave Wright, TNC
Joe Pecharich, NOAA RC
Cheryl Hayhurst, CGS
Rick Macedo, DFW
Dr. Neil Lassetre, SCWA
Kathie Lowrey, PCI
Patty Madigan, MCRCO
Mary Olswang, DFW
Chuck Striplen, SFEI
Carrie Lukacic, PCI
Eric McVermott, SCWA
Anya Starovoytov, SCRCO
Wes Stokes, DFW
Dan Wilson, NMFS
Dave Longstreth, CGS
Mike Newland, ASC-SSU
Nick Tipon, FIGR
Kaete King, NCRWQCB
Colin Noyes, CAL FIRE-SDSF
Bob Coey, NMFS
Pete Cafferata, CAL FIRE

Participating by Conference Line:

Lance Salisbury, DFW
Anna Halligan, TU
Stacy Stanish, CAL FIRE

Agenda Items

This Wood for Salmon Working Group (WFSWG) meeting focused on the following topics: (1) wood and fisheries restoration-related announcements; (2) discussion of development of a large wood guidance document; (3) presentations on Assembly Bill 52—Native American: California Environmental Quality Act; (4) presentation on monitoring results for the Soquel Demonstration State Forest large wood enhancement and streambank stabilization projects; (5) background information on the Dry Creek Restoration Project, and (6) a field visit to the Dry Creek Restoration Project.

Action items are shown in BOLD font

1. Wood and Fisheries Restoration-Related Announcements

- Jonathan Warmerdam announced for Allan Renger, DFW, that Allan could be contacted regarding opportunities for fish rescue due to drought conditions, and that DFW staff were actively monitoring juvenile coho salmon for low water conditions at numerous watersheds in the northern part of the Coast Ranges.
- Mary Olswang announced that the DFW webpage has drought rescue case studies and information on funded FRGP projects related to drought. See: <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Drought>
[Note that you may need to open this site with Google Chrome]
- Rick Macedo announced that this would be the last regular WFSWG meeting he would attend, since he is moving to Sacramento to be DFW's Manager for the Habitat Conservation Planning Branch. He stated that Wes Stokes and Allan Renger would be replacing Rick in terms of WFSWG participation.
- Joe Pecharich announced that the work on revisions to the 2006 Biological Opinion for Central California Coast coho salmon restoration projects sunsets in June 2016. A revised draft to replace it is currently being reviewed and should be in place by January 2016; it will not include CESA consistency because that is addressed by CDWF.
- Dave Wright announced that wood additions for the Pudding Creek BACI large wood experiment being conducted in western Mendocino County were now complete. Eighty percent of the available sites were treated with ~400 conifer logs at 200 sites. This is a cooperative project involving Campbell Global, Trout Unlimited, DFW, The Nature Conservancy, and Chris Blencowe and Associates (including Ken Smith). Three years of monitoring will now follow the implementation phase.
- Lance Salisbury announced that since January 2015, AB 2193--Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Act, has had three applications, two of which have been approved. One FRGP project in the Santa Barbara area used AB 2193 in lieu of a DFW 1600 Agreement.

2. Discussion of Development of a Large Wood Guidance Document

Pete Cafferata introduced the topic by providing a brief history of past discussions regarding WFSWG involvement in developing a large wood guidance document, which began in 2013. Remaining funds from a CAL FIRE grant with the MCRCDD for large wood projects was proposed to be used to hire a contractor to develop a simple guidance document stressing the accelerated recruitment method, but funding was insufficient. In August of 2014, the group discussed the concept of submitting a FRGP grant proposal for the project, with the goal of supporting the development of an appendix to the CA Salmonid Restoration Manual (DFW staff informed the WFSWG that

this was not appropriate). At the November 2014 Coho Recovery Team meeting, CRT Wood Work Group leader Sarah Beasley discussed working with the WFSWG to move forward on producing a simple guidance document. In June of this year, DFW's Kevin Shaffer informed the WFSWG that DFW was working to get Gary Flosi and possibly others hired as Retired Annuitants to complete revision work for the Salmonid Restoration Manual. He stated that the WFSWG and CRT can work on a guidance document, but that it would have no effect on the Manual unless it was done under DFW guidance and went through formal peer review by DFW staff.

