

**Cooperative Monitoring Evaluation and Research Committee
 March 25, 2008
 NWIFC
 Final Notes**

Attendees:

*Almond, Lyle	Makah Tribe, RSAG Co-chair
*Baldwin, Todd	Kalispel Tribe, SAGE Co-Chair
Black, Jenelle	NWIFC, CMER Project Manager
*Butts, Sally	USFWS, CMER Co-Chair
Cahill, Candace	Rayonier, WETSAG Co-Chair
Cramer, Darin	DNR, Adaptive Management Administrator
Dieu, Julie	Rayonier, UPSAG Co-Chair
*Ehinger, Bill	DOE
Heckel, Linda	DNR, CMER Coordinator
Heide, Pete	WFPA
*Hicks, Mark	DOE
*Jackson, Terry	WDFW, BTSAG Co-chair
Jones, Bruce	NWIFC
Kurtenbach, Amy	DNR, CMER Project Manager
*Martin, Doug	WFPA Contractor
*McConnell, Steve (v)	UCUT
*Mendoza, Chris	Conservation Caucus Contractor, RSAG Tri-Chair
*Miller, Dick	WFFA
*Mobbs, Mark	Quinault
Moon, Teresa	DNR, CMER Project Manager
Schuett-Hames, Dave	NWIFC, CMER Staff
*Sturhan, Nancy	NWIFC, CMER Co-chair
*Vaugeois, Laura	DNR, UPSAG Co-Chair
*Veldhuisen, Curt (v)	Skagit River System Cooperative

* indicates official CMER members and alternates

v indicates attended via video-conferencing; ph indicates attended via phone

Assignments From Previous Meetings:	
Schedule a meeting of the Type N “soft rock” sub-group for mid-January (week of the 14 th) and send it out via email. Temporarily on hold due to work load and staffing changes at NWIFC	Nancy Sturhan
Re-write SAG request for \$20,000 for temperature sensors ; make it more accurate to actual request	Bill Ehinger
Small work plan work group produce revised chap 1-4 by Apr 8	Sally, Todd, Steve
UCUT will write memo clarifying their concerns with work plan and CMER and Policy process	Steve McConnell
Cover memo on CMER work plan describing what has been done and what	Darin Cramer, Sally

Agenda Review – Butts

Sally asked if there were any other items that needed to be added to this month's agenda. Todd Baldwin wanted to have a discussion of meeting locations and logistics.

'09 Workplan and Budget – Cramer

Darin started the discussion by reminding the group of the standard approval process for the workplan and budget. The workplan and budget are typically approved by CMER in March/April, approved by Policy in April/May (after a budget retreat) and then presented to the FP Board in May. Last year the retreat was postponed until June, because of workload. DNR went to the Board with a continuing resolution in May and then the whole workplan and budget was presented in August. Policy tries to schedule their retreat a couple months before the May board meeting. This year it is scheduled for April 9-10 and CMER would need to act on it at this meeting to get time to get materials ready for that meeting.

In January/February Darin asked the Project Managers to look at their '08 workplan for updates to turn it into the '09 workplan knowing that policy was still working on their policy strategy review. That review process has started and is ongoing. It is going slowly, recognizing that it didn't seem prudent to do substantive revisions to the workplan this year, because we could then incorporate policy comments for the 2010 workplan. Darin received some comments from SAGs and Steve and most of these were entered in as updates. He didn't enter the policy/procedural type comments so CMER could review those prior to their incorporation. The workplan and budget were then sent out to the group for review.

After review, UCUT did not agree that the workplan is ready for approval. Darin responded that at a minimum CMER would have to agree upon a recommendation to take to policy for their budget meeting next week. If CMER can't come up with a consensus decision, they would need to make a plan on how it could get to the board. Darin would like to avoid taking to the Board a workplan in stages, such as last year. It could delay projects. UCUT's main concerns are that there is no strategy and the budget is running out of money. Todd expressed concern that a memo with UCUT's concerns was circulated to the CMER list. Darin explained that he did that so folks would be prepared for the meeting since the memo stated that UCUT would oppose passage of the work plan.

