

# LEWIS RIVER TERRESTRIAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE

Facilitator: KENDEL EMMERSON  
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Location: TEAMS MEETING ONLY

Date: February 9 , 2022

Time: 9:00 AM –11:00 AM

## Agenda Items

- 9:00 a.m. Welcome
- Review Agenda, 12/8/22 Meeting Notes
  - Review and Accept Agenda and 12/8/2022 Meeting Notes
- 9:10 a.m. Public Comment Period
- 9:15 a.m. Yale Saddle Dam Seismic Remediation Project Potential Impacts
- 9:45 a.m. Review Cowlitz WHMP 2021 Report and 2022 Plan
- 10:15 a.m. Review PacifiCorp WHMP 2021 Report and 2022 Plan
- 10:30 a.m. Study/Work Product Updates
- Moss Cave
  - Merwin Dam Bald Eagle Nest
  - Personnel Changes at PacifiCorp
- 10:45 a.m. Next Meeting's Agenda
- Public Comment Opportunity
- Note: all meeting notes and the meeting schedule can be located at:  
<https://www.pacificorp.com/energy/hydro/lewis-river/acc-tcc.html>
- 11:00 a.m. Meeting Adjourn

## Microsoft Teams meeting

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**Meeting Notes**  
**Lewis River License Implementation**  
**Terrestrial Coordination Committee (TCC) Meeting**  
**February 9, 2022**  
**Conference Call Only**

**TCC Representatives Present: (8)**

Kendel Emmerson, PacifiCorp  
Summer Peterman, PacifiCorp  
Beth Bendickson, PacifiCorp  
Erik White, Cowlitz Indian Tribe  
Peggy Miller, WDFW  
Amanda Froberg, Cowlitz PUD  
Eric Holman, WDFW  
Bill Richardson, RMEF  
Conner England, USFS  
Jeff Garnett, USFWS

**Guests: (1)**

Sarah Montgomery, Anchor QEA (note-taker for PacifiCorp)

**Calendar:**

February 9, 2022	TCC Meeting	TEAMS Call Only
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<b>Assignments for February 9, 2022</b>	<b>Status</b>
All: Consider having the April TCC meeting in person at Yale Dam to discuss restoration plans for the seismic remediation project.	<b>In progress</b>
Froberg: Send the TCC-approved elk forage plant mix list to England.	<b>In progress</b>
Connor: Provide information to Froberg about the USFS-Skamania County interlocal agreement for herbicide treatments outside of (but beneficial to) USFS lands.	<b>In progress</b>
Bendickson: Reset the Teams invites for 2022 meetings.	<b>In progress</b>

<b>Assignments for December 8, 2021</b>	<b>Status</b>
Emmerson: Discuss potential WHMP disturbance impacts with permitting staff for the Cougar Creek highway project.	<b>In progress</b>

<b>Assignments for January 13, 2021</b>	<b>Status</b>
Emmerson: Provide a list of past timber harvest areas that have been within the WHMP buffer, associated TCC meeting notes, and reference to the WHMP language.	<b>In progress</b>

<b>Parking Lot Items</b>	<b>Status</b>
Emmerson: Contact PacifiCorp's properties department to discuss further TNC detail and report to the TCC at the next meeting.	<b>In progress</b>

Kendel Emmerson (PacifiCorp) called the meeting to order at 9:05 am. No additions to the agenda were requested. Emmerson reviewed the meeting notes from December 8, 2021. The meeting notes were approved at 9:08 am with no changes.

### **Public Comment Period**

None

### **Yale Saddle Dam Seismic Remediation Project Potential Impacts**

Kendel Emmerson shared recent design files and photographs related to the Yale Dam Seismic Remediation Project. The project will extend at the toe of slope by 50-feet, which results in a permanent loss of WHMP lands. Temporary laydown areas and a new drainage swale (which will still be mowable) are other potential losses. The total loss is about 2 acres of agricultural land, meadow, and upland mix. Some areas may also change their land use types. From 2023 to the 2024 growing seasons, the farm would not be used which is a significant but temporary impact. Emmerson showed photographs of the hedgerow and gate area where trees will be removed and described the changes that will occur. The tree impacts will be finalized at a later stage of design, but to date have a fairly accurate estimate (those currently flagged with white tape will be removed). She also noted some in-water impacts on reservoir side of the existing dam, though those impacts are not the purview of the TCC.

