

**CMER  
October 25th, 2005  
NWIFC Conference Center  
Olympia, WA  
Minutes**

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**Attendees**

Black, Jennelle	NWIFC, CMER Staff
Butts, Sally	USFWS, BTSAG Co-Chair
Ehinger, Bill	Ecology
Fransen, Brian	Weyerhaeuser, ISAG Co-Chair
Heide, Pete	WFPA
Hofmann, Lynda	WDFW, Sage Co-Chair
Hunter, Mark	WDFW
Jackson, Terry	WDFW, BTSAG Co-Chair
MacCracken, Jim	Longview Fibre, LWAG Co-Chair
Marks, Derek	Skagit River Cooperative
Martin, Doug	Martin Environmental, CMER Co-Chair
McConnell, Steve	NWIFC
McDonald, Dennis	DNR, ISAG Co-Chair
McNaughton, Geoffrey	DNR, AMPA
Mendoza, Chris	ARC Consultants
Mobbs, Mark	Quinault Indian Nation
Naslund, Deborah	DNR IT
Pederson, 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
Robinson, Tom	WSAC
Rowton, Heather	WFPA, CMER Coordinator
Schuett-Hames, Dave	NWIFC, CMER Staff
Smitch, Curt	Thompson Smitch Consulting, Facilitator
Stevie, Michelle	WDFW
Sturhan, Nancy	DNR, CMER Co-Chair
Vaugeois, Laura	DNR

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

**CMER Consensus:** Minutes from the September CMER meeting were approved as amended.

Decisions and Tasks from September were reviewed as follows:

- CMER approved \$30,000 in additional funding for site selection efforts related to the Type N Experimental Buffer Project.
- SAGs were asked to provide updates to the project tracking form.
- Jackson and Schuett-Hames were asked to bring forward a proposal for disclaimer language for consideration at the October CMER meeting
- The document classification proposal was revised based on comment at the meeting and additional comments from CMER over the month. A new proposal is available for consideration at today's meeting.
- CMER did not approve an LWAG request for publication in a Scientific Journal of the Seeps Methods Manuscript, and is asking Policy to consider the implications of this. CMER did approve the document as final. It was agreed that discussions on journal publication of CMER documents would continue at a later date.
- CMER approved a request from ISAG for \$31,056 for the Seasonal Variability Study.
- CMER agreed to review the Temperature Modeling Component of the Hardwood Conversion study. Assigned reviewers were Doug Martin, Sally Buts and Mark Hunter.

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**CMER Ground Rules Exercise:** CMER members were asked to read through the ground rules and then mark with Xs two favorite ground rules, rules they have seen broken at CMER often, and ground rules they have broken at CMER. Sturhan will bring results back to the next meeting.

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**SRC Update:** McNaughton said it was difficult to get an associate editor for the Riparian Extensive Monitoring Study design, but there is an editor now and the study is moving forward. The review should be completed around December.

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**Budget Update:** McNaughton said there is a \$4 million spending plan approved for this year. Contracts and interagency agreements are proceeding and a contract is being negotiated for the roads sub-basin monitoring project.

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**Project Status Report:** Sturhan distributed a tracking sheet to CMER. **Assignment:** She asked SAGs to update this sheet for distribution again next month. It will be a living document. Sturhan will send the document electronically to CMER so SAGs can easily update it.

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**CMER Workplan Development:** Sturhan said the workplan is currently being updated and there are not too many changes being made, though some are occurring. The

workplan will need to be updated to include new projects and the rationale for new projects. Another item to think about for the workplan is the studies that will require FPB approval in addition to the normal workplan approval (i.e. special prescriptions that require approval before proceeding). SAGE does have proposed changes for the workplan that will be forwarded.

**Assignment:** The workplan schedule will be sent with the agenda each month so CMER can track progress.

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**Document Issues:** Jackson and Schuett-Hames handed out a disclaimer proposal for CMER consideration; the disclaimers in the document are broken into categories depending on the type of CMER document the disclaimer would apply to. Jackson said there are three options in the proposal and she reviewed these options briefly for CMER. Heide said all of these disclaimers would be okay with him but he has a problem with the use of the term “Scientific Review Committee” because there really is not one; it changes for each project. Heide suggested changing the language to state “this report has been subjected to scientific review.” Pleus agreed with Heide and brought up other naming convention problems. Pleus was also concerned that CMER that the disclaimer indicates that CMER does not need to support the report for it to move forward. If CMER does not support the conclusions and views of the author, the report should not move forward. Butts was also concerned about the statement indicating that CMER does not support the science. She suggested cutting the word “CMER” from this as it would still allow individual caucus members to not support the views and opinions.