Darin – we were trying to prepare the program/workplan to change from federal funding to state funding. He wanted to make sure CMER knew where he thought the program was going for success over the long-term. The scrutiny put on the program was going to be higher. He thought it would be unwise for this group to wrestle with a lot of those issues because it is more in the policy arena Darin mentioned that there has been a lot of work completed at reconciling the budget and the end figure looks better.

Steve said it has to do with follow-thru. Last month there was a lot of materials sent to policy that were poorly communicated to them – there were documents with different names for the

same project and none of the documents provided to FFR Policy had anything on them to help Policy understand which document went with which agenda item. . At the June Budget Retreat last year, there was a lot discussed about changing the workplan and there hasn't been anything done. There was little follow-up from that. Now we are getting a workplan and we don't know what is going on. Darin agreed with what Steve was saying, but some of the problems are communication issues. What do you want to change to the workplan and how do you propose to change it? This group needs to hear those issues and discuss them.

Darin asked that UCUT explain each change they are proposing for the Workplan. Steve answered that they feel Rules and Guidelines aren't being followed and UCUT does not feel comfortable putting their names on the workplan when DNR isn't following the process rules developed for the Adaptive Management program They want to fix it, what is wrong and what is not being followed. Everything seems to be put off and is not being resolved. The issues are brought into focus by the workplan because it references Rules and Guidelines that are not being followed but the problems are within the program itself and these cannot be addressed by simply wordsmithing the workplan document.. Todd mentioned he understood what Darin was asking for but wasn't sure how exactly they prepare this information.

Darin stated he would like the workplan and budget to get to a place where policy can review/approve it and then pass along to the Board for approval. Then make sure the projects have their funding for '09 and continue forward, Policy may want to put new projects in tier two while they work on the strategy. This isn't something that Darin was taking ownership of; he was doing this so CMER has a budget for FY '09. Any CMER member can volunteer to take this workplan on; usually it is done by co-chairs and CMER staff. Darin took the tasks of working on it because nobody volunteered to do it.

Todd wasn't suggesting postponing the retreat, but UCUT has some concerns that won't go away. Postponing things doesn't work. There aren't alternative sources of funding. We have a whole bunch of contracts that can't be covered. The '09 workplan has issues, overall strategy has issues with it, Todd's proposal is to move forward to Policy and then Todd and Steve can work with Darin and CMER to push edits and improve the documents and projects aren't being held up.

Steve stated that this is contrary to the direction he received. All three tribes agreed that AM and the process needs to follow the rules and they don't want him to approve the workplan. UCUT could put it in dispute resolution and we can meet and go over the issues. We need to meet and resolve these issues. And move the workplan forward but not today.

Dick asked the question as to whose responsibility it is. Is it Policy? He remembers that CMER went through the process where Doug was the lead and they came up with criteria for deciding what priorities should be given to things. It was a very objective way to make decisions for prioritization and funding. He was under the impression that policy was going to do the same thing. He then thought there would be some way to prioritize work and link to strategies. He has never heard of anything coming out of policy on that. I attended my first policy meeting last month and it was a big fiasco and I don't think they could ever agree on a priority process. Maybe instead of saying to policy that you come up with a process, CMER should say this

should be the priority and strategy and they just approve it. We need to look at the limitations of the process. Like Steve was saying we keep accumulating the unfinished pieces of business. Maybe we are pushing too much responsibility onto policy and we need to take back some of that which is scientifically palatable.

