

# TRINITY RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL

## *Mission Statement*

*To protect, enhance, restore and revitalize the watershed through collaborative efforts that leverage external resources, work toward common goals, educate and engage community stakeholders, address natural resource issues, and support healthy ecosystems for future generations.*

Final Meeting Notes  
Tuesday September 25, 2018  
TCRCD Conference Room, #3 Horseshoe Lane, Weaverville  
10:00 am – 12:35 pm

***In attendance:*** David Schmerge (USFS), Cindy Buxton (5Cs and WRTC), Donna Rupp, Patrick Flynn and Tracy McFadin (TCRCD), Marie Petersen (Down River Consulting), Adam McKannay (CDFW), Bob Morris (SAFE), Bobbi Chadwick (TCBOS). Attendance via phone Eli Asarian (Riverbend Sciences) and Wes Smith (NOAA).

## **1. Introductions.**

**2. Trinity County Commercial Cannabis Licensing Program CEQA** – Marie Petersen provided a handout of the CEQA timeline. Her concerns are a) The first CEQA document released was inadequate, and b) The county is already behind schedule and may miss the June 2019 deadline. Feels the process lacks transparency and has mostly been administrative so far. She urged the BOS to create a cannabis advisory committee but it hasn't happened. She would like to create a stakeholder group that will review the draft CEQA documents and comment on them. Grading ordinances are one of the issues. She would like to have a broad representation in the stakeholder group. She would like to have process paid for by farmers, possibly through a "go-fund-me" account. She believes there is a lack of accountability and environmental issues are not being addressed. Bobbi commented that the state set the timeline the county is under. She said that Cal. Dept. of Food and Ag's CalCannabis Division said that until July 1, 2019, individuals can prepare their own CEQA and don't have to wait for the county to complete CEQA. Marie said she would like the stakeholder group to provide input at every opportunity, review drafts, and comment, and support a successful outcome and help avoid litigation. Marie said that the TCRCD, WRTC, 5C and DSAFE have agreed to participate. If anyone is interested in being a part of the stakeholder group, please let Marie know. Question asked what kind of agreement CDFW has with County to keep farmers in compliance. Adam said that CDFW has a road remediation process in place, and if they want to move out of cultivation it is an easy process. He said they don't have one remediation process for water diversions because they can be so variable.

**3. Grading Ordinance Update** – Donna Rupp shared notes from her 9/14/18 meeting with Trinity County Director of Transportation, Rick Tippet, and Trinity County Planner, David Colbeck. Trinity County is pushing back the deadline for getting a grading ordinance in place, according to staff it is not a top BOS priority. Even if the county adopts an ordinance from another county (as a template), Trinity County doesn't have the infrastructure in place to support and enforce it. Recommended that Watershed Council attend cannabis meetings and keep the issue in front of the BOS. County under deadline set by state for getting permit process in place. Egregious violations need to be remediated if affecting streams. Water Board visits are focusing on farms trying to get permitted and meet water quality/sediment standards set by water board and CDFW. Trinity County is not an "MS4" county (which deals with how storm water is managed). Trinity County may be low priority for water board. The County doesn't have the "will" or resources needed to deal with the grading ordinance, no funding is coming back to the county yet from cannabis sales.

**4. New Project - Temperature Synthesis Report re: water temperatures in the Trinity River and tributaries – Eli Asarian, Riverbend Sciences (via phone)**

Eli explained that the project is in partnership with Yurok Tribe and TRRP. He will be focusing on summarizing what we know, and don't know, about stream temperatures. Mainstem Trinity River is the focus for analysis, but the project also will gather and warehouse data from South Fork, tributaries, and lower Klamath mainstem. He is currently gathering agency data, and starting to reach out to NGOs that might also have smaller data sets. Looking more at continuous data collected than spot samples. Expected to complete project by spring 2020. Plans to compile the data into a centralized location.

**5. Update on watershed restoration gap analysis: GIS analysis draft maps and request for input (WaterSmart Project) – Donna Rupp /Patrick Flynn**

Handout: Project Landscape Level Restoration Gap and Trend Analysis for Tributaries of the Trinity River, CA., summarizes the project. Donna has been reviewing agency information and online databases. The approach is different from a watershed analysis, and uses landscape GIS data to define watershed characteristics. It is a new approach and will need refinement. Product will be available to public. Looking at Trinity River subwatersheds (as TRRP has already analyzed the Trinity River mainstem). The goal is to help create priorities for watershed restoration work. Project is considering data gathered back to 2000 (era of TRRP ROD, TMDLs, SONCC Plan, etc.). The resulting information should help TRWC make recommendations based on data collected.

