

California Fish Passage Forum

Meeting Minutes - February 26-27, 2013

Attendees: Robin Carlson, Anne Elston, Tom Schroyer, Kevin Shaffer, Javier Linares, Tim Ash, Bob Pagliuco, Sara Denzler, Marc Commandatore, Donnie Ratcliff, Richard Hill, Lisa DeBruyckere. Stan Allen and Leah Mahan attended the 2nd day via conference call. Mark Lancaster attempted to participate via conference call the first day, but we had difficulties with the conference line.

February 26, 2013

Governance Committee

During the February 22 conference call of the Governance Committee, members discussed:

- Potentially finalizing the endorsement form.
- NFHP funding – would like to use some of the funding for coordinator support.
- Donnie Ratcliff as the new Governance Committee co-chair.
- The Governance Committee hosting monthly meetings between the Forum meetings to advance the 2013 workplan.
- Putting finishing touches on 2013 workplan – will be asking all other committees to produce the next years' workplans in November of the previous year. As committees and work groups develop workplans, they should be routinely updated.
- The 2013 workplan:

Goal 1 – Develop criteria and potential project lists for FY13 NFHP funding; anticipating \$90,000 again in 2013. The window for agreements this year is going to be tight. **ACTION ITEM** – Governance Committee to send request to California entities by April 10, 2013 to obtain proposals for potential FY13 project funds (likely a 2-week turnaround). Total funding will be limited, thus the Forum will consider including minimal criteria (e.g., all permits must be in place).

Goal 2 – Summarize the Forum's committee/working groups' financial requests and develop a budget by March 30, 2013. [Note: it is important the Forum thinks about its priorities, not just the existence available and somewhat limited funding.]

Goal 3 – Seek out other funding sources to fund high priority fish passage barriers (post-November 2013 – because we need the strategic framework and the workplans in place first).

Goal 4 – Identify NFHP reporting schedule and provide information before deadlines.

Goal 5 – Work to integrate the Forum into the 3 California LCCs by April 2013. [Note: Immediate step might be for someone to sit on the California LCC steering committee.]

Goal 6 – Identify elements for public consumption.

Goal 7 - Update the strategic plan. [Note: The Forum never added a goal or an element to remediate fish passage barriers in the strategic framework despite the fact that this action is core to the Forum's existence.] There was discussion about whether or not each agency needs to have sign-off from the respective Forum agencies and entities. Each Forum member should indicate that the strategic plan is consistent with each agency and potentially its respective priority plans, e.g., Fish and Wildlife – aligns with State Wildlife Action Plan. **ACTION ITEM** – Lisa will develop key messages that Forum entities can use that acknowledges the alignment of the Forum strategic framework with California fish passage priorities – acknowledge we need to be more efficient and collaborative with what we have.

State we are consistent with NFHP guidance. This is a tiered document – strong backing at national level.

Outreach and Education Committee

- Robin Carlson is working on the Forum logo on behalf of the Forum; and noted that the chair of the Outreach and Education Committee is vacant.
 - **Forum logo** – The current concepts attempt to avoid focusing on specific barrier types, represent connectivity and life cycles, have a landscape-level perspective, and avoid highlighting a single species. The logo must view well both in grayscale and in color, it has to be scalable, and has to convey the Forum’s mission. Robin shared the original logo concept, and several new iterations of concepts. **ACTION ITEM:** Robin was asked to use the first iteration of the logo, add species, and make the word California bigger by March 30, 2013; send additional thoughts to Robin. Everyone will then provide feedback via email, and the Forum will vote on adopting the new logo at the May meeting.
 - **Website** – Lisa showed examples of the West Coast Governor’s Alliance website and PMP website, which have both Intranet and Internet functions. Cost for the version Lisa demonstrated ~ \$795 initial fee to set up and ~\$45/monthly maintenance fee. **ACTION ITEMS:** Robin will talk with Stan about available funding for the website, in the hopes that remaining funds can be used to host the website with RushWebSolutions.com. Lisa was asked to move forward with building the beta site with RushWebSolutions.com. It was noted that the Forum should consider using the website as the “face” of the Forum, and link to data websites. **ACTION ITEM:** The Governance Committee will research current limitations and potential options for the Forum to develop and maintain an independent website vs. one hosted by one of the signatories or another existing site (e.g., CalFish) by March 30. **VOTE:** The motion was made for Lisa to begin developing the website on the rushwebsolutions.com server (6 voting reps present). **ACTION ITEM:** Lisa will send an email to outreach and education committee members to see if there is anyone interested in being the chair.

