

**Cooperative Monitoring Evaluation and Research Committee
February 26, 2008
Phoenix Inn, Olympia
Final Notes**

Attendees:

*Almond, Lyle	Makah Tribe, RSAG Co-chair
*Baldwin, Todd	Kalispel Tribe, SAGE Co-Chair
Black, Jenelle	NWIFC, CMER Project Manager
*Butts, Sally	USFWS, CMER Co-Chair
Cahill, Candace	Rayonier, WETSAG Co-Chair
Cramer, Darin	DNR, Adaptive Management Administrator
*Ehinger, Bill	DOE
Heckel, Linda	DNR, CMER Coordinator
Heide, Pete	WFPA
*Hicks, Mark	DOE
Jacobsen, Deanna (ph)	Suquamish Tribe
*Jackson, Terry	WDFW, BTSAG Co-chair
Jones, Bruce	NWIFC
Kurtenbach, Amy	DNR, CMER Project Manager
*Martin, Doug	WFPA Contractor
*McConnell, Steve (ph)	UCUT
*MacCracken, Jim	Longview Timberland, LWAG Co-Chair
McFarlane, Ronald	NWIFC
*Mendoza, Chris	Conservation Caucus Contractor, RSAG Tri-Chair
*Miller, Dick	WFFA
Moon, Teresa	DNR, CMER Project Manager
Neumann, Emily	NWIFC, CMER Intern
Robinson, Tom	Counties
Schuett-Hames, Dave	NWIFC, CMER Staff
*Sturhan, Nancy	NWIFC, CMER Co-chair
*Vaugeois, Laura	DNR, UPSAG Co-Chair
*Veldhuisen, Curt (ph)	Skagit River System Cooperative

* indicates official CMER members and alternates

v indicates attended via video-conferencing; ph indicates attended via phone

Note: the phone connection to this meeting was extremely inadequate. Those connecting by phone were largely unable to participate and were not able to track discussion or even decisions made.

Assignments From January Meeting:	
Bring to the CMER March meeting a status update on the bulltrout add-on discussion	Sally Butts/Chris Mendoza

Assignments From November Meeting:	
Schedule a meeting of the Type N sub-group for mid-January (week of the 14 th) and send it out via email. Temporarily on hold due to work load and staffing changes at NWIFC	Nancy Sturhan

Assignments From September Meeting:	
Update the CMER membership rosters with phone numbers (completed but needs to be posted on the website 2/08)	Linda Heckel

Agenda Review – Sturhan

Nancy asked if there were any other items that needed to be added to this month’s agenda. Additional SAG issues that were added:

- CMER PSM Item
- Aerial Photos Discussion
- Type N Genetic Update

Science Session – CMER Information Management System - Sturhan/CMER Staff

Nancy started off the session by explaining the background of the pilot system and where they are to date. This pilot is being designed by NWIFC CMER staff along with Commission IT staff. The pilot system was presented in draft form to CMER.

Ron McFarlane, NWIFC IT Staff, started the presentation by explaining that the database system has three components: a GIS database for spatial information, an Access database, and an Adobe Acrobat component. He explained that this is completely CMER’s project and that whatever we want this to do, it can happen. There are text documents with links for ease in viewing. This draft database will allow project managers to collate all project information into one source. The database that was presented was only for pilot-project-viewing at this time. At any time the format could be changed according to what CMER wants it to look like. Right now the database is very basic and reports have not been created.

It was mentioned that depending on what CMER would like to use this system for it could look very different. Is it going to be used for just CMER with “all” documents or for a “public viewing” database? Those two purposes could have very distinct needs.

Nancy mentioned that every one of the database documents are residing somewhere in the state and with various individuals and it has been an ordeal to pull these together. CMER may want to find all of them and put them together in one place. For our own business purpose, we need to be able to demonstrate the steps that were taken on these studies.

Ron went on to present the Site Location data by reviewing a state map and walking through the different features. The distinct sites are based on relational tables, relating the GIS data with the access- database information. A person could also click on a site and find that there are overlapping study sites. CMER can set this up to meet their needs for information. Ron is able to change the format, etc. to whatever we would like the queries to be. It has the full capability of the GIS system, so anything that is functional in GIS is available.