In July 2015, Dan Wilson discussed with Pete Cafferata the concept of developing a short "process assistance" document for landowners on how and where to propose large wood enhancement projects using trees from WLPZs as part of a Timber Harvesting Plan (THP). This document could include a list of BMPs, benefits of pre-consultation, brief technical information, etc. It would (1) complement the VTAC guidance document's section on large wood addition (see pages 64-68, http://bofdata.fire.ca.gov/board_committees/vtac/vtac_guidance_document/vtac_guidancedocument_dec21-2012_final.pdf), and (2) send a message to landowners that the state and federal agencies are supportive of this work.

At the current meeting, Dan briefly discussed past efforts involving large wood additions as part of THPs in the Gualala River watershed (Kestrel and Dogwood plans). Only three trees were felled as part of the Kestrel plan, and while 40 trees were discussed for felling as part of the Dogwood plan, this work was never formally proposed in the THP and eventually dropped from consideration (viewed as a lost opportunity). This situation was the genesis for the concept of a short, understandable document with all the state and federal review agencies' logos on the cover.

WFSWG participants were supportive of this concept and provided the following suggestions: (1) include cost share information in the document, (2) include incentive concepts for landowners, and (3) explain the benefits of doing the work while heavy equipment is onsite for timber operations. **Mary Olswang informed the group that (1) Gary Flosi is currently working on updating the Manual wood chapter, and that the WFSWG needs to coordinate with DFW and Gary on this effort, and (2) the Bureau of Reclamation has a large wood document that should be reviewed (Improving Public Safety of Large Wood Installations: Scoping Proposal Report of Findings, see: <http://www.usbr.gov/research/projects/detail.cfm?id=689>). It was decided that further discussion on how to proceed with Dan's concept document would occur at the next WFSWG meeting.**

3. Presentations on AB 52—Native Americans: CEQA

Nick Tipon, Member and Elder, Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, provided a tribal perspective on AB 52, which addresses Native Americans and CEQA. AB 52 imposes new requirements for early consultation regarding projects with tribal members. Graton Rancheria has 1350 members, is a "Sovereign Government", is composed of Southern Pomo and Coast Miwok, and covers Marin County and part of Sonoma

County. Mr. Tipon stated that coastal zone topography has changed considerably since the end of the last Ice Age (~12,000 years ago), requiring an understanding of where historic habitation sites may be located. He cited the 2013 report titled "[Inventory and Analysis of Coastal and Submerged Archaeological Site Occurrence on the Pacific Outer Continental Shelf](#)" conducted by the USDI Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (report posted at: <http://www.boem.gov/Pacific-Completed-Studies/>).

Mr. Tipon stated that "Traditional Cultural Resources" are defined by the Tribe (i.e., the Tribe determines what is important to protect). Critical themes to the Tribe were stated as including Nature—all things have a spirit; the concept that all things are connected and that everything has equal importance; and that the past, present, and future have equal standing and importance. Culturally significant animals were stated as including lizards, salmon, condors, and deer. Rock art (petroglyphs) and cupule rocks were stated as being culturally significant, as were important viewsheds. Mr. Tipon also informed the group that there are culturally significant plants such as dogbane (Indian hemp) and soaproot. AB 52 was described as a step to prevent the destruction of Native American cultural sites; the goal is for protection/ avoidance, not mitigation of impacts. It was suggested to have early pre-consultation with tribal representatives (before engineering designs are produced), and to get agreements in writing. Pre-planning was stated as being very important for a getting a project finished, and it was stressed that project proponents and tribal representatives must trust, listen, and respect each other.