Eric Holman asked what the surface and slope will be in the area where the toe of slope of extended. Emmerson said it will be rock in order to meet FERC's requirements. The slope will not change significantly. Holman asked what vegetation management operations will occur when vegetation inevitably grows through the rock. Emmerson responded that vegetation management will occur as part of operations and as needed. Following construction, Emmerson anticipates the entire footprint of the Saddle Dam will be excluded from WHMP lands.

Emmerson showed the areas of temporary impacts and no-work zones and described some of the best management practices that will be used to protect habitats (e.g., use of geotextile fabrics). Following construction these road and laydown area can tilled and reseeded to provide improved forage. This means there will be loss of forage for two years during construction and 1 year for field restoration.

Emmerson noted one of the main questions about mitigating for these impacts is how to calculate the tree replacement rate for the significant tree loss. She noted that City of Seattle provides a diameter class replacement at 4-to-1 for large trees. There are other methods available too, like accounting for permanent habitat loss. The species of trees are mainly Douglas fir, with some pines in the hedgerows and red alder. Holman said he has visited the area due to interest in white-tailed deer exclosures. He said the tree removal is indeed significant, and the trees to be removed are large, open grown, robust trees with good wildlife habitat. Emmerson suggested that the TCC schedule a field visit in the spring for further discussion.

At the next meeting, Emmerson will present a tree diameter class evaluation and restoration framework. She will want help from the TCC determining where the trees should be planted, and which species to plant. The project team will plant the trees, which usually would include a survival guarantee for a few years, but any long-term monitoring may fall to PacifiCorp staff.

Holman said the southeast area where parking would be expanded might be one area to plant more trees for a visual buffer from cars and activity. Emmerson said that area is currently quite dense but agreed that visual screening should be a priority in determining where to plant new trees and shrubs. The gate area can be planted with native shrubs, and the hedgerow can be replaced with fruit-bearing shrubs.

Emmerson noted that the schedule has also pushed out to 2023, with construction starting January 2023. This area will be closed to public access through the duration of construction.

### **Review Cowlitz WHMP 2021 Report and 2022 Plan**

Amanda Froberg shared Cowlitz PUD's Draft WMHP Report and Draft 2022 WHMP Plan, which will be provided for TCC review. In the plan, Froberg reviewed proposed work in 2022, including initial invasive species surveys at the elk forage plot, follow-up invasive species surveys, work to address weed infestations, and inspection of lands and project work in the Devil's Backbone area for public access and habitat concerns. Connor England asked if Froberg has a list of plants that were used in the elk forage plots. Froberg said the TCC-approved forage mix was used, and she will send the list to England.

Froberg reviewed the 2022 annual budget, which is in the green in 2022. The budget includes funds for plant surveys, administration of the program, invasive species control, and reseeding Devil's Backbone if needed. She said due to the extreme heat last June, she anticipates potentially needing to reseed the meadow at Devil's Backbone, but she is open to TCC input on that item. Froberg noted that Skamania County is contracted for the weed control work. Connor said that USFS has provided funds to Skamania County to apply herbicide outside of the USFS boundaries if the application would benefit the USFS lands. He will provide more information to Froberg about that interlocal agreement because it could save the program funds. Connor said one goal of that agreement is to prevent highly used public areas from becoming a vector for weeds into the national forest. Connor said this agreement could feasibly apply to any county. Holman said the plan overall looks good and commended the attention to weed control. Bill Richardson agreed and noted that if the fund continues to grow as Froberg is projecting, the program will be preparing to undertake another large project soon.

