**4-25-13 Fish Tagging Forum (FTF) Meeting Notes**

**NPCC conference room – Portland, OR**

**Introductions/Meeting Objectives/Recap of Last Meeting**

Kevin Kytola opened the meeting with introductions and a discussion of meeting objectives.

**Discuss Process for Final FTF Memorandum Editing and Delivery**

Tony Grover said he is planning on giving the decision memo to Public Affairs staff for final editing tomorrow. Since it will be “pens down” after today’s meeting so the memo can be edited and finalized, completing a discussion of the memo’s recommendations and content during the remaining agenda items will be important today.

Concerning the language in the genetics section that Pete Hassemer prepared, several other FTF members have suggested some changes in that section which aren’t included in the version of the memo today. The group will need to review, discuss and agree on any revisions today.

Dan Rawding also prepared a shared infrastructure/efficiencies section which Tony inserted on p. 13 immediately ahead of the Effectiveness Evaluation. The appropriateness of this placement will be evaluated in the afternoon when we discuss the overall content of the memo.

**Review and Finalize FTF Recommendations**

NOTE: revisions to the recommendations were discussed and captured in a redline/strikeout version of the draft memorandum. The notes below capture additional context for the discussions.

Tony explained that, once the Council adopts or embraces these recommendations, a letter will be sent out to the region explaining the Council decision. The Council’s recommendations are advisory to Bonneville, which typically implements the Council’s recommendations or explains why it won’t. However, if the upcoming F&WL Program amendment process changes any of the Forum’s recommendations and subsequent Council adoption of those recommendations, then it could “trump” the FTF recommendations.

It was agreed to include several sentences on p. 7 to explain the relationship of the FTF recommendations relative to the U.S. v Oregon process and the NOAA Fisheries biological opinions.

It was agreed to include language to explain that the IEAB’s economic modeling work was unavailable at this time and could not be taken into account in the memo recommendations. Depending on what the IEAB economic study shows, the FTF should probably have an opportunity to review and discuss their work.

PIT Tag Recommendations

It was agreed to define near-term actions as those to be implemented “now,” or right away, mid-term actions as implemented within one year, and long-term actions within the next 3-5 years.

It was agreed that PIT tag recommendation a. is a near-term action.

There was a discussion by the group as to whether PIT tag recommendation b. is an “actionable recommendation” and whether it needs to be changed or removed? It was agreed to add some new language in the memo to assess regional opportunities for fresh water life-cycle monitoring below BON Dam and remove PIT tag recommendation b.

Tony will provide revised language concerning generic tagging effects and regulatory analyses elsewhere in the memo and include a reference to all regional parties, not simply NOAA Fisheries.

Dan Rawding suggested a new long-term recommendation related to ISRP review of an ongoing PIT tag harvest monitoring project and how it complements other ongoing monitoring projects.

Other specific language changes were suggested in the other PIT tag recommendations, accepted in the revised version of the memo and displayed on the screen in the room.

Jay Hesse recommended deleting Figure 1 due to the large number of ad clips in basin and FTF agreed. Jay also had suggested some additions for Table 1 and adding a summary for the genetic tagging technology section. Jay also proposed some changes to the management questions and indicators (Attachment 2a), as well as several missing ongoing tagging projects to be added to the list of tagging projects in Attachment 4.

Coded Wire Tag Recommendations

The first paragraph of Marianne McClure’s suggested CWT language will be inserted into the introduction of the CWT recommendations. The other paragraphs of Marianne’s suggested background language, as modified by the Forum, will be moved immediately above the Cost Effectiveness section on p. 14.

The potential funding reduction for recommendation a. may be up to $500,000. Recommendation a. is a long-term recommendation.

It was suggested that, for each alternative listed under recommendation b, a rationale or reason should be added for context and a proponent for each alternative could be identified. As a result of discussion, the following path forward was agreed to for communicating alternate perspectives on the recommendations: The proponent(s) for each of the alternatives will present their comments on the merits and consequences of each alternative to the F&WL Committee and Council directly. Additionally, forum participants can provide their thoughts on the recommendations in writing as an attachment to the memorandum.

The total cost identified for Alternative 1 (status quo) should be $7.5 million.

Over a 3-year transition period for Alternative 2, the total funding reduction will be about $2.1million per year. (Note: this language may be refined further for clarity.) As a result of further discussion regarding the data management recommendation below, it was agreed that the recommendation would be modified such that the funding for RMIS is not reduced. The result of this is a potential funding reduction of approximately $1.9 million rather than $2.1 million.

Dan Rawding’s proposed language for CWTs was refined by the group and will be incorporated into the memo immediately after Table 8.

**Action:** Each proponent for each of the CWT alternatives has the option to prepare a 1-2 page paper on the pros and cons and consequences of their alternative and will forward it to Tony Grover by Tuesday morning, April 30.

Genetic Tag Recommendations

A new section about genetic tagging prepared by Pete Hassemer and his staff, accompanied by Marianne’s section on genetics, will be inserted into a new section on emerging tag technologies.

Specific language changes were suggested in the genetic tag recommendations, accepted in the revised version of the memo and shown on the screen in the room.

Acoustic Tag Recommendations

**Action:** Marianne will check to determine if the tribes’ Accords have specific language related to performance standard testing using acoustic tags.

Recommendation a. is a near-term recommendation; b. is a mid-term recommendation; and recommendation d. was removed since the coordination aspect is already captured in b.

A new recommendation was developed which calls on the Corps, in consultation with NOAA, to develop a plan, including costs and schedule, for future performance standard studies using acoustic tags at FCRPS mainstem dams.

Specific language changes were suggested in the acoustic tag recommendations, accepted in the revised version of the memo and shown on the screen in the room.

Radio Tag Recommendations

Specific language changes were suggested in the radio tag recommendations, accepted in the revised version of the memo and shown on the screen in the room.

Coordination Recommendations

It was agreed to remove the PIT tag recommendation for coordination because it is already covered in the specific tag technology recommendations.

Recommendations for tagging data systems and data organization

The RMIS data base component of recommendation a. will be removed from the funding reduction recommendation in the CWT section.

Specific language changes were suggested in this section of the memo, accepted in the revised version of the memo and shown on the screen in the room.

**Review and Finalize Overall Memo Content**

Tony suggested removing the reference to the Council’s 1997 policy statement about CWTs and harvest, and the Forum agreed. He also pointed out there are historical summary paragraphs on this topic on p. 3 just before the Overview section. There was some discussion about keeping or removing the new sentence added on p. 3 that says “At the time the Council instructed the staff to make coded wire tag projects a focus of the Fish Tagging Forum.” It was pointed out that all the CWT projects were approved and conditioned by the Council under the RME categorical review process subject to the findings and recommendations of the FTF.

**Action:** Tony will change this sentence to reflect the Council decision on conditions for funding at the time of the RME categorical review.

**Outline Presentation for Fish and Wildlife Committee**

The FTF discussed the format of its presentation at the May 7th Fish and Wildlife Committee meeting in Boardman, OR. Tony will introduce FTF members and turn it over to Therese Hampton, as Chair, who will begin the presentation. Therese would be followed by Kevin explaining the Forum process and associated work products, followed by various FTF members to discuss their points of view. Toward the end, Bill Jaeger of IEAB will present results of the economic modeling effort. The floor will then be opened up to Council members and staff for Q&A of FTF members present.

**Wrap-up:** There are no further FTF meetings scheduled at this point.

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