SLTCRC – Data Management Committee Meeting DRAFT Summary
Meeting via WebEx | February 16th, 2022 | 3:30 pm- 4:30 pm

Meeting Attendees:
Paul Sclafani ***– Army Corp of Engineers***
Brandon Robinson ***–CWCOG***
Colin Thorne – ***Emeritus Professor University of Nottingham***
Sue Ripp (phone) and Chris Strebig –***USFS***
Jon Major ***-USGS***
Gordan Grant –***USFS PNWRS***
Maggie Counihan, Chris page, Kara Whitman***—William D. Ruckelshaus Center***
Lukas Speckhardt – ***WSU Student (Process Observing)***

Discussion:
After a round of introductions, Chris Page reminded the group of components of the NASEM Report and then opened it up for full group discussion. Much of the discussion centered around what the purpose of this working group is and what they, as a group, could provide to the full SLTCRC.

- **C.** NASEM Report recommended monitoring, data sharing, etc. Several of their multiple recommendations merge in some way. Each entity has their own "data clearinghouses" so to speak. The task for this working group could be to have the subject matter experts define the task.
- **Q.** What would give the collaborative the information they would need? Coordinated and targeted monitoring? Data availability to all? A clearinghouse of data?
- **C**. We need to clearly define what this group can do to ascertain what is needed. It is key is to transfer information not data. Need to determine what information is materially useful for this group.
- **C**. It is not clear the absence and retrieval of data is a big problem.
- **Q**. What is it that the group might need down the road, not just data, but some level of understanding of what the data is telling us/them? Decisions will be made on some picture of how the system works.
- **C.** Tailor the data/information to what is needed. **Q.** Could this group bring some questions to the collaborative that could help to better define what they would like from this working group, better identify what information would be useful?
- **C.** The Ruckelshaus Center has asked the participating entities to provide information on the projects they are working on, this group could look at the information that ties these projects together.
- **C.** Goal – help the collaborative have an understanding of the system, its features, and its hazards, and build a coordinated monitoring system and make data available.

- **Q.** What are the questions that the collaborative as a whole needs to answer? What specifically would they like to answer? What specific questions need addressed?
- **C.** The SLTCRC need to know enough about the issues to ask good questions. Do the stakeholders that make decisions on sediment management have good science to make those decisions? It is not the job of scientists and engineers to make the decisions, it is up to them to inform the decision makers of the science and consequences of decisions. The people affected by these decisions likely have limited understanding about how the management decisions impact their safety. Once you explain this to people, they get very realistic about their expectations.
- **C.** Could emphasize that there has been a lot of work and synthesis in these systems including the efforts to bring and understand the Toutle/Cowlitz system (PMA, alternatives, etc.).
- **C.** There is a trajectory of decision making that is a little bit opaque, including the alternatives and their consequences (staging) and where expertise fits into these larger things happening.
- **C.** Challenges moving forward: at some point the whole region is going to need to make decisions regarding sediment management (e.g. 2035). The question is, how do we bolster what we know to make these decisions?
- **Q.** It would be helpful to know what type of data we need by 2035 in order to make decisions about the future by then.
- **C.** There is ongoing and planned analysis of potential outlets and other actions. Whatever is done has implications downstream. It may be useful to bring a few of the ideas (example if water comes out of the lake via path A, B, or C there are ramifications of that).
    - How do we get water out the lake and what are the implications? How far do we go with this type of analysis?
    - How do we use the river system? What is the future of the fish population, and what requirements will they be? Analysis must have some constraints. Would this conflict with the mandates of the different entities?
- **C.** Make this process diagrammatic, with a timeline of all the decisions that need to be made in the order they need to be made.
    - Persisting survey in the back end – people can always contribute to it – those questions can then go to the data group. What decisions need to be made and who needs to make them? How do we make sure the data to make those decisions is available? We can help the group keep up with questions that may or may not be immediately relevant.
    - **"Monday"** is a project management system in which a shareable project interface can be used. (CWCOG has a license)

- **C.** Reminder – each entity will make decisions based on their mandates and decision-making authority, while the SLTCRC does not make these types of decisions. The SLTCRC is meant as a way to share information amongst those entities.
- **C.** The bottom line is there are multiple stakeholders/interested parties and decision makers, but there is only one river. Everyone needs to better understand the decision being made, to develop trust. There are other benefits that the decision entities cannot provide on their own. We can broaden the decision-making basis, but we need to get out of our silos.
- **C.** Could facilitate a targeted conversation in front of the collaborative and then ask them some questions.
- **C.** This discussion is highlighting what was not fully thought through in the NASEM report. It is one thing to convene a group of parties with a diverse array of perspectives and decision-making authority, if there is an inequality amongst the parties, to orchestrate a conversation that involves everyone, has to be done with some level of finesse. Helping people understand the full dimensions of the things we are talking about, and that not everyone gets to weigh in on decisions.
- **C.** Identify what decisions are being made, when and why, and what information is being used to make these decisions.
- **C.** Review how sediment must be managed as being both a hazard and a valuable resource. (Beneficial use of dredge spoil) open thinking about managing risks.
- **C.** Information is important, but there are tough management decisions that are not part of the collaborative. Make decisions based on the best information.
- **C.** Everybody understanding big decision points, when they are made, who makes them, and that everyone that cares they understand everything about

Note: Paul Sclafani is not available on March 10th .

