

**CMER**  
**March 22, 2005**  
**Sawyer Hall**  
**Lacey, WA**  
**Minutes**

---

**Attendees**

Barreca, Jeannette	Ecology
Beach, Eric	Green Diamond Resources
Butts, Sally	USFWS, BTSAG co-chair
Clark, Jeffrey	Weyerhaeuser, UPSAG co-chair
Dominguez, Larry	DNR Small Landowner Office
Ehinger, Bill	Ecology
Fransen, Brian	Weyerhaeuser, ISAG co-chair
Hitchens, Dawn	DNR Contract Specialist
Hunter, Mark	WDFW
Jackson, Terry	WDFW, BTSAG co-chair
Knutzen, John	Tetra-Tech FW
MacCracken, Jim	Longview Fibre, LWAG co-chair
Maigo, Wendy	USDA- NWRC
Martin, Doug	Martin Environmental, CMER co-chair
Martin, Pam	Tetra-Tech FW
McConnell, Steve	NWIFC
McNaughton, Geoff	DNR, AMPA
Mendoza, Chris	ARC Consultants
Peterson, Pete	Upper Columbia United Tribes
Pleus Allen	NWIFC
Pucci, Dawn	Suquamish Tribe, WETSAG co-chair
Ray, Kris	Colville Confederated Tribes, SAGE co-chair
Risenhoover, Ken	Port Blakely
Rowe, Blake	Longview Fibre
Schuett-Hames, Dave	NWIFC, CMER Staff
Smitch, Curt	Thompson Smitch Consulting
Sturhan, Nancy	DNR, CMER co-chair

---

Call Donna Hughes to talk about set-up for CMER conference

---

**Minutes, Decisions/Tasks Review, General Updates:**

**CMER Consensus:** Minutes from the January and February CMER meeting were approved as amended.

Decisions and Tasks were reviewed as follows:

- CMER agreed to review the Water Typing Model Field Validation Summary of Pilot Project Findings
- Disclaimers are to be discussed at a future CMER meeting
- CMER approved funding in the amount of \$10,080 for ISAG Water Typing Model Field Performance Approach and Procedures to identify randomly selected end of fish points
- CMER supported funding Steve Toth as a project manager for the Eastside Riparian Shade and Temperature Effectiveness Study and the request was forwarded to Policy
- CMER agreed to review of the Riparian Extensive Status and Trends Monitoring Program with comments due March 18<sup>th</sup>
- The Validation of the Western Washington Riparian Desired Future Condition Performance Targets in the Washington State Forest Practices Rules with Data from Mature, Unmanaged, Conifer-dominated Riparian Stands was approved as a final report and forwarded to Policy
- The Type N Demarcation Study Phase I: Pilot results were approved as final and forwarded to Policy
- CMER approved a \$17,000 budget increase for the Type N Feasibility Study
- CMER provided provisional approval for the Protocols and Standards Manual

Disclaimers will be on the agenda for the April CMER meeting.

---

### **SAG Requests:**

- **UPSAG: Request to use project funding to hire a contractor to assist in development and management of selected projects.** The request is for \$60,000 and UPSAG is seeking CMER support so this request can be forwarded to FFR Policy for consideration. Support may go for the roads and the Unstable slopes projects. This money would come from existing project funds. UPSAG does not believe they are the only SAG in this position and this may be a CMER level discussion. Jackson expressed a concern about how this project manager would be overseen by UPSAG; UPSAG envisions active discussion and reporting at all times. WETSAG and SAGE have also discussed the need for paid project managers.

Plus said that a Project Management sub-group has been formed at the FFR Policy committee. A suggestion was made that we incorporate these needs into the CMER budget and present them to Policy. McNaughton said that the Project management subgroup is meeting on Thursday. Barreca asked if something in the PSM is needed to address this issue and ensure that conflict of interest issues are resolved prior to hiring project or contract managers. Clark added that UPSAG has filtered down from 15-20 projects to 3 and agree that there are only 3-4 that can actually be done and only if they get help with them. Martin said that every three months CMER co-chairs and McNaughton are meeting with CMER staff and the next quarterly meeting is coming up soon; integration of these project management needs will be important to receive

Policy approval for using the funds. Answering this question before that discussion seems premature. Peterson said guidance on how a contractor should interface with a SAG is important. Clark said part of this is also defining the workload break between the project manager and the principle investigator; that will define the project management cost. Sturhan suggested this request be tabled until the budget request is firmed up. Clark asked when this would happen. Martin said it would be within the next few months. Peterson said he does not see a reason to table this request; Sturhan said we need to know how much money is available before answering these questions as the budget realities may eliminate some of the things CMER wants to do. Pucci also asked why, if it is existing money, we should not approve it. Sturhan said it is because CMER needs to prioritize the workplan and budget before this decision is made. Any project that has not yet started should not receive additional funding at this time.