Sturhan asked if we should pick an option and move forward with the discussion that way. McDonald said all three disclaimers are valuable and could be used; he would support making all of them available. Robinson said CMER documents are always produced for the public and policy, not one or the other. Sturhan proposed that CMER adopt option 1 and that CMER send comments to Jackson and Schuett-Hames in time for final approval at the November CMER meeting.

Smitch suggested these documents are for the scientific community and for adaptive management decision-making, and that should be noted. Smitch also said CMER should not reserve the right to not accept their own science as valid; the statements as currently drafted do allow CMER to not accept its own science. Marks asked if the disclaimer would go on all CMER documents. Martin said yes. Pleus said he is unclear on the differences between option 1 and option 2. Pleus wants to be sure that if option 1 is chosen that option 2 language is not completely dropped. Mendoza said that if a disclaimer is adopted, people should not use that as a tool to disagree with parts of the science in the end. Concerns with the report should be made as the report is developed.

**Consensus:** CMER agreed to work on a decision tree approach. Comments will be submitted on the proposal and accompanying documents. Jackson and Schuett-Hames will receive these comments and bring a revised version to the November meeting for consideration.

McNaughton reminded the group that Lenny Young is not supportive of disclaimers, and would prefer to see any issues or concerns addressed within the Discussion section of CMER reports just like other scientific articles do.

Martin then moved onto the document classification proposal, distributed to CMER last month and again this month. There are very few changes to this document from last month. Thus, he would suggest that CMER either adopt this classification system as drafted or agree not to have a classification system. Robinson said classification is important because products differ; setting context is important for readers of the report. Pucci said the process allowing a report to change to a different category needs to be clearly defined. Mendoza said this is a good framework for document classification and would label the products and reports to coincide with the PSM. Documents linked to the same project would then be easy to find as they would be connected. MacCracken said a report really cannot change categories. A new report would be a new category but possibly be within the same project. Pucci said the desire is not to have the reports change classes, but that might happen in some cases. Pleus said the categories should remain on a technical level and that the classification does not necessarily limit the use of the document. Black said she likes the idea of labeling and that may limit how the documents are used. Pleus said our intent is to say how CMER will use the report, not how Policy will use it.

**Consensus:** CMER agreed that documents should have categories last month. CMER now agrees this classification system will be part of the PSM but not as worded.

**Assignment:** CMER will comment to Martin by two weeks prior the next CMER meeting.

**Assignment:** There was discussion about the lack of comment on the classification proposal and the hold-up it resulted in. To help alleviate this problem in the future, Rowton will send assignments and task lists to CMER after each meeting so people know what tasks and assignments need to be done by when to help the next CMER meeting be productive and to keep projects and issues on schedule.

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## SAG Requests

- SAGE requested Independent Scientific Peer Review (ISPR) for the Eastside Type F Riparian Assessment Project Work Plan Phase I. Hofmann asked that assigned reviewers be familiar with eastern Washington; McNaughton agreed to work on this and said the University generally does a very good job of finding qualified reviewers and is also willing to accept suggestions for reviewers. Mendoza said, based on experience of submitting questions to the SRC, McNaughton should ensure the intent of the study is clear in the cover letter.

**Consensus:** CMER agreed to send this document for ISPR.

- RSAG requested no ISPR for the Hardwood Conversion Temperature Modeling Project. The modeling that will be used is widely accepted and well tested.  
**Consensus:** CMER agreed to withhold this document from ISPR.
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**CMER Advisory to Policy: Watertyping field performance assessment:** McNaughton said there was a setback in contracting the watertyping field performance assessment because the contract intent was not clear enough. A new RFQQ and advertisement will be drafted and sent as soon as possible. At the same time, ISAG has technical concern with this approach. Data is still being looked at and the lingering technical questions issues should be resolved before advertisement to avoid holding up the project later based on technical issues. McNaughton said he was asked to have CMER and ISAG frame up the issues being worked through by both committees at this time. McDonald said that it was apparent within the ISAG group there is growing support to ask two key questions: how will the model be used and if the map will not be rule, then why is the model being evaluated.

