

**Columbia River Policy Advisory Group
September 6, 2018
Hal Holmes Community Center
Ellensburg, Washington**

Welcome/Introductions

The meeting began at 9:30 a.m. Introductions were made around the room. Facilitator Neil Aaland reviewed the agenda.

Columbia River Treaty Update

Tom Tebb summarized the current status. Formal negotiations with Canadian representatives started in May. The state department website has information; he also noted there is a public workshop tonight in Portland. Call-in information was provided [888-330-1716, PIN 19431467#].

Tom Karier, one of Washington's designees regarding the CR Treaty, was on the phone. The workshop tonight in Portland will include U.S. negotiator Jill Smail. He does not have a lot to discuss on progress, initial work is still being done. Canada is interested in how the U.S. uses water. \$300 million is spent each year on mitigation in the U.S. Canada spends much less on ecosystem and fisheries. The U.S. makes significant payments to Canada each year, and it's up to them how to spend those payments. Canada is not likely to agree to changes unless they're better off. The process has been moving slowly, and there are no timelines. Washington has major interests – energy, floods, ecosystem/salmon recovery, water supply, and more.

Questions and comments:

- Craig has heard that the Canadians want a longer process, Jill Smail wants it sooner [this reflects the Canadian interest in a longer process]
- When is the next negotiation session scheduled? [Next scheduled meeting is October 17 and 18 in Portland]

Columbia System Operations Review EIS

Tom Tebb led this discussion about the scoping process. It's been going on for a year now. Several of you around the table may be asked to be a "cooperating agency". BPA is one of three federal co-leads, and they have had public meetings; 2300 people have attended. There is a website. At this point 8 alternatives will be developed, will be combined into multi-objective alternatives. The plan is to put out a draft EIS in March 2020. Michael Garrity is also part of the Washington team and agrees with Tom's summary; the driver is to meet Judge Simon's directive. A final EIS is planned by September 2021.

OCR Budget/Legislative Updates

Melissa Downes led this discussion on budget updates. It is similar to the presentation made to the PAG in June, but now has better defined dollar estimates. Projects scheduled for funding (additional or new) include Odessa, Icicle Creek Management Strategy, OCR project level mitigation (several projects), Odessa road bridges (needed due to widening of canals), "coordinated conservation, Walla Walla Plan, and Potholes. There are some new project proposals. Rick Miller asked about the "bubble of water" near Tri-Cities; Tom said they need to get some legal questions answered about using that water.

Tom Tebb led the discussion about agency request legislation. OCR has used up the final \$12 million of the original \$200 million. OCR is requesting re-authorization of bonds, increased to

\$300 million. There seems to be general support. There are lots of demands for state funding. Senator Honeyford may run a bill upwards of \$4 billion – addressing floods, stormwater, water supply, and culverts.

Darryll Olson noted there is an appetite for other people's money; using private sector funding is still possible. He also thinks if Senator Honeyford is looking to add another land tax, the new bill would likely be dead.

Michael Garrity thinks a discussion, building on the strategic planning exercise done by the CR-PAG, would be useful – a higher level discussion on water supply priorities for coming years.

Columbia Basin Fish Accords

Michael Garrity provided an update. BPA last Friday issued a proposal that would extend the 2008 accords, at reduced funding levels. Most of the current MOUs expire at the end of September 2018. Washington State is technically not part of accords, there is a separate agreement with the state and BPA that is being worked on. BPA is inviting comment on the draft extensions.

A break was taken at 10:35 a.m.

Public Comment

Ann Lewis, Friends of Lake Kachess, submitted a petition signed by over 5,000 people opposing the Lake Kachess Drought Relief Pumping Plant and the Keechelus to Kachess Conveyance (pipeline) which are alternatives described in an SDEIS of the BOR and WA Dept. of Ecology. A link to the petition: <http://savelakekachess.org/petition/>

Michelle Kiesz represents land owners in the basin. She thanks OCR for their help in getting water and helping irritators.

Project Updates

Tom Tebb said they are working on three Environmental Impact Statements (EISs).

