

CMER
November 23, 2004
NWIFC Conference Center
Draft Minutes

Attendees

Barreca, Jeannette	Ecology
Blake, Jim	UCUT
Butts, Sally	USFWS, BTSAG co-chair
Colowick, Ann	Healthy Systems (PSM editor)
Dominguez, Larry	DNR, Small Forest Landowner Office
Hoffman, Lynda	WDFW, SAGE co-chair
Hunter, Mark	WDFW
Keller, Steve	NOAA-Fisheries
MacCracken, Jim	Longview Fibre
Martin, Doug	Martin Environmental, CMER co-chair
McConnell, Steve	NWIFC, RSAG co-chair
McDonald, Dennis	DNR, Watertyping Project Manager
McNaughton, Geoff	DNR, AMPA
McMillan, Andy	Ecology, WETSAG co-chair
Mendoza, Chris	ARC Consultants
Palmquist, Bob	NWIFC, CMER Staff
Peterson, Pete	UCUT
Pleus, Allen	NWIFC
Pucci, Dawn	Suquamish Tribe
Pucci, Mari	
Ray, Kris	Colville Confederated Tribes, SAGE co-chair
Risenhoover, Ken	Port Blakely Tree Farms
Schuett-Hames, Dave	NWIFC, CMER Staff
Stevie, Michelle	WDFW
Sturhan, Nancy	DNR, CMER co-chair
Veldhuisen, Curt	Skagit River System Cooperative, UPSAG co-chair

Minutes, Decisions/Tasks Review, General Updates:

CMER Protocols & Standards Manual Action Plan SAG request added to agenda
WETSAG requests move up since Andy McMillian had to leave early

October 26, 2004 CMER minutes were approved as amended

CMER Decision Summary:

1. **CMER approved up to \$5000 to develop a scoping paper for the wetlands mitigation project (WETSAG).**
2. **CMER approved to send “Review and Synthesis of Available Information on Riparian Disturbance Regimes in Eastern Washington” for double-blind peer review with a detailed context letter explaining where we are and why, and pointing out the conflicting issues that CMER has already identified.**
3. **CMER approved UPSAG’s proposed action plan the Type N demarcation pilot study report as submitted (i.e. no changes in the data analysis as Palmquist proposed).**
4. **CMER approved the action plan for the Protocols & Standards manual.**
5. **CMER asked UPSAG to develop the six-question document for Policy in reference to the PIP report. UPSAG will provide a schedule for completing this document at next CMER. Allen Pleus offered to assist UPSAG in answering question #5 of the CMER/Policy Interaction document for the CMER Type N Demarcation (PIP) report. He is to test the Protocols & Standards manual draft guidelines for use of external information, and report back to CMER on their usefulness.**

SAG Requests

Forested Wetlands Regeneration pilot report. CMER review was requested. Ken Risenhoover, Nancy Sturhan (editorial review), and Steve McConnell will review report for CMER. Comments due back to Dawn Pucci by January 11, 2005. WETSAG will also answer the 6 CMER questions from the CMER/Policy Interaction document, and CMER will later submit to Policy. CMER will review at January meeting. Dawn will e-mail the document to the reviewers.

Wetland Mitigation study: WETSAG requested \$5000 from the project development fund to develop a study plan and answer the 6 CMER/Policy Interaction questions. Patricia Johnson (WDOE), lead for the recently completed wetland regeneration study, would also be the lead for study design. Study plan must consider how to find sites, and how to minimize potential overlap with DNR compliance monitoring program. Dave Schuett-Hames suggested a phased approach of doing a scoping document first, followed by a more detailed study design later. Sturhan contrasted the content of a scoping document versus study design as listed in the draft CMER Protocols & Standards Manual. The \$5000 would probably only be enough for the scoping document. Allen Pleus and Lynda Hoffman confirmed how SAGE benefited from first doing a scoping document before getting too far down the road with a study design. **CMER approved up to \$5000 to develop a scoping paper.** WETSAG may request further funding after the scoping paper is completed.

