

**Cooperative Monitoring Evaluation and Research Committee
(CMER)
August 24, 2010
DNR/DOC Compound - Tumwater
Meeting Notes**

Attendees	Representing
*Baldwin, Todd (ph)	Kalispel Tribe, SAGE Co-Chair
*Dieu, Julie	Rayonier, UPSAG Co-Chair
*Hicks, Mark	Department of Ecology
Hitchens, Dawn	Dept of Natural Resources /CMER Coordinator
Hotvedt, Jim	Dept of Natural Resources /Adaptive Management Program Administrator
*Jackson, Terry	Washington Dept of Fish & Wildlife, CMER Co-Chair
Kurtenbach, Amy	Dept of Natural Resources /Project Manager
*Kroll, A.J.	Weyerhaeuser
*Lingley, Leslie	Dept of Natural Resources /Scientist
*Martin, Doug	Washington Forestry Protection Association
*McConnell, Steve (ph)	Upper Columbia United Tribes
*Mendoza, Chris	Conservation Caucus Contractor, CMER Co-Chair
Miskovic, Teresa	Dept of Natural Resources /Project Manager
*Miller, Dick	Washington Family Forest Association
Mobbs, Mark	Quinault Tribe
Roorbach, Ash	CMER Staff, North West Indian Fisheries Commission
Schuett-Hames, Dave	CMER Staff, North West Indian Fisheries Commission
*Sturhan, Nancy	North West Indian Fisheries Commission

* Indicates official CMER members and alternates; ph indicates attended via phone & v indicates attended by video conferencing.

Agenda

Nancy Sturhan requested to add the project on lessons learned.

Science Session

Jack Janisch presented his Type 5 Headwaters Paper - results of the headwaters study (wetlands and woody debris).

Business Session

➤ Upslope Processes Scientific Advisory Group (UPSAG) - Roads Sub-Basin Report
CMER Approved ISPR Matrix

Julie Dieu reported that the ISPR comments came back a few weeks ago and the contractor and CMER on-call statistician have responded accordingly. UPSAG co-chair Dieu and Greg Stewart worked with the CMER reviewers, and the CMER comments have been addressed. This report's CMER / ISPR review process has gone more quickly and smoothly than most. UPSAG will have the final report ready for CMER approval in September or October.

Project Manager Amy Kurtenbach reported that the contract ends in a few months.

CMER co-chair Mendoza stated that it helped to have the report findings presented to CMER, prior to their review process, in PowerPoint by the contractor, Watershed Professional Network. This presentation helped CMER more clearly understand and comment on the report results. In the future, CMER should consider having an oral presentation prior to their review.

CMER co-chair Mendoza motioned to approve the UPSAG request.
CMER approved.

➤ CMER Information Systems Project

CMER approved the projects list with two additions & the table of contents

Nancy Sturhan provided a handout that reflects the current list & proposed list of projects for the CMER information management systems project for this year. She has yet to receive comments.

CMER Co-chair Jackson stated that the projects for this year need to include the Type N Hard Rock Experimental Buffer Study. The Hard Rock Feasibility study should be captured under the Type N Hard Rock Experimental Study. The Bull Trout Overlay Add-On study is missing as well.

Nancy Sturhan suggested that the appropriate SAGS need to get the materials for each of these projects to Bruce Jones so that they will know what level of work will be required to accomplish the task of adding more CMER projects. This will assist Bruce Jones in estimating the costs for their interagency agreement. This task needs to be accomplished in the next couple of months.

Points of Discussion:

CMER co-chair Mendoza stated that there is still data missing on the current list that CMER approved last year. For example, the Last Fish Habitat Model projects are missing the GIS spatial data. Chris and Jim Hotvedt together will locate that data.

Nancy Sturhan stated that we need to prioritize moving forward with providing data for this year's projects; GIS data is going to require more effort. She suggested the end of October as the deadline for her to get this information to Bruce Jones.