Mike Newland, staff archaeologist with the Anthropological Studies Center at Sonoma State University, provided a PowerPoint presentation titled "AB 52: A CEQA Guidelines Update for Tribal Cultural Resources." This presentation developed by Holly Roberson, JD, Land Use Counsel at the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), explains the details of AB 52. In brief, AB 52 (1) establishes a consultation process with all California Native American Tribes, and (2) establishes a new class of resources: Tribal Cultural Resources (TCRs, requiring consideration of Tribal Cultural Values in determination of project impacts and mitigation, and required Tribal notice and meaningful consultation). Consultation is to end when either (1) parties agree to mitigation measures or avoid a significant impact on TCRs, or (2) a party acting in good faith and after reasonable effort concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached. The law went into effect on July 15, 2015. Mike briefly reviewed the AB 52 definition of a TCR, notice and timing requirements, mitigation measures, implementation timelines, OPR requirements (revised CEQA Guidelines by July 1, 2016), OPR's process, and contact information. This PPT is posted on the OPR website at: http://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/OPR_AB_52_Presentation_Discussion_Draft.pdf

4. Monitoring Results for the SDSF Large Wood Enhancement Project

Cheryl Hayhurst, California Geological Survey (CGS) Engineering Geologist, provided a presentation on monitoring results for the Soquel Demonstration State Forest (SDSF) large wood habitat enhancement and streambank stabilization projects. She provided background information on the projects, including a description of Soquel Creek's deficient wood load volumes and the basin being a focus watershed in NMFS's Central California Coast (CCC) coho recovery plan. Four large wood sites were constructed:

site 1: three excavated redwood clumps built in 2012; site 2: log cluster, log vein, and rootwad anchor structures built in 2013; site 4: similar structures to site 2 and built in 2013, and site 5: a log cluster structure built in 2013.

Thalweg surveys at site 1 have shown that incipient pools (depth < 1 ft) increased from 1 to 5, pools >1 ft increased from 0 to 2, and the channel appears to have aggraded ~1.5 ft through the project reach. Four-year and eight-year return interval storm events have occurred at this site, moving the stems of the rootwads and changing the thalweg position. At site 2, thalweg surveys after one winter have shown that incipient pools increased from 3 to 5, pools from 0 to 3, the channel has locally aggraded, and that a scour pool has been created at the log vane site. At site 4, incipient pools increased from 4 to 6, and the channel has locally aggraded ~0.5 to 1 ft through most of the reach. Finally, at site 5, incipient pools increased from 2 to 3, and there has been local channel aggradation of ~0.5 to 1 ft extending 25 ft upstream of the log cluster.

The bank stabilization project was needed because the main SDSF road was severely eroded for 140 ft, threatening the loss of the entire road prism. Nine pairs of rootwads with boles and footer logs were used for revetment in 2014. Concrete blocks or rock ballast was placed in the reworked fill to anchor the logs. Additionally, a drain was placed along the inboard edge of the road to drain hillslope seepage and rock revetment was placed between the logs on the face of the fill. To date, the thalweg has been pushed away from the log revetment structures. **Monitoring for both the streambank stabilization project and the large wood structures will occur for five years.**

5. Background Information on the Dry Creek Restoration Project

Bob Coey, NMFS, provided background information on the Dry Creek Restoration Project prior to our field visit in the afternoon. Dry Creek is a tributary to the Russian River that was blocked for anadromy by the Warm Springs Dam in 1983. The dam lowered flood peaks and produces high, cold summer flows (85-125 cfs, 4-13 °C). Approximately 14 miles of Dry Creek stream channel exist from the dam to the Russian River. Habitat typing revealed a lack of deep pools and large wood, and water velocities are too high for juvenile coho salmon.

NMFS determined that the operation of Warm Springs Dam could threaten the survival of coho salmon and steelhead in the Russian River watershed, and in 2008 issued the Russian River Biological Opinion (RRBO) requiring improvements to their habitat. The Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA) created the Russian River Instream Flow and Restoration (RRIFR) Project to implement the mandates of the RRBO. The Dry Creek project is part of the RRIFR. Key goals identified for habitat enhancement in Dry Creek include development of rearing and refugia habitat for CCC coho salmon and steelhead. The RRBO requires six miles of fish habitat enhancements to be implemented over the 14 mile long reach in three phases by 2020 (i.e., creating low velocity areas for juvenile salmonids). Considerable information on the Dry Creek project (including photos) is posted at: <http://www.scwa.ca.gov/drycreek/>.

