# Southern California Edison Bishop Creek Project Relicensing
# Technical Working Groups
# October 9-10, 2018, Bishop, CA

## MEETING SUMMARY

## Meeting Schedule

Technical Working Group (TWG) Meetings to address the Bishop Creek Relicensing proposed study plans were held over the course of two days, October 9 and 10, 2018, according to the following schedule. The meeting summaries below are organized in the same order.

- October 9, 2018, Cultural Resources Technical Working Group
- October 10, 2018, an all-day meeting covered resource areas in the following order:
    - Aquatic Studies
    - Geology and Soils
    - Hydrology
    - Operations Modeling
    - Botanical Studies
    - Terrestrial Studies
    - Recreation Studies

## Objectives

All the technical working groups worked toward the same broad objectives:

- Confirm agreement on objectives and scope of existing studies
- Decide whether to proceed with the development of the three additional proposed studies
- Determine whether there are management objectives not addressed by existing studies and what studies would be needed

## TWG Meeting Summaries

Within each subsection, discussion topics are summarized, key questions and comments are listed, and action items are noted with a tag [ACTION ITEM]. All action items are then listed at the end of the summary.

## I. October 9 Cultural Resource Technical Working Group Meeting

**Attendees**

Tristan Leong, USFS (Phone)
Sheila Irons, USFS
Ashley Blythe Haverstock, USFS
Monty J Bengochia, Bishop Paiute Tribe
Kelly Larimer, Kleinschmidt
Heather Miller, HRA (phone)
Matthew Woodhall, SCE
Audry Williams, SCE
Martin Ostendorf, SCE
Mike Harty, Kearns & West

Finlay Anderson, Kleinschmidt
Lynn Compas, HRA
Terra Alpaugh, Kearns & West

### Updates & Actions Items

Finlay Anderson reminded participants that the Relicensing Team (hereafter, "the Team") hopes to come out of these meetings with next steps to develop a final draft of the study plans for distribution in mid-November.

The group reviewed the status of August action items:

- Terra Alpaugh has received not comments on the August meeting summary and is finalizing it.
- Lynn Compas completed a records search at USFS.
- In August, the Team discussed sending hard copies of 70% draft PAD and study plans to tribal contacts. Since all tribal contacts receive links to plans via email, the group decided not to mail hard copies; however, Audry will mail CDs of the final draft study plans and draft PAD [ACTION ITEM].
- Outstanding items:
    - The Team to confirm with Greg Haverstock whether BLM has any additional cultural resource objectives/relevant management plans/concerns about the draft study plants [ACTION ITEM].

### Review of Relicensing and Study Plan Development Process

The Cultural TWG had two new attendees so the Team provided an overview of the FERC process in general and specifically as related to cultural resources. The Bishop Creek Project has a FERC license that will expire in 2024. SCE's ultimate goal in this process is to renew that license with minimal changes to operations or infrastructure. There are three typical steps in a relicensing process: (1) the Project owner (SCE) describes the Project to stakeholders and listens to their questions about Project impacts; (2) the Project owner (SCE) gathers the information stakeholders have asked for via studies; and (3) FERC does its own assessment and review and determines whether and under what conditions to issue the license.

The Team explained that specific studies are not pre-established for relicensings the way they would be for an EIR under CEQA. FERC asks the Project owner and stakeholders to identify what studies need to be done based on gaps in existing information and the specific resource interests in the Project area.

The licensing process will officially begin in March 2019 when SCE files its Pre-Application Document (PAD). Because the process has very strict timelines, SCE has decided to meet with stakeholders in advance to develop study plans collaboratively, which they hope will result in FERC's accelerated approval of those plans, providing time for an