

ICICLE STRATEGY
Icicle Work Group Meeting Summary
Thursday, October 12, 2023: 10:00am – 2:00pm
Confluence Technology Center, Wenatchee

Members/Alternates Present: Melissa Downes, Ecology-OCR; Theo Burgoon, TU; Shon Smith, Chelan County Commissioner; Erica Taecker, USFS; Nate White, WDFW; Carl Florea, City of Leavenworth; Mike Kaputa, Chelan County; Levi Jantzer, IPID; Mat Maxey, USFWS; Bill Gale, USFWS; Chuck Brushwood, CTRC; Greg McLaughlin, WWT; Tessa Reader, WWT; Dan Church, Reclamation; Brock Hoenes, WDFW; Shannon Lunz, ICWC; Shaun Seaman, ICWC; Dan Wilkinson, COIC; Nicole Ahlem, Reclamation; Chris Duke, Reclamation

Guests Present:: David Ortman (online); Margie Van Cleve (online);

Staff/Consultants Present: Mary Jo Sanborn, Chelan County; Dan Haller, Aspect Consulting; Peter Dykstra, Plauche&Carr; Cynthia Carlstad, NHC; Dave Rice, Anchor QEA; Abby Hendrickson, Chelan County; Ingrid Eckstrom, Ecology-OCR; Caroline Mellor, Ecology Water Resources Program (online);

Short Updates

- LNFH SWISP in-water work is wrapping up this fall, the new fish screen has been operational since spring, meeting NOAA requirements. USFWS staff will watch winter operations of the new screen carefully. Mat will present the project to the Leavenworth Rotary in November. IWG members expressed an interest in having a full presentation with photos, videos at a future meeting. This project is a huge accomplishment and has been well over 10 years in process. Look for an opportunity for a field visit by IWG in spring.
- 2023 Lake Release Coordination Levi noted that IPID used every bit of storage water that was available this year with such low flows. Several early meetings then email coordination worked to communicate adjustments throughout the season by IPID and LNFH. Dan noted that flows stayed above drought year levels as a result of releases. Aspect is working on final data and will bring results to the Steering Committee, then will work with Ecology on trust water donations. A question was asked about clarifying Snow Lake storage: IPID has rights to the natural flow in Snow Creek and storage rights in Snow Lake. IPID agreed to reduce storage rights in agreement with LNFH and will release water from at least one other lake before it accesses Snow Lake.
- PHABSIM data collection WDFW completed data collection; a final report will be done in January.
- COIC Project Update The appeal period ended with no appeals to the ROE. Chelan County, WWT, COIC are working on a three-party agreement. The construction team is meeting to finalize bid documents with the plan to go out to bid in late October. Chelan county is also working on funding agreements. The County will need all funding agreements in place by the time bids are awarded in late January.
- Icicle River Middle School Water Conservation Project This project was designed by middle school students and planted by students earlier this week. The school is very excited about this garden and outdoor classroom space. Interpretive signs to come.
- Outreach

- Website will go live by early next week at iciclestrategy.com. Project pages will be added as the information is ready.
- PBS Event North40 worked with KBTC in Tacoma to show a consolidated 30 minute video on the Icicle Strategy. Four IWG members participated in a panel conversation on Northwest Now which will air on the PBS station next Friday, Oct 20th at 7PM. The show was taped yesterday.
- For general outreach support IWG can work with Nicole at Reclamation to access BOR's public affairs staff, WDFW has new additional capacity to help with outreach, as well as the County's public affairs officer, who will be doing outreach for COIC. Peter will convene a new outreach committee utilizing these resources. The City will have a new person in several weeks that could be involved.
- Eightmile Lake Dam Rebuild and Restoration EIS Ecology and consultants continue to compile a comment response summary and plan to release the final EIS around the end of the year.

LNFH Groundwater Update and Feasibility Funding Request (Mat Maxey, Dan Haller)

One of the guiding principles is a Sustainable Hatchery and improving access to groundwater for the LNFH water source is an important part of that. The IWG supported work on this guiding principle 6 or 7 years ago, however progress stalled while efforts focused on completing the pRAS Pilot project and SWISP, which are both important components of the BiOP. Dan and Mat provided a presentation review of the importance of groundwater to hatchery operations, what work was done several years ago, and a proposal to continue moving this project forward.