The responsibility rests with the SAG co-chairs and the project managers for compiling information for each project. The following projects were discussed:

Mass Wasting Prescription Scale Effectiveness Monitoring (aka Post Mortem) = Project Manager (PM)

Hardwood Conversion Silviculture/Feasibility Project = CMER staff

Hardwood Conversion Temperature project = RSAG Co-Chairs

DFC FPA Analysis Project = RSAG Co-Chairs

DFC Field Project = RSAG Co-Chairs

DFC Sensitivity Analysis = RSAG Co-Chairs

Type N Experimental Buffer Treatment Feasibility Study = LWAG Co-Chair, Marc Hayes

DOE Stream Temperature Modeling Project = RSAG Co-Chairs and Bill Ehinger

BTO Add-On = PM

Last Fish = Chris Mendoza and Jim Hotvedt

Nancy Sturhan asked for CMER approval of the project list with the two additions.

CMER Co-chair Mendoza motioned to approve the current project list and the Table of Contents, and have Sturhan return to CMER with the estimated costs for CMER to approve the overall project for this fiscal year (2011-2012).

CMER approved.

➤ **CMER Lessons Learned Project**

Nancy Sturhan suggested that the Adaptive Management Program Administrator (AMPA) should take this project. The main goal of this project is to document lessons-learned from past or on-going projects. These lessons-learned may be from difficulties encountered, unsuccessful outcomes, or actually what-went-right with various CMER projects over the past 10 years since the FFR report was signed. Nancy has not received much comment or response from the SAGs.

AMPA Hotvedt agreed that it should be passed on after CMER has discussed it. CMER needs to discuss and identify how this information will be used.

Points of Discussion:

Leslie Lingley stated that a checklist was developed when the Landslide Hazard Zonation project was terminated. The check list provided information about the status of the work with comments.

Dick Miller asked who could provide information concerning the eastside nomograph report. SAGE Co-chair Baldwin stated that this project was sent to Charles Chesney and the reasons stating why this project was considered incomplete has been documented.

CMER coordinator Hitchens responded that the contract file for the eastside nomograph project has a memo from Charles Chesney outlining the work that was accomplished and the decisions made by SAGE.

Project Manager Kurtenbach stated that project information like this is really important; the lessons learned are valuable. It is good to document what has gone well, important to have that side of the picture as well. She reminded folks that the format of the projects plans has a section about lessons learned. AMPA Hotvedt posed a question for CMER: Nancy Sturhan has provided a table where CMER can populate it over time. CMER needs to have a thorough discussion of what is in the table before it gets passed on to him. CMER needs to discuss this further at a future CMER meeting.

CMER agreed to have an hour scheduled for a discussion on the larger topic on lessons learned at a future CMER meeting.

➤ **Riparian Scientific Advisory Group (RSAG) - Extensive Type F Eastside
*CMER Approved Final Report***

Project Manager Miskovic reported that the three CMER reviewers (Lingley, Baldwin & Hayes) provided comments and these have been addressed by RSAG. There are a couple of questions identified for ISPR regarding the rotating panel. RSAG has commented on the benefits and constraints associated with using the rotating panel design for assessing trends in stream temperature, and asked if there are better or alternative approaches? Do the study results and conclusions address the original study objectives, questions, and intent?

For ISPR of the final report, RSAG requested a list of skills rather than recommended reviewers; looking for experience in forest-related science and statistics.

CMER Co-chair Mendoza motioned to approve the RSAG request.
CMER approved.

➤ RSAG - Type N Experimental Buffer Effectiveness in Hard Rock Lithologies
CMER Approved the Requested Modifications Memo

Project Manager Miskovic and LWAG Chair Hayes stated that a SAG request does not accompany the memo. The document is in memo form as requested by CMER. All modifications have previously been approved by LWAG, RSAG, and CMER and are presented here in summary for informational purposes only. A previous memo regarding modifications to the study plan was developed, presented to CMER, and approved in May 2007.

Points of Discussion:

Nancy Sturhan suggested giving a presentation to Policy on this project. This is a major project and has seen some changes.

AMPA Hotvedt pointed out that landowner involvement is a challenge with long term studies. It may not hurt to bring this up with Policy but not at this level of detail. AMPA Hotvedt stated that this segues well into the Stillwater Report and that now is the time to bring up the landowner cooperation and long term commitment.

CMER approved the memo and requested that this be a part of the project file.

