



**MEETING SUMMARY\***  
**BISHOP CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT**  
**TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP UPDATES**  
**FERC PROJECT No. 1394**

**DATE:** May 7, 2020, 8:45 a.m. - 4:50 p.m.  
**LOCATION:** Conference Call/Webinar  
**Topics:** Fish and Aquatics, Sediment, Recreation, Botanical, and Wildlife Studies and Operations Model

---

*\*These meeting notes are documentation of general discussions from the meeting held on the above-noted date. These notes are not a verbatim account of proceedings, are not meeting minutes, and do not represent any final decisions or official documentation for the project or participating agencies.*

**1.0 OBJECTIVES**

---

- Summarize Work to Date and Preliminary Conclusions
- Discuss necessary adjustments to address key questions
- Preview 2020 Field Session

**2.0 ATTENDEES**

---

Todd Ellsworth, USFS  
Blake Engelhardt, USFS  
Sheila Irons, USFS  
Tristan Leong, USFS  
Diana Pietrasanta, USFS  
Kary Schlick, USFS  
Nathan Sill, USFS  
Andy Starostka, USFWS  
Nick Buckmaster, CDFW  
Steve Parmenter, CDFW  
Brandy Wood, CDFW  
Chase Hildeburn, Water Board  
Ed Hancock, Water Board  
BryAnna Vaughn, Bishop Paiute Tribe

Finlay Anderson, Kleinschmidt  
Brad Blood, Psomas  
Michael Donovan, Psomas  
Matt Harper, Kleinschmidt  
Brett Hoffman, Kleinschmidt  
Tyler Kreider, Kleinschmidt  
Brandon Kulik, Kleinschmidt  
Kelly Larimer, Kleinschmidt  
Shannon Luoma, Kleinschmidt  
Edith Read, E. Read Consulting  
Samantha Nelson, SCE  
Al Partridge, SCE  
Martin Ostendorf, SCE  
Matt Woodhall, SCE  
Mike Harty, Kearns & West  
Terra Alpaugh, Kearns & West

### 3.0 COMPILED ACTION ITEMS

---

- Technical Work Group Members:
  - Will provide comments on study plans by Friday May 15 or notify the Relicensing Team if they will be late; specifically include feedback on the requested adjustments to the Sediment Study methodology.
  - Nick B (CDFW) will send Brandon CDFW's latest habitat preference data (consolidated write up and tables on habitat proportions and use data) on Friday 5/8.
  - Blake E (USFS) will share any information she finds on the confluence of conditions that limit the range/spread of *robinia*.
  - Kerry will provide comments on places in the Wildlife status report where Forest Plan desired conditions could be called out.
- Kleinschmidt:
  - Will distribute Powerpoint slides
    - Brandon/KS will correct slide on the focus of HSI development for Birch and McGee Creeks in SD1 (i.e., add focus on Owen's speckled dace).
  - Will schedule a "close the loop" call to discuss any outstanding questions or concerns for 5/19 at 1pm.
  - Will plan to schedule a webinar around the time of the ISR to demonstrate the efficacy and potential weaknesses of the operations model.
  - Will discuss how to address USFS interest in assessing the spread of *robinia* immediately above Plant 4.
  - Matt H to schedule call with Diana Pietrasanta to (1) compare sites being used for the USFS National Visitor Use Survey with those proposed for the relicensing, and (2) assess what concessionaire data they can begin to dig into as part of the Facilities Condition Assessment.
  - Edith to follow up with Psomas biologist to see if any white bark pine was identified in the project area during the latest survey.
  - Edith to add interpretive element into the Initial Study Report, discussing observations that could provide insight into the condition and distribution of cottonwoods (e.g., beaver activity).
  - The Relicensing Team will discuss how to address USFS interest in the extent of spread of *robinia* above Plant 4.
  - Brad B will QA/QC the GIS data on wildlife detections to date and share it with Kerry.
  - Will coordinate with the TWG agencies around any adjustments to the study schedule based on COVID precautions.
- SCE:
  - Will assess what flexibility there is in terms of getting relicensing staff access to the project area during the road construction.