Permitting/Policy Committee

- White paper – when the document is ready for public consumption, the committee will bring it to the Forum for discussion and any next steps.
- Have had 2 chairs for this committee; chair needs to call meetings, set agendas, etc.
- Engineering group fixed an identified problem – the committees need to identify issues. What will permitting and regulation take on?
 - **ACTION ITEM:** Lisa will contact Michael to discuss the committee and its functioning. Coho Help ACT page – we can direct them to that page. Consider developing something like that for the Forum – when we require individuals to work with the agencies – requestor is responsible for all permissions and permits. We can provide processes and jurisdictions – who individuals have to check with to do their project. CalTrans has to deal with 172 agencies – would be great if somebody put together an expert tool that allowed the public to understand. The Forum could identify the agencies to get the ball started – identify the importance of the project. **ACTION ITEM:** Kevin Shaffer will ask Mark Lancaster and Sam Herzberg if they remain interested in participating in the Forum. **ACTION ITEM:** Kurt Zimmerman is officially the rep for CalTrans – Bob Pagiucio will reach out to Kurt.

CHANGES WERE MADE TO THE COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS:

- Governance Committee:

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- Bob Pagliuco – Chair
- Donnie Ratcliff – Co-Chair
- Stan Allen
- Tim Ash
- Kevin Shaffer
- Permitting and Policy Committee:
 - Michael Bowen, Chair
 - Tim Ash
 - Sam Herzberg
 - Mark Lancaster
 - Donnie Ratcliff
- Education and Outreach Committee:
 - No Chair currently
 - Robin Carlson
 - Leah Mahan
 - Kevin Shaffer
 - Michael Kellett
- Science and Data Committee
 - Javier Linares, Chair
 - Robin Carlson, Co-Chair
 - Donnie Ratcliff
 - Tom Schroyer
 - Michael Bowen
 - Richard Hill
 - Anne Elston
 - Michael Kellett
 - Sara Denzler
 - Mark Lancaster
 - Bob Pagliuco
 - Marc Commandatore
 - The Project Prioritization Working Group, under the Science and Data Committee, is led by Donnie Ratcliff and Tom Schroyer
 - Engineering Working Group
 - Tim Ash, Chair
 - **ACTION ITEM:** Tim will provide the names of his committee members

Prioritization Working Group

APASS – Jesse is going to make about 12 hard copies and distribute it that way (because of problems with distribution). APASS runs off of an excel spreadsheet. If people format the data according to the fields developed in APASS, it would prioritize their data (optimization tool that can be based on cost, species, etc. or different weights). It is flexible from a statewide to a sub-basin, individual tributaries and smaller systems. **ACTION ITEM:** The Project Prioritization Working Group will consider renaming itself the Project Optimization Working Group by March 30, 2013.

How the PAD-APASS Constructor works – it creates a text file from the base parameters that can be refined/changed. There are three options:

- *Passability* (these defaults can be changed if the data exists on a barrier)
- *Weighting species* – just limited to coho, Chinook, and steelhead. Values can be changed up to #9 – e.g., coho are 9x more important than Chinook for this analysis.

- *Barrier cost estimates* – the model can be run with and without costs.

Then you copy and paste the Excel file into the PAD-APASS Constructor. It is recommended you put all of these files into one folder on your computer, and when the model is run, it will be put files into that folder. The Constructor maintains the base data file. **ACTION ITEM:** All of the working group members need to run the model (as is, with the bugs fixed) by April 15, so Forum members can provide a level of confidence to others. At the last working group meeting, everyone ran through the model via WebEx. Documentation will be prepared that describes the process for running the model. Options and Batch Tabs allow individuals to refine model runs. There will be a future choice that includes number of barriers and cost. **Solutions:** (1) First refinement is that the printable text file that is produced will list the subset of priorities that should first be fixed. This is not a ranked list of barriers to fix – assumption is that you will fix all of them. (2) Barrier name, larger watershed it is in, XY coordinates, and there will be a geospatial representation of those barriers.