➤ Landscape and Wildlife Advisory Group (LWAG) - Type N Experimental Buffer Effectiveness in Hard Rock Lithologies: Amphibian Genetics
CMER Approved the WSU Amphibian Genetics ISPR Response Matrix

Project Manager Miskovic and LWAG Chair Hayes reported that the report has gone through the ISPR. ISPR provided three good reviewers. LWAG & CMER have reviewed the comment matrix and request CMER approval of the response matrix.

CMER co-chair Mendoza motioned to approve this request.
CMER approved.

➤ Scientific Advisory Group Eastside (SAGE) - Type N Characterization Project, Forest Hydrology Study
CMER approved the proposal regarding landowner participation

Baldwin reported that SAGE ran the site validation work for the Forest Hydrology study. SAGE is proposing to drop private non-industrial lands from this study due to the very low success rate in obtaining permission from small forest landowners. Currently, no sub-basins with more than one small forest landowner have been successful in getting permission for all landowners and sub-basins with only a single small forest landowner has a permission success rate of approximately 2%. SAGE would like to concentrate on large industrial landowners.

Mark Hicks asked if dropping small non-industrial forestland owners could potentially eliminate a geographic area of importance to the study design.

Baldwin reported that SAGE is reviewing sites that were screened out (50% - where 40% do not have Type N waters). There are two small landowners in 100 sub-basins. At this point, SAGE doesn't know if there is a need for further analysis. SAGE has field validated 150 sites of the original 500 sites. There are three excel spreadsheets document the findings.

Mark Hicks stressed that SAGE needs to make sure that they have done everything feasible to include non-industrial landowners in the study and then document the results of their screening process. This documentation is important so that future reviewers do not question why small forest landowners were screened out of the site selection process.

CMER Co-chair Jackson stated that this issue would be good to bring up to the Policy level. Small forest landowners do not have representation at Policy, but it would be prudent to inform them about the difficulty of including small forest landowners in this study.

CMER co-chair Mendoza stated that this will be a part of the CMER update to Policy.

CMER co-chair Mendoza motioned to approve the SAGE request to exclude sub-basins dominated by small forest landowners based on SAGE's low success rate.

CMER approved.

➤ **Wetlands Scientific Advisory Group (WETSAG) -Wetlands Mitigation Project**
CMER Approved the Wetlands Mitigation Project Charter

Miskovic provided an overview of the purpose for the project charter. As of September 2009, CMER approved the Project Charter as a protocol tool to use for research projects. As new projects are started, CMER will be developing and implementing plans and charters. For project management purposes, it is valuable to clearly identify up front the expectations and resources needed to ensure that CMER and Policy is informed and committed to the success of a project. This charter has been reviewed and approved by WETSAG.

Discussion Points:

CMER co-chair Jackson asked if this project will have a project manager assigned to it before the scoping document.

AMPA Hotvedt stated that there will be a project manager assigned for developing a charter.

CMER co-chair Mendoza asked for clarification about what CMER was agreeing to? CMER provided input and approved the approach laid out in the presentation given by WETSAG at the last CMER meeting.

Ash Roorbach clarified that the project charter has a different focus and that the PowerPoint presentation was for the implementation plan. Miskovic stated that the project charter is for the study design.

Kurtenbach stated that if there is buy-in from Policy about the other phases of the study, those can be reflected in the project charter document. The intent for this document is to be a living document and the project integration section is the area for reflecting the works in progress.

AMPA Hotvedt stated that this project charter has the agreement between Policy and CMER. Signatures will be reflected so that 6 months from now, CMER has in writing, stipulations about the agreement. This is something that is negotiated between CMER and Policy, but it needs to get CMER approval first.

CMER co-chair Mendoza stated that Policy had a lot of questions based on the presentation given last month, and they did not give a green light; the timelines and costs of the project were still an outstanding issue.

WETSAG co-chair Steve Todd stated that CMER urged WETSAG to present to Policy. WETSAG has scheduled a meeting with Tom Hruby on August 11th and a field trip is scheduled with him on September 29th. Tom Hruby has very limited time to offer to WETSAG so it's critical that everything is well planned out for the field trip. WETSAG is looking at 2 to 3 sites where there are roads in close proximity or are adjacent to wetlands.

The RFQQ is going through the internal process at DNR, then it goes to OFM for approval; the target date for the public is September 15th.

CMER co-chair Mendoza motioned to approve the project charter for WETSAG.