### 4.0 INTRODUCTION & GENERAL QUESTIONS

---

The day-long meeting was divided into subject-specific blocks, and participants were able to join the webinar at the appropriate interval(s) to discuss whichever study plans aligned with their subject matter expertise. Finlay Anderson, the Kleinschmidt Relicensing Team lead, reminded attendees that this meeting was not scheduled to correspond with a typical FERC milestone; because the Team was able to initiate studies last fall rather than waiting for this coming study season, they planned this meeting to share that initial progress with the Technical Working Group. The next FERC process milestone will be in November when the Relicensing Team delivers the Initial Study Report (ISR). Therefore, the results

shared today should be seen as preliminary and only part of a larger picture that will be available in the fall.

For each study plan, the Relicensing Team Lead presented on the plan's goals, work completed to date, initial results, any modifications from the approved plan, and upcoming activities. The presentation slides are available on the project website and are not summarized here. The summary below focuses on questions and comments from participants, the group's general assessment of progress on the specific study plan, and any action items that resulted from the conversation (all of which are compiled in Section 3.0 above).

Questions before the start of presentations included the following:

- Question (Q) (USFWS): How involved does the Fish and Wildlife Service need to be in this relicensing?
  - Response (R) (Kleinschmidt): There were very few concerns about ESA species in this project area: we did surveys for Southwestern Willow Flycatcher since they are present in the Owens valley but discovered there was no appropriate habitat for them within the project area. We also did surveys for special status amphibians, but there were no detections.

---

## 5.0 FISH & AQUATICS: IFIM AND BISHOP CREEK FISH ABUNDANCE STUDY PLANS

### 5.1 QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

Brandon Kulik, Kleinschmidt, presented on the IFIM and Bishop Creek Fish Abundance Study Plans.

Questions and comments from TWG members included:

- Comment (C): CDFW reported that the habitat preference data for speckled dace will be compiled by the end of this week (5/8). While CDFW is not planning on translating that data into habitat suitability curves, they will share the consolidated write up and tables on habitat proportions and use. **[ACTION ITEM]**
- Q (USFS): Brandon mentioned that the IFIM study in Birch and McGee Creeks would focus on brook trout and other non-natives; USFS thought the focus was on Owens speckled dace and native fish refugias. Please clarify.
  - R (Kleinschmidt): The Team cross-checked the study plan objectives and clarified that the Team is establishing Habitat Suitability Indices (HSI) for both introduced brook trout and Owens speckled dace. The Team will correct the PowerPoint accordingly. **[ACTION ITEM]**
- Q (CDFW): Were any fish migration barriers discovered during the mesohabitat surveys?
  - R (USFS): It depends on what one qualifies as fish barriers. Consider that each reach is isolated in part from one another given the dams/diversions and discontinuity. Some have vertical gradients within the reach that are impassable to upstream migration.
  - R (Kleinschmidt): Assessing natural barriers was not a stated goal and therefore beyond the scope of the mesohabitat report. It is possible to make some inferences about natural barriers, falls, and cascades, which are mapped out in the report and are likely a challenge for large scale upstream movement of fish.
- Q (USFS): Were Owens suckers historically present within the bypass reaches? If so, how long have they been absent?
  - R (CDFW): There are no data available to confirm historical presence or absence. The best we can do is infer, which is why we were curious about barriers. The same is true of

the Owens Speckled Dace – presence/absence in the project area is historically unknown.

- R (CDFW): Bypasses were emptied and dried before there was any significant survey completed. It seems likely that Owens sucker would have been present prior to that time but there is no evidence one way or the other.
- Q (CDFW): How were the reaches for modeling sucker habitat for the IFIM selected?
  - R (Kleinschmidt): They were selected during the scoping process based on feedback from CDFW staff that the Department’s priority was managing for suckers in the two lowermost reaches and solely game fishes further upstream.
  - R (CDFW): Yes, we discussed that in the TWG meeting two years ago.
- C (CDFW): Wanted to note that the histogram of brown trout age structure shared in the presentation is very typical of a stream that is not providing adequate/appropriate habitat for brown trout. If TWG participants decided that fostering wild brown trout was important to management of the Creek, SCE may need to tweak current operations.

