

# 20130112 RC Discussion: Aquatics Concept

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Presenters: Bill Conroy (FS), Katherine Thompson (FS), Bob Ries (NOAA Fisheries)

- Powepoint Presentation on Aquatics Framework to incorporate Pacfish/Infish Interim direction into Forest Plan Revision
- Revision Collaborative Input (as discussed, no discussion of consensus or non-concensus items)

## **Orofino 1 Boise (VTC): Pacfish/Infish Suggestions, Concepts, Ideas**

- Buffers too wide due to steep drainages or maybe the buffers aren't wide enough
  - Provide for flexibility within the buffer (300') and to deal with some site-specific areas
- Should there be triggers? To determine or allow for activities
  - To help define:
    - where actions might take place
    - Distances
    - Brush
    - i.e. if x then y or z—not one size fits all
- Monitoring is a high priority

## **Orofino 2**

- Concern about Category 1, 2 and 3 measurements. How accurate?
- Like the flexibility
- Like the agencies working together
- Like the flexibility, but all projects still have to go through NEPA

## **Grangeville 1**

- What is “real science”
  - Professional opinion?
  - Peer reviewed paper? (published paper): Peer reviewed science
- Sensibility/Common Sense (flexibility) (sensibility and flexibility—Good Job!)
- Ability to collaborate with other agencies to restore historical fisheries (i.e. Running Crk)
- Need to understand how sediment contributions will be modeled; how will effects be modeled in project planning
- Need clear understanding/chance to collaborate on specific such as road density
- Ability to collaborate with other agencies and collaborate as a group as we proceed through this process
- Watershed: transportation and aquatics (linked)

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## Grangeville 2

- Local professionals should have more to say about local projects rather than officials in another area
- Need more flexibility in identifying riparian conservation areas
- Manage for multiple species rather than just endangered
- Better local control to have flexibility in short term to manage for long term

## Potlatch, Moscow, Lapwai, Lewiston

- Outline of all fish and who's responsible for the management (NOTE: FS agreed to provide this chart to collaborative)
- Too restrictive, suggest more flexibility need measurable, meaningful standards

## Kooskia, Kamiah, Lolo, Missoula (VTC)

- Define ACS and H2O shed priority: what is the difference between these?
  - Priority watershed and ACS: aren't always going to be the same
    - Watershed system integrity: maintenance and restoration
    - Priority watershed: all limiting factors/measures
  - Not clear where Level 1, 2 and 3 are coming from
  - NOTE: Adam will submit to KT a written synthesis of this discussion (doc attached below)
- KKL Input from emailed doc
- Likes Pacfish/infish, does not want to see them go away, but update them with the best science.
- Wants to see the proposals in the ACS
- Not sure about prioritization of 1-3 and the focus on 3
  - Shouldn't just be fish based but based on other indicators

## Discussion with Bob Ries and Katherine Thompson

- Will it be less/more constraining on management activities?
  - Flexibility in addressing short term vs long term effects
  - Improve vegetation condition in buffer areas
  - Provides same level of protection as Pacfish/Infish (Cam's Dry Forest example)
- Habitats and Historical Range
  - DFC: to address connectivity and this condition naturally changes
- Objectives: Current or Historical
  - Need to balance without number's ?
- BO's: will they go away?
  - FP BOs: Old ones will go away at FP level; these will be re-written with new plan
  - Will still be project specific BO's (evaluation of effect)



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**Input from Kooskia, Kamiah, Lolo, Missoula member: Adam Rissen; Wildlands CPR**

Greeting Planning Team,

Attached is one idea that may be a helpful way of integrating priority watersheds and the Aquatic Conservation Strategy into the revised forest plan. However, I know there are many other places where plan components are currently proposed that also would fit under my proposed categories. So it may be useful to discuss if it makes more sense to have related plan components in one place or spread throughout the plan, or both. It may be that restoration specific plan components should live under each resource, but then still have more general components under my proposed category.

Bottom line, I am not married to this approach, but feel strongly that priority watersheds should have its own section outside of the ACS.

Thanks

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Wildlands CPR revives and protects wild places by promoting watershed restoration that improves fish and wildlife habitat, provides clean water, and enhances community economies.

## Watershed Systems

### ID Team Recommended Plan Components

**Background:** *Watershed condition is the state of the physical and biological characteristics and processes within a watershed that affect the soil and hydrologic functions supporting aquatic ecosystems. Watershed condition reflects a range of variability from natural pristine (functioning properly) to degraded (severely altered state or impaired). Watersheds that are functioning properly have terrestrial, riparian, and aquatic ecosystems that capture, store, and release water, sediment, wood, and nutrients within their range of natural variability for these processes. When watersheds are functioning properly, they create and sustain functional terrestrial, riparian, aquatic, and wetland habitats that are capable of supporting diverse populations of native aquatic- and riparian-dependent species (Potyondy, et al., 2010).*

Watersheds are both areas with discrete physical boundaries and systems governed by complex, interconnected functions and processes. This section includes the plan components required to

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maintain or restore the ecological integrity of watersheds in the plan area, specifically detailing plan components to maintain or restore structure, function, composition, and connectivity. Watershed systems (i.e., structure, composition, function, connectivity, and integrity) are viewed at multiple analytical scales. Analysis scale followed the Hierarchy Framework of Aquatic Ecological Units in North America (Maxwell et. al 1995). The four analysis scales are: basin (HUC-3), subbasin (HUC-4), watershed (HUC-5), and subwatershed (HUC-6). The smallest scale land unit used in this analysis was the subwatershed (10 to 50 square mile area); consistent with the Watershed Condition Framework (Potyondy, et al., 2010).

The planning regulations (36 CFR Part 219.8) require plan components “to maintain or restore the ecological integrity of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems ... structure, function, composition, and connectivity”; specifically considering the “interdependence of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems”, “system drivers, including dominant ecological processes, disturbance regimes, and stressors”, and “opportunities for landscape restoration”.

Watershed structure, composition, function, and integrity are further divided into subsections used to develop plan components. Watershed structure includes: uplands, riparian areas, and stream channels; and are described in the Terrestrial Systems, Riparian Areas, and Aquatics sections, respectively. Watershed composition includes air, soil, water, and vegetation; each of which is described in separate plan component sections. Watershed function describes the ecosystem services (e.g., water filtration, flood regulation) provided by watershed components. Watershed integrity is the resilience of watershed structure, composition, and function in response to disturbance regimes, dominant ecological processes, and stressors like vegetation and road management, wildfire, climate change, and invasive species.

To address the complexity and interconnected nature of watershed systems, plan components are developed in a hierarchal system as follows:

- A. Watershed Systems
  - a. Watershed Structure
    - i. Aquatic Systems
      - 1. Physical
      - 2. Biological
        - a. T&E species
    - ii. Riparian Areas
    - iii. Terrestrial Areas
      - 1. Soils
      - 2. Vegetation
        - a. Sensitive and T&E species
      - 3. Wildlife Habitat
        - a. Sensitive and T&E species
  - b. Watershed Composition
    - i. Water Resources

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1. Water quality and quantity
2. Groundwater and Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems
3. Public and Municipal Watersheds and Water Supplies
- ii. Soil Resources
  1. Productivity
  2. Quality and Ecosystem Function
- iii. Vegetation Resources
  1. Timber
- c. Watershed Function
  - i. Watershed Ecosystem Services
    1. Clean water (filtration)
    2. Flood control/regulation
    3. Climate regulation
    4. Soil Productivity
    5. Carbon Sequestration
- d. Watershed System Integrity
  - i. Watershed Maintenance & Restoration
    1. Priority Watersheds – Watershed (Ecological?) Condition Framework  
(need this dedicated section outside of ACS to allow for a wide range of watershed restoration activities that may not be part of the ACS).
      - a. Identify those as priorities for maintaining level 1 status and those most in need of restoration, level 2 and 3
    2. Aquatic Conservation Strategy - PACFISH/INFISH Direction?
      - a. Should not focus exclusively on level 3 watersheds?
- e. System Drivers
  - i. Wildfire
  - ii. Invasive Species
  - iii. Insects/Disease
  - iv. Climate Change
  - v. Management activities?
  - vi. floods?

**INSERT Graphic Here**