Jenelle questioned if policy has ever sat down and reprioritized the L-1 and L-2 and each of the questions that the SAGs direct their work to? They could put themselves into a morass. Todd said those directions should be coming from the FP Board down, and that isn't happening either. Darin told them that what CMER is doing is identifying what policy wants to do, but Policy felt they couldn't do that with their current level of knowledge. That is why we are trying to develop the information where they could understand that. Sally said the flowcharts that are being developed are pulling the key pieces of information from all the different reports and workplans and key documents to put into one easy to see place. Policy gets overwhelmed with the volume of work CMER does. This is one way to get them to understand what CMER is doing so they could make a more informed decision about where CMER should head in the future. What we are trying to do is to get policy to understand better where CMER is going. We have slowly evolved over time to incorporate new questions and reactions from others. A more meaningful, thoughtful CMER strategy is desired by the CMER group and the Policy group and it is a huge workload and challenges to do that.

Steve – having a transparent accurate work plan document would be good to have. Steve suggested that if there are parts of Rules and Guidelines we don't think work for us, it is better to change these so that what it says we should be doing on paper is in fact what we are doing. Darin suggested adding specific directions and edits, not just comments, as the best route to go.

Laura stated that in the past UPSAG has put in the workplan what is proposed by them, if Policy adds work to that SAG then the workplan is changed to reflect that policy direction. That is one way the SAGs could help in the process. Sally suggested that in section 3; add a section that describes the process we are working on now with policy, comprehensive approach, we can describe what we have been talking about without putting either group down. Mark agreed but what is needed is clarification of where decisions have been changed by Policy or the Board. There are a lot of ways to do it, but state how it has happened. We also need to make sure what information is given to policy is really clear of the impacts. Terry agreed that what Sally suggested under section 3 was a good idea. Also under the CMER strategy, we could add a blip about what projects are policy-requested.

Chris stated that CMER has developed several documents on how it operates, how they have developed documents to track the process but it is hard for people to stay on track when it comes to process. CMER has gone through several prioritizations and have tossed in questionable projects; the workplan is sound from the prioritization process. I think one of my bigger concerns is that before policy can chase more money down, they have to understand what we are doing first and how the linkages are put together. In the absence of that, there is a risk associated with that (time and effort). It is going to take a lot of time. I am confident that it needs to happen. There are no shortcuts.

Sally suggested, what if we incorporate the non-substantive edits that are already in the track changes, create a new section under 3.0 (history of the workplan, and fill in the gaps about how the workplan has come to be, ongoing strategy effort) and talk about how other projects have come into the process and talk about the tradeoffs (if we fund this, what gets left out) and put that in, draft the language and we could still have the bulk of the workplan approved and then get agreement on the language...how can we approve the workplan and then draft this other section. She mentioned she could help draft the language along with Darin, Todd and Steve and that might help us get through the first phase this year.

Sally said that they would also have to differentiate what is editorial vs. substantive. Stakeholder concerns should be addressed by the stakeholders, not CMER staff. She appreciated all the work that folks have put in on the workplan. Steve said he would be able to put some time in so long as his boss is agreeable. But, there needs to be substantive changes made to the workplan so that is going to be a long process with meetings needing to be had. It isn't going to be that easy. If it goes to policy there are going to be discussions because our policy person needs timelines, etc. Todd was firm that CMER has to deal with the CMER stuff and leave the policy stuff to policy. Steve said one of the problems was the UCUT policy guy has been asking for time on the Policy agenda, and there hasn't been any time assigned to this. Todd said that is Policy's problem that Chase's issue gets the time he needs. We can only be concerned with the CMER part of it and what CMER can do.

Chris said if we don't have an issue with the budget can't we approve the budget contingent upon working on the workplan issues that are more long-term? His concern about the budget is mainly, a couple of years ago policy punted their budget meeting, CMER had to scramble how that was going to affect the field season, if we can keep them on schedule with the budget and come up with the plan for workplan that would be good. Steve thought that CMER could approve the budget and keep working on the workplan. Todd said there still needs to be prioritization on the budget, but overall the budget could be approved. But then the CMER '09 workplan is approved with editorial comments with the caveat that there are problems. It doesn't go to policy as CMER approved, it goes to policy with a list of issues being worked on.