## **5.2 TWG ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS**

Mike Harty, the facilitator, asked if the work described was consistent with TWG expectations for the study plans. Both USFS and CDFW expressed appreciation for the work completed thus far and stated that it met their expectations.

Finlay noted that the Relicensing Team hopes to complete additional work this year, though it could be pushed to the following study season depending on restrictions due to COVID-19. There are some sucker surveys that would need to be done at the end of May or early June, which potentially could be delayed as a result of COVID.

## **5.3 ACTION ITEMS**

- Nick Buckmaster (CDFW) will send Brandon CDFW’s latest Owens speckled dace habitat preference data (consolidated write up and tables on habitat proportions and use data) on Friday 5/8.
- Brandon Kulik (Kleinschmidt) will correct the slide on the focus of HSI development for Birch and McGee Creeks in SD1 (i.e., add focus on Owen’s speckled dace). A Summary of findings are included with the PowerPoint presentation and the associated Technical Report.

## **6.0 WATER QUALITY STUDY PLAN**

---

### **6.1 QUESTIONS & COMMENTS**

Michael Donovan, Psomas, presented on the Water Quality Study Plan. Questions and comments from TWG members included:

- C (Water Board): Michael mentioned planning for six-hour sample hold times. Hold times for bacteria are actually eight hours for regulatory purposes and 24 hours for ambient monitoring, so the Team actually has a little more leeway between collection and processing.

- R (Kleinschmidt): In planning for water quality sampling, we are focused on how difficult it may be to get in and out of sampling locations, including the potential for road construction delays on weekdays. The lab is open on weekends, which is helpful.
- C (CDFW): CDFW's Director has been delegated the authority to delay or extend fishing or hunting seasons based on health concerns. With the support of local authorities, the fishing season opening has been deferred until May 31<sup>st</sup>, and it is unclear if it will be deferred further. CDFW does not have authority over the openings/closures of campgrounds; that is USFS jurisdiction.
  - C (Kleinschmidt): The Relicensing Team will adapt their plans to various closures to whatever extent possible, and where the closures prevent access, they will look at deferring work until the following year.
  - C (SCE): The road construction will create public closures, but local residents and operational staff will still have access, so SCE may be able to get the Relicensing Team access even if the road is closed to most people. **[ACTION ITEM]**
  - C (USFS): Inyo County is performing the road improvements. The Forest Engineer said that the road closures could cause delays up to 30 minutes and that advance notice will be provided for any longer closures.
  - C (CDFW): With the road and other facility closures, this summer could be an opportunity to assess baseline water quality levels without typical recreation usage.
- Q (USFS): *E.coli* samples can be sampled any time of the year. Are you focusing on sampling during the summer in order to capture the impacts of the normal recreation use?
  - R (Kleinschmidt): Yes, the regional board wanted the samples taken six times between July 1 and August 15 because that was the heaviest recreation period for the three lakes.
- Q (USFS): Is SNARL doing the sampling currently?
  - R (Water Board): SNARL is not currently under contract with the Regional Board, but they have worked very effectively with us in the past. We planned to do work with them this spring, but it was deferred to next year due to COVID. SNARL does fantastic work and is well-placed in the Eastern Sierra. In the meantime, the Board is sampling the Bishop Creek watershed and processing samples in our labs in South Lake Tahoe.
  - R (Kleinschmidt): We will use SNARL for the analysis outlined in the study plan.
  - Q (Kleinschmidt): My understanding is that there is an accreditation (Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program, ([ELAP]) needed for health-related samples (e.g., drinking water), which SNARL does not have, but they can provide *E.coli* samples.
    - R (Water Board): Yes, that is correct: SNARL does not have the ELAP accreditation, but they are equipped to provide the processing needed for the recreation-related analysis. Both the Bishop Paiute Tribe and County labs are ELAP accredited if needed.
    - R (Kleinschmidt): SNARL can also do DNA analysis if needed.

## 6.2 TWG ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Mike Harty, the facilitator, asked if the work described was consistent with TWG expectations for the study plan. The Water Board stated that the planning looked good and expressed their appreciation.