**CMER Consensus:** This request will be tabled for now and this means that Palmquist is the default project manager for the roads project at this time.

- **ISAG:** Request for **Extensive Fish Passage Monitoring Methodology Review and Preferred Study Design** to proceed to SRC review. Jackson said this study has been reviewed by CMER and the study design was revised based on comments. ISAG wanted to send this to CMER to ensure comments were incorporated adequately and a revised study design with tracked changes was submitted to CMER last week. If there are no outstanding concerns with this study design, ISAG requests that it be forwarded for SRC review. Mendoza said ISAG does not have consensus on this as they have not met since these comments were received and incorporated. Pucci said she did not see a response to her comments until last week and has not had a chance to talk to anyone about this. Barreca said that her comment was not addressed and it related to the fact that it only addresses large landowners. There was discussion and concern about whether small and large landowners will both be sampled. It was suggested that ISAG present this at a CMER science session. Rowe said that when the site is identified the landowner will need to be approached to see if they are willing to participate which will identify whether they are a small landowner or not.

**CMER Consensus:** This study design was remanded back to ISAG to ensure that reviewer comments were incorporated. This request will be forward for CMER approval next month. A section will be added to the PSM to address how to proceed after internal review and before sending to SRC review

---

**Data Reporting and Archiving Discussion:** Sturhan said there is a chapter in the PSM that is a placeholder at this time and needs development. Pleus offered that the group who produced the manual will come up with a proposal on this issue. McNaughton said he would participate in the group. MacCracken said that LWAG discussed having SAG co-chairs keep copies of the data as well. Pleus said the workgroup is meeting at lunch today to discuss how to move a draft of this proposal forward. One of the concepts is to have a technical workgroup with the right expertise to develop a formal proposal and the PSMWG will oversee and facilitate the work development.

---

**Website Update:** Sturhan said there was a meeting Friday to discuss ideas about how to bring the DNR CMER Website up to date. A committee has begun putting together ideas about how the website will look. Martin said that the DNR CMER website looks like the rest of the website at this time and links to many things that do not involve CMER. Instead of modifying the initial page, CMER will have a button of its own there and CMER content will be placed on that other page. Ideas so far have been to include a “what’s new section” that would be updated regularly; a publications button ; meeting minutes and agendas and a contacts list. There may also be a program button that will include the workplan, budget, current studies, other related studies, etc. McNaughton said CMER is paying for a part time webmaster. If anyone has additional suggestions, please forward them to Doug.

---

**SRC Update:** McNaughton said the University continues to have problems lining up reviewers. SAGE did send suggestions for reviewers. The University does maintain a reviewer database. Tomorrow, a teleconference for an interactive review of the Type N experimental buffer study is scheduled. Ray said the Eastern Washington disturbance review went in as a double-blind review. McNaughton said the managing editor of this is discussing whether this should be single-blind instead of double-blind review.

---

**CMER Conference:** Martin said the CMER conference is coming together well and an updated list of conference talks and times was distributed. Martin said to please be sure the talk titles are correct and if they are not, edit them today and give them to Martin before the end of today. Reducing the amount of time necessary for talks is critical to the success of the conference. One suggestion was to have concurrent sessions. Martin is asking whether people can reduce their talk times, combine with others, or remove their talk. Posters were also suggested. Pucci offered to compress WETSAG’s talk to one instead of two talks but would appreciate moving it up in the day; 15 minutes would work for them. Martin said that UPSAG is integrating similar talks. Pleus recommended that each SAG try to cut out one talk from their session. MacCracken offered to make his talk and the Type N talk a poster. Final information on talks is needed by Friday. Mendoza suggested that SAGs look at sorting this by subject and reducing time there.

