



## Trinity River Restoration Program

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NC-150

-- DRAFT --MEMORANDUM-- DRAFT --

**TO:** TMC Members and Alternates

**FROM:** Doug Schleusner, Executive Director  
Trinity River Restoration Program

**CC:** TAMWG Members; TRRP Staff

**SUBJECT:** Director's Report; June 27 – September 18, 2003

**DATE:** September 4, 2003

1. **Summary:** Primary areas of emphasis during the past three months include: 1) completion of the NEPA/CEQA documentation for the bridges, associated realty actions, and contract specifications; 2) revision of the Cableway spawning gravel project to meet CEQA requirements and obtain final permit from the Water Quality Control Board; 3) revision of the late-summer/fall fishery flows action plan and completion of NEPA documentation; and 4) continuation of FY2004 budget planning.
2. **General Program Administration:**
  - **Budget:** The Draft FY2004 Budget was approved in concept by the TMC on June 26, 2003. Recommendations from the TAMWG have been incorporated, including shifting the emphasis on Rush Creek from a construction project at the delta to an initial assessment of overall watershed conditions. A line item has been included to recognize the need for additional sources of funding (\$1.5 million) to address watershed restoration activities. Reclamation and the Fish and Wildlife Service were successful in getting \$2 million identified in the FY2004 CVPIA Restoration Fund budget for bridges, other floodplain infrastructure improvements, and initial channel restoration activities. An additional \$3 million has been identified for FY2005. Trinity County has submitted a proposal for \$1.2 million to the Coastal Salmon Recovery Program to assist with construction of the Poker Bar and Bucktail bridges, but results will not be known until January 2004. Availability of additional Reclamation FY2003 year-end funding has allowed for carryover of FWS funds to be used in FY2004. Overall FY2004 budget conditions are much more favorable than in the June presentation.

- Staffing: The budget assistant position is now being advertised (opened September 2, closes September 26). This staff position will take over much of the routine budget analysis, preparation, and reporting, allowing the Director and Branch Chiefs to spend more time on the strategic aspects of budgeting. The Grants and Agreements Specialist position has been advertised twice, with no qualified applicants. The position description is being modified and reclassified into a different series, which should result in greater interest and a larger applicant pool.
- Klamath Coordination: A number of activities have taken place in recent months that will improve coordination between management entities in both the Klamath and Trinity basins. Examples include: 1) Bi-weekly conference calls facilitated by the Fish and Wildlife Service among state, federal, and tribal representatives who are monitoring water quality, fish returns, and disease incidence in both rivers; 2) The North Coast Water Quality Control Board has recently facilitated two meetings with technical representatives from state, federal, and tribal representatives to coordinate monitoring activities associated with fall fishery flows; 3) The Klamath Deputy Area Manager (Reclamation) will be visiting the TRRP office this September to become more familiar with the program and to discuss topics of mutual interest.
- Program Website: Initial version of the website is nearly ready to send to the service provider. After some additional review and editing, it should be on-line by mid to late September. Major headings include: Home, About Us, Administration, Calendar, Library Resources, Links and Partners, Outreach, Programs, Recreation, Trinity River (history and overview), Current Events, and Contact Us. Bob Sullivan has been instrumental in developing the website and is to be commended for his persistence.
- Status of SEIS/SEIR (provided by Tom Stokely):  
The four co-lead agencies (USBR, USFWS, Hoopa Valley Tribe and Trinity County) are proceeding with the SEIS/SEIR analyses. The second round of scoping based on the addition of new alternatives was completed in July. The SEIS/SEIR includes the following alternatives: (Existing Conditions; No Action; Flow Evaluation; Mechanical Restoration; Percent Inflow; Modified Mechanical; 70% Maximum Flow; Cumulative)

CALSIM 2 modeling is nearly completed for all alternatives described above except Cumulative. Trinity River temperature modeling is being done now by Kamman Hydrology and Watercourse Engineering (Greg Kamman and Mike Deas). Sacramento River temperature modeling is completed and all Delta Water Quality modeling is completed except for dissolved oxygen.

Trinity County, with assistance from Americorps Watershed Stewards and Rosemary Kenner (a summer intern at the TRRP office) is taking the lead on development of additional non-flow restoration measures to incorporate into the alternatives analysis (watershed and tributary work).

Endangered Species Act compliance is being done in conjunction with, and part of revision of the Central Valley Project Long-Term Operations Criteria and Plan (CVP OCAP). Thus, the Biological Opinions from USFWS and NOAA Fisheries will be the same as the one for the CVP OCAP. While there is some uncertainty regarding the recent and on-going Napa Agreement and how it fits in with CVP OCAP, in general it is not affecting the flow/ water allocation composition of the ROD (TRFE Alternative) at this time.