## 6.3 ACTION ITEMS

- SCE will assess what flexibility there is in terms of getting relicensing staff access to the project area during the road construction.

## 7.0 SEDIMENT STUDY PLAN

---

### 7.1 QUESTION AND COMMENTS

Tyler Krieder, Kleinschmidt, presented on the Sediment Study Plan and proposed study plan modifications. Questions and comments from TWG members included:

- Q (USFS): Since the stream system has a lack of large woody debris, would it be helpful to place some woody debris to add more diverse geomorphological features that could capture sediment?
  - R (Kleinschmidt): A large proportion of the study reach does not have large trees (those more than 12-inch diameter); approximately 20 percent has some large trees. If there was material placed, it could provide some temporary habitat, though we then would not want to send sediment down those reaches and risk burying the debris placements. During some parts of the year, the stream flow is very low, so any wood may not be saturated and may start to deteriorate. We would want Brandon Kulik's perspective on the habitat value that could be achieved by adding large woody debris.
  - C (Kleinschmidt): This conversation should be deferred until we have more study results and can examine potential improvements across the resource areas in an integrated fashion.
  - Q (USFS): Is integrating the studies and asking questions about whether there is enough habitat, etc., the next step in the process?
    - R (Kleinschmidt): It depends somewhat on the complexity of the system, but we can begin to have those conversations in November around the Initial Study Report. There will still be gaps, but we can begin to look at the system as a whole, what limits there are, how SCE would like to operate, etc.
- Q (USFS): When do you want a final recommendation from us regarding your suggested changes to the study?
  - R (Kleinschmidt): We want comments by Friday, May 15. **[ACTION ITEM]** We are particularly interested in your thoughts about switching from a latex to an oil-based paint for the tracer rock study, which would be more durable. Stillwater will be placing rocks in mid-to-late June along with their bathymetry work, and we would like to give them several weeks advance notice about the paint selection. Please compare the suggested methodological changes to address the goals and objectives in the study report and ensure the revisions do not impact your agencies' ability to get the information they need. We will plan a brief check in call the week of May 18 to answer any final questions. **[ACTION ITEM]**
  - R (USFS): Initial feedback from USFS staff suggests that we will not have an issue with oil-based paint as long as you are not doing the painting in the riparian area.

### 7.2 TWG ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

TWG participants did not voice any concerns about progress on the Sediment Study thus far.

### 7.3 ACTION ITEMS

- TWG participants will provide comments on study plans by Friday May 15 or notify the Relicensing Team if they will be late; specifically include feedback on the requested adjustments to the Sediment Study
- Kleinschmidt will schedule a “close the loop” call to discuss any outstanding questions or concerns for 5/19 at 1pm.

## **8.0 OPERATIONS MODEL**

---

### **8.1 QUESTION AND COMMENTS**

Brett Hoffman presented on the design and intent of the Operations Model. There is not a written study plan update on the Operations Model, so the PowerPoint slides should be used as the primary source of information about model development progress. Questions and comments from TWG members included:

- Q (USFS): We envisioned this model being used to understand the potential implications for generation from any proposed change to operations. Is the model able to replicate known flow records and provide outputs that can be compared to baseline conditions?
  - R (Kleinschmidt): That is exactly what we are trying to replicate, including a nuanced understanding of outputs in different water year types.
  - C (USFS): We expect to select a period of record, pull hydrology for the period, confirm the model is calibrated to that period, and then run the model with a change to operations, and see what the effects would have been during that period. I defer to SCE to determine what metric matters most in terms of lost generation (e.g., gross, daily). Will the model provide an annual output?
    - R (Kleinschmidt): It can provide a monthly output, but a smaller timescale than that is more difficult.
    - C (USFS): Monthly would be useful. Since it is not a peaking system, daily outputs are not necessary.
  - Q (USFS): At some point, we will need to understand the quality of performance and any anticipated errors in the model; e.g. under or over-reporting in a given month. What is the target date to do a trial run and sensitivity testing? Before using the model for hypothesis testing during the development of PM&Es, we will want to know it sufficiently replicates the system.
    - R (SCE): We will not be at the point of developing PM&Es until next year, so we can focus on development and calibration this year. Around the Initial Study Report, we can do some testing to show that it is working as expected.

