

Timber, Fish, & Wildlife Policy Committee  
 October 31, 2019 Approved Meeting Summary  
 Final v. 12.5.19

October 31, 2019	
Action	Responsibility
<b>Send future meeting materials to Policy Co-Chairs so they can vet materials for future meeting packets.</b>	All
<b>Review the October 3 meeting summary and send comments to Thomas Christian.</b>	All
<b>Request input from the Eastside Tribal caucus on the ENREP project for Policy to consider.</b>	Jim Peters
<b>Follow up with the Policy Co-Chairs on process questions for the SFL Template recommendation.</b>	SFL Caucus
<b>Help inform Policy how Ecology uses macroinvertebrates as indicators of water quality, for consideration in the ENREP study.</b>	Melissa Gildersleeve
<b>Send presentations on the BCIF study and the Hardwood Conversion study out to Policy.</b>	Thomas Christian
<b>Send a doodle poll to explore rescheduling the January 2, 2020 Policy meeting.</b>	Co-chairs
<b>Add a 60-minute p-value presentation to the Policy Workload Tracker.</b>	Co-chairs

Decision	Notes
<b>Defer review of the October 3 meeting summary to the December meeting.</b>	The Eastside Tribal caucus and Federal caucus were absent; all other caucuses voted thumbs up.
<b>Recommend replacing the Rattlesnake site pair, and if needed the Sedge site pair, and look for two additional site pairs.</b>	The Eastside Tribal caucus and Federal caucus were absent; all other caucuses voted thumbs up.
<b>Determine no action by the Board is warranted on the ERSTM Temperature Study.</b>	The Eastside Tribal caucus and Federal caucus were absent; all other caucuses voted thumbs up.

Welcome, Introductions, & Old Business – Policy Co-Chair Curt Veldhuisen, Skagit River System Cooperative (SRSC), opened the meeting and reviewed the day’s agenda.

Policy Co-Chair Terra Rentz, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) noted the large volume of materials sent prior to the meeting and requested that all materials for future meetings be shared with Co-Chairs prior to distribution so the Co-Chairs can determine if all materials should be included in the meeting packet.

Action: Send future meeting materials to Policy Co-Chairs so they can vet materials for meeting packets.

Terra passed out a document titled *TFW Policy AMP Process Decision Support Tree* for Policy's reference. She noted Policy would receive later in the meeting a report from the Small Forest Landowner (SFL) Template Work Group, which per the Support Tree, starts Policy's 180-day decision-making clock.

Mark Hicks, Adaptive Management Program Administrator (AMPA), announced that Policy representatives now have access to the password protected CMER Information Management System. CMER agreed at its October 22 meeting that Policy representatives should have access to the System with a training. Access is not for all caucus members, but specifically for Policy representatives because the system includes raw data and incomplete documents. Mark has requested \$2,500-\$3,000 a year for maintenance of the System.

Jim Peters, Northwest Indian Fish Commission (NWIFC), announced the Billy Frank Jr. Summit would take place on Tuesday, November 5, 2019, at the Little Creek Casino. The 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Centennial Accord Meeting will take place on November 6-7, 2019 at the Little Creek Casino.

Policy reviewed the October meeting summary and Curt noted that he had not provided his edits.

**Decision:** Deferred review of the October meeting summary to the December meeting. The Eastside Tribal caucus and Federal caucus were absent; all other caucuses voted thumbs up.

CMER Update – Chris Mendoza, Conservation Caucus and CMER Co-Chair, provided Policy with an update from the October 2019 CMER meeting. Highlights are listed below.

- Greg Stewart, NWIFC, gave a presentation on p-values which are used as a threshold to determine if results support or refute a hypothesis. Greg argued it is important to look at a range of p-values rather than a single p-value.

Action: Add a 60-minute p-value presentation to the Policy Workload Tracker.

- CMER prepared and approved an answer to Policy's ENREP Question #1.
- CMER approved final reports for the Eastside Type F Riparian Effectiveness Monitoring Project – Bull Trout (BTO – Add on) Summary and the Westside Type N Buffer Characteristics Integrity and Function (BCIF) Study. Policy will receive the reports once CMER approved the answers to the six questions.
- CMER approved the Hardwood Conversion summary report answers to the six questions and had previously approved the Final Report.
- CMER agreed to provide Policy representatives access to the CMER Information Management System, but representatives need training on how to differentiate between draft reports and final ISPR-approved reports.
- CMER discussed Policy's recommendation to have a workshop on Extensive Status and Trends monitoring and directed RSAG to develop an agenda for a workshop.

Policy did not have any questions regarding the CMER update.

Mark Hicks added that ISPR has approved the Forest Wetlands Study and the Unstable Slope Study.