[Jeff Garnett (USFWS) joined the meeting and introduced himself to the TCC.]

Emmerson noted that prices have recently gone up for herbicide supplies and recommended that everyone plan ahead or think creatively about herbicide applications.

Froberg said the annual plan was emailed to the group on February 7<sup>th</sup>, with a 30-day review for the TCC until March 15.

Froberg reviewed the 2021 WHMP Annual Report. This report is included in the Lewis River annual report, which is a large document that is filed with FERC by June 30. She said comments can be provided on the annual report when it is distributed for review. Froberg reviewed the WHMP tracking account, which is in the green with an approximately \$8,000 carryover from 2021. Froberg showed photos taken in 2021, including the elk forage area where elk signs were observed in August during a site visit.

She said any comments on the annual report can be provided when PacifiCorp sends it out along with the larger report for ACC review or if wanted can email to her now. .

As an aside, Peggy Miller asked if anyone knows where the acre-feet of water that needs to go through a constructed channel is reported annually. Froberg suggested checking with Erik Lesko.

### **Review PacifiCorp WHMP 2021 Report and 2022 Plan**

Emmerson said PacifiCorp's WHMP 2021 Report and 2022 Plan are currently in the draft stage and will be provided for TCC review after the March meeting. Similarly, the report will also be attached to the larger Lewis River report that is submitted to FERC in June.

Emmerson shared the excel tracking sheet of projects, which is part of the draft report. She said this system is working better than using Microsoft Project and allows for better tracking and fine-tuning of details like budgets. In 2022, projects went slightly over in budget for public access (due to trespass issues) and orchards and monitoring. However, the program is about \$50,000 under its budget. Holman asked what is done with the overage? Emmerson replied it is rolled over into the 2022 budget (added to the by acreage calculation for 2022). With the extra funds in 2022, PacifiCorp is hoping to do more spraying, especially since their contractor is acquiring another truck that will help with large projects. Emmerson noted that PacifiCorp's administrative time includes items like the TCC meeting and contracting, whereas site visits or project work related to a specific project is allocated to that budget. Holman asked if the extra funds present an opportunity to do more one-off or special projects like pollinator or intensive food plot work. Emmerson replied not necessarily since it just rolls back into the WHMP budget.

Peterman said the wetland projects were under budget due to missing the spray window, so additional spray work will be conducted in 2022 to make up for that. Peterman and Emmerson are working to budget out the remaining rollover funds, but they will likely be allocated to additional spray work and catching up on other work that did not occur in 2021 or increased prices. Emmerson noted that PacifiCorp has a chemicals budget that pays for herbicides, and the applications in forestry are split between forestry and the WHMP budget.

Holman asked for more information on the thinning project. Emmerson said she and the foresters worked to identify natural openings in areas that would not require thinning and protect open-growth noble fir. Silver fir and western hemlock often grow through natural regeneration so those were selected for when possible. She noted that the forestry crew did a good job of protecting diversity in the stand. She said this treatment may be overdue for other areas, and it would be beneficial for the TCC to do a site visit this summer to the area to learn more. Holman said he would like to go see the area as it sounds like the thinning process worked well.

In lands acquired from the last Fruit Grower's Supply acquisition, has a wetland that is much larger than originally mapped. Emmerson said the buffer area will be filled in with wetland buffer plants instead of forestry trees. A small wetland was also found in unit 35, where there is an upcoming clearcut harvest. These features were not previously mapped.

Peterman provided an update on the Plantskyd treatment in Oak sites. 2021 was the third year of treatment, and two more years are planned. She suggested that the treatment was successful and

after the monitoring period is completed, it would be likely be beneficial to implement this at other sites.

Peterman provided an update on the orchards project. She said this project has had multiple issues with enclosures, and the solution appears to be using a vertical crossbar to add structural stability as well as make the enclosures easier to access for cleaning up. Allowing a small area under the fence for small mammals to access helps to mat down overgrowing vegetation. The orchards site will also be added to the soil testing and fertilizing rotation because the plantings at Saddle Dam have not survived.