**Assignment:** all SAGs need to have final talk lists, hopefully shortened, to Martin by Friday, March 25<sup>th</sup>.

---

**Budget Update:** McNaughton deferred the budget to the workplan discussion. There was a Policy group that went back to DC to attempt to get one additional year of federal funding. This was well-received and the group is hopeful the additional money will be approved. The FFR Project budget subcommittee has asked for three options to consider at their next meeting.

---

**CMER Staff Update:** Schuett-Hames said interviews are scheduled for April 1<sup>st</sup> for the CMER technical project manager position.

---

**CMER Monthly Report to Policy:** Policy approved the hiring of Steve Toth for the Bull Trout overlay and he is to be referred to as a field implementation coordinator. The PIP and DFC studies were delivered to FFR Policy and subgroups were formed. Both subgroups have met. FFR Policy was also informed about the conference. FFR Policy formed a project management subcommittee that will meet Thursday. Lastly they delayed approval of the workplan to the August Forest Practices Board meeting instead of May. CMER therefore has more time to develop its workplan. FFR Policy also agreed to discuss additional funding needs on a case by case basis.

April report to Policy:

- Budget organization
- General updates
- It will be mentioned that when Policy re-evaluates data, they should be cognizant of the role CMER might play in this.

Pleus said he is uncomfortable with the way Policy is requesting additional data for studies. Martin said FFR Policy will ask for additional information; if CMER questions the data development Policy asks for then they should look at it within the SAG or at CMER and then forward it back to FFR Policy. Mendoza said it might be a good idea to set up a process to ensure that additional analysis does go through CMER review. Pucci asked what the implications for CMER research are if FFR Policy does its own data development. Smitch said CMER needs to be very clear about the problem; is it issue specific or broader than that. Schuett-Hames said this is raising a confusing situation for the CMER people who have been involved in the DFC and PIP studies. McConnell has brought his information back to RSAG for consideration and RSAG has reviewed the information. Palmquist was also asked to do additional analysis and he sent this to the Np work group. He also benefited from information from the workgroup.

---

### **SAG Issues**

- ISAG: Jackson said this is a “record” drought year so there may be some potential research implications that we were not previously aware of. CMER may need to examine their projects to determine whether this year’s drought could have significant impacts to any study results. Jackson wanted to inform the group that WDFW and the State Caucus had strong concerns about conducting the Last Fish Habitat Model Validation (or Model Performance) study during this drought year (as it is a record low). The validation/model performance studies are based on surveying for last fish points (not habitat points) and comparing those points to the model points. The concern is that using last fish points collected in a “record” drought year would not be appropriate for examining performance of a “habitat” model. Annual and seasonal variability studies should be able to go forward, as the drought year would provide a valuable data point in the possible range of variability; however, WDFW (and some other caucuses) believe that we need multiple years of data representing the range of

flow years. A factor compounding the issue is the fact that CMER has limited funding and has not really considered how many years these two studies should be conducted. ISAG has only looked at one year, with the need for additional years to be determined later. There will be further discussions within Policy on whether to move forward with these studies. Jackson mentioned that these concerns about the drought and the need to put off the Validation/Performance studies occurred after the last ISAG meeting, so this discussion has not yet occurred within ISAG. At the last ISAG meeting, the plan was to move forward with both validation and variability studies. As contracts are ready to go now, and field work is anticipated to begin in mid-April, decisions will have to be made soon. However, the issue has been elevated to Policy for resolution, and Jackson is not sure what role CMER and ISAG play along with Policy. Clark asked if, for the seasonal variability studies, ISAG needs more than one year of data anyway so can we use this year regardless. Jackson said that ISAG only planned for one year, with the idea that the need for future years would be determined later. Some within ISAG (including WDFW) believe that multiple years are needed for annual and seasonal variability, but this has not been agreed to within ISAG. Clark said that anytime a variability study is being done and you leave a year out, you reduce the credibility of the data. Sturhan said she is in favor of using the money and opportunity to do this and CMER should do the studies and continue validation for many years to come. Others suggested that since this year the drought is setting a record, using it as an indicator is not appropriate. Various other points of view were also expressed. Fransen clarified this is not a SAG request.

Jackson mentioned that there seems to be some misunderstandings of what the validation study is actually doing and suggested that CMER should plan to have another discussion of the model validation study and whether the model is being validated based on the end of fish presence or the end of fish habitat characteristics. Sturhan said there have been a number of presentations on the model and the validation studies in the past and maybe an additional discussion is needed. Smitch said the scientists need to determine whether this anomaly is worth throwing out the validation study for this year. Droughts happen on a regular basis according to NOAA and others.