Groundwater is critical for the hatchery to have clean, cold and pathogen free water which supplements surface water. Groundwater is used 10 months a year. Under current production the groundwater need is 6,000 gpm. LNFH has groundwater rights of 6,700 gpm with 7 active wells. Groundwater at the hatchery is very difficult and complicated; existing wells are not efficient and have multiple challenges. Good information exists on existing wells, however these wells are not able to meet the hatchery's current needs. Next steps are to update the current Reclamation groundwater model with updated data inputs and conduct a groundwater supply investigation.

Questions were discussed about the timing and process to bring the details of this project forward – it was not vetted through the Steering Committee first. Members voiced understanding that sometimes the IWG should deviate from its formal project funding process to expedite an urgent funding need, but requested that the Steering Committee discuss the topic and bring a recommendation to the IWG.

Funding Request: \$367,000

Instream Flow Rule Amendment

A handout was sent to IWG members to outline a potential work plan for working on this topic. This topic has been worked on for several years but with no progress. Cynthia asked if any IWG members need additional information on how this topic fits into the domestic guiding principle. We have discussed projects under the Icicle Strategy and which ones will produce permanent instream flows, but we have not discussed and agreed to a threshold of that permanent flow that

is needed to access the remaining reserve under the instream flow rule. The point today is to decide on the approach to determine this threshold.

There was a question about the timing of this information to prepare for this meeting as it was short for a decision item. Cynthia clarified that the decision today is only whether to form a subcommittee to work on the topic. The work plan was provided as a starting point for the IWG to think more concretely about what work may be needed.

This instream flow rule is one of a couple of tools available to meet the domestic guiding principle. The remaining reserve right now is very low and may not last the 5 years it takes for this process for rulemaking so some interim strategy may be needed to meet the need.

Chuck suggested it would be helpful to have focused one-on-one conversations with fisheries co-managers to ensure questions are addressed along the way and to engage the right leadership. Melissa clarified that Ecology would ensure these conversations would happen.

Mike suggested initiating the co-manager discussions soon, while also exploring a backup strategy to meet domestic needs sooner.

A multi-pronged approach seems necessary: co-manager conversations to start soon; technical discussions on a threshold; additional strategy to meet domestic needs soon, which would be a water acquisition or lease.

One idea is to explore conditions where IWG funding could be used to do some kind of a water right lease in the interim – identifying water available and a process and parameters.

Next Steps:

1. Technical Subcommittee to develop a threshold that the IWG supports for rulemaking and access to 0.4 cfs of the reserve. Need to define who is on this committee.
2. Develop short-term strategy for meeting domestic needs sooner with an acquisition or lease. County to lead development of this strategy and work with instream flow rule subcommittee to vet ideas and discuss process.
3. Fisheries Co-Managers meetings to discuss process, need, gain input, etc. is happening along with these efforts.

Updated IWG Membership List

An updated list was sent out. Send any other updates to Cynthia this week.

2023-2025 Budget Allocations

IWG direction to the Steering Committee to discuss the process for project proposals – when a proposal should be required to follow the formal process vs when an expedited process may be allowed. The Steering Committee will provide that recommendation to the IWG in December.

IWG Decision: The IWG reviewed the budget allocations and approved them.

Public Comment

David Ortman-

1. Will there be an 8-Mile restoration update?

Melissa responded that Ecology is in the midst of responding to ~6k public comments on the draft EIS. Ecology has a target of mid-December to release the final EIS.

2. There has been one mention of water conservation in Leavenworth (IRMS Demonstration Garden), wondering if there will be other updates from the City on their conservation efforts?

The City of Leavenworth is working on multiple efforts focused on a source assessment and rate study. When enough information is available, we will have a presentation/update.

Upcoming Meetings

- Steering Committee Meeting – November 9, 2023. Consider adding a subcommittee meeting from 10-12 for the Instream Flow rule amendment.
- IWG – December 14, 2023

Adjourn