Review and Synthesis of Available Information on Riparian Disturbance Regimes in Eastern Washington (June 2002). Kris Ray (SAGE co-chair) requested that the report be submitted for scientific peer review. \$10,000 is in the approved CMER FY 2005 budget for further work if needed, but this will not be spent until after the peer review. The goal is to finalize the report as a final CMER document. Peer review was requested since it contains synthesis, not just a simple bibliography. Other concerns were that new literature may have come out since this report was completed.

Martin asked what is to be gained beyond the concerns identified during CMER review. Dave Schuett-Hames pointed out the need to pull information together to help in validation of eastside riparian prescriptions, and that this document is where to go for that information. Dawn Pucci said the recent WETSAG literature review benefited from peer review, and also they have had several requests for the document. They were much more comfortable distributing the report knowing that it had been peer reviewed.

Martin expressed concerns that this request is out of sequence, the document was only recently reviewed by CMER. SAGE review and approval should not be the final review. CMER comments have not been incorporated yet, and we always need the best possible documents sent to peer review. This draft may only confuse reviewers. We are asking peer reviewers to identify problems we already know about. It is still not clear how the document will be used, or how spending more budget will demonstrate to CMER how it will be used. Hoffman said that SAGE is already using the document, and SAGE just wants the document to be finalized and put into general use. Mendoza supported the request for peer review, but suggested that CMER comments and other cleanup are incorporated first. Peterson pointed out that the document contains conflicting interpretations from different papers reviewed (little versus much known about a topic), that is why the document has languished for 2 years. Outside objective input is needed to help reconcile differences into a research direction for SAGE.

Pleus asked if a reasonable process for this peer review is to put CMER-identified issues as context in the transmittal letter, and ask peer reviewers to focus on other areas? Sturhan proposed that SAGE contract with an editor to incorporate CMER comments, then that document is sent to peer review. Curt Veldhuisen suggested laying out the context very well as a separate document submitted with the literature review, and ask reviewers not to focus on those issues. Sturhan didn't like sending an incomplete document, but seconded Veldhuisen's approach of a detailed context letter that explains why this is not a completed document, then later incorporate both CMER and peer review comments. Risenhoover pointed out that this makes a lot of work for reviewers and may affect our future relationship with them. Keller and Butts also had concerns over sending a "quandary product" for peer review, they would prefer to clean it up as much as possible before sending for peer review. **CMER approved to send document for double-blind peer review with a detailed context letter explaining where we are and why, and pointing out the conflicting issues that CMER has already identified.**

SAGE project completion plan: Were CMER reviewer's comments adequately addressed?
CMER approved the plan.

UPSAG request to finalize Type N demarcation pilot study report: UPSAG proposes to only add some text to clarify issues identified by peer review, and then finalize as a CMER report. Policy would receive a separate document that addresses how CMER addressed peer review comments. A large body of information on this topic is becoming available and will not be directly incorporated in this document. Policy is expected to have this additional information (outside studies) to help them make a recommendation. CMER would need to review again if additional analyses were performed. Palmquist proposed just removing the biased “wet stream” data (30 out of 213 streams are potentially biased) and re-analyzing the data. MacCracken and Risenhoover questioned if you can just cut the biased data out, suggesting that the protocol would need to be changed in order to address the bias. Any future studies would address this bias issue. **CMER approved UPSAG proposed action plan as submitted (i.e. no changes in the data analysis as Palmquist proposed). Discussion section will address potential bias as pointed out by peer review.**

CMER Protocols & Standards Manual: Response to comments. Martin remains concerned about the amount of material that could be incorporated by reference. Sturhan pointed out that the manual is envisioned to be used for a trial period, and modified as needed. This could mean either increasing or decreasing the amount of detail. **CMER approved the action plan for finalizing this document.**

SRC Update. McNaughton said that the Type N Experimental Buffer study design has not been officially sent for peer review pending completion and CMER approval of context and frame up questions. The study design was informally sent to University of Washington to help facilitate identifying a willing associate editor and reviewers. Martin and McNaughton continue attempts to set a meeting with UW to discuss the successes and problems experienced with the program so far.