Sturhan said she hears a strong urge to carry forward and recognition that there may be problems and a need to gather additional data because of the weather conditions.

- UPSAG: The roads study design is currently being revised based on SRC review and is close to being completed. Site selection is already underway. CMER will see the final study plan in April or May.
- RSAG: Ehinger said comments on the Extensive Riparian Monitoring study plan have been received and all of the comments have been summarized. The committee can address all the comments and get the study to SRC review soon. Schuett-Hames asked if CMER needs to see this again or whether RSAG can make the changes and then submit it for SRC review.

**CMER Consensus:** The reviewers will see how their comments are addressed; the study plan will then go through RSAG for final approval and then be sent to CMER for review before going to SRC review. The document will be sent to CMER with

changes tracked. Ehinger will send the revised version prior to the next CMER meeting and a request will be made of CMER at that time for approval to send to SRC review.

---

**CMER Workplan and Budget Discussion:** Sturhan said her understanding after the last CMER meeting was the budget was set-up to potentially run out of money next year. Given that, a few people got together and worked with several options. The group started with a blank sheet of paper and talked about the studies that must get done. This resulted in some projects being marked urgent and others marked as finished, knowing that there is a little additional work to do on them. There are then projects of secondary importance and the rest were marked delay to start past 2010. This is designed to provide CMER with something to work with in drafting the 2006 workplan. The scenarios in the budget reflect what happens when CMER completes only the urgent studies, another with urgent and secondary and a third with all studies. Sturhan distributed a handout reflecting these scenarios. For a copy, please contact her. The shaded areas in the sheet reflect projects that have been moved in this budget sheet and where there may be serious questions.

Smitch said we need to clarify that the 2007 federal funds appropriation is actually for fiscal year 2006. McNaughton said that the objective of this budget sheet is mostly to help with internal DNR financial tracking. That is why it is organized by state fiscal year and which IAC contract the federal funding is passed through. Federal fiscal years would only confuse and complicate the sheet and so are not directly shown.

The scenarios outlined on the distributed budget sheet include:

- Scenario #2A – Urgent plus Finish with \$3 million Federal Funds in 2007
- Scenario #2B – Urgent plus finish with no federal funding in 2007
- Scenario #3A – Urgent plus finish plus secondary with \$3 million from federal fund sin 2007
- Scenario #3B – Urgent plus finish plus secondary with no federal funding in 2007

It appears as though, even without additional federal funding in 2007, CMER can finish the urgent and finish projects by 2010. If CMER adds the secondary projects, only some of them will be funded because there is about \$1 million unspent if the 2007 appropriation comes through from the federal government.

One goal of the workplan this year is to tell FFR Policy what CMER is actually going to do, not what CMER wants to do. Barreca asked if this proposal is similar to what the FFR Budget subcommittee wanted to see and who is commenting when. Smitch clarified that the Budget subcommittee would like to know how much money they need to fund this program, for how long, and what the crucial projects are. Sturhan reiterated that we need to figure out what needs to get done and then focus on that. McNaughton said there is \$1.6 million in Gregoire's budget for FFR implementation, an HCP project manager, and compliance monitoring.

Rowe said that the budget estimates for riparian extensive monitoring are still in question. Martin said these are the numbers given for one year of study on each project. However, the projects have not been fully scoped yet. Schuett-Hames said the initial baseline monitoring will be completed and then a decision will be made about how to proceed. Thus, the budget only encompasses the baseline information gathering, not trends monitoring. These projects are all expected to carry out past the 2010 window we are working within.

Smitch suggested a category for those studies that will go beyond 2010. Pleus said that FFR Policy recognized at the last meeting that grants may be necessary for continuation of this program. Ray asked how we will consider additional projects for this list. It was agreed that this list is not static.

**Assignment:** Sturhan and others will continue to work with SAGs on getting this priority list refined based on SAG input. A formal proposal will be brought forward in April and considered by CMER. Make sure that if the SAG proposes a study to begin this year, this proposal includes a schedule for what will get done this year. Schuett-Hames suggested a definition of what urgent, secondary and delay really mean. A definition will be sent around by next week.

---