Terry thought that a minority report could go in. Part of the comments in the email weren't specific enough, they were general and she couldn't get her hands around them. If they could be more specific then they could be documented and dealt with. That entire list could be moved forward with the workplan.

Todd asked if CMER could put a timeline together for addressing "issues" and then move forward with this strategy for approving the workplan...Steve is going to abstain from voting and Todd is voting to move it forward, approving the budget and move ahead the project portion of the workplan with the issue list. Developing a strategy and presenting it to policy shouldn't be delayed.

Steve agreed to providing edits and comments to workplan. He agreed to work with a subgroup and identify the specific issues. The tribes want rules that are comprehensible and followed. He was happy to contribute to the work.

Sally was struggling a bit with what she was hearing. Was CMER partially–approving the workplan with an approved budget, and the introduction not in consensus and that a supplemental document with issues will be worked on with a subgroup and timeline? Todd said if we take the CMER work plan, it is designed to help explain the rule groups, issues, some strategy and then the studies and what they are designed to answer and where to go, the section from rule group down to projects isn't the issue. The strategy, there isn't one (CMER has to work on it) and the process language that we have concerns with. Approve the document with the exception of the process (sections 1-4).

Sally said that the concerns are in the first few pages up to page 8. Take those pages out and then work on those pages, be transparent to policy that we are working on those pages. I would like to have a whole document/package that could be approved of instead of forwarding a partially approved document to the Board. Steve thought that was avoiding the problem of facing our questions/issues we have related to those pages. Sally then suggested we could take those to policy and articulate those concerns with them. We can work on the CMER related problems and forward the policy issues to policy.

Steve commented that we need to be clear. People are using Policy and process interchangeably and they are not at all the same thing. We have an adaptive management process defined by Rules and Guidelines. Many of these define specifically how CMER is supposed to operate and many of these directives are not being followed. Then there is Policy. There is a component of work that is under the purview of the Policy committee and is not work that is or should be taken on by CMER. Policy also has process steps for how they are to work. The point is that people need to understand what is meant by “process” and “Policy”. Then we will have a forum to address Steve's concerns from those pages we took out. UCUT said yes, they can agree to that just so long as those pages are being worked on.

Sally can work with Steve and Todd offline to work through those pages. Then we can have a completely approved document. Steve said there needs to be a cover memo delivered with these documents as they go to policy so they understand what has been done and what is going to be done. Chris felt the small group could work on those pages (Sections 1-4 of the Workplan) and bring it back to the next CMER meeting for review. Todd agreed the strategy issue is still an underlying issue. And this process might help with getting to this issue. Darin suggested that along with the issue document, you may want to address to policy that CMER is going to reengage in the CMER strategy work.

Sally stated that as of today, there is consensus on section 5 on of the workplan, with review of most recent edits. Then convene a small workgroup consisting of Sally, Todd, Steve and others interested to work on sections 1-4 (to trim out those pieces where there isn't consensus), create track changes by April 8th and **hopefully** prepare that by the budget retreat to discuss. April 8th, pass on to CMER for review, for decision at the April CMER meeting.

UCUT will then be putting together a memo or letter that articulates the concerns, separates out what is policy and what is CMER, what can be tackled. They will try to get that done to take to the budget retreat.

Darin has already reviewed changes submitted by WETSAG and UPSAG yesterday. There was a lot of new language entered yesterday. Darin will send out the draft for review. If a core member has a red flag of the new edits, let Darin, Nancy and Sally know by the close of business day on Thursday (3/27). They will communicate that to the SAG leadership and figure it out.

Darin also sent out to the SAG chairs the 6 questions document he wants to take to the retreat. He only heard back from one SAG, are there other changes? Todd will send his stuff to Darin tomorrow and Candace will check in with Ash on their changes. Steve asked if that could be sent to the CMER members also? Darin said it was the six questions that come with the scoping documents. But he can send it out again.