Emily Neumann, CMER Staff Intern, introduced herself and presented the group with a spreadsheet that contains information on about 65 projects. Some of them are new projects and some are old projects. About 15 of the projects are completed, which means all the information has been gathered for them. It has been a problem to coordinate schedules, look through contract files, etc. A lot of time is spent trying to find out if there even are documents available. Emily is going to keep working on the document and create the GIS information on sites if it is available. It has to be formatted into a compatible format. She will be working 3 more weeks on this project. A lot of the old projects don't have specific site information so we will not be able to have the GIS site information for those projects.

Dave Schuett-Hames explained that the project has been able to grab some of the low hanging fruit. Dawn Hitchens has been trying to organize the information from the contracts. Emily has been working with the project managers focusing on current and recently completed projects to gather information. Now we are getting into projects that haven't been operational for a while, there isn't a current project manager and folks have moved on and we don't have information readily available.

Emily mentioned that it was helpful that the project managers sent out emails notifying the others with project information and that helped her make the necessary contacts to follow-up on.

Pete asked what the target is for information gathering. He felt it should be all the way back to the beginning of FFR; we shouldn't shorten the target because it is difficult to find. We should try and find all the documents we can. Don't stop until we are done. This may be tough but it is too important to not do it.

Emily asked that folks look at the sheet and if they have any information that she needs, please contact her.

Nancy let the group know that staff is working on the current projects first back to 2000. Then we can attack those further back. Site location and access to data all goes together.

Dave then thanked Ron and Emily for all their hard work on this project. CMER staff still has some questions that CMER needs to figure out where to go with this system:

- Who is the system really designed to serve? Darin ran into problems locating sites and has basic accountability for the products that we have received over time. The project managers have needs for historical information. Need to track decisions made over time, peer review, etc.
- How do we want to handle the actual data? Emily has tried to locate the data but not actually "capture" the data. She has possibly found the "keepers" of that data.
- How much effort do we want to put into the pre-FFR projects?
- How do we want to handle site location sensitivity issues?

Tom made the point that the information was paid for by the State of Washington and it needs to be found, kept and understood. It has to be available. What you put in there shouldn't be a question – it all needs to be there. Who it is available to find this is the question. You have to

keep everything!!! If we lost site data – get out there and find it on the ground. It needs to be available and retrievable.

Nancy mentioned that sometimes we have projects that do not make it any further than a scoping document, these need to be captured somewhere and this would be the place for this. All decisions/summaries for projects could be captured for archival purposes. It needs to continue to move forward.

Laura pointed out that DNR has to be the owner of the data; this information should be residing with DNR. Dave thought one option of storage could be the SSHIAP (Salmon and Steelhead Habitat Inventory and Assessment Program) database at the NWIFC. Laura also covered the web-based applications, which are good because they take advantage of databases in the internet world and link through applications that can be built and maintained cheaply. The GIS system Ron showed is similar to the DNR FPARS system. That system has features that could be copied for CMER purposes.

Bruce recommended continuing the small group work and have them develop the project further. Really focus on CMER needs and get that database set up. Do that first and worry about public access later. Some alternatives are to use interns or hire another person to interface with CMER to set this thing up. Let that person go ahead and get the information and kick it to Ron to enter into his system. Contractors are too expensive. Work as partners so we don't have to worry about a contract.

Dave requested that CMER continue the data gathering effort after Emily leaves at the end of March - We don't want to lose momentum. Tom stated that this should be a full-time dedicated staff position. It needs to be analyzed and money put to it. We are losing pieces of the puzzle and will continue to. Someone needs to be focused on it full-time. Keep it simple but keep it moving.

Minutes from December meeting – Sturhan/Heckel

Minutes from the January meeting, with Laura Vaugeois's comments, were approved. The Monthly Assignment lists were reviewed and updated.

'09 Workplan and Budget - Cramer

Darin reminded the group that between this meeting and the next meeting CMER needs to get the budget items and workplan edits done. They need to be approved at next meeting.

The current budget spreadsheet was reviewed and a few changes were made to projects. **SEE ATTACHED SPREADSHEET.**

Darin will clean up the spreadsheet between now and the next meeting. Those who didn't bring information need to bring it to the next meeting. Linda will send it out for review prior to the meeting.

