

Coordinating Committee
Regional Water Supply Planning
July 26, 2006

After introductions, Holly Coccoli and Steve Hirschey briefed the Coordinating Committee on the initial work product of the Tributaries Streamflow Committee. The Tributaries Committee developed 12 criteria for ranking streams. This process (and the resulting list) is narrowly focused to assist in this regional planning process and specifically on source exchange opportunities. The criteria are in three categories: relative biologic importance; hydrologic need; and likely measurable benefit. After using these criteria to rank the streams in WRIA 8 and 9, the committee gave the list a reality check. The final list has some limitations: a narrow geographic scope (does not cover WRIA 7 or 10); the criteria focused on those streams that could benefit from 2 cfs of flow restoration (which tended to favor smaller streams). This list is not a silver bullet. There are lots of other stream flow protection and restoration needs and efforts on-going. Instead, this ranking is a first step moving forward on source exchange/substitution in a positive manner. The ranking is not “the model” for prioritization of tributaries; it is one of several models or tools that people can look at and modify to prioritize streams in other basins.

Following the presentation, there were questions and discussion around some key issues such as documentation, geographic area covered, and the planning horizon. Holly and Steve offered these clarifications:

- The committee used Chinook data because it was more widely available for all streams. But the ranking was not limited to just Chinook; benefits to other fish species were incorporated in the ranking
- This list was put together for the narrow purpose of source substitution and source exchange. If a stream is not on the list, it means that it is not among those that are the highest relative priority for source substitution/source exchange in WRIA 8 or 9. Streams that were not listed continue to be very important for streamflow protection efforts.
- This list will be used by the Source Exchange Committee to get volunteers for evaluation and potentially a pilot.
- One of the criteria used to rank the streams was 2 cubic feet per second (2 cfs). This ranking did not favor larger stream channels as priorities because the 2 cfs recommended criteria guidance would not make a measurable difference in larger rivers, whereas it could help small streams. Source exchange/substitution can benefit rivers like the Sammamish River if more water is available. The committee report will emphasize this.

A member of the Coordinating Committee suggested that the report further explain the narrow purpose, the limiting factors, how the committee reached the ranking, and how the ranking might change if criteria changes. This report should also recognize how other actions, such as shading, conservation, etc. can benefit streams. The report needs to be helpful in other contexts, especially for the bigger stream channels.

- The Tributaries Committee felt it was important to get started in WRIA 8 and 9 first. If there is an interest in expanding the prioritization to WRIA 7 or 10, that would require a different list of people to serve on the committee.

The Coordinating Committee asked Ecology and Fish and Wildlife to make contact with groups in WRIA 7 and 10 to see if they might be interested in having those WRIsAs use grant funding to do a more comprehensive ranking of streams.

- The criteria used for WRIsAs 8 and 9 could be used elsewhere. Other groups or jurisdictions could evaluate and tweak the criteria.

Discussion then ensued on how the prioritized list put together by the Tributaries Committee would be used by the Source Exchange Committee and the Reclaimed Water Committee, and how the 2cfs criterion might affect the work of these other committees.

- The prospect of water from other sources might be significantly greater than the 2cfs used by the Tributaries Committee. For example, there is potentially 16 cfs in the Lake Tapps water right or 20 mgd from reclaimed water. However, this water is not expected for quite some time. The list from the Tributaries Committee ranks streams that are in need of source substitution today. The Source Exchange Committee is looking for volunteer projects in the near term. This list is viewed as a good first step. The source exchange near term look will help evaluate how to make source exchange work. This list and the focus of the Source Exchange Committee are small steps forward.
- The current charge of the Source Exchange Committee is to evaluate strategies for making source exchange happen. Looking at projects that can be done now helps to examine issues on larger projects that may occur in the future. At present the Source Exchange Committee is focused on the short term; seeing how to make source exchange work. To change the focus at this point might slow down the slow progress being made by the Source Exchange Committee.

Coordinating Committee members expressed interest in the Source Exchange Committee's scope of work and the intersection of the various planning horizons and geographic scope. An open question is when we might look out 20+ years when the CWA source exchange water might be available.

- To a certain extent, the limits of one committee's work will necessarily limit the work of other committees. The 2 cfs was not intended as a limitation; it was intended as recommended guidance for ranking among streams to help standardize the ranking process and discriminate among streams, most of which are smaller tributaries.
- The Reclaimed Water Committee is working on the bigger efforts (what can be made available and where). The Reclaimed Water Committee is not necessarily looking at the demand for reclaimed water. A big question will be how to match the availability with the demand. The Source Exchange Committee is not analyzing the opportunities for reclaimed water, but relying on the Reclaimed

Water Committee. It was suggested that the Coordinating Committee might be the best point to connect these issues after critical next steps.

- The Demand Committee has not planned to focus on demand specifically for reclaimed water.
- An open issue for the Coordinating Committee is when and how to evaluate the specific interrelationships among and between the technical committees. Following the work being done by the Source Exchange Committee, there will be a discussion about adding to their scope a longer planning horizon. One member asked to hear about the efforts of other groups, like Shared Strategies.

The chair summarized the meeting: the Coordinating Committee is ok with the scope and work of the Tributaries Committee approach. The Coordinating Committee would like to see elaboration of several key points in the forthcoming report (e.g., limitation of the 2cfs criterion, use of Chinook data as a criterion, and how the ranking matrix relates to other analytic assessments). Efforts will be made by DFWW and Ecology to contact groups in WRIA 7 and 10 to see about getting comparable prioritizations via other avenues.

As committees begin to complete their work, it was suggested that their reports be issued in draft form, so that the Coordinating Committee can have an opportunity to comment.

The Committee discussed the chart of deliverables, which shows the approximate dates of expected end products as well as the connection between the various committees.

Finally, the Committee was briefed on the projects selected for funding by the funding committee.

The next meeting will focus on the substantive work of other technical committees. Three of the other committees should be close to finishing their work. The Coordinating Committee would like to have discussions on those efforts prior to finalization (much like today's discussion). It is anticipated that the agenda would focus on:

- Small Water Systems Committee work
- Reclaimed Water Committee's work on the Rauscher model
- Climate Change Committee's building blocks
- Source Exchange Committee's analysis and scope of committee work
- Discussion on geographic scope, planning horizon, and timing of deliverables

Before the next meeting, the committee members would like to have the facilitators collect and present (via e-mail) some specifics from each committee:

1. Geographic scope of the work being done by each committee
2. Planning horizon framing each committees' work
3. Timing of deliverables
4. Are there any drafts circulating for review? If so, provide a summary.

The date for the next Coordinating Committee meeting is October 24th 10:00 am to 12:30 pm.