England said the Wild Turkey Federation may have some input on plants and techniques to encourage oak regrowth. Peterman said the oak areas are all naturally regenerated as there has not been success with planting oaks. She noted there is a lot of browse on oak, so there are many oak shrubs but few oak trees that contribute seeds. Emmerson noted that the Columbia Land Trust has an oak habitat model for the Klickitat area that could be helpful to review. Holman also recommended looking into the Gorge Oak Working Group, who have had success planting oak trees in a wildlife area near Vancouver.

## **Study/Work Product Updates**

### *Moss Cave*

Emmerson provided an update on the Moss Cave acquisition process. She said WDFW and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) have drafted a conservation easement, which PacifiCorp is currently editing. PacifiCorp Property has been giving feedback. TNC doesn't have legal access totally figured out and may need to obtain an easement. She said a site visit is planned for April 6. Connor asked to be included on the site visit with WDFW, and PacifiCorp staff if possible due to previous access issues (both the key and the wrench are needed to access the cage). As an aside, Connor will work with USFS staff to acquire the wrench.

### *Cougar Creek WSDOT Project*

Kendel reached out to Tom Kohl at WSDOT, and he explained that they were waiting on more design and permits. When that is complete, he intends to schedule a site visit with PacifiCorp. WSDOT has a right-of-way (ROW) so if the project extends beyond the ROW, then it will impact WHMP lands. In preliminary discussions it appeared WSDOT may need to access the stream from WHMP lands, but that will need to be determined.

### *Merwin Dam Bald Eagle Nest*

Emmerson said there are two bald eagle nests near Merwin Dam, one on a cottonwood tree that is within 330-feet of where operations occur. There is a jeep trail type road that comes near this nest that is used to access the dam with equipment. There is a sign posted at the top of the road informing operations about bald eagle restrictions. While these birds must have a high disturbance tolerance to sirens and activities about the dam, she said disturbance during the nesting season needs to be minimized to the extent feasible. Work that was previously planned for November will now occur in April, during the nesting season and the access road is needed for mobilization and demobilization of a crane. Emmerson has advised operations to walk the equipment down the road, through the nest buffer, very slowly. USFWS provided guidance to Emmerson to monitor the nest during the work period, and if disturbance is observed, to stop work and notify USFWS. She said she personally thinks the activity is not a high risk for disrupting nesting but will have a biologist

on site to conduct monitoring and coordinate with the project team and USFWS as needed. Garnett asked who is the contact at USFWS for this work? Emmerson said there is a bald eagle nesting email account with several staff monitoring it. Emmerson will forward her communications with USFWS to Garnett.

### **Beaver Reintroduction**

Erik White provided an update on the Cowlitz Indian Tribe's beaver reintroduction program. He said Cowlitz Indian Tribe has been relocating beaver to the north zone of the Gifford Pinchot ranger district for three years. In 2020, he wrote a tribal wildlife application to get funding for relocation on DNR lands, within the volcanic monument, in land trust areas, and in the Lewis River basin. The tribe has been conducting aerial analysis to prioritize sites. They are currently identifying and prioritizing sites on WHMP lands in the Lewis River basin. Field visits are also conducted to determine the feasibility of a potential reintroduction site. After field work is completed, White will provide another update to the TCC on their findings on WHMP lands.

Holman asked about the supply of animals. White said in 2019, 30 beaver were reintroduced, and in 2020 and 2021 about 50 beavers were reintroduced. He said with additional funding, more could be completed each year. The supply comes from Wildlife Services but if more are needed, they could be acquired from WSDOT, Weyerhaeuser, or other sources. Beavers are translocated as pairs or family groups, usually 2 to 5 individuals (up to about 8). He said reintroductions so far have focused on the upper Cowlitz river basin. White asked for the TCC's input on the process for vetting WHMP lands for beaver reintroduction.