Inter-Fluve, Inc. produced the Dry Creek fish habitat enhancement conceptual design final report for the Sonoma County Water Agency in July 2012 (the report is posted at:

<http://www.scwa.ca.gov/files/docs/projects/rri/fr/dry-creek/habitat-demonstration/FINAL%20Dry%20Creek%20Conceptual%20Design%20Report%2007-31-12-appGadded.pdf>). As illustrated in this document, elements of the Dry Creek habitat enhancement projects include bank stabilization, anchored boulders, anchored log jams, and constructed backwater alcoves/side channels.

SCWA worked with a group of landowners to construct about one mile of habitat enhancements beginning in 2012 and finishing in 2014 (see photos in: http://www.scwa.ca.gov/files/docs/projects/rri/fr/PPFC/PPFC_Dry_Creek_and_Fish_1-17-14.pdf). The purpose of this initial project (Reach 7) was to demonstrate to stakeholders the feasibility of Dry Creek habitat enhancements on a smaller scale and, in particular, to determine how they could be constructed, what they may ultimately look like, and how effective they are before implementing the full six miles of habitat enhancements on Dry Creek.

An adaptive management plan has been developed with effectiveness performance measures targeted at coho salmon. Three types of monitoring are occurring for the project spanning the first mile: implementation, effectiveness, and validation. SCWA is preparing an EIR for miles 2-6 of the Dry Creek Habitat Enhancement Project, with miles 2-3 to be constructed in 2017 and miles 4-6 after 2018. Construction of future phases of the project will be informed by the monitoring results from the first phase. In total, the habitat construction work is expected to cost ~40 million dollars. Mr. Coey stated that if the habitat enhancement project is unsuccessful, a “Plan B” will be implemented, building a 120 million dollar pipeline to bypass Dry Creek (water from Lake Sonoma will be input directly into the Russian River). Also, a Dry Creek Valley Programmatic Safe Harbor Agreement is under discussion.

6. Field visit to the Dry Creek Restoration Project

Following lunch, 13 WFSWG participants traveled to the Dry Creek Restoration Project, led by Dr. Neil Lassetre, Sonoma County Water Agency. Neil provided further background information upon arrival to the site where a large backwater alcove was constructed in 2013, part of the first mile of the eventual six mile project. He stated that landowner access was a critical issue for the initial phase of the project and that several landowners involved in the first mile of the project were very cooperative. Dr. Lassetre mentioned the American Fisheries Society (AFS) poster on the Dry Creek project presented at the 2015 meeting held in Portland (“Dry Creek Habitat Enhancement Project Adaptive Management Plan: Evaluating Physical and Biological Response”). Poster authors were Justin Smith, SCWA, Neil Lassetre, SCWA, David Manning, SCWA, Gregg Horton, SCWA, and Bob Coey, NMFS. The poster abstract is posted at: <https://afs.confex.com/afs/2015/webprogram/Paper22889.html>. Photos 1 through 6 below illustrate the sites observed in the field (Reach 7—Dry Creek Habitat Enhancement Demonstration Project Reach). **The WFSWG thanks Dr. Lassetre for setting up this excellent field trip to view the Dry Creek restoration project.**

Next Meeting - The next WFSWG meeting was tentatively planned for December or January. Pete Cafferata will send out a Doodle poll with possible dates.



Photo 1. Neil Lassetre and Eric McVermott of the Sonoma County Water Agency explaining the Dry Creek Restoration Project in the field.



Photo 2. Dry Creek flowing at approximately 85 cfs on September 3, 2015 in Reach 7.



Photo 3. Woody debris that has collected in front of a constructed log jam at Reach 7.



Photo 4. Overview of the backwater alcove constructed in 2013 as part of the Dry Creek Habitat Enhancement Demonstration Project Reach.



Photo 5. Close-up view of the backwater alcove constructed in 2013 as part of the Dry Creek Habitat Enhancement Demonstration Project Reach.



Photo 6. Wood for Salmon Working Group participants discussing the backwater alcove structure constructed as part of the Dry Creek Restoration Project.