An example discussed Aquatic Health map (displayed on screen). Coho presence and Intrinsic Potential (IP) mapping is often used to prioritize restoration project funding. Wes explained that the IP (from SONCC) was a broad brush, landscape approach, for large planning areas that is meant to be fine-tuned on the ground. Any new information will be incorporated. Eli said it is important to use observed data and modeled data separately. IP refinement could include letting NOAA know if there are natural unmapped barriers to fish passage (i.e. waterfalls) for IP layer updates. Donna said maps will indicate total barriers (i.e. Trinity Dam).

Discussion of Terrestrial Health map (displayed on screen) showing watershed characteristics of habitat connectivity (Wilderness Areas show more connectivity but it is spotty around communities). Map also indicates marbled Murrelet and NSO critical habitat and NWFP watershed health rating. North Trinity Lake Watershed used as an example, restoration funding to date has been driven by anadromous fisheries, so not a lot of restoration has happened there. More funding may become available for upper watershed, headwaters restoration. Map may help focus our restoration priorities in those areas.

Discussion of Completed restoration projects and past impacts map (displayed on screen). Eleven projects types displayed with subwatershed boundaries. Discussion regarding amount of past projects in a watershed being used as an indicator of watershed health. David said monitoring data is needed to show the actual conditions. Tracy said amount of project work being used to indicate watershed health needs to be considered against background conditions (such as erosive DG or amount of disturbance). Marie said type of restoration important, i.e. was a road closed or properly decommissioned? Discussion about how if needed restoration work identified in TMDL reports is completed, can improve water quality conditions by 83%, but maybe not enough to delist, which is a huge process. Bobbi asked about overlaying fire maps with past projects/impacts to help predict future sediment issues. Donna said fire history maps and fuels reduction work not considered in this data set because they change so much over time. However, it is easy to overlay fire maps and use with the data. Donna and Patrick will circulate the draft maps for recommendations and feedback. Marie suggested using the 100 year fire analysis map that the WRTC completed - they refer to it as the spaghetti and meatballs map.

## 6. South Fork Priority Watershed Update – David Schmerge

David explained that the USFS has a regional Water Board waiver for land disturbing activities. To comply with the waiver they need to select priority subwatersheds. They have a Westside NEPA ID Team now to do small restoration projects. They are currently scoping the Headwaters of the SFTR Restoration Project CE. Project is to address legacy sediment sites (Shell Mountain Creek roads). Watershed currently exceeds water quality standards for sedimentation. They are doing monitoring in the drainage, hoping that monitoring will show over time that they do not have to restore every stream crossing to meet water quality standards in TMDL. Decision expected this year. No funding currently for implementation.

## 7. Upcoming watershed grant opportunities – Donna Rupp

Mike Dixon, TRRP, said in an email to her that the BOR-TRRP Watershed Implementation Proposal FOA will be released between Oct. 1 and Nov. 1, 2018, and will be open for 60 days. Tracy said that there are two Prop 68 draft RFPs available for comment, from the CDFW and WCB, can be found online. Applicants can include local, state and federal agencies. WCB opportunity's eligible projects include restoration work in headwaters.

## 8. Program work/updates/news

### *TC Fish and Game Commission (Donna)*

- They have been reviewing the deer management plan.

### *TCRCD (Donna)*

- Road and restoration work on the Helena-Fork Fire BAER Project, South Fork Trinity River road decommissioning project, Smokey Creek Watershed roads upgrade project, 2017 Buck Fire Area road work, and Browns Project road work.
- Weaverville Community Forest- Planning project with CSD at West Weaver Creek CSD diversion to improve efficiency and put more water back into the creek.

### *TRRP (Mike Dixon via email to Donna)*

- TRRP will be drawing down Hamilton Ponds and excavating sediment (DG) in October. No coho present, but 30 steelhead counted.
- Mainstem Trinity River Draft NEPA for Dutch Creek Restoration Project for functional floodplain creation and Chapman Ranch Site Draft NEPA– possible construction in 2019.

### *Watershed Research Training Center (Cindy)*

- Implementing the SFTR Heliwood Project (with Yurok Tribe),
- Watershed Stewards Program staff arriving October, available for watershed project work.

### *5Cs (Cindy)*

- Working on final design stages of East Weaver Creek Dam Removal Project. Implementation to begin next year. First installing new water service diversion, then there will be removal of dam in multiple stages.
- Browns Creek Project- community meeting last month had about 30 people attend. They are getting landowners signed up for the project. Working to decrease summer use of creek water, some landowners interested in forbearance and storage program.