ACTION ITEM: The working group will discuss options for reporting out and engaging the SLTCRC at the March 10th meeting. Identify some key messages/talking points to speak to the full group for 10 to 15 minutes then questions in breakout rooms.

Summary of Follow-up conversations over email:

Potential roles for this subgroup (rename to Sediment Management Working Group?)

- facilitate meaningful discussion between stakeholders regarding current sediment concerns and sediment management actions in the Toutle-Cowlitz River system,
- clarify how sediment is monitored and managed, and how decisions on sediment management policies and actions are currently made,
- establish an online sediment management knowledge hub. This would make sediment-related reports, journal papers and conference presentations available to stakeholders and would provide weblinks to relevant data sources (USGS, USFS, USACE etc.), and

- explore how stakeholders can participate in planning long-term sediment management, with the aim of setting and meeting achievable targets for ensuring public safety while supporting recovery of natural river-wetland-floodplain functions and socio-economic benefits that have been absent in the Toutle-Cowlitz system since the eruption

Potential Presentation at the March 10th Meeting:

- Prologue from the sediment management sub-group that sets that tone while offering the Collaborative a sediment management work plan that addresses the four points above.
- Colin: can give a brief explanation of how:
  1. the 50-year plan for managing sediment that was first put in place in 1985 has been modified in light of experience gained over the last 30 years,
  2. the science base for making decisions on sediment management actions, and
  3. investigations are underway to explore future options for sediment management actions, post-2035.
  4. This presentation would be based on a journal paper Colin Thorned and Paul and Chris Nygaard co-authored, in 2018 (copy attached for reference). It should be provide the basis for a well-informed Q&A session, focused on the science base for sediment management decision making.

Maybe then Val or Liza from the Corps would like to talk about sediment management policy, the congressional authority under which the Corps manages sediment, and the boundaries that authority places on them? Again, this should inform a useful Q&A session.

Then, perhaps Chris Strebig would like to talk about the implications for future sediment management of USFS plans for the future of Spirit Lake?

How do we find a proper "Docking Port"?

To consider: despite over a year of virtual meetings, it's not clear to me what the Collaboration's role in helping to define the future of the Toutle River system/Spirit Lake is. Is the Collaboration a sounding board for ideas being advanced by the various agencies involved, or an information hub, or an opportunity for interested parties to meet other interested parties, or a task oriented assemblage with a specific charge, or a group whose primary purpose is to fulfill a recommendation from the NASEM report?

Facilitator follow-up:

Most collaboratives serve multiple functions and this one is still nascent. After only ten short meetings via computer, starting from scratch, that doesn't seem wrong. In terms of the potential purposes and functions of this one, Chris Page suggests a few, e.g.,

- Learning forum
- Vehicle to build trust and relationships
- Idea exchange, improvement, and refining (Gordon's "sounding board for ideas")

- Catalyze action on issues or projects or endeavors of common interest (perhaps by a subset of parties if not the whole)
- Information collection and/or storage/dissemination
- Support for and advancement of one another's efforts (e.g., the Hoffstadt Hills land acquisition for winter elk habitat and the LCFEG fish habitat restoration project that garnered letters of support)

Chris Page does not see it as a task-oriented assemblage unless it evolves into that in years to come. And hopefully it becomes something more than a gratuitous NASEM-inspired body!

While the collaborative has high-level Mission, Vision, and Purpose statements in its formative documents (Declaration o' Cooperation & Operating Protocols), collaboratives are living and evolving amalgams and free to self-define and self-improve.

Sediment management, covered in name by the Army Corps' Plan through 2035 (if I understand correctly), carries with it a constellation of complex challenges, from stormwater management to emergency preparedness to elk or fish habitat restoration to slowing down the sediment or finding places to put it. In transcending most jurisdictions and authorities, these types of complex challenges can benefit from a cross-sector, multiparty approach.

The collaborative could create or help determine a suitable "docking port" for what this group generates. Would it make sense to give the full group, in breakout rooms first, the opportunity to discuss that concept as it hears what this Workgroup begins to generate and gives input on that? Maybe that docking port is something like the information base and planning framework for a Post-2035 Sediment Management Strategy…