### **8.2 TWG ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS**

Mike Harty, the facilitator, asked if the work described was consistent with TWG expectations for the Operations Model. USFS confirmed that they are aligned with the Relicensing Team on what the model contains and should be used for.

### **8.3 ACTION ITEMS**

- Around the time of the ISR, Kleinschmidt will plan schedule a webinar to demonstrate the efficacy and potential weaknesses of the operations model.

## 9.0 RECREATION STUDY PLANS

---

### 9.1 QUESTION AND COMMENTS

Matt Harper, Kleinschmidt, presented on the Recreation-related Study Plans. Questions and comments from TWG members included:

- Q (USFS): What is the Operations and Maintenance Economics Assessment?
  - R (Kleinschmidt): The Operations and Maintenance Economics Assessment is a subset of the Facilities Condition Assessment. USFS felt some recreation areas were not being maintained adequately and were interested in understanding where money has been used for O&M in the past and how it might be used more effectively in the future. Essentially, the Assessment will be a desktop exercise looking into concessionaire agreements, the fees available for use on O&M, and overall costs of maintaining the sites; the plan for this assessment is still in nascent form, but the Team will begin looking into old concessionaire data to flesh it out.
  - R (USFS): All the campgrounds at Bishop Creek are concessionaire-run. Many of the facilities are legacy and not in great condition. USFS wants to understand the true cost of improving standards of facilities and basic maintenance.
- C (Kleinschmidt): The survey instruments for the Recreation Needs Study are close to complete.
- C (USFS): The Relicensing Team should also be aware that the USFS National Visitor Use Survey will be conducted between October 2020 and September 2021, so there will be another large survey going on at the same time in the Forest. It may not have any impact on people's willingness to participate in the Bishop Creek Use Survey, but the Team should be aware of potential for survey overload. USFS will walk the Team through any survey sites that overlap on their next check in call [**ACTION ITEM**].
- C (USFS): The roadwork construction will start May 11 and continue throughout the summer season. The roads will be closed to traffic for up to 30 minutes at a time. We anticipate that the closures will be somewhat disruptive given pent up recreation demand due to COVID. Currently, all developed sites in Region 5 are closed (i.e., picnic areas, marinas, etc.), but the forest itself is not closed to hiking or driving on the roads.
- Q (USFS): Given that lots of permittees operate on very thin margins, what if they go out of business due to COVID? If there is demand to use the marina but no marina operator that will be a real problem.

### 9.2 TWG ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Mike Harty, the facilitator, asked if the work described was consistent with TWG expectations for the Recreation Studies. USFS confirmed that these studies are going in the right direction and will provide what they need for management decisions. They support putting the offsite survey online as well.

### 9.3 ACTION ITEMS

- Matt H to schedule call with Diana Pietrasanta to (1) compare sites being used for the USFS National Visitor Use Survey with those proposed for the relicensing, and (2) assess what concessionaire data they can begin to dig into as part of the Facilities Condition Assessment.



## 10.0 BOTANICAL STUDY PLANS

---

### 10.1 QUESTION AND COMMENTS

Edith Read presented on the Botanical Study Plans. Questions and comments from TWG members included:

- Q (USFS): In the riparian community analysis presentation, it looked like there would be more information on black cottonwoods, but there was not much discussion of cottonwoods in the latest memo.
  - R (E. Read): Yes, the guild analysis was not fine-grained enough to tell us anything specific about the black cottonwoods.
  - C (USFS): There might be more information on the cottonwoods in the most recent riparian monitoring report.
  - R (Kleinschmidt): We could add an interpretive element on that topic to the Initial Study Report.
  - C (E. Read): The crew observed beaver and grazing activity, including topped willows. There may be other factors as well that could be mentioned in the Initial Study Report.
- Q (USFS): The Invasive and Special Status Plant Study Plans mention surveying at recreation sites as well as around project infrastructure and reference the Recreation Study Plan. Was the intent to look at those areas at some point?
  - R (E. Read): This has been a subject of internal discussion. Given that SCE has little ability to manage recreation areas, what would happen if they do find invasive or special status species? As a result, we focused on surveying facility areas and left recreation areas for further discussion.
- Q (USFS): For the Invasive Plant Study Plan, *robinia* was on the list of species in the project area, but it did not appear to be mapped. Was there any survey up the reach above Plant 4 to figure out where the leading edge of *robinia* spread was?
  - R (E. Read): We are not planning to traverse the whole area above Plant 4; we are relying on the license monitoring to report whether *robinia* appears above Plant 4. Previously, it has not appeared there, and the species does have an elevation limit.
  - R (USFS): The monitoring stations above Plant 4 (4.1 and 4.2) are quite a ways upstream. I was envisioning simply walking upstream from Plant 4.
  - R (E. Read): Until 2009, we did have a monitoring site upstream of the confluence with Coyote Creek, and there was not any *robinia* recorded at that point, but that data is dated.
  - R (Kleinschmidt): The team will discuss how they can address these concerns and follow up with USFS. **[ACTION ITEM]**
  - C (E. Read): If USFS has any additional information on the confluence of conditions which limit the spread of *robinia*, please share it; this will help us target our search. **[ACTION ITEM]**
- Q (USFS): Was white bark pine targeted in the Special Status Plant Study survey? It is a candidate for listing and could occur at South Lake or Green Creek.
  - R (E. Read): I have not seen it. The Special Status Plant Study focused on all the species listed in the National Diversity Database or as USFS Sensitive Species.
  - R (USFS): It is not necessarily riparian dependent, so it might have been missed if the focus of surveying was on riparian species. We would want to know if it was present to ensure its maintenance.
  - R (E. Read): I will follow up with the Psomas biologist to confirm whether any were sighted. **[ACTION ITEM]**

## 10.2 TWG ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The Relicensing Team committed to following up with USFS to resolve the details above; TWG participants did not voice any other concerns about progress on the Botanical Studies thus far.

## 10.3 ACTION ITEMS

- Edith to add interpretive element into the Initial Study Report, discussing observations that could provide insight into the condition and distribution of cottonwoods (e.g., beaver activity).
- The Relicensing Team will discuss how to address USFS interest in the extent of spread of *robinia* above Plant 4.
- Blake E (USFS) will share any information she finds on the confluence of conditions that limit the range/spread of *robinia*.
- Edith to follow up with Psomas biologist to see if any white bark pine was identified in the project area during the latest survey.

## 11.0 WILDLIFE STUDY PLAN

---

### 11.1 QUESTION AND COMMENTS

Brad Blood, Psomas, presented on the Wildlife Study Plan. Questions and comments from TWG members included:

- Q (USFS): Will the study report include the Forest Plan's desired conditions?
  - R (Psomas): The goal of this report was simply to report last year's survey results and see if the TWG had questions about the data. We will put together a more complete report for next year that includes how these results align with desired conditions in the Forest Plan.
  - R (USFS): In my comments on this report, I will make notes of where I think those desired conditions might align and could be included. **[ACTION ITEM]**
- C (USFS): Note that white bark pine is called out in the Wildlife Plan as a species the project could support. The Wildlife and Botanical study plans should refer to its potential presence in a consistent manner. USFWS expects to know whether it will be listed or not by this fall.
- Q (USFS): Can the Relicensing Team provide the GIS layers of wildlife detection data to date?
  - R (Psomas): Yes, we will send you and Matt Harper the GIS data. **[ACTION ITEM]**

### 11.2 TWG ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

TWG participants did not voice any concerns about progress on the Wildlife Study thus far. USFS expressed appreciation for the guzzlers that are providing water for wildlife. USFS strongly supports having cameras continue to record that area while the surveys are ongoing, and if possible, to include managing the guzzlers as part of the licensing.