CMER Project Status Tracker. Sturhan presented a proposed table that would list the completion date for each phase of a project from conception to final report. Project managers are requested to fill out the status tables and send back to Sturhan by the next CMER meeting. This will also help set goals for implementing the FY 2005 workplan, and especially get projects going on the ground. Pleus pointed out that, although this is very much needed, it should be incorporated within the Protocols & Standards manual if this will be a continuing task. Dave Schuett-Hames suggested housing it as an appendix to each CMER workplan. SAG assignment: fill in the table by listing all SAG projects and indicating which steps are done or not applicable. If you have projects dates to complete future steps, include them as well. Send these tables to Nancy Sturhan or bring to the December CMER meeting. Nancy will e-mail the table to SAG co-chairs.

Project Management Update. Martin pointed out that CMER will have difficulty securing more funds for CMER project managers before the CMER staff vacancy is filled. A date needs to be set for advertising and filing this vacancy. Scoping for this position is ongoing. DNR cannot provide an office in Ellensburg, but the Cle Elum workcenter is a possibility. WDFW or Central Wash University were suggested as potential sites. CMER co-chairs and McNaughton will meet to further discuss the best duty station, and report results at the next CMER meeting.

CMER Report to Policy. Martin went over the last Policy meeting which was mostly just FYI. The afternoon however, was devoted to a workshop reviewing the DFC study. After reviewing all the options, Policy wanted CMER to simply finalize the DFC report by incorporating peer review comments, without conducting more field work. It was expected to take about 2 months to do this.

This format will probably be used for bringing the CMER Type N Demarcation report (PIP) to Policy. Policy requested that CMER incorporate the Tribal PIP report and other appropriate studies in the form of answering question #5 (other studies) of the CMER/Policy Interaction document. The existing 6-question document and relevance table should be updated by UPSAG with this new context format, and reviewed by CMER prior to submitting to Policy. Pleus asked whether the proposed guidelines for using external information within the Protocols & Standards manual should be used for this exercise. Martin suggested that the authors could consider this but not be required. Pleus reminded CMER that the P&S manual only contains guidelines, and asked if this exercise might be a good case study for testing the guidelines. Mendoza also pointed out that the proposed guidelines were handed out at the last meeting, and were to have comments received by today's meeting. Palmquist listed many other pertinent studies recently released, and asked if he should run all these through the guidelines as well. Martin suggested that the authors should decide how to best incorporate other studies into answering question #5 without forcing them to use these draft guidelines. Pleus said that if these guidelines are not to be used for this particular case, that he did not want the larger issue to fall off the plate. **CMER agreed to Pleus's offer to work with UPSAG to test the guidelines for this task, and report back to CMER on their usefulness.** Veldhuisen will work further on a timeline.

The Hardwood Conversion project was assigned by Policy to Jed Herman and Steve McConnell to better develop a budget, and how to incorporate temperature and/or modeling issues.

SAG Issues: Martin reminded the group that we still need at least general ideas for the annual CMER Science Conference in early March (February has competing UW and tribal conferences). Format changes and other ideas are welcome. For example, perhaps a portion of the conference could be dedicated to having a scientific panel with a few presentations, followed by discussion and interaction with the audience. Suggestions need to be brought to CMER by the next meeting. Because of potential conflicts in February, the conference is likely to occur in early March. A date needs to be defined by the next CMER meeting.

McDonald gave CMER a heads up that several water typing issues will be brought to CMER at the next meeting, and was concerned about attendance. A poll was taken on expected attendance for December 28th meeting. About 1/3 of the group indicated they could NOT attend (including 4 CMER members). Pleus stressed the importance of the next meeting for the Protocols & Standards manual presentation which was planned for the afternoon session. The contract for the consultants ends December 31. The P&S Manual group will consider whether attendance is adequate for their presentation and let the co-chairs know by December 20.

SAG Assignment: Let the CMER co-chairs know of potential science afternoon sessions for future CMER meetings.