

Entiat Watershed Planning Unit Meeting

June 5th, 2024

4:00-6:45 pm

Entiat Fire Station – 2200 Entiat Way

Facilitator: Mark Ingman, Cascadia CD

Participants: Chuck Largent (resident), Virginia White (Hinchinbrook Eco Innovations), Steve Tift (resident), Melisa Sternhill (resident), Tim Aemmer (resident), James Hudson (YNF), Alan Schmidt (resident), Steve Kolk (Reclamation), Mike Kaputa (Chelan County), Brandt Cappell (Commissioner candidate), Bob Whitehall (resident), Kerri Franklin (resident), Joe Kelly (resident), Renee Swearingen (City of Entiat), Tiffany Gering (Chelan County), Seth Shy (WDFW), Kelley Lerner (WDFW), Paul Willard (USDA FS), Alan Moen (Wenatchee World), Mickey Fleming (Chelan – Douglas Land Trust), Marcy Bartelheimer (Cascadia CD), Carlos Polivka (USFS PNW Research Station), Jenny Hymer (resident), Claudia Mullek (resident), Becky Flitcroft (presenter, USFS), Amanda Barg (WDFW), Ann Welz (The Trust for Public Land), Peter Dykstra (consultant to TPL)

- Introductions
- Roundtable
 - CCD updates: BDA work (Potato Creek, Stormy Creek, Mud Creek), hosted two tours during BirdFest in May
 - James Hudson-Yakama Fisheries: Mad River project this summer
 - WDFW- second smolt trap on Entiat River near Roaring Creek
 - Virginia-snorkel survey at a few sites on river, every week next couple months and during winter
 - Steve Tift: question about fire mitigation collaboration effort and outreach
 - Mark- Will keep this in mind for future presentation [arranging for next mtg]
 - Paul W. --contact Josh about USFS efforts
 - Renee, Mayor: keep Discover Entiat in mind for tourism/tours. Contact her to schedule
 - Tim: question about the proposal for cutting power off on windy days
 - Renee, Mayor: This is a conversation that the PUD has had. There will be a meeting here June 20, 6-8 at the fire station to answer questions. This is to hopefully reduce fire danger because if wind knocks towers

down, fires can start. Entiat valley is unique because if you cut power, there's no communication.

- James: habitat restoration up the Entiat and looking for more places, so contact them if you want restoration on your site.
- Mike Kaputa: Three habitat projects and two VSP are happening. Coordinated Cost reimbursement process for water rights is upcoming. Encourage landowners to check to see if their rights are on the list. The idea is to start the program in Entiat in about two years after they finish in the Lake Chelan area. Suggests this topic for a future meeting
 - Steven's contact: stephen.lesky@co.chelan.wa.us (for VSP)
- Presentation: Virginia White, Hinchinbrook Eco Innovations. How Juvenile Salmon Utilize Engineered Log Jams (ELJs)
 - ELJs provide habitat and protection for juvenile chinook and steelhead
 - Study how the salmon utilize the ELJs in a variety of situations: time of day, time of year, age, conditions, water level/flow
 - Findings: Recaptured fish often recaptured at the site where they were PIT tagged (site fidelity is higher value of ELJs to fish). Found that fish were also able to move around to various ELJs if they wanted to for food/resources. Fish that stayed, mostly stayed for 30 days, but found some fish that stayed >200 days. Fish utilized full structure for its habitat benefits
 - Future studies and work coming up
 - Alan Moen: have you investigated natural log jams too?
 - Yes, control sites with various habitat (NLJ, vegetated areas, etc.), more so funding limitation
 - Bob: Dillwater site – included/whats happening there?
 - Carlos: older sites are included in long-term work and publications that show substantial use of ELJs by both chinook and steelhead. Increasing the capacity of the reach to support fish (mostly chinook, steelhead are variable)
 - Is this helping the whole population of fish in the river?
- Rebecca Flitcroft, USFS: Wildfire effects on fish and aquatic ecosystems
 - In the future, fire could wipe out patches of habitat, increasing vulnerability of bull trout
 - Wildfire expected to have a positive response for spring chinook
 - Questions:
 - Where do steelhead fall in that continuum?

- Stress response turns them to steelhead, more females, shifts observed in population in response to fire (fire plays a role in steelhead populations)
 - Depends on connectivity of habitats before fire
 - Expect fewer steelhead first few years after fire, unless habitat is really degraded (landslide, etc.) then maybe more because of the cortisol/stress response
- Over long term, fire is probably necessary to deliver large logs and debris to rivers and streams (consider characteristic vs uncharacteristic fires on the landscape and their effects)
- Things to think about: ability to rebound? PNW fish are actually fire dependent to maintain productivity
- Peter Dykstra, Mike Kaputa, Ann Welz: Conservation Opportunity in Chelan County Phase 3: Entiat Ridge (one option to buy set of parcels among others in larger project, gauging public support)
 - Video played, linked/accessible here: <https://vimeo.com/919244913/9f442f1193>
 - Mickey: history of this project background relating to the CDLT
 - Land and Water Conservation Funding for phases 1-3
 - Chumstick and Coulter blocks looking at other ownership types. Phase 1-4 USFS ownership because they're checkerboard with USFS land
 - Ideally, find a long-term landowner to take care of the parcels that have option for TPL to purchase.
 - Question: do you have a budget for road maintenance ?
 - Yes, limitations for funding on road maintenance, but will be able to store roads and pull culverts to reduce costs
 - Community help: support letters in July/August
 - Followup item: Mark- would it be good to make a support letter from EWPU? [post-meeting update: application is already submitted, letters from organizations were submitted – completed item]
- James, Yakama Nation Fisheries: Yakama Nation Fisheries Columbia Basin Habitat Projects
 - Updating a sizable portion of the older/existing reach assessments along the Entiat River
 - Includes river miles 15.5-23 (road mile ~14-20)
 - May start this fall, and will continue into 2025
- Topics for next meeting:
 - What's being done for fire mitigation in Entiat? [Mark I. will look into this]