### 11.3 ACTION ITEMS

- Kerry will provide comments on places in the status report where Forest Plan desired conditions could be called out
- Brad B will QA/QC the GIS data on wildlife detections to date and share it with Kerry



**MEETING SUMMARY\***  
**BISHOP CREEK HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT**  
**TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP UPDATES**  
**FERC PROJECT No. 1394**

**DATE:** May 19, 2020, 1-2 p.m.  
**LOCATION:** Conference Call  
**Topics:** Follow Up on May 7 Webinar re: Study Plan Updates

---

*\*These meeting notes are documentation of general discussions from the meeting held on the above-noted date. These notes are not a verbatim account of proceedings, are not meeting minutes, and do not represent any final decisions or official documentation for the project or participating agencies.*

**1.0 ATTENDEES**

---

Nathan Sill, USFS	Tyler Kreider, Kleinschmidt
Andy Starostka, USFWS	Brandon Kulik, Kleinschmidt
Chase Hildeburn, Water Board	Kelly Larimer, Kleinschmidt
Ed Hancock, Water Board	Shannon Luoma, Kleinschmidt
Finlay Anderson, Kleinschmidt	Edith Read, E. Read Consulting
Brad Blood, Psomas	Matthew Woodhall, SCE
Michael Donovan, Kleinschmidt	Martin Ostendorf, SCE
Matt Harper, Kleinschmidt	Terra Alpaugh, Kearns & West
Brett Hoffman, Kleinschmidt	

**2.0 COMPILED ACTION ITEMS**

---

- Kleinschmidt will:
  - Defer the *e.coli* sampling for the Water Quality Study Plan unless recreation numbers have rebounded by July.
  - Confer with USFS regarding adjustments needed to safely implement the Cultural Study Plans.
  - Reach out to CDFW and USFS to confirm dates for the reservoir studies in case they want to participate.
  - Reach out to the USFS botanist regarding adjusting the proposed 500 foot survey area; and will document their agreement in email to other TWG members.

### **3.0 KEY TAKEAWAYS**

---

Finlay Anderson, Kleinschmidt, addressed the primary outstanding questions the Relicensing Team had based on the May 7 webinar and the comments received on the study plans thus far. They are divided by topic below.

#### **3.1 WATER QUALITY STUDY PLAN**

The Relicensing Team noted that the fishing season has been postponed until at least May 31<sup>st</sup>, and it is unclear when the campgrounds will reopen. USFS stated that they cannot provide a reliable opening date for campgrounds at this point: they are aiming for early June, but it depends on their ability to obtain enough PPE for staff to clean bathrooms. The Water Quality Study Plan was designed to assess *e.coli* levels during the recreation season; it prescribes a single year of testing unless a second year is necessary for some reason. SCE will need to make a decision about whether to proceed with testing by July.

- The Water Board asked to postpone the *e.coli* testing unless recreation use is back to normal this summer. They will want data from as close to a representative year as possible.
- The Board noted that during the Kaweah Relicensing, there was a fish entrainment study that was delayed due to outside circumstances and could not be finished during the two-year study plan window. As a result, SCE arranged to finish the study as a PM&E, an arrangement that FERC agreed to.
- SCE supported deferring the study a year and agreed that if additional studies were needed after that time, they could figure out how to get the sampling done.

#### **3.2 COVID IMPACTS ON OTHER STUDIES**

Finlay explained that they need to touch base with the USFS to discuss how to implement the cultural resource and land surveys, which are currently scheduled for July. Given the current proposed in-person format of those interviews, they will need to address logistics for how to best conduct those safely in light of social distancing recommendations.

While the reservoir studies (e.g. bathymetry and sucker surveys) will go forward as planned this summer, the Relicensing Team does plan to shift the staffing to those who can drive to Bishop rather than fly. SCE will reach out to CDFW and USFS to confirm dates for those studies.

#### **3.3 BOTANICAL STUDY PLANS**

Finlay noted that the Relicensing Team received comments from the USFS botanical lead. For comments that do not impact the summer schedule, the Team plans to address them as part of the November Study Report. Edith Read, the Botanical Lead, had one question she plans to reach out to USFS to discuss: the botanists will be joining the wildlife survey staff this summer to examine at recreation areas for invasive plants. The Survey Plan calls for a 500-foot buffer around each recreation point, but Edith feels that a smaller area would be both more realistic and adequate for their management purposes. She will discuss with USFS and circulate their decision for concurrence by the other agencies.