Update on AMP Hiring – In response to a question from Policy, Mark Hicks explained the AMP is midway through the hiring process for a senior secretary position and is scheduling interviews for the project manager positions. The job opening for the eastside scientist position has closed.

Type Np Workgroup Update – Darin Cramer, Washington Forest Protection Association (WFPA) and Type Np Workgroup Co-chair, shared the Work Group held a meeting on October 29 and focused on administrative tasks, meeting dates, agenda topics, and possible BCIF site visits. All members attended except for one scientist from the University of British Columbia who was stopped at the U.S. – Canada border.

Eastside Type N Riparian Effectiveness Project (ENREP) Final Budget Recommendations – Curt Veldhuisen reminded the meeting participants of the ENREP Study's current status:

- The study design is approved
- Suitable study sites are being identified
- Policy is reviewing the budget to see if all study factors are needed/worth including.

Mark Hicks announced that DNR State Lands cannot allow the Study to use the Rattlesnake Basin site pair because of the presence of Northern Spotted Owl dispersal habitat. He explained the loss of study sites diminishes the ability of the study to infer responses of streams located in wetter and colder regions.

Mark also explained the AMP recently received an email that there is also concern about owl dispersal habitat at the Sedge site pair. Prior to Mark beginning his role as the AMPA, a commitment was made to work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to get approval to reduce the amount of dispersal habitat under the Habitat Conservation Plan. The AMP never followed up with FWS and now needs to take responsibility for that commitment. Teresa Miskovic, AMP, has been in contact with DNR State Lands and will begin the process to determine who else the AMP needs to work with to harvest in the Sedge Site.

Mark explained the AMP received notification that the Coxit site pair is still available for the Study. Mark noted Policy may want to debate if the AMP should look for additional sites.

Terra Rentz walked the participants through the ENREP project team's response to Policy's questions and noted CMER's recommendation to replace the Rattlesnake site pair. Terra highlighted the project team's explanation regarding the tradeoffs resulting from the removal of study factors, summarized below. Terra asked Policy to consider how these factors influence Policy's decision-making.

- Macroinvertebrates – Removal would reduce the study's ability to determine whether aquatic life is being affected by the buffer treatment. Aquatic life is protected in all waters of the State of Washington (WAC 173-201A-200(1)). Darin clarified there is nothing in WAC 173-201 about Benthic Index of Biotic Integrity (B-IBI).
- Sedimentation – Removal would reduce the study's cost and limit its ability to understand how sediment may be related to aquatic life responses. Mark Hicks clarified that the cost of including sedimentation is minimal if it is assumed the study is putting in flumes to monitor flows. If that is not assumed, the cost is high.
- Orphaned Np Streams – Removal of the orphaned (disconnected) Np stream sites (Springdale site pair) will reduce personnel, travel, and analytical costs, but would negate previous investments made in this site pair.

The participants discussed the removal of study factors. In response to a question, Terra clarified that unless Policy takes action to remove a factor, the study will continue as planned. Mark cautioned Policy about trimming study factors on sites where work has already started.

In response to a question about the budget, Terra clarified that despite the loss of the Rattlesnake Basin site pair, the budget still increased due to site access costing more than initially thought.

Darin Cramer, WFPA, stated he would like to see the AMP look for two more study site pairs in Northeast Washington and suggested letting the Sedge site pair go and reallocate funding to a new site. The group discussed if they should recommend the AMP drop the Sedge site pair given its uncertainty.

Darin made a motion, seconded by Steve Barnowe-Meyer, WFFA for Policy to recommend the replacement of the Rattlesnake site pair, and if needed the Sedge site pair, and look for two additional site pairs outside the current range of the ENREP study. The group clarified that this motion is to ask the project team to look for sites and come back with a budget for two additional site pairs.

**Decision:** Recommend replacing the Rattlesnake site pair, and if needed the Sedge site pair, and look for two additional sites/pairs. The Eastside Tribal caucus and Federal caucus were absent; all other caucuses voted thumbs up.

Scott Swanson, Counties Caucus, expressed appreciation for Policy representatives who have highlighted why this study is needed, despite the cost which he previously expressed concern about.

**Action:** Jim Peters will contact Ray Entz to request input from the Eastside Tribal caucus on the ENREP project to share at the next Policy meeting.

No motion was made to alter the study factors, so the ENREP Study will continue as previously approved. Darin noted that he does have some concern about the use of BIBI and the macroinvertebrate study factor.

**Action:** Melissa Gildersleeve, Department of Ecology, will prepare a presentation to help inform Policy how Ecology uses macroinvertebrates as indicators of water quality, which Policy may use for consideration in the ENREP study.

