



July 15, 2014 California Fish Passage Forum Meeting Minutes Sacramento, California

Present: Tom Schroyer, Stan Allen, Bob Pagliuco, Melinda Molnar, Sam Akkam, Frank Meraz, Donnie Ratcliff, Anne Elston, Marc Commandatore, Stefan Lorenzato, Michael Bowen, Kurt Zimmerman, Candice Meneghin, Lisa DeBruyckere

Via Telephone: Marcin Whitman, Mark Lancaster, Suzanne Gilmore, Stephanie Wald, Anna Halligan

Executive Summary of Decision and Action Items

Decision Items

1. **Forum Bylaws** - Forum members unanimously approved the version 4.0 of the bylaws, incorporating the following statement into the Governance Committee section of the document: "Facilitate the formation of work groups and assist Forum work groups and committees as needed."
2. **Remediation of fish passage barriers on state highways** – Since the last Forum meeting, the Governance Committee convened to discuss long-standing issues associated with the remediation of fish passage barriers along state highways. As an outcome of these discussions, the Governance Committee brought to the Forum a proposed letter to send to Caltrans. Forum members discussed the draft Caltrans letter, and lacking a motion to advance the letter, the Forum voted (all in favor, one agency (DWR) opposed) to issue a white paper that will serve to document impediments to the remediation of fish passage barriers on state highways. The Forum will then be able to reference the primary issues and create agenda items to advance those issues over time. There was a great deal of discussion about both the protocol of dealing with the issues through a letter as well as the content and substance of the letter. There was general consensus that the long-standing issues identified in the letter are important priorities to address, and that regular updates from Caltrans on progress addressing and advancing these issues are of significant importance to the Forum. It was also acknowledged that the Forum members may possibly be able to help Caltrans advance these issues. Lisa will develop a draft white paper for Forum review. Appreciation was expressed by some to Caltrans staff in attendance for the forward progress that has been made during the past six months to discuss the issues and take steps to begin implementing solutions.
3. **NFHP application for funding** - Forum members approved the amended NFHP application for funding, with the addition of one question: "Would an existing commercial, recreational or tribal fishery be enhanced as a result of the project? If so, describe. If not, is there a fishery that would potentially be restored as a result of this project? If so, describe."

Action Items

1. **MOU** - Forum members discussed the next steps in the development of the MOU. Lisa will incorporate the latest round of suggested edits from Michael, Kevin, and Bob, omit the section of the MOU pertaining to bylaws content (e.g., committees and working groups, e.g.), incorporate Marc Commandatore's and Kurt Zimmerman's bullets, and reference the Forum bylaws and incorporate them as an attachment to the MOU. Each Forum signatory will then share both documents with their leadership and provide any additional feedback and suggested edits before obtaining signatures. Lisa will also share the draft MOU with Steph Wald.
2. **Trabuco Project** – CalTrout announced that the Trabuco Creek project, though funded, had stalled due to various concerns raised by the initially supported Cleveland National Forest. Forum members discussed creating a work group consisting of Bob, Kurt, Mary Larson (CDFW), and Michael (with potential assistance from Stan), to work with Michael Kellett to discuss potential solutions to advance the Trabuco Project.
3. **Fish monitoring at fish passage project sites** - Forum members tasked the Science and Data Committee with developing a \$20,000 scope of work to census organizations conducting fish monitoring at fish passage project sites to determine the scope and scale of monitoring and existence of datasets. The Forum would like the Science and Data Committee to then take a key next step in defining the data gaps that exist, and recommend best management practices in terms of protocols that should be used relative to fish monitoring. A decision will then be made to let the work to PSMFC or develop a request for proposal.
4. **Forum application for 2015 NFHP funding** – Donnie Ratcliff shared the feedback he received on the Forum's application for 2014 NFHP funding, and the Forum then discussed two key improvements it could make in the 2015 application: (1) include a Forum-specific climate change strategy, highlighting the climate change document the Forum produced, and (2) include references to specific climate change strategies for each Forum member organization.
5. **Permitting and Policy Working Group** – Michael asked the Forum to think about the potential role of the Permitting and Policy Working Group, specifically the procedural barriers that impede remediation of barriers statewide. Michael will send an email to Forum members asking members for feedback.
6. **APASS** – Donnie Ratcliff discussed the two known deficiencies in APASS – the scant cost data, and ways to differentiate quality of habitat above barriers. The Science and Data Committee has been reviewing macroinvertebrate data, stream temperatures, and intrinsic potential to pilot these three habitat quality alternatives in the Eel River areas. The stream temperature data is the most robust data set, and can be displayed in mean weekly average temperatures (MWAT). Michael Kellett will be working with Brent to look at empirical data from throughout the watershed to create line features versus point features.
7. **Effectiveness Monitoring** – The Science and Data Committee is creating a definition for EM, and documenting places where it is occurring, compiling existing protocols, and describing the different types. This work product will assist Caltrans, which requests assistance describing recommended standards and protocols associated with EM. Caltrans has funding for post-project implementation effectiveness monitoring (they would like to evaluate 31 post-project fish passage locations, but cannot move forward without the recommended standards and protocols – the 31 locations can be found in the October 2013 annual fish passage report Caltrans provides to the legislature). Caltrans also has funding for advanced mitigation, but there has to be an accepted method of evaluation – they can conduct mitigation in advance of actual project implementation, but they need to be able to describe the value of mitigation in advance of the project.