3. Rehabilitation and Implementation Branch:

- Trinity River Bridges: The EIR for modification of the four bridges on the Trinity River below Lewiston Dam was certified by the Trinity County Board of Supervisors on July 15, 2003. The associated EA/FONSI was signed on July 17. The final date for filing a lawsuit on this action under CEQA provisions was originally August 15, but was extended by the County until September 29. Award of a construction contract for at least the Biggers Road bridge is expected by September 19, 2003. Complex realty actions associated with the Salt Flat bridge have taken much longer than anticipated, but may still be resolved by the September 20 cutoff date for FY2003 contract obligations. This construction schedule would allow traffic by March 2004. The construction contract for the other two bridges at Bucktail and Poker Bar is planned for award in the spring of FY2004. All four bridges are scheduled to be open for traffic by December 2004. Actions are also ongoing to inventory and address other floodplain structures potentially impacted by fishery restoration flows.
- Channel Rehabilitation Sites: The Department of Water Resources (DWR) has offered to be the CEQA lead for the Hocker Flat pilot restoration site. A series of design team meetings have taken place this summer, and NEPA/CEQA analysis and documentation should be completed this fall. A construction contract should be awarded in early 2004.
- Gravel Introductions: Documentation for the Cableway spawning gravel introduction project (upstream of the Old Lewiston Bridge) was revised this summer to fully comply with CEQA requirements. The Water Quality Control Board recently granted the necessary permit, and project implementation will be completed by September 15.
- Rush Creek Delta: Based on recommendations from the TAMWG and direction by the TMC, the previously proposed restoration of this site has been deferred until a more comprehensive analysis of the upper watershed is completed. A technical team will identify the scope of work, and coordinate the assessment with other inventories already in progress. Funding has been identified in the FY 2004 budget to accomplish this work.

4. Monitoring and Analysis Branch:

- Science Advisory Board: The initial 15 nominations for the five-member Science Advisory Board (SAB) have been reviewed by TMAG staff, and narrowed down to a short list of about seven candidates. The TMAG branch chief is now conducting telephone interviews with those individuals and professional references. Recommendations will be made to the Executive Director within the next several weeks, and selections announced at the September 18 TMC meeting.
- Science Framework: Lori Kleifgen has taken the lead in drafting initial concepts and coordinating with TRRP partners. A scope of work has been developed that will lead to a contract with experts in the field of river system modeling and monitoring. A series of workshops will allow for participation by TMC technical representatives, TRRP staff,

and TAMWG subcommittee representatives. This framework will provide the basis for setting research, monitoring, and budget priorities, and initial results should be available for use in the FY 2005 budget cycle.

- Annual flow schedule monitoring: Monitoring activities have been on-going, and a final "report card" will be prepared that evaluates the effectiveness of the flow schedule in meeting the stated objectives. Anecdotal reports to date have been largely positive, with initial reservations by fishing guides in particular changing to either neutral or enthusiastic. Reports of spring run chinook by anglers have included the phrase "larger and brighter" than in past years. More quantitative analysis will follow.
- Fall fishery flows: The EA/FONSI for the fall (late-summer) action plan flows was completed in a very timely and professional manner, and signed on August 21, 2003. The manner in which the technical representatives of the TMC, TAMWG representatives, TRRP staff, and agency officials worked together in this effort reflects very positively on the Program. The Action Plan release schedule (33,000 acre feet) began on August 27 and will ramp down to the fall base flow of 450 cfs on September 15.

5. Key Contacts and Meetings:

- July 8 – SEIS scoping session, Redding
- July 9 – Last day of 2,000 cfs spring releases, ramp-down begins
- July 10 - SEIS scoping session, Hoopa
- July 17 – EA/FONSI for bridges project signed
- July 21 – Trinity River summer base flow of 450 cfs begins
- July 23-24 – TMC tech team meets to discuss potential fall fishery releases (50,000 ac ft)
- July 29 – Special TAMWG meeting to discuss potential fall fishery releases
- July 30 – Special TMC meeting to consider staff recommendations for fall flows
- August 1 – FY2004 CVPIA Work Plan submitted for \$2 million
- August 21 – EA/FONSI for fall fishery releases signed
- August 22-24 - TRRP exhibit at Trinity County Fair, Hayfork
- August 27 – Fall fishery releases begin (33,000 acre feet)

6. Upcoming Events:

- September 3 – Cableway spawning gravel placement begins
- September 4 – TAMWG meeting, Weaverville
- September 15 – Last day of fall fisheries releases, ramp down from 1,000 cfs to base flow of 450 cfs
- September 16 – Field tour for FWS Assistant Director Mamie Parker
- September 17 – Field tour with Klamath Deputy Area Manager Christine Karas
- September 18 – TMC meeting, Weitchpec
- September 18 – Announcement of Science Advisory Board members
- September 19 - Contract award date for Salt Flat and Biggers Road bridges
- September 27 – Whiskeytown's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration
- October 4 - TRRP exhibit at Weaverville's Salmon Festival
- October 18 – TRRP exhibit at Coleman Hatchery's "Return of the Salmon" Festival