CMER approved and suggested that Teresa Miskovic and Steve Todd present this charter to Policy.

- Soft Rock Scientific Advisory Group (SRSAG) - Type N Experimental Buffer Study in Incompetent Lithologies in Western Washington - *Update on Scoping Document*

SRSAG Co-chair Mendoza reported that a draft of the scoping document will be available for the next CMER Meeting.

- Clean Water Act Assurances - *Update and CWA CMER Project Flagging Process*
AMPA Hotvedt and Mark Hicks gave an overview of the CWA assurances. The CWA review conducted in 2009 found that monitoring was not occurring on a timeline necessary to determine whether or not water quality was being protected. One CWA milestone required development of a process where projects are flagged that are not proceeding on time. A table has been developed, with the help of project managers Kurtenbach and Miskovic, to track the progress. This tool will help trigger those projects that are off schedule and not meeting their timelines where, as a general rule, the project managers will notify the AMPA and CMER as soon as issues are identified that could affect a project's progress. This flagging tool will be presented to Policy next month, which will also realistically how long it takes to get a project from scoping, design, and planning to review and approval of a final product.

- CMER Funded Final Report - *Update*

CMER co-chair Jackson and AMPA Hotvedt gave a history of the issue surrounding definition of a CMER funded final report and the associated requirements for going through ISPR. It is clear in the WAC and the board manual that all CMER-funded final reports need to go through ISPR. The real issue is the differences in interpretation of what is a "CMER-funded final report". The primary purpose of the peer review process is to assure that CMER final reports are scientifically credible. Not all "final reports" are set up to attain interference from statistically significant findings," and may not benefit from the review of independent scientific experts. In 2005, CMER developed and approved an approach for classifying final reports by type and level of relatedness to larger projects. Along with these classifications came the appropriate text for the final report cover page and disclaimers for CMER approved final reports. For example, distinctions were made between "exploratory" and final technical reports, regarding meeting ISPR requirements. Policy requested that CMER more clearly define a "CMER-funded final report" and develop a proposal as to whether there was a need to change the WAC and/or the Adaptive Management board manual.

Due to the amount of time already spent on this issue without resolution, and the other CMER tasks needing more immediate attention on the work list, CMER agreed that this issue be set aside and dealt with on a case-by-case basis until the Protocols and Standards Manual is updated.

➤ Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Grant – *Update*

Mark Hicks – submitted application for \$694,000 covering the first 4 years of the soft rock study. SRSAG/ CMER’s grant proposal has been selected and the final signing is slated for September 8th. CMER needs to continue to move forward on this project to meet EPA grant deadlines.

➤ SAG Participation at Meetings

CMER Co-chair Jackson stated that it is critically important to have SAG co-chairs attend all CMER meetings in order to provide CMER updates to the SAG and coordinate CMER/SAG assignments.

When CMER reviews SAG requests, it is important to have at least one SAG co-chair present and/or a SAG member who is familiar with the technical/scientific aspects of the project in order to answer any questions CMER may have.

CMER co-chair Mendoza agreed and stated that the Protocols and Standards Manual has the SAG co-chairs and SAG member roles and responsibilities laid out. The Principal Investigators (PIs) have roles; the project managers (PMs) have roles and the SAG co-chairs have roles; all of which need to have clear distinction between their roles.

AMPA Hotvedt stated that the problem is that we are preaching to the choir; the people this message is directed at are the people absent from this meeting. The people we are talking to today all participate. It appeared to me that there was an over reliance on PMs for the projects; in order to have robust scientific discussions at the CMER meetings, we need to have the scientists here. This is the science committee, we need to have scientific discussions and deal with the scientific issues that the SAGs are dealing with.

➤ CMER Annual Science Conference - *Update based on the drop dead dates*

CMER coordinator reviewed the benchmark deadlines and stressed that SAGs need to start deciding on their list of topics to be presented to CMER for approval.

➤ CMER Report to Policy – *Discussion* - Items to be taken to Policy meeting on September 2, 2010:

- ❖ WETSAG Project Charter as an action item – Miskovic and Steve Todd to present to Policy.
- ❖ The Forest Hydrology Study issue with small forest landowner site selection screening.

Meeting Adjourned.