Small Forest Landowner (SFL) Template Workgroup Recommendations – Terra Rentz and Curt Veldhuisen highlighted the *Alternate Harvest Prescriptions for Small Forest Landowners in Western Washington* template proposal, which began as a proposal to the Forest Practices Board. The Board directed Policy to address the proposal. Policy set up the Workgroup to make a recommendation. Policy received the recommendations at this meeting and will make a decision at their December TFW Policy meeting.

Marc Engel, SFL Template Workgroup Chair, reviewed the Workgroup report and explained the Workgroup was asked to determine if the proposed template meets the policy requirements of an alternate plan template. The Workgroup determined, through a non-consensus majority, the following findings:

- As a whole, the proposed template does not meet the criteria of an alternate plan template.
- In part, the proposed template does not meet the criteria of an alternate plan template(s).

The Workgroup also determined through consensus decisions:

- There are proposed prescriptions within the SFL template proposal which could be changed to become qualified as an alternate plan template or a set of prescriptions.
- The experimental conifer restoration and conifer thinning alternate harvest prescriptions should continue to be developed.

Marc explained that the Workgroup proposed that Policy sanction another workgroup to work with the SFL Advisory Committee to evaluate if or under what site-specific conditions a 75-foot and 50-foot

buffer, respectively, would be acceptable as an alternate plan template prescription for Type NP streams. Marc suggested that Policy could move the recommendation to the Forest Practices Board and then the Board could direct the SFL Advisory Committee to take action on Policy's recommendation.

Ken Miller introduced guests from the SFL caucus in the audience (see list below) and explained some of the diverse perspectives within the caucus on the topic of the template. Ken provided an overview of the following documents from the SFL template proposal process.

- WFFA request for SFL Template, February 10, 2015
- Draft Template Simplified, with crosswalk
- Draft Template Simplified, clean
- Presentation to TFW Policy January 5, 2017
- RCW-WACs SFL Advisory Committee handbook
- Eligibility of SFL Proposal to be a Template
- Template Element Comparisons from prior efforts & rules
- Alternate Plan Documents – Forest Practices Board Manual Section 21 and WAC 222-12-0400
- Relative Effectiveness of WFFA proposal vs. Rule (Science review)
- The Case for Approving the WFFA Westside Low Impact Template Proposal

Terra explained that Policy has not been given a science report about the SFL Template proposal, so the Policy's decision is limited to whether the SFL Template proposal meets the policy requirements that would qualify it as an alternate plan template. Terra clarified that CMER and Policy have not reviewed the science behind the proposal. The Forest Practices Board Manual does not outline what should happen if CMER is instructed not to do a scientific review.

Ken requested time with the AMPA and Co-Chairs before the Forest Practices Board meeting to discuss the issue resulting from the decision to not to perform a scientific review of the SFL Template proposal.

Elaine O'Neil, WFFA Executive Director, offered some context from the SFL perspective. She made the following points:

- Policy should consider what site-specificity means beyond what the rules articulate.
- Forest Practices rules are too complicated for SFLs and alternate plans are costly.

Elaine explained that there is strong pressure for SFLs to convert their forest land to other uses. She highlighted the personal stories of each of the SFL guests in the audience and explained the conversion issue is about a loss of value due to loss of connection to the land.

Ken read draft dispute resolution language that the SFL caucus may invoke at the December policy meeting. Terra outlined the dispute resolution process, which can be invoked if Policy fails to reach consensus or if a discussion has been exhausted and a motion is not brought forward. Dispute Resolution can be invoked verbally or in writing, and then Policy must come to consensus on the definition of the dispute.

Each caucus provided the following comments on the SFL Template proposal discussion.

- Counties – Scott Swanson offered support for SFLs. He expressed concern the workgroup is talking past one another and current language in the SFL Template proposal does not include enough specificity to qualify as a template that can be used at any place and at any time.
- Westside Tribes – Jim Peters said the Westside Tribes have always shown support for SFLs and for alleviating the pressure to convert forested land, which is related to water quality and salmon recovery concerns. Many of the prescriptions are more appropriate for alternate plans as the proposal does not fit the template policy requirements for broad application. Jim also noted that the Tribes are willing and have expertise and resources to help SFLs if they were to ask for it.

- Industrial Landowners – Darin Cramer echoed the concern about forest conversion. He suggested there may be multiple options for the SFLs if they are open to using a different tool such as an alternate plan or experimental prescription.
- Conservation – Alec Brown, Washington Environmental Council (WEC), expressed his concern regarding forest conversion but also expressed skepticism that a 25-foot buffer would prevent or slow the conversion rate.
- WDFW – Don Nauer suggested the roadblock for SFLs is the fear of submitting an alternate plan for site conditions which include characteristics in addition to stream size. WDFW believes the alternate plan process works. Don clarified that a template is different because it should be able to be used anywhere. Don also reminded Policy the SFL designation includes landowners that harvest up to 2 million board feet. He explained it is difficult to make a blanket statement about the resource impact of alternate plans when the size of a SFL harvest can vary from only a few trees to substantially large harvests due to the definition of Small Forest Landowner
- DNR – Marc Engel said the prescriptions in the proposed template are not site specific enough to qualify the proposal as a template.
- SFLs – Ken Miller noted it would be fruitful to have a discussion about the 75-foot buffer prescriptions and stated that alternate plans work for only a few SFLs.