The “Wish List” that was passed on to Jessie includes: (a) a placeholder for other species; (b) dividing the salmonid species and others into ESUs/DPSs; (c) create an output file of only “fixed” barriers for any given solution; (d) names, watersheds, etc. beyond just barrier ID for each “fixed” barrier; (e) the ability to make individual barrier passability estimates available for the user to define; (f) ability to rename “total habitat” and “net habitat gain” for APASS summary data; (g) draft user guide; (h) examples of what is being used on other projects for habitat quality; and (i) 12 CDs of all original files. **ACTION ITEM:** Determine if the programmer can develop a habitat qualifier in APASS by March 15, 2013. **ACTION ITEM:** Committee members need to provide Donnie with comments on the workplan asap.

- Workplan—4 goals:
 - Complete testing and finalize version of APASS.
 - Develop and implement target audience list and release strategies for APASS. **ACTION ITEM:** The Working Group needs to make recommendations to the Forum on how they think the product should be reviewed and released (science and user review).
 - Develop generalized cost estimates for potential barrier remediation. Survey Forum members – have project planners put projects in \$ buckets (<\$100,000, \$100,000–\$250,000, etc.). This will help inform APASS.
 - Develop sufficient “habitat qualifier” for the miles opened metric of APASS. **ACTION ITEM:** Recommend Donnie talks with Joe Carboni, Kevin Shaffer, and Steve Goldman (supervisor in Biogeographic Branch).

Engineering Working Group

- The group has been difficult to convene, partly because of its representation (some private industry representatives). The Forum listed some tasks for the Engineering Working Group, and then the group prioritized the list.
 - *Highest priority* – look at the options for capturing lessons learned in California similar to what is on FishXing, and establish a home for that on a website. The data set the Forest service is using – do we want more than that or something different? They will look at pros and cons of siting the information differently. Future steps will be to itemize what will be included and make that happen.
 - Other goal in 2013:
 - What in-house training might the Forum want to sponsor, recognizing there is a fair amount of training provided by other entities? An outcome this year would be to identify the types of training and discuss who could deliver the training and where in 2014. Detail issues such as funding and staff time may slow this down – perhaps the training could be focused on aspects the Forum wants to see.

- Other goals in 2014 and beyond:
 - Examine the design review process and provide guidance on how to efficiently navigate through the process.
 - Compile planning level costs for fish passage projects for use by grantor agencies.
 - Explore developing general guidance for exception to fish passage guidelines – there’s a significant policy component to this, thus it may not be most appropriate for this working group. Anything the Forum could do that would be within the abilities of the agencies to provide clarity without enacting formal guidance (e.g., juvenile fish passage) – to make it more clear. How do you amend the guidelines for full and partial remediation for different life stages? Existing guidelines only refer to federal guidelines per state statute. Engineers need to work out the problem – to ultimately revise the guidelines. Need to create a flow chart that shows when they run into barriers and when they don’t – you want x, and they want to do y – if a variance works, then which ones work, and why? Which ones were stopped and why? The guidelines can be amended. Use case studies of real world examples to look at the issues and dissect the problems to determine if it is a problem with the variance process, guidelines, etc. Defining the criteria for the exceptions is important. Ask where they have received exceptions and where they approved variances and look at commonalities. **ACTION ITEMS:** California Fish and Wildlife will provide a list of variances that have been approved, describing any commonalities among those variances. Tim and the Engineering Work Group will look at examples to the variance process and highlight which ones worked and why (to serve as information for those that seek to understand the variance process). Projects that never saw the light of day will be described.

February 27, 2013

Key Messages Forum Members May Use to Discuss the Status of CPPF Strategic Framework with Their Respective Leadership Staff

At the request of Forum members, Lisa developed some draft key messages that Forum members could use to communicate the status of the Forum strategic framework with respective agency leaders. **ACTION ITEMS:** Lisa shared the draft with the members, and asked for additional feedback and edits. Lisa will circulate the document electronically.

