



CALIFORNIA FISH PASSAGE FORUM

Policy & Permitting Committee Meetings

Present: Holly Steindorf, Sandi Jacobson, Anna Halligan, Stephanie Falzone

Meeting attendance:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1NApL93PWEhVy2thUfWbRoe0IJVullm5_YTjQfazKil/edit?usp=drive_link

7/10 Agenda

Discuss Policy and Permitting Committee project to develop a suite of simplified permitting pathway focused case studies in collaboration with sustainable conservation.

7/10 Meeting Minutes:

Holly, Stephanie, and Anna discussed the value of interviewing both agencies and practitioners, to get information about how permitting pathways are functioning, why project practitioners chose certain permitting pathways, and their lessons learned from the process.

The group decided that individual case studies are valuable and brainstormed a list of a variety of project types and permitting types represented. The group also agreed that once individual case studies are compiled, we could also create a general perspective, and lessons learned document that compiles the information from many individual case studies.

Individual Case Studies

Types of Projects*

- SRGO with SERP
- SRGO with PEIR
- SRGO with categorical exception
- FRGP Programmatic
- Standard Permit Nexus (Comparison)
- USFWS BO?

*Likely all will use NMFS PBO

Example Projects

- (Forum) No-Name Gulch- (Anna- couldn't have used certain permitting pathways for this as implemented, since they used engineering geologist and not engineer, interesting case, maybe not a do-able situation today)
- (Forum) Strawberry Creek- used HREA, created a fishway, did not remove barrier, multi species (lamprey)
- (Forum) Upper Noyo- used HREA
- (Non Forum) Butnao Creek (multiple species, frogs, snakes, had to use USFWS PBO)

Information for Practitioner Interview

- Details of the project? (Project size, impact, open up # habitat?)
- Do you have experience permitting restoration projects? How much?
- What types of permits were eligible or acceptable to them, what ones did you select and why? What motivated you to follow the path and why? What factors were at play? (sometimes there are unique circumstances that influence permit choice)
- Cost to permit? Time to permit?
- Other (non-cost or time) benefits to that pathway?
- What were your challenges, either getting the permit, or being compliant?
- If you were to do it again, would you do it the same way?

The agency perspective

Tips like: “always ask for the 5 years”, “include other riparian species”

Ask agencies for the baseline cost or time to permit for our standards for comparison.

Other questions about the progress in permitting and general perspectives (i.e. long-term benefits of restoration outweigh short-term impacts)

- Regional Water Board (Region 1- north coast is where Anna works)
- CDFW (Brad and Jen, CTGT, Cory SERP)
- NOAA NMFS BO (bob)
- USFWS PBO
- USACE (not our best use of time- USACE appreciate and rely on specialized permits but have not themselves created a different permit) 404 is rigid.
- Santa Margarita River bridge replacement and fish passage project (had some Forum funding for small amount in late design phase) is utilizing the FRGP programmatic for South Coast RGP78 for the 404, the NMFS So Cal programmatic permit for Southern steelhead; and has USFWS Biological Opinion.

General Perspectives and Lessons Learned

Use the information from the individual case studies to compare different perspectives and be able to report out some general perspectives without having them attributed to any project or practitioner.

7/10 Action Items

- Procure a list of projects internally
- Send that list to agencies ask for additions
- Create template with Information above
- Create interview plan