



Independent Scientific Review Panel

for the Northwest Power & Conservation Council
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Memorandum (ISRP 2017-8)

July 25, 2017

To: Tony Grover, Director Fish and Wildlife Division, Northwest Power and Conservation Council

From: Steve Schroder, ISRP Chair

Subject: Request for an ISRP meeting with the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation to discuss the John Day Habitat Enhancement Implementation Strategy (Project #2007-397-00)

The ISRP reviewed the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation's (CTWSR) May 26, 2017 response to previous qualifications on the John Day Habitat Enhancement Implementation Strategy ([ISRP 2016-13](#), [ISRP 2016-4](#), [ISRP 2013-11](#); see also [ISRP 2017-2](#)). Rather than continuing the response-loop process to address some remaining concerns, the ISRP requests a face-to-face meeting with the project proponents to discuss specific questions before making recommendations on the current response. The goals of the meeting would be (1) to open a more efficient dialogue for aligning the visions of the ISRP and CTWSR for effective restoration and enhancement, and (2) for the ISRP to learn more about specific elements of the Strategy that were not fully addressed in the May 26 response.

The ISRP wishes to collaborate with the CTWSR to arrange the meeting. A meeting this summer or fall would be preferred. The ISRP feels that there is a continuing gap between its expectations for the project and those of CTWSR, and that a face-to-face meeting, rather than a teleconference, would be the most effective way to achieve mutual understanding and resolution of continuing questions and issues. A site visit may not be necessary given the focus of ISRP comments on monitoring and evaluation and adaptive management. However, a site visit would provide an opportunity to see upslope work, examples of the Strategy in action, and evidence of communication with a variety of stakeholders including landowners and partners.

The meeting should result in addressing the remaining qualifications:

1. Provide a comprehensive discussion of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) linked to a more formal process for adaptive management

The ISRP acknowledges that the funding committed for comprehensive monitoring is inadequate and commends the CTWSR for attempting to leverage partnerships to achieve

project monitoring. However, the M&E plan described in the response is very conceptual, and substantially more detail is needed for the ISRP to fully understand the planned actions, how they will be implemented and how monitoring will be linked to evaluation as well as the formal adaptive management process. For example, how will ODFW data be evaluated and used to inform project selection, implementation, or remedial actions? What are the potential decisions that might stem from adaptive management, and to what extent can CTWSR anticipate actions in response to new information? Broadly, the ISRP would like to learn more about the adaptive management process as well as how and which data will inform that process.

2. Describe additional efforts supporting expanded information sharing and public involvement

The ISRP suspects that CTWSR is sharing more information and conducting more public outreach about the Strategy than has been presented in the reporting and responses. In addition, current methods appear to lack an organized approach for outreach, regular events to share and discuss new technical information and planned actions, and overall public engagement. The Partnership is a good step, but the mechanics of how the larger John Day Partnership will align with the Strategy were not clear to the ISRP. Thus, the ISRP would like to learn more about the general approach and specific actions the CTWSR has taken to share information about the Strategy, its implementation with the public, and the mechanics of how the Partnership and the Strategy will be coordinated.

3. Modify Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) membership to increase the range of disciplines represented and the diversity and objectivity of its membership

The May 26th response to this qualification addressed the majority of ISRP concerns.

4. Comprehensively consider upslope conditions

The CTWSR responded to the qualification, but questions remain about how priorities and restoration actions in the upslope areas and downstream rivers will be coordinated. The ISRP would like to learn more details about the Agreement, and associated Action Plan, in order to develop a clearer sense of cooperation and coordination among the partner agencies. For example, how will priority geographic areas and activities be aligned, such that they complement each other as well as ensure integrated “ridgetop to valley bottom” restoration planning and implementation? What are the specific actions that will be coordinated with the US Forest Service? How are priority activities for the Strategy linked with the Forest Service’s restoration plans and other efforts addressing upslope issues? Is there an alignment between the Tribes’ acknowledging the importance of upslope efforts as a restoration priority and actually coordinating and committing resources to address upslope issues?