Emmerson said her only concern is potential issues with roadways. White agreed about risks to culverts and noted no issues from previous reintroductions. He said the project would be committed to fixing that issue if it arose (through flow control, a beaver deceiver, or other methods). Connor asked about concerns for the spread of aquatic invasive species. How long are the beaver held? He also asked if there is a compiled list of where they are placed, because USFS is also doing reintroductions and it would be wise to avoid placing beaver in the same location through two different programs. White responded the beaver are usually held for 4 days, and not longer than two weeks. The Cowlitz Indian Tribe has a spreadsheet from WDFW showing where New Zealand mud snails are an issue and are not taking beaver from those locations. He said researchers at Washington State University are doing work on beavers and vector diseases, and the Cowlitz Indian Tribe will continue monitoring those reports and research to stay current with best practices. Peggy Miller asked if there is a monitoring program for after the beaver are reintroduced. White said WDFW developed regulations and criteria to become a certified beaver relocater, which includes following a monitoring program. White said the Cowlitz Indian Tribe is not beholden to those regulations; however, they do follow best practices and often do more monitoring than would be required. White said the success rate is around 30-40%, when beaver establish where they are placed. Beavers often move to nearby areas, so the success rate may undercount the true success of the program. The ongoing monitoring will help the Cowlitz Indian Tribe validate their model. What they've seen so far, is that when beaver do move, they move to other locations that the model also considers suitable.

The TCC discussed the logistics of voting on beaver reintroduction in WHMP lands. Miller asked if WDFW has input at an earlier stage of the process. Holman said WDFW developed a protocol for these beaver reintroduction programs, but tribes have been leading the way in reintroduction



efforts. The process is for approved beaver relocators to meet with the district biologist each year to review plans. The district biologist coordinates those locations with other programs like salmon recovery and provide feedback to the beaver reintroduction program lead. Holman said tribes are not required to follow this protocol; however, there is still significant regional coordination among tribes, WDFW, USFS, and other interested groups to implement best practices and share information. While the USFS and Cowlitz Indian Tribe have an arrangement in place for reintroduction within the Cowlitz River ranger district, White's question to the TCC is focused on the TCC's authority over WHMP lands. Holman said his opinion is that the TCC should be involved in providing input on sites and flagging any concerns, but he does not see the need to approve the placement of individual animals. Miller thanked Holman for informing the TCC about the sovereign nation aspect of reintroduction and agreed on the TCC level of involvement. Emmerson summarized that the TCC would like to have an informative meeting with the Cowlitz Indian Tribe when they have identified priority site locations for beaver reintroduction but will not be voting on individual reintroduction efforts. White thanked the TCC for their input and said he is excited to expand beaver reintroduction efforts, especially with the help of new staff who have a lot of experience with reintroduction.

#### *Personnel Changes at PacifiCorp*

Beth Bendickson will be filling the Project Coordinator role and her position will be backfilled over the next few months. Her role will be emails and distribution in the interim, then she will take over notes in a few months. Bendickson, who is a senior business administrator, introduced herself to the TCC.

Emmerson noted that Dave Moore, who previously held the position of Recreational Manager at PacifiCorp, left the company in early January. There is a position open for Recreational Manager and Emmerson asked that anyone interested in the position be referred to her. In the meantime, she is working to move forward with a trail easement at Saddle Dam that Moore was working on.

#### **Administrative Updates**

See Personnel Changes at PacifiCorp section of meeting notes.

#### **Agenda items for March 9, 2022**

- Review February 9, 2022 Meeting Notes
- Additional PacifiCorp lands being included in WHMP Lands
- Yale Dam Seismic Remediation Project – Tree Diameter Class Evaluation
- Study/Work Product Updates

#### **Next Scheduled Meeting**

March 9, 2022
TEAMS Meeting Only

#### **Attachments:**

- February 9, 2022 Meeting Agenda

*Adjourn 11:15 a.m.*