Darin then reviewed the budget spreadsheet.

All approved.

Minutes from February meeting – Butts/Heckel

Minutes from the February meeting were approved. Linda will work to get those posted on the internet.

CMER Meeting Locations and Logistics Discussion

Linda briefed the group she has reserved either the DNR compound or NRB conference room for the rest of the year. This allows us to use the DNR video conferencing.

Todd brought up the topic of frustration of missing information, etc. I would like to request people sharing the burden of traveling to the meetings. When everything works it's good, almost okay. But, if things mess up and nothing changes and we can't participate, unless something is decided on prior to the meeting, we can't continue. I suggest we move the meetings around the state. We have video conferencing available over in Spokane. We are in an extreme disadvantage and are creating issues with both CMER and Policy. If there are objections, I would like to know the reasoning behind it. There are issues with the phones also. You cannot hear all of the comments and decisions made around the room. Having six of the 12 meetings on the eastside would be reasonable.

Jenelle suggested that Ellensburg is centrally located (Central WA University) and they have space for meetings.

Several others, besides the Eastside folks also have problems traveling to meetings.

Sally said we needed to find an equitable solution, the concerns are loud and clear. Linda needs IT help. If we have ½ our meetings at Eburg and a couple of times a year in Spokane, another time at Forks, and the rest at NWIFC, and we have travel equipment, we could probably make it work. We need a specialist on the equipment end of things. We could set up a small contract for IT specialist assistance. We need a small group of folks to work on this issue. Set up a meeting with IT help. Dick, Sally, Todd, Jenelle, Amy and Linda will work on this issue.

SAG Requests - Butts

SAGE – eastside channel wood characterization project – Todd sent out several documents. Approval of scoping document that is going to look at in-stream wood and its associated habitat features. It is time sensitive to a degree. We will probably be getting into the field next summer. They are not requesting any additional funds for this request.

Doug has concerns about this project. CMER already has data from wood loading. This should be integrated with other projects. I don't see a technical justification for this project at this time. He didn't get the scoping document via mail from Linda. The temperature study has this data already. I think you could get good answers to the questions already without having to go out there again. This isn't laid out with what we know, what we need to know and what we are going to find out. Where is this information going to even get used. I don't see anywhere that policy would use this information.

Todd stated that they have captured that information and have quoted the Literature Review.

Doug said you could get this information without doing this study. Fox and Bolton has information out there now. He suggested SAGE go and read it. Sage also needs to go out and do another literature review. The strategy isn't laid out very well in the plan.

Todd said he wasn't aware that type of data had been collected. Maybe there was a simple wood count, but that isn't going to answer the eastern Washington questions. He wasn't sure if the Fox and Bolton was incorporated in this study. In SAGE literature review they could not find any data needed to validate the forest practices rules.

Darin mentioned that at a minimum SAGE needs to find out from other temperature modeling reports and data.

Todd said he was okay with not doing this study if it isn't necessary, but he believes this data doesn't exist in studies already completed.

Sally stated that CMER might not be ready for this request. The Fox and Bolton paper might be useful to review. And she asked Doug and Todd to get together to see if Doug's questions could get resolved.

Todd asked that this be put on the science session time on the April agenda

Chris said a bigger issue here is that we need to figure out what we are collecting and what they are collecting on the eastside and if the data from either could assist either project. We are doing status and trends, but aren't really collecting "data". A conference call should be scheduled.

Sally suggested a joint SAGE/RSAG discussion would be helpful. Doug agreed and also said an RSAG/SAGE integration discussion about a strategy to find information needs to happen.

Todd commented that at last year's budget retreat, policy wanted a scoping document. We have discussed the concerns with Doug and now we sit here again. The budget retreat is in two weeks without a budget approved again. I guess we can take this to Policy later. Are there any other

folks that object to this request? It is continuing with an existing project. Policy has asked for this, we have worked on it, it is in CMER's lap.

