

Meeting Summary:
Battle Creek Watershed Working Group March 15, 2011: 10 am – 2 pm
Conference Room, RBFWO, 10950 Tyler Road, Red Bluff, CA 527-3043

I. Convene

Present: Tricia Parker Hamelberg, Marily Woodhouse, Virginia Phelps, ____, Jim Smith, Bob Lee, Sharon Paquin-Gilmore, Mike Berry, Michael Strawn, Liv Imset, Suzanne Turek, Kerry Burke Hanna, Kathy Bishop, Glenn Graham, Mary Marshall, Naseem Alston, Drew Coe (CVRB), Steve Emershy, Cajun James (Sierra Pacific Industries), Rich Reiner, Matt Brown, Harry Rectenwald (BCC/Terraqua), Bob Null, Peter Jacobsen, Teresa Connor

- A. Review Jan 2011 meeting summary: Postponed until May.
- B. Review and approve agenda
- C. Representatives: update roster & alternates: Postponed until May.
- D. Nominating committee report & nominations: The Nominating Committee of Teresa Connor and Mike Berry gave their report. Sharon Paquin-Gilmore (Chair), Peter Jacobsen (Vice-Chair) and Jim Smith/Tricia Parker Hamelberg (Secretary) were re-elected to serve for another year.

II. Announcements (all participants)

Glenn Graham: The PG&E Stewardship Council is meeting on March 24 at the Millville Grange.

*** Action: This group needs to coordinate with them: Glenn, Sharon, and Marily will attend and provide an update to this group in May.

Mike Berry: Mike gave an overview of his new responsibilities as Senior Environmental Specialist with DFG. Mike will continue his work in Battle Creek with Mt Lassen Trout Farms -- he expects it to complete it in the next several days. Mike introduced Doug Killam who will continue his various roles with DFG (primarily monitoring related) plus gain the task of writing the Fishery Management Plan for Battle Creek.

Jim Smith: Jim gave a brief update on the salmon harvest management process. The Pacific Fisheries Management Council will soon be developing a “preferred alternative” for all ocean salmon fisheries for the May 1, 2011 through April 30, 2012 season at its April 9-13, 2011 meeting in San Mateo, California.> Additional information is available for review at < [2011 Process for Salmon Harvest Management](#)>

III. Updates

- A. Restoration Project (Mary Marshall, USBR)

Under Phase 1A of the project, the majority of the fish ladder construction was completed at Eagle Canyon and North Battle Creek Feeder dams in 2010. Construction at these project sites will resume in

Spring 2011, and work is planned to be completed late 2011. In regards to the Wildcat project site, some road erosion issues will be corrected in Summer 2011. For the Asbury/Baldwin Creek site, design specifications are under development and a contract is planned to be awarded in late 2011.

Under Phase 1B of the project, vegetation clearing began in late-January 2011 and construction of the Inskip powerhouse tailrace connector and bypass is currently planned to be completed late 2011.

Under Phase 2 of the project, financial agreements (to receive State funding) are underway and are planned to be completed in 2011. Construction is currently planned to occur under two contracts. One construction contract would involve the installation of a fish screen and ladder at Inskip diversion dam, installation of a tailrace tunnel connector from South Powerhouse to Inskip Canal, and removal of Lower Ripley Creek Feeder and Coleman diversion dams. Another construction contract would involve the removal of Soap Creek Feeder diversion and the removal of South diversion dam and appurtenant conveyance system, including the removal of South Canal. These construction contracts are currently anticipated to be awarded in 2012 and be completed in late 2014/early 2015.

Monthly construction updates (including photos) are posted on the Battle Creek Restoration Project Reclamation website (www.usbr.gov/mp/battlecreek).

Environmental mitigation efforts associated with construction impacts, and adaptive management efforts will continue after construction is completed.

Currently, the overall Restoration Project estimated cost is roughly \$130 M.

The Coleman National Fish Hatchery AMP final award is scheduled for August, 2011.

B. P. G. & E. (Liv Imset)

PG&E is supporting construction for Phase 1. The FERC authorization to proceed with construction is imminent for Phase 1B. We are also preparing background documents for the FERC license amendment application. For a personnel update: Curtis Steiz retired at the end of February. Gene Geary will now be the contact.

C. Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy (Sharon Paquin-Gilmore) [handout]

Harry distributed copies of the February 14 2011 letter to NMFS. The letter describes the BCWC requesting public review process for the CNFH Biological Assessment and possible delegation of authority in preparation of the Biological Opinion. Jim Smith stated there will be a USFWS expert in Endangered Species Act procedures to provide a presentation at the next meeting to address the concerns raised in the letter. Naseem stated that a response is in process within her agency. {update: letter sent to BCWC on April 21, 2011}.

Sharon expressed appreciation for PG&E's financial donation of \$1,000 to the BCWC. The Battle Creek Salmon & Steelhead Restoration Team selected the BCWC to receive this charitable contribution from PG&E. This team was recognized as a finalist in the 2010 Richard A. Clarke-Environmental Leadership Awards for their role in bringing to implementation one of the largest cold-water salmon & steelhead restoration efforts in North America.