- Keechelus-Kachess: over 6,000 comments have been received
- Icicle Creek: coordinated with Chelan County. Comment period closed end of July, received more than 6,000 comments.
- Switzler Reservoir: just starting the EIS scoping process [proposal discussed later in this meeting]

There is more work to do, including meeting with landowners. OCR has also been asked to engage in the Walla Walla work. This includes working with Oregon and local tribes, notably the Umatilla Tribe. OCR is also noting a lot of interest in Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR). OCR believes this is a useful tool.

Yakima Basin Integrated Plan (YBIP) work is continuing. Work includes:

- Projects benefiting juvenile salmon
- Removing the Bateman Island causeway
- Potholes feed route resulted in flooding in Crab Creek area; need additional work to understand the problems and develop a solution. No water was placed in Crab Creek this past year and flooding still occurred
- A house impacted by flooding was purchased in Moses Lake vicinity, and some work was needed to repair damage at Moses Lake airport

Switzler Reservoir EIS Scoping

Dave McClure, Klickitat County, and Melissa Downes, OCR gave a powerpoint presentation. A \$950,000 grant was received from OCR. Alternatives addressed by the EIS include ASR and two storage projects. The Alder reservoir had a fatal flaw and is no longer part of the proposal. Switzler Reservoir dam would be 1 mile upstream of Columbia River and is on private property. It is intended to mitigate for new water rights. No additional infrastructure is planned. The aim is to get water back to the Columbia River during July/August low flows.

Questions and comments:

- What is the size of the dam? [325 feet]
- Hydro generation not considered with current technology, perhaps a decade out
- Earth and concrete structure
- 44,000 acre-feet of storage
- Demand for water is all through Horse Heaven area
- No listed aquatic species in canyon
- Probably 8-10 years out from construction

Scoping period is open till October 22.

Upper Columbia Forest Restoration/Snowpack Decision Support Tool

Melody Kreimes and Mike Merton gave this presentation. Melody noted the work is funded by OCR. They made an initial presentation to the CR-PAG about three years ago. The goal of the tool is Allow users to explore the effects of forest management (prescriptions and treatment locations) on snowpack and resulting stream flows. The model was developed by Pacific Northwest Labs. EcoTrust was hired to develop an interface for the model.

Mike Merton took over from here and gave the powerpoint [see PPT posted on OCR website for details - https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1962/Documents/CRPAG/snow2flow8-18.pdf]. Tom Tebb noted that managers can play with different scenarios to assess impacts on stream flow. This version only applies to the upper Columbia; it is very location-specific. It will be useful to come back in a couple of years to see how it works.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:00 p.m. The next meeting of the CRPAG will be on Thursday, December 13 at the Hal Holmes Center in Ellensburg, WA.

Attendees:

CRPAG members and alternates:

Debbie Carlson, BPA
 Michael Garrity, WDFW
 Chris Kewitz, OR DWR
 B. J. Kieffer, Spokane Tribe
 Wendy McDermott, Amer. Rivers
 Rick Miller, Franklin Co. Comm.

Darryll Olsen, CSRIA
 Mike Schwisow
 Craig Simpson, ECBID
 Mark Stedman, Lincoln Co. Comm.
 Richard Stevens, Grant Co. Comm.

Others in attendance:

Neil Aaland, Facilitator
Ben Carr, OCR
Scott Cave, City of Quincy
Stuart Crane, Yakama Nation
Jeff Dengel, WDFW
Melissa Downes, OCR
Urban Eberhart, KRD
Karen Epps, Senate Comm Svcs
Bernie Erickson
Tim Flynn, Aspect
Tim Hill, Ecology
Mike Kaputa, Chelan Co

Ann Keiffer, WA Dept of Commerce
Michelle Kiesz, EBIA/OGWRP
Mike Krautkramer, Robinson Noble
Ann Lewis
Kevin Lindsey, GeoEngineers
Dave McClure, Klickitat County
Chris Marks, CTUIR
Tom Myrum, WSWRA
Joye Redfield-Wilder, Ecology
Ben Serr, WA Dept of Commerce
Tom Tebb, OCR
Bruce Wakefield, Colville Tribe