Sally said we first need to find out if there is existing information that could help this and what priority is this for the budget retreat? My suggestion is for Doug to point out where the existing data can be found. We have a core member that isn't in consensus and that is all it takes. We need to work this issue outside of this meeting. We pass along the priority issue to policy and retrofit the scoping document if Doug can find the existing data.

Everyone agreed with the tier two budget requests if SAGE can resolve the study plan, as needed.

Riparian hardwood conversion

RSAG asked for a bibliography review. Mark suggested that they should add how they completed the search steps. Others would then know how their information was accepted or rejected.

Dick, Mark and Laura will be reviewers on this document.

Timeline – comments due April 8th and it will be sent out for next month's meeting.

Intermittent streams study, phase 1

Reviewed by LWAG. Needs CMER reviewers to complete the official process steps.

Sally, Julie, Chris (extra), Terry and Doug, will be the official CMER reviewers. All CMER members' comments are welcome. Same schedule as above.

Darin also mentioned that there are several WDFW studies that are getting cleaned up, so some phases are out of order. Phase III hasn't been sent to CMER yet. Jim is gathering all the comments and putting into a spreadsheet.

Dunn's salamander

Needs reviewers

Sally, Chris and Nancy will review. Same schedule as above.

Extensive Temperature Monitoring

This request was to install equipment on Westside streams for two strata and not just one (that was requested before). The request is now down to \$20,000 for temperature sensors. Bill has staff to put them in the field and will start next month. It will come out of project development funds.

Chris said CMER we will be saving money in the long run by collecting data together.

It was approved for \$20,000.

Todd asked if the request could get updated with the right number and resent to CMER and where the field crew implementation is coming from.

Bill said he would do that and add project development funds, as the funding source.

Fish passage – Culvert Test Bed Study

Terry updated CMER that the CMER Fish Passage subgroup met on March 11 to try and finish the course of action response to the Independent Scientific Peer Review. They made progress on a course of action to send out to the rest of the subgroup for review, along with an explanation

of the proposed option. The plan was to have the subgroup review the document, hopefully get consensus, and bring it to the next CMER meeting. There have been delays and it was just sent out to the group, giving them two weeks to review it. Doug also said the group was under a tight timeline and that they need 3 CMER reviewers. The subgroup needs to review and approve the response matrix to the ISPR comments. After the subgroup has reviewed and approved the matrix, it can then be sent to the 3 CMER reviewers for review. Hopefully then, it will be ready to come back to the April CMER meeting. It is all dependent on getting it thru the subgroup first.

Nancy, Curt, and Todd will be the CMER reviewers. When the technical group is ready, it can go to these three with a timeline.

Chris reminded them that they also have to read the peer reviews along with the matrix.

Co-chair discussions - Butts

Nancy Sturhan will be stepping down as the CMER co-chair effective June 30, 2008, and CMER needs to choose three names to submit to Policy. The table was opened for nominations. Nancy nominated Todd Baldwin because of his excellent work with SAGE and it would be great to have an Eastside representative. Todd accepted on the grounds that he talk with his supervisor, etc. and if the meeting locations could be worked on. Nancy then nominated Terry Jackson because of her great work with the BTSAG. Doug Martin nominated Mark Mobbs. Mark said he would have to talk with his supervisor for approval. Others nominated but are unable to do it at this time were: Julie Dieu; Doug Martin and Dick Miller.

Sally – several items got postponed and we will prioritize them for next month. It doesn't diminish the importance of those items.

The meeting was adjourned.

Future Meetings

CMER 2008 Regular Meetings: April 22 DNR Compound, May 27 TBD, June 24 DNR Compound, July 22 DNR Compound, August 26 DNR Compound, September 23 DNR Compound, October 28 DNR Compound, November 25 DNR Compound and December 16 DNR Compound.