Policy Meeting Recap– Cramer

Darin informed the group of the topics that were discussed at Policy last month:

- Post-mortem study was approved.
- There will be a meeting within DNR (Darin, Lenny Young, and Vicki Christiansen) to discuss the bull trout overlay study sites on State
- Dick Miller will be giving a presentation on the risk matrix idea at the March policy meeting.
- Policy is preceding under the original timeline for approving the CMER Budget and Workplan
 - Final approval at the CMER March meeting
 - Budget Retreat in April
 - Request for approval at the Policy May meeting
 - Request for approval at the Board's May meeting
- There is a sub-group working on follow-up to the DFC reports – there will an update at the March Policy meeting
- There was an update on the Forests and Fish Support Account
 - DNR has authority to spend \$8,000,000 for the biennium (not sure how much will be in the account)
 - Policy has not yet decided what will be paid for out of the “discretionary” portion of FFSA money because it is not known how much the account will accrue
 - There will be another update at the Policy March meeting

Steve mentioned that he had reviewed materials sent out to the FFR Policy Group and found them to be poorly organized and incomplete. His main concern were attachments linked to decision items. It was hard to distinguish which document went with which agenda item. He suggested labeling any attachments to clearly state which agenda item it is linked too. Darin commented that DNR would work on these in the future.

Project Management – Cramer

The Document that was sent out at the last meeting incorporated any comments received in time for the January meeting mailing. Darin wasn't going to do anything else with the PM language until Chapter 7 is opened for review and updating. The project managers have the document if anyone wants to review it. Todd had corrections but they didn't come through and he will wait until it gets picked up again in June. Darin said the entire chapter will be opened and updated and this section will be reviewed along with chapter 7.

ISPR Update – Cramer

Darin mentioned there were no updates on ISPR. Accuracy and Bias is next in the cue and Laura is putting together the transmittal letter.

Steve mentioned he was looking through the WAC, the Board Manual and the PSM and noted that scientific peer review is required for all CMER- funded studies. We aren't sending all reports through peer review; Steve mentioned the DOE temp modeling report and his DFC reports as examples. Steve has written a report and will send it to Darin and suggested it be given legal review and that we may have to send all the old reports through ISPR. Steve thought the intent of the rule and our guidance documents was clear. Nancy stated that it says they should be reviewed in one place and, then another place, it states that review is discretionary.

Steve countered that there are a few places like that but 10-1 it is in favor of required ISPR. Policy shouldn't be making those decisions; it is up to CMER and the Board if a study should go through ISPR. That is why we need a legal review of this issue. It is wrong that all reports don't get reviewed by ISPR. Nancy said that when it was discussed whether to send items to ISPR, CMER had a consensus review on these items and she didn't think it is a major issue. Further, it is very expensive to have ISPR review documents that don't go anywhere.

Chris agreed with some of the above statements but if you read the WAC and the HCP there are areas that are conflicting and areas that aren't. It needs to be sorted out. But, how we have dealt with it depended on how we have classified documents. Maybe that is how we can explain it: preliminary reports don't need to be reviewed but use ISPR for the larger final reports. We need clearer direction/guidelines for reviewing the reports. Steve will forward his report to Darin.

SAG Requests - Sturhan

WETSAG: Candace updated the group that WETSAG has been working on the wetlands mitigation- effectiveness project. They had drafted a scoping document and routed it around and received feedback. As a result of the feedback, more fuzzy policy questions arose. WETSAG is supposed to evaluate the effectiveness of mitigation and functions of wetlands. This is effectiveness monitoring and not compliance monitoring. WETSAG wants to evaluate sites as the rule is stated; are landowners and DNR really meeting the intent of the rule? Candace talked with Stephen Bernath and Mark Hicks, who clarified some of the implementation questions, but they are still a little fuzzy about how the rule is stated. The change they made was wanting to do a phase one survey to look at forest practices that occur within 300' of a wetland, look at the roads, landing/filling, or filling, and then in Phase 2, get a detailed/qualitative list of what kind of wetlands functions might be affected. Then phase two could progress. The budget item was the phase 1 survey.