Heide said that to add context, the fundamental question people are asking is no matter how much performance work is done, what are the chances of the model ever functioning as the rule states it is supposed to function – as rule. As time has been spent over the year talking about these issues, it will be difficult to satisfy everyone’s concerns and none of the validation work will improve the model. Even if we demonstrate a statistical accuracy that is acceptable, we are still not sure people in the field will buy into the map. It is difficult to convince people at this time that a permanent switch should be made, which raises the question of whether there is another way to solve the problem. The real question is do we really want to spend money validating a model that we already know will not work or do we know it will not work yet. CMER does not have good alternatives for this yet.

Jackson said Barreca sent an e-mail with three brief bullets that is a good way to get this information to policy. Many people agree the model has been good in updating the base maps, but she basically agrees with everything Heide says. A validation study will not give us more than we already have. The model has gone as far as it is going too. Smitch said when he looked at the memo he saw the issues as policy not technical. People are also questioning many aspects of this study; a policy and technical work group is needed to resolve these issues.

Pleus agrees the questions are policy, and the scientific and technical staff participating at ISAG do not believe the model can meet its goals. There is no doubt in their minds now, so proceeding with a validation study may not be necessary. There are pieces that are good though as well. ISAG could go forward with an assessment of the areas where the model works well. Mendoza said when the model report came back and the action plan was developed, he made the argument Heide just made and no one agreed with him. Mendoza suggests we address the questions that Heide has brought up. When Policy needs to weigh in and technical people try to answer questions for Policy it causes problems.

There are two fundamental questions that need to be addressed before we move forward: 1) how will the model be used, and 2) if the map is not and will not be the rule, then why are we validating it. Pucci said CMER was asked to come up with some options for how Policy can proceed given these circumstances. It is possible that a brainstorming session about how to move forward is needed. Sturhan suggested a presentation to Policy as well. Pleus reiterated his point that the questions above are policy questions, not technical ones. The question in front of CMER is how does CMER tell Policy that the information they are asking for will not answer any questions of value? If that is not the case, then this should be qualified in a technical way. Fransen said Policy needs to be made aware that the technical people have moved past a map and data approach and are going to do something else. Marks said ISAG needs to meet in November and reach consensus about what was learned by the various completed studies; then Policy needs to be educated on this. Smitch said if that is the case, then Policy does need to be made aware. If you look at what the Board and Policy wanted, it was a model. They were not aware of all the problems associated with that. Pleus said CMER needs to focus on why this method should move forward or why it should not.

Martin said we seem to be at the point of knowing that we need technical information from ISAG that they were planning to bring next month to CMER. The advisory to Policy now should simply be a statement of where we are and where we are heading. There is no technical debate about the information. ISAG is proceeding and it will provide the context for the next scientific steps. ISAG will likely have ideas about next steps in November; CMER can consider those ideas and make recommendations or provide options to Policy. CMER needs to have the basic facts on the table and know them before advice is provided to Policy.

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**CMER Monthly Report to Policy:** Sturhan said that CMER talked about funding flexibility with Policy at the last meeting and how to use the project development fund. Policy said CMER should make these decisions without Policy involvement. CMER will make its own decisions about whether the amount is so large that Policy should be asked to weigh in. Peer review issues were also brought up as was publication of CMER studies. Policy is supportive of publishing CMER studies in any forum available, but first on the CMER website. Palmquist's retirement was noted and the Commission was asked to refill the CMER staff position. McNaughton said that there will be more documents on the CMER website soon.

The CMER November Report to Policy will include the following:

- **Action request:** Watertyping Model Performance Evaluation RFQQ – no responsive bids. Recommend not sending another RFQQ until other technical and policy issues are resolved.
- **Update:** Watertyping implementation concerns – ISAG/CMER question the need for further model performance studies given the uncertainty on how the model may or may not be implemented. Policy review and guidance are recommended

- **Policy is Requesting Action:** CMER Facilitation – decide whether to contract for CMER meeting facilitation
- Policy guidance on projects and budget priorities; status?
- Proposal for in-house staffing of riparian research projects
- FYI on SAG co-chair needs

**Assignment:** In the future, this agenda items will appear at the end of the agenda. CMER discussions must be completed before a decision can be made about what CMER will report to Policy.

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**CMER Staffing and Facilitation:** These discussions were brief. Schuett-Hames distributed a proposal for CMER staffing for review and discussion at a later date. CMER expressed its appreciation for the work Curt Smith does to interface between CMER and Policy. Since CMER was not well briefed for either of these discussions, no decisions were made.

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**Afternoon Science Session for November:** Watertyping issues discussion and recommendations

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