### *Downriver Consulting (Marie)*

- Working with a Browns Creek farmer that has a legacy water system and leaky diversion. Planning water storage infrastructure.
- Working on a water plan for a Burnt Ranch 200 ac property with complex water issues. Water forbearance and infrastructure needs to be set up.

### *SAFE (Bob)*

- Working on the county cannabis issues.

- Doing support work for Congressman Huffman's Public Lands Bill (Northern CA Conservation and Recreation Act). Proposed wilderness areas are in part to protect the cold-water sources for fisheries habitat.
- Working with TCCG subgroup on shaded fuel break treatments, having a lot of success with Six River NF, not as much success working with Shasta-Trinity NF.

*CDFW (Adam)*

- Foothill yellow-legged frog listing (under ESA) decision coming up, may affect restoration projects.
- CEQA for small habitat restoration projects can use CDFW Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Act Authority (HREA) (1552 & 1553) as an alternative to standard process/permits (1600 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement and/or 2081 CA ESA Incidental Take Permit). Local CDFW staff can help you prepare for state level review.

*USFS (David)*

- Burnt Ranch Fire Resiliency Community Project EIS,
- Trinity County Collaborative Group Roads and Plantations Pilot Project EA,
- Dubakella Plantations Insect and Disease Project CE,
- Also working on logging, prescribed fire, and legacy sediment site plans,
- Trinity Post Fire Hazard Reduction and Salvage Project (2015 Fires) EIS,
- Restoration Road Work planning for future NFWF grant funding opportunity,
- PG&E Hazard Tree Removal,
- Headwaters SFTR Restoration Project CE.

*Trinity County Board of Supervisors (Bobbi)*

- New state rules require county to address cannabis policy. If grower is not licensed will not be allowed to farm (opposite of how it worked before, the grower had to have a grow established to get a license in Trinity County). You have to be compliant when you come in to the process and submit a completed application.
- Illegal water diversions are being identified.
- Individual cultivation sites can demonstrate CEQA compliance, allowed through 2019.

*Trinity County Planning (Leslie)*

- County is working on the cannabis licensing CEQA process. They now have a consultant on board, providing third party viewpoint, which should be perceived as being more objective.
- New floodplain maps for Trinity River management corridor from FEMA. Conditional letter of map revision.

*NRCS (Jen)*

- Starting into new fiscal year, so not a lot of funding right now.
- Working with contracted Registered Professional Forester on site visits and plans for private lands affected by the Carr Fire. Two sites in Trinity County. Looking at erosion, trees, etc.
- Forester position is going to be advertised for Weaverville office in Oct.

*(No one present to report for Yurok Tribe, Hoopa Tribe and BLM).*

Adjourned at 12:35 pm. Next Meeting: Tuesday November 27, 2018 at 10 am.

# MEETING SIGN-IN SHEET

Trinity River Watershed Council

Meeting Date: Sept. 25, 2018

TCRCD Conference Room

Name	Affiliation/ Contact Info. If Not on Current List
Marie Petersen	Down River Consulting
BOB MORRIS	SAFE
Adam McKannay	CDFW
Tracy McFadin	TCRCD
David Schmerge	USFS
Bobbi Chackwick	BOJ
PATRICK FLYNN	TCRCD
Cindy Buxton	WRTC / SC.
Eli Asarian	River Bend Sci (phone)
Donna Rupp	TCRCD
Wes	NOAA (phone) NMFS
Jenna GANBUNG	NRCS
Leslie Hubbard	TC Planning Dept

Marie noted that the dates are two days off through the whole schedule, making the last date June 4, 2019.

<b>TC Cannabis Cultivation CEQA Milestones</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Julien</b>	<b>Days to complete</b>
BOS Meeting to Approve Contract	28-Aug	240	
Document Type Selection	<del>19</del> 17-Oct	290	50
Prepare NOP	<del>26</del> 24-Oct	297	7
Publish/Circulate NOP	<del>25</del> 23-Nov	327	30
Review Written Comments on NOP	<del>Dec</del> 30-Nov	334	7
Conduct Scoping Meetings	<del>16</del> 14-Dec	348	14
Prepare Admin Draft EIR	12-Feb	43	60
Staff Review of Draft	19-Feb	50	7
Prepare Public DEIR	5-Mar	64	14
Publish/Circulate DEIR	19-Apr	109	45
Review Comments, Respond Final EIR	19-May	139	30
Prepare findings for Certification and Project Approval	2-Jun	153	14