RSAG/LWAG requests: Type N Experimental Buffer Study in Basalt Lithologies. Teresa Moon, Project Manager, updated the group on the December event and how it affected the study sites for this project. Staff had difficulty getting into the sites but they did find that some of the Willapa Hill sites are severely affected, some are snow- covered, and some have spotty damage. RSAG/LWAG would like to: 1. quantify the extent windthrow, and 2. distinguish between the blowdown and harvest effects. Therefore we need to collect more pre-harvest and post-storm data. Aerial photography is the best way to estimate the windthrow in each basin. They are going to photograph the Type N basins but collect, on – the- ground data in the RMZs. There are 18 sites and the storm may have affected only 14, and only 8 of those have substantial wind throw. The aerial photograph will be done at the end of March or the beginning of April, depending on weather. Pete wanted to remind the group that it depends on the weather and there might be shadows, particularly along cutting lines. There is a lot of wood on the ground and lousy markets. Have you gone back to the landowners and harvesters asking if they are really going to harvest standing timber this year? Teresa did say they checked in with the landowners and the study group is aware this is going to be an issue, but the landowners have stated they are still going to harvest the study sites.

There was discussion about joining this photograph request with the post-mortem data collection. It might be beneficial to combine the two. Amy said she had a meeting with DNR Engineering

about the aerial photography and she will bring up this idea and whether it is feasible. Doug also added a recommendation to collect additional aerial photos in the storm-damaged area along the coast line to complete the photo record for the area. There was a lot of discussion about the need for, logistics, and cost of these additional photos. No decision was made on this recommendation at the meeting and Doug will follow-up with additional information on his recommendation for future consideration.

Nancy asked for a group vote on the two requests and they were both **approved** (aerial photo request for \$20,000 and field sampling request for \$86,000)

RSAG Request – Extensive Riparian Monitoring, Vegetation Component Method Development. Jenelle presented the request for \$25,000 to begin work on project development in FY '08. It is currently in FY '09. They would like to use funds (up to \$25,000) out of project development for '08 and request the remainder from the '09 budget. This is for developing project methodology. This was **approved**.

SAG Issues - Sturhan

Terry Jackson brought forward an issue regarding the fish passage sub group. The group had met recently and wasn't able to finish development of an approved course of action. The peer reviewers brought up several issues which, together, could significantly affect the study design. Some of the issues were statistical in nature, such as: adding replicates and randomizing trials. Addressing both of those could impact other aspects of the study design and increase the sample size. The group needs help from CMER on how to proceed with the next steps. The first option the subgroup came up with was to complete the course of action, identifying the areas that need more work, and to bring that course of action to CMER for discussion. A second option was to get a statistician to figure out these issues before completion of the course of action and presentation to CMER. The second option would likely involve additional money for contracting a statistician. A third option would involve forwarding the issues to be resolved to an RFP. The subgroup would then need to review various responses from proposals and agree on one proposal. The direction the subgroup takes is complicated, as policy has not yet decided on whether or not to go forward with the study. Should these issues be brought forward to policy before going further? Jenelle suggested that the subgroup doesn't have to do exactly what was suggested in the ISPR review. They just need to respond to ISPR comments and give an explanation of what may or may not be added to the study and have CMER review it. Nancy agreed that the subgroup doesn't have to solve all of the ISPR comments, you just have to respond to the comments (you agree, you don't agree, we agree but we don't have the time or resources, etc.). Doug commented that he didn't think a statistician needs to go over it. The response should be that there needs to be further evaluation in the final design. This is a policy driven thing; we have to go to Policy to ask for the go ahead. It has to do with the end point, do they want the product or not. Nancy followed up that right now all the group needs to do is to respond on paper to the reviews. Don't fix it. Nancy offered to assist Terry with the responses to comments.

Chris wanted to follow-up with CMER regarding Paul Kennard reviewing the post-mortem study as amended. The Conservation Caucus approves the study without Paul's review.

Chris also has a question on designating CMER reviewers for the amphibian –on- intermittent stream study, originally there were three; Curt, Sally and himself. The study for review was retracted and additional work was done and sent out for another review. Chris did not receive that information. His question was: at the time he was going to review it, now his time availability has changed. If there is a retracted document, should they look for different reviewers? Nancy said the question for reviewers should come back to the entire CMER group. To see if there are others that would like to be reviewing it. Chris says he plans on commenting but isn't finished yet.

The meeting was adjourned.

Future Meetings

CMER 2008 Regular Meetings: March 25 TBD, April 22 DNR Compound, May 27 TBD, June 24 DNR Compound, July 22 DNR Compound, August 26 DNR Compound, September 23 DNR Compound, October 28 DNR Compound, November 25 DNR Compound and December 16 DNR Compound.