

Forest Practices Board
Water Typing Rule Committee
September 24, 2021
Meeting conducted via Zoom

Committee Members Present:

Bob Guenther, Committee Chair and General Public Member
Cody Desautel, General Public Member
David Herrera, General Public Member
Jeff Davis, Director's designee, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (9:15 a.m.–10 a.m.)
Tom Nelson, General Public Member

Staff

Marc Engel and Patricia Anderson, DNR
Phil Ferester, ATG

Welcome and Introductions

Bob Guenther, Committee chair, called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

Anadromous Fish Floor (AFF) Workshop, Project Team Presentation

Marc Ratcliff, DNR, provided an overview on the Board's acceptance of two Anadromous Fish Floor (AFF) proposals in 2018, the creation of the Board's Water Typing Committee (Committee) to oversee the development of the AFF, and the goals contained in the AFF project team's charter. He said the completion for recommendations has taken longer than originally thought due to additional time to initiate an open competitive contract, time to work through complex data, and time to clarify the difference in what the Board accepted and the true application of each AFF proposal.

Ash Roorbach, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, shared information on the watersheds used in the AFF analysis, the different data sets the project team evaluated, and how tributaries or natural barriers should be evaluated. He said the data was integrated to answer the questions of interest the AFF analysis attempted to resolve. He walked the Committee through the four different AFF alternatives the team evaluated – two alternatives are variations from the original AFF proposals accepted by the Board in 2018.

Dan Miller, Terrainworks, provided an overview of the methods used to perform the analysis. He provided an overview of the digital elevation information to derive channel networks, the snapping procedure used to incorporate the fish data to the stream networks, and the process to calculate stream gradients and length segments.

Gus Seixas, Skagit River System Cooperative, provided the purpose of the AFF sensitivity analysis. The purpose of the sensitivity analysis was to try to assess how the performance of the model would change based on things like changing the minimum reach length or stream gradients. He said this is important because three of the four AFF alternatives relied used a concept of sustained gradient.

He shared the false positive and false negative results for each AFF proposal. He said to reduce errors, the team used a 20 X bank full width criteria for reach distances.

Miller provided the results of the sensitivity analysis. To view the full presentation, see the meeting recording at: <https://www.dnr.wa.gov/about/boards-and-councils/forest-practices-board/water-typing-rule-committee>

Roorbach shared some of the issues with the data used in the analysis: incomplete information within water type modification forms, lack of statewide anadromy used in the Statewide Washington Integrated Fish Distribution (SWIFD) dataset, the definitions used for natural barriers, the lack of field calibration for the results and model accuracy in the gradient estimates.

Next Steps, Products of Deliverable Update

Ash Roorbach, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, said the next step is for the AFF project team to discuss Dan Miller's findings. He said the team needs to compare the information, draft a report for the Committee and work to develop recommendations. He said they will strive for consensus, but if that is not achieved, they will provide options for the Committee to consider. He added that the AFF project team still needs to develop the implementation part of the AFF for rule and guidance.

Committee Direction to AFF Workgroup

Committee member Nelson asked that the AFF project team provide enough time for the Committee to digest the information before making a decision, especially before the Committee is expected to make a recommendation to the full Board.

Committee chair Guenther questioned the need for the next meeting if the report or the AFF project team's recommendation is not ready.

Committee member Desautel said that a field component for assessing the AFF may be needed, but it should not be rushed.

Committee Herrera said he supports an urgent approach. He added that the AFF workgroup needs to be involved in helping arrive at the AFF recommendation. He hopes the product will give the Committee enough information to make the best policy decision.

Marc Engel, DNR, suggested that the October 18 meeting would be used to review a draft of the AFF project team's report if the final report is not ready or if recommendations are not quite developed.

Committee member Nelson requested that time for public comment be provided at the October 18 meeting.

Engel said a Committee status report will be given at the November 2021 Board meeting, but a topic for recommendations will not be included if it is not fully developed.

Committee chair Guenther recommended that October 18 Committee meeting will include the review of the AFF project team's report and the October 19 meeting will provide time for public comment.

The Committee requested that the AFF project team's draft report to be delivered by October 15, 2021.

Meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.