Science and Data Committee

Conference call February 11 to affirm membership and create a workplan and operational guidelines. The operational guidelines describe the background of committee formation, committee purpose, membership, committee roles, and activities associated with the workplan. The committee is planning a call to finalize the operational guidelines.

ACTION ITEM: By September 2013, Lisa will coordinate the development of an accomplishment report for the Forum that describes accomplishments to date since the Forum was created. Create a regular schedule (annual, biannual, e.g.) for more formally reporting accomplishments on the website [ensure alignment with NFHP's reporting accomplishments].

Strategic Framework

ACTION ITEM: By September 2013, Lisa will suggest new language for the Forum MOU, make it a high-level document that links to the strategic framework, and ask organizations to sign the agreement at Director's level. The new agreement will not have an expiration date, and will be in place before the existing agreement expires in September 2015.

Forum Project Endorsement Application Guidelines

ACTION ITEM: Post project endorsement application guidelines on the Forum website when the new website launches. **Decision:** The Forum approved passage of the forum project endorsement application guidelines. There was discussion about whether or not Forum members would outreach to others about the endorsement process – let it know it exists or not – but be consistent among Forum members in terms of outreach. Consider having a discussion on limiting the types of projects the Forum endorses (*future agenda item*). Forum members will discuss via conference call and vote on endorsing projects. In practice, the Forum will formally agendize these endorsements at quarterly meetings, but will explore opportunities to be flexible to respond to significant emerging funding opportunities (we will accept off schedule on a case-by-case basis). **ACTION ITEM:** Lisa will add this to the project endorsement form – timeline of quarterly meetings, and new proposed practice. Remove FHP language from the form. There was discussion about why the Forum is subject to the Brown Act if the Forum is a consortium of organizations and not a state agency – this will be discussed at future meeting. **ACTION ITEM:** *Future agenda item* - Kevin Shaffer will ask California Fish and Wildlife legal staff to attend a Forum meeting to discuss two issues (1) avenues to explore who is responsible for the Forum and (2) suggestions to update or modify the MOU in the future to avoid the pitfalls of past issues.

Funding for Passage Assessment Database (PAD)

Principal funding for PAD has come from FRGP since 2002. Under new State guidelines/processes, PAD does not compete well for FRGP funds. Kevin was able to find a different funding avenue for 2013, but it may not continue into the future. Staff needs training to do the work or there must be a contract to go out for bid. State is going to have a difficult time continuing this initiative in the future. Forum members were asked to think about their agency's ability to put major funding into a pool to support this initiative – how

much is in that budget item line (\$130,000 for PAD – doesn't include GIS work, and some of Robin's work, and funding to keep CalFish running – we need the 10-year average cost of the good system – getting PAD out to the public requires CalFish). **ACTION ITEM:** *Future agenda item.*

Collaboration with the California LCCs

FHPs should have a functional relationship with the California LCCs (there are 4, but the California LCC is the largest). California Fish and Wildlife has placed significant priority on the LCCs – DWR and CalTrans also seem to have this priority. As an aquatic-based resource group, the timing is good to intersect with the California LCCs. **ACTION ITEM:** The Governance Committee and Javier will make a recommendation to the Forum about representation on the California LCC during its March Governance Committee meeting.

Monitoring Salmonid Response to Barrier Removal in Northern California Coastal Tributaries

Leah Mahan with the NOAA Restoration Center talked about the work NOAA has been doing. **ACTION ITEM:** Leah Mahan will send monitoring data to Anne, and Lisa will make Leah's PowerPoint available to Forum members.

10 Waters to Watch

March 18 is the 10 Waters to Watch Deadline – Conner Creek was submitted last year, and it was accepted. The Forum seeks to share with the Washington, DC crowd what is getting accomplished. Ryan Roberts is going to follow up with a template of results and information, which would provide national attention. **ACTION ITEM:** Start the process to select a Water to Watch via email to meet the March 18 deadline.

Deadline to send workplan changes to Bob

ACTION ITEM: Bob will be sending an email to committee and work group chairs to finalize their workplans in the next month or so. He will provide a deadline within the next month and a half.

Next Meeting – Lisa will send out a Doodle to obtain available dates for Forum members to participate in a meeting in late May in at the Office of Training and Development in Sac-Davis.