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## **YRBWEP Habitat Subcommittee Subgroup- Mainstem Floodplain Restoration in Yakima County**

**Meeting Notes, September 14, 2010, Yakima County Courthouse in Yakima, Washington**

### **Opening Comments**

Ben Floyd, Anchor QEA and meeting facilitator, led introductions and distributed a copy of the Mainstem Floodplain Restoration table from the YRBWEP Habitat Subcommittee recommendations report prepared Fall 2009. Ben also discussed the focus of this meeting to identify more specific improvements in the mainstream reaches on the Yakima and Naches Rivers within Yakima County. The group decided to discuss a framework for implementation prior to characterizing more specific floodplain restoration improvements.

Alex Conley, YBFWRB, commented that we need to look at how funds will be allocated (partnerships to direct dollars), what is being spent on what (program structure), and goals for floodplain restoration (habitat metrics). Alex emphasized the need to know everybody's interests are accounted for.

### **Organization and Goals**

The group agreed that there is a need for a recommendation for either an "Advisory Group", or a "Floodplain Management Group" (i.e., some new entity). The main players to draw from to create this new entity include: Counties, FEMA, Cities, Yakama Nation, WDFW, NMFS, USFWS, USBR, USACE, land trusts, and conservation groups.

The goals addressed two categories: physical processes and biological processes. The group identified the main elements for both physical and biological processes to have functioning in the mainstem floodplain to achieve desired water quality and habitat conditions, as summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Mainstem Floodplain Restoration Physical and Biological Processes to Achieve	
PHYSICAL PROCESSES:	BIOLOGICAL PROCESSES:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sediment transport and storage (floodplain turnover)</li> <li>• Sediment deposition/erosion (floodplain turnover)</li> <li>• Maintenance of channel (flow) conveyance</li> <li>• Hyporheic exchange</li> <li>• Flood/drought management regime</li> <li>• Maintenance of tributaries ( and connections)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Habitat connectivity</li> <li>• Nutrient cycling and water quality</li> <li>• Riparian forest turnover</li> <li>• Diverse community structure</li> <li>• Protect unique environments</li> </ul>

The group also determined that "Reach by Reach" plans may be the most efficient approach in addressing this Mainstem Floodplain Restoration effort.



## Geographic Areas and Improvements

Joel Freudenthal, Yakima County, supplied technical support and provided Yakima County GIS mapping to assist with identifying each reach. The subcommittee agreed to start in the upper Naches River and move downstream, identifying needed improvements at each reach. Table 2 below summarizes the improvements identified by the group.

Table 2 Naches River Mainstem Floodplain Restoration Necessary Improvements by Geographic Location	
GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION:	NOTES:
Bumping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Couple of fish blockages (~200 feet of habitat upstream)</li> </ul>
Meandering strip above and just below Cliffdell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No significant channel reinforcements</li> </ul>
By Mather Rest Area and Campground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slight bank armoring (further assessment needed)</li> </ul>
Gold Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No “floodway”, or similar to no “no-go-zone”</li> <li>• Land acquisition opportunity area?</li> <li>• Land-use controls are in place here (cannot subdivide)</li> <li>• Can maintain physical goals, but not biological</li> </ul>
Old Forest Work Center downstream to Rock Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nothing really too bad to justify action</li> <li>• Fish rearing present</li> </ul>
Rock Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1974 vintage levy constricts channel</li> <li>• Pile of rip rap</li> <li>• Would like to widen channel at levy</li> <li>• Coho rearing in (biologically valuable)</li> <li>• No acquisition opportunity: housing at levy and downstream</li> <li>• Restricts sediment transport</li> <li>• River will eventually overcome the neighboring highway</li> <li>• Bend will get sharper</li> </ul>
Bed Rock Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bank armoring by red house (red house existed in 1998 setback from river; now sets at river)</li> <li>• More development</li> <li>• Potential for land acquisition (some opportunities here)</li> </ul>
Upper Nile Bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early- to mid-1960s development</li> <li>• Lot consolidation / land acquisition opportunity area?</li> <li>• Undeveloped land in floodplain (will not be developed)</li> <li>• Pleistocene floodplains (should move around)</li> </ul>

Table 2

Mainstem Floodplain Restoration Necessary Improvements by Reach	
GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION:	NOTES:
End of Nile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rip out levy (protecting gravel pit)</li> </ul>
Nile Confluence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private lands</li> <li>• First soft constriction</li> <li>• First alluvial</li> </ul>
Upstream of Rattlesnake Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highly recommend land acquisition</li> </ul>
Nile Slide Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• *See Nile Meeting Notes. Anchor QEA will incorporate actions from this meeting into the recommendations</li> </ul>
Below lower Nile Bridge (~1 mile)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temperature problems</li> </ul>

### Meeting Wrap-up

Tom Elliott, Yakama Nation, will compile and geo-reference all of today's notes and send them out for the next meeting. Tom and Alex will also work on a hosted KML, or keyhole markup language, to include everyone's notes (KML is a file format used to display geographic data in an Earth browser such as Google Earth, Google Maps, and Google Maps for mobile). Markups should be made prior to the next meeting. Anchor QEA will put today's notes in table-form per site and send them out to the group. Ben noted that all floodplain restoration planning needs to be wrapped up by mid-October so that the information can be presented at the YRBWEP Workgroup October 21 meeting.

### Attendance

Alex Conley, YBFWRB  
 Tom Elliott, Yakama Nation  
 Ben Floyd, Anchor QEA  
 Joel Freudenthal, Yakima County  
 Joel Hubble, Reclamation  
 Ryan Anderson, City of Yakima  
 Kristi Geris, Anchor QEA

### Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010, 1 – 4 PM at Alex's shop. Items to cover at the next meeting include:

- Prioritize Actions (i.e. 1<sup>st</sup>: Great opportunities, 2<sup>nd</sup>: Limited opportunities, etc.)
- Apply some type of units to each reach (\$)
- Continue moving downstream from today, covering the following reaches: Naches, Gap to Gap (quickly), and Taylor Ditch.

The subcommittee agreed to defer Wapato to the Wapato Process, and leave Selah for now.

### **Where to Find Additional Information**

Meeting materials, notes, and presentations from the Workgroup meetings and subcommittee meetings will be posted on the project website (<http://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/yrbwep/index.html>). A bibliography of information sources, many of which are available online, is also posted on the website. If anyone needs help finding an information source, contact those listed at the top of page 1 or Ben Floyd at Anchor QEA, Richland office, (509) 392-4548, or [bfloyd@anchorqea.com](mailto:bfloyd@anchorqea.com).

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