III. Updates (continued)

D. Vice-Chair (Peter Jacobsen): updates rec'd on Issue-Tracking- Document

Peter described the background for this document: Its purpose is to document the issues, identify who is responsible for keeping us up-to-date on the issues development and keep the issues in front of this group so that we can continue to give them mindful consideration. The rating and sorting of these issues occurred by the representatives at the last meeting and now the top "ranked" issues are shown on the first page. These issues will be re-sorted, on an annual basis, in November 2011.

*** Actions: Mike Berry will provide an update on the Lassen Lodge Hydro Project to Peter for the next version, other contacts will provide updates as needed.

E. USFWS (Tricia Parker):

Tricia provided a handout describing the USFWS updates for all activities in Battle Creek . Matt added a detailed description of the monitoring for adult fish swimming into upper Battle Creek. Matt described that when the trap in the middle ladder is removed, a pulse of fish will likely move upstream using this year's interim route of swimming through the CNFH spawning building. The biologists working on this project have carefully completed an Impact Assessment and have received approval by both DFG and NMFS for using this route this year. The Impact Assessment estimates that a very low number of fish will be handled (approx. 5 spring Chinook, 1 steelhead, and 14 late-Fall Chinook).

Discussion:

- BCWC (Harry Rectenwald) had a question on trap operation schedule and ladder blockage prior to routing fish through the hatchery. Answer: The trap and ladder opening was 8 hours per day. In response to a follow-up question on the alternative of operating the trap and opening the ladder 24 hours per day Jim Smith stated many traps are operated on only an 8 hour shift. Rectenwald mentioned the need for the Coleman Fish Barrier Dam fish passage facilities perform the same as the PG&E facilities updated by the Restoration Project as explained in the National Environmental Policy Act document for the modifications of the Coleman Hatchery Barrier Dam.
- Responses: The scientific assessment is that the high flows through the spawning building, combined with the low numbers of fish, cool temperatures and minimal delay should not cause any negative problems for these fish. NMFS, DFG and FWS will be monitoring the situation closely to insure successful upstream migration. The use of the interim route of passing upstream migrating fish through the CNFH spawning building is for this year only and only for several more weeks.

Additional information provided after the GBCWWG meeting in response to Harry’s questions about adult fish monitoring, here is the summary table:

2011 Adult Salmonid Monitoring in Battle Creek	Biosampling and Monitoring	Upstream passage (above SM 6)
March 1-28	At CNFH spawning bldg. as fish pass through.	Spring Chinook, Steelhead (NOR)
March 28-Aug 1	Video in middle ladder SM 6	Spring Chinook
Sept - Oct	Snorkel survey Spring Chinook	n/a
mid-August through mid-Nov	Video at counting weir SM 2	n/a

Final reports/data showing salmon escapement are available at:
<http://calsport.org/news/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/GrandTab.2011.02.012.pdf>
 USFWS reports are available at <http://www.fws.gov/redbluff/activities.html>

IV. Presentation: Marily Woodhouse, stream monitoring [handout and ppt]

Battle Creek Alliance Citizens Water Monitoring is monitoring the tributaries of Battle Creek and Battle Creek itself in the Manton/Shingletown area. Turbidity monitoring began in December of 2009. The citizens performing the monitoring have been trained with 3 watershed groups, DFG and Western Shasta RCD and received advice from staff from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Board. When the Alliance obtained additional equipment in July of 2010 they also began monitoring dissolved oxygen, temperature and pH. The monitoring project consists of 12 sites on county maintained, public roads throughout the area that has been heavily clearcut between 1998 and 2008. According to the lead agency Cal Fire’s records, the Timber Harvest Plan (THP) total will eventually total 19,586 acres. Currently, 13,324 acres have been cut. When the THP’s are fully carried out, 65% of the total will be clearcut for harvestable lumber, 3% will be cleared for roads, 10% will be shelterwood removal (near to clearcut).

Since the water and forest systems are so intricately interconnected, we believe this information is pertinent to the Battle Creek Salmon and Steelhead Restoration project, as well as affecting many other public trust issues. Within the limitations of accessibility, the Alliance chose our monitoring sites for comparison as being “upstream”, “within” and “downstream” of logging. The sites are on Bailey Creek, Rock Creek, Canyon Creek, Digger Creek, North Fork of Battle Creek and South Fork of Battle Creek. Two of the sites are seasonal drainages that are dry for part of the year; one of these is next to a clearcut and the other is in an area that is scheduled to be cut, but has not been yet.

This citizen monitoring project began when we found that no monitoring was being done to track the changes that are potentially occurring. The contiguous area that the 19,586 acres of projects entails has never had a cumulative impacts assessment done because Cal Fire has broken the area into seven subwatersheds, subverting the definition of what a watershed is. We hope there will be monitoring by other agencies that address the true cumulative impacts to the public trust resources.

Future Need : comprehensive and independent watershed water quality monitoring and reporting.

V. Presentation: Null, USFWS fish monitoring at the barrier weir and fish ladders – jumpers over the weir and telemetry monitoring up the ladders (30 minutes) [see handout of final report and ppt]

VI. Closure

Additional Action Items: Mike B will contact BLM regarding future presentation on potential land acquisition, Sharon will provide signed copy of MOU to group for review prior to the May meeting and write up the process for adding text to the Issue Tracking Document (SPG).

Future meetings (e.g. May 17 Red Bluff FWS office, July field trip to see SPI sites: meet in Manton).

Meeting adjourned.