In closing, the Co-Chairs reminded Policy they will be asked to make a decision regard the SFL Template Workgroup recommendation at the December meeting. Ken thanked the Co-Chairs for the additional time.

Legislative Update – No legislative staff were present at the meeting, so the main legislative update was moved to January.

Hardwood Conversion Study Presentation – Chris Mendoza introduced the Hardwood Conversion Study, which was started in 2003. After the initial study was complete, Policy funded extended monitoring for “free to grow” trees. At this meeting, Policy received the findings report, the six questions from CMER, and the transmittal letter from the AMPA.

Report author Kevin Cedar, Cramer Fish Sciences, provided Policy with a presentation on the Hardwood Conversion Study (see attached slides). Kevin highlighted the following conclusions:

- Trees with leaders above the brush have higher growth and lower mortality.
- Shade- and moisture-tolerant species perform better.
- Hardwood conversion treatment was economically viable.
- Results were from case studies, which limits inference beyond sites.

The meeting participants discussed the definition of “free to grow” and whether this provided useful information to landowners or whether the study data is too limited to take action. Policy will be asked to make a decision regarding the Hardwood Conversation Study at their December meeting.

Buffer Characteristic, Integrity & Functions Study (BCIF) Add-on Presentation – Dave Schuett-Hames, NWIFC, provided a presentation on the BCIF Add-on (see attached slides). This study will be provided to the Type N Workgroup.

Chris Mendoza clarified that CMER will hopefully approve the BCIF study in December. In that case, Policy would get the findings report and six CMER questions at the January meeting and will be asked to make a decision at the February meeting.

Action: Thomas Christian, Triangle Associates, will send the BCIF and Hardwood Conversation Study presentations out to Policy.

Extensive Riparian Status and Trends (ERSTM) – Temperature Monitoring Presentation – Curt Veldhuisen reminded Policy they received the ERST study findings report at the October 3 meeting. Darin Cramer noted the study is relevant to the Type N Workgroup.

Darin Cramer offered a motion, seconded by Scott Swanson, that no action by the Board is warranted on the ERSTM Temperature Study.

**Decision:** No action by the Board is warranted on the ERSTM Temperature Study. The Eastside Tribal caucus and Federal caucus were absent; all other caucuses voted thumbs up.

Next Steps – Policy reviewed the monthly workload document and the meeting schedule for the remainder of 2019. The Co-chairs will explore rescheduling the January meeting, which was scheduled for January 2.

Action: Send a Doodle poll to explore rescheduling the January 2, 2020 Policy Meeting.

Next meeting date: The next Policy meeting will occur on Thursday, December 5, 2019. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Attachment 1 – Participants by Caucus at 10/31 Meeting\*

**Adaptive Management Program – DNR/NWIFC**

Mark Hicks, Adaptive Management Program Administrator  
Teresa Miskovic, AMP Staff  
Dave Schuett-Hames, CMER staff

**Conservation Caucus**

\*Alec Brown, Washington Environmental Coalition  
Chris Mendoza, Conservation Caucus, CMER Co-chair

**County Caucus**

Kendra Smith, Skagit County  
\*Scott Swanson, WSAC

**Industrial Timber Landowner Caucus**

\*Darin Cramer, WFFA  
Doug Hooks, WFFA, CMER Co-chair  
Joe Murray, WFFA/Merrill & Ring

**Small Forest Landowner Caucus**

Bob Loiselle, Small Forest Landowner  
David Townsend, Small Forest Landowner  
Dick Alescro, WFFA  
Elaine O'Neil, WFFA  
Harry Bell, WFFA  
Kay Townsend, Small Forest Landowner  
Ken Miller, WFFA  
Paula Hopkins, WFFA/Hopkins Forestry  
\*Steve Barnowe-Meyer, WFFA  
Steve Townsend, Small Forest Landowner

**State Caucus – DNR**

\*Marc Engel, DNR

**State Caucus – Ecology & WDFW**

\*Don Nauer, WDFW  
\*Melissa Gildersleeve, Ecology  
Terra Rentz, WDFW  
Bill Ehinger, Ecology

**Tribal Caucus – Westside**

Ash Roorbach, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission  
\*Jim Peters, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission  
Curt Veldhuisen, Skagit River System Cooperative/Policy Co-Chair

\*caucus representative

**Others**

