

Forest Practices Board
Water Typing Rule Committee
October 7, 2020
Meeting conducted via GoToWebinar

Committee Members Present:

Bob Guenther, Committee Chair and General Public Member
David Herrera, General Public Member
Jeff Davis, Director's designee, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Tom Nelson, General Public Member

Absent:

Paula Swedeen, General Public Member

Staff

Marc Engel and Marc Ratcliff, DNR
Phil Ferester, ATG

Welcome and Introductions

Bob Guenther, Committee chair, called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

Approval of July 14 and August 3, 2020 Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Tom Nelson moved the Committee approve the meeting minutes for July 14 and August 3, 2020.

SECONDED: Dave Herrera

Discussion:

None

ACTION: Motioned passed unanimously.

Anadromous Fish Floor GIS Analysis Contract and Project Team Work

Marc Ratcliff, DNR, provided an update on the work being done by the GIS contractor for the development of an Anadromous Fish Floor (AFF). He said the contract was awarded to Terrainworks in August. The kick-off meeting with the AFF workgroup occurred on August 26. He said the first GIS deliverable, to create synthetic stream networks using high quality lidar within the identified watersheds, which is needed for analysis by the AFF Workgroup, has been completed by the contractor.

He reported the AFF project team is in the process of completing a qa/qc of the initial synthetic stream networks produced by Terrainworks. The review of synthetic watersheds were divided up amongst project team members based on their familiarity with the stream systems and drainages. In order to complete their review, some members needed to learn GIS functions unfamiliar to them. As a result, the team may be a little late in providing feedback, but will be able to complete some areas during the week of October 5 and the remaining areas during the week of October 12.

He explained that verifying the accuracy of these stream systems is foundational to the later running the analysis to inform the Workgroup developing an anadromous fish floor. Although this is taking more time than envisioned, the AFF project team does not anticipate a problem with the final targeted

date of April 2020 to complete the AFF analysis and for the AFF Workgroup to make a recommendation to the Board Committee.

Once the AFF project team has reviewed all the synthetic stream network basins, Terrainworks will make any necessary changes for a final synthetic stream network products. He said Terrainworks will begin populating fish data provided by the AFF project team once all the streams are corrected, creating the final synthetic stream networks.

Ash Roorbach, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, said the AFF project team has been evaluating different fish distribution data for use in the analysis. They are looking into data from the Skagit River System Cooperative tribal last fish analyses, US Forest Service fish populations, the Statewide Washington Integrated Fish Distribution dataset, Squaxin tribal data, water type modification data, Washington Fish and Wildlife road barrier data and natural barrier data and DNR's RMAP data.

Roorbach said once the fish distribution data is determined, the project team will provide it to Terrainworks. This will supplement the data used for estimating anadromous fish points from Terrainwork's algorithm model, which uses channel features such as slope gradient and natural fish obstacles.

Eastern Washington Fish Data

Marc Ratcliff, DNR provided an update on the efforts to evaluate the Cooperative Monitoring, Evaluation, and Research Committee (CMER) and tribal eastern Washington fish data for inclusion in the state-wide potential habitat break spatial analysis. He reminded the Committee that the Board (at the August meeting) accepted the Committee's recommendation to use the screened data from the 2001 CMER data and the tribal data after DNR has qa/qc the fish points provided by the Yakama Nation and Kalispel Tribe. He said the qa/qc effort is not complete at this time.

He reported that DNR was initially unsuccessful in locating the 2001 CMER GIS data when the eastern WA technical group first began meeting. DNR had envisioned contracting with Terrapin to obtain the GIS point data they collected for the 2001 CMER. He stated that just last week, DNR staff Kevin Smith located the data by reaching out to past DNR staff and Chris Mendoza. Smith is in the process of comparing the data from the screened points with the GIS points and said DNR is comfortable that we will not have to contract for the data at this time.

Ratcliff said he will be scheduling another meeting with the entire eastern WA technical group to discuss the outcomes from the tribal data qa/qc evaluation and share what DNR has found from the 2001 CMER spatial data.

Public Comment

Darin Cramer, Washington Forest Protection Association, restated their concern regarding the recommendations they provided to the Board last year, specifically the need to clarify what the performance targets are for potential habitat breaks, and how the application of the fish habitat assessment methodology will be measured in comparison to the current water typing system rule. Clearly defined performance targets that can be accurately measured have not been developed for field application. He said the Board has not clearly articulated how the preferred alternatives will be identified and suggested that there are many rule making process and technical deficiencies for this rule that could be challenged by any caucus. He asked for a discussion and check-in at the next Board meeting on how to move these concerns forward.

Discuss Committee Update for November Forest Practices Board Meeting

Board Members agreed to have staff prepare a report for the November Board meeting that captures the updates provided today and any additional activity between today and the November Board meeting. Committee members will provide additional comments to the Board that may not be captured in the staff memo.

Marc Engel, DNR, suggested that the Committee should plan to continue to meet to address additional outstanding permanent water typing rule issues.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 a.m.