8. **Prioritization Working Group** - Donnie is able to participate in the PWG, but no longer has the resources to lead the group. An individual is needed to evaluate the cost data with the working group, finish the estimates and spearhead the 2nd round of APASS testing. Donnie will create a workplan, and then PSMFC will provide financial support via the Forum's multi-state conservation grant to hire someone to spearhead these tasks, with administrative support from Lisa.

9. **Engineering Working Group** – Michael Bowen has conducted outreach to identify a stellar group of individuals to serve on the Engineering Working Group, with the understanding these individuals will be tasked with specific requests and deliverables. Michael drafted a work plan for the group with three specific tasks – Forum members can comment on that work plan. Michael will send a follow-up email to Forum members to request their input.

10. **Next Forum meeting** – The event will be held Thursday, September 18, and Lisa will send a Doodle to Forum members to obtain their availability for a Forum meeting on either September 17 or September 19.

Other discussion and presentations:

1. **Fish jump tests** – Bob Pagliuco discussed the juvenile [fish jump tests](#) being conducted with NOAA staff and others, and notes that most successful jumps occur after dark. This is prompting investigators to obtain infrared cameras to get 2-hour subsamples so that they can count the number of attempts as an index. They completed two tests, with fairly similar results: In Test 1, 100 fish had 20 total successful jumps after 24 hours, and 55 total successful jumps after the weekend. In Test 2, 100 fish had a total of 21 successful jumps after 24 hours, and 59 total successful jumps after the weekend. They are conducting a third test, and Bob will send an email asking entities what they would like to know, e.g., unsuccessful attempts, the difference in success between light and dark conditions, and the difference in success with a different type of barrier (e.g., a v-notch crest that is thicker and with a 6-inch jump so that they have a comparison between 12-inch and 6-inch jump success).

2. **Phase 4 of the Bay-Delta Effort** – Dan Schultz and Nicole De LaMora of the Division of Water Rights, gave a presentation on Phase 4 of the Bay-Delta effort (the [presentation](#) is posted on the Forum website). They discussed flow criteria, flow objective, public trust, and beneficial uses. They discussed development and implementation of flow criteria and flow objectives for priority tributaries to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta watershed, with a focus on the Sacramento River watershed.

3. **Instream Flow Projects in Coastal Watersheds** – Matt Clifford with Trout Unlimited presented an overview of Trout Unlimited's instream flow work and the working model they have developed (the [presentation](#) is posted on the Forum website). Steps in the process include deciding where to work, identifying problems, developing objectives, project "recon", landowner outreach, project development, funding, permitting, and construction.

4. **Tri-County Fish Team** – Steph Wald, Coordinator of Central Coast Salmon Enhancement, discussed the tri-county fish team, its signatories and draft MOU, accomplishments, current activities (including the [October 21-23, 2014 First Annual Steelhead summit](#), and opportunities for Tri-County to work with the Forum. Lisa will send Steph a copy of the draft Forum MOU as Steph considers the Tri-County FISH Team potentially joining the Forum.

5. **Forum budget updates** – The Forum received a \$38,439 multi-state conservation grant, of which \$11,902 will help support a GIS/Data Technician, \$6,884 will help support a Data Management Specialist

(and an additional \$500 provides travel support to these two positions), \$1,000 will provide funding to attend workshops and meetings, \$2,251 is designated for supplies, \$10,000 is designated for APASS, and \$2,000 is available to support obtaining cost data from 5-Counties. Overhead, program management, and administrative costs consume the remaining funding.

The 2014 NFHP funding will be used to provide coordinator support \$57,000, support for a Data Management Specialist \$8,443, \$1,000 for software, \$1,267 for office supplies, \$4,000 to support travel, with the remaining funding for administrative costs.

The Forum also reviewed the projects it is funding in 2014 – all are posted on the Forum website.

6. **Eel River Delta Event** – The Forum, Pacific Marine and Estuarine Fish Habitat Partnership, The Wildlands Conservancy, Humboldt RCD, CalTrout and others are hosting an event in Fortuna, California September 18. The goal of the event is to highlight the three landscape-scale restoration projects in the Eel River Delta with a focus on estuary health and economic benefits to the local, regional, and state communities. The event was suggested to highlight the Eel River as a 10 Waters to Watch in 2014, the National Estuaries Week events that occur in September 2014, and the jointly funded (PMEP and the Forum) Salt River Ecosystem Restoration Project (2014). The Forum will host its September meeting in Fortuna, either the day before or the day after the event.