

**Thompson Falls Technical Advisory Committee
NorthWestern Energy**

Annual Meeting for 2025 Calendar Year

December 11, 2024

10:30 – 2:00

NWE Missoula Office

Attendees

NorthWestern: Sady Babcock, Andy Welch, Grant Grisak, Joe Hagengruber, Jon Hanson, Jordan Tollefson

FWP: Abigail Maddigan, Jason Blakney, Harvey Carlsmith, Ladd Knotek, Mike Hensler

USFS: Josh Schulze

Avista: Eric Oldenburg

FWS: Dan Brewer

CSKT: Craig Barfoot

TU: Christine Brissette

New Wave: Kristi Webb

Welcome/Introductions

Quorum is present with representatives from FWS, FWP, CSKT, and NorthWestern

Review 2024 Activities – PowerPoint Presentation provided by Jon Hanson

- Fish Ladder and Monitoring
 - March 13 through October 22
 - Not closed for high flow in 2024
 - 2,998 total fish captured

2025 Ladder Operations

- Operate lower pools in orifice mode to evaluate internal efficiency compared to weir mode.
- Maintain existing tagging protocols as previous years.

2024 TAC funded projects report

Project Title	Agency/Contact	TAC Approved Cost	Status
TRiver Road coordination	TU	\$5,000	
Jocko Baseline Update	CSKT	\$3,575	
Pathogen survey	FWP	\$5,000	
Submersible antenna	NWE	\$50,100	*approved mid-year

Review End-Of-Year 2024 Budget and Reserve Account

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2024 Project Summary

Thompson River Road Coordination: (Christine Brissette, TU) Continued coordination with resource agencies and other partners on road investigations. Working with LNF and Great West on an engineering and feasibility study. Awarded a BOR grant for the next 3 years, about \$120,000 earmarked for Thompson River.

Jocko River Baseline Genetics Update (Craig Barfoot, CSKT) Samples sent to Abernathy via Avista to update bull trout baseline. Utilize this information for genetic assignment protocol.

Pathogen Survey (Jason Blakney, FWP) Continued this project which is based on a 5-year interval. Genetics were collected throughout the Lower Clark Fork River, including the Thompson River, Little Thompson River, Fishtrap Creek, Prospect Creek, and Cherry Creek. Full results are available via 2024 Pathogen Survey by FWP.

Submersible Antenna (Joe Hagenruber, NWE) Purchased 4 battery operated submersible PIT antenna to place in the tailrace and begin fine-scale movement study. Results are included in the end of the year report.

Review/Discuss 2025 TAC Proposals and Allocate Funds

Budget for CY 2024	\$100,000
Reserve Account Balance start of 2024	\$109,935
Reserve Account Commitments	\$13,473
Uncommitted Reserve Funds start of 2024	\$96,462
2024-1 TR Road Consolidation Coordination	\$5,000
2024-2 Jocko genetics update	\$3,757
2024-3 Pathogen Survey	\$6,090
*2024-4 Submersible PIT antenna	\$50,100

2025 Proposed Projects for TAC Funding

Thompson River River Genetic Baseline Update – Jason Blakney (FWP)

- Update genetic baseline in the Thompson River drainage. Data will be used to genetically assign individual fish to a population for 1) rapid response evaluation of fish captured below Cabinet Gorge Dam so fish can be transported to their natal drainage of origin.

Contingency Funds – Jon Hanson (NWE)

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- Funding to be used towards approved project overruns or equipment needs during the 2025 calendar year. Used as needed and report back to the TAC.
- **Submersible PIT Antenna Data Management** – Joe Hagengruber (NWE)
 - Utilize funding to hire a contractor to help manage the large quantities of data produced by fish detections on the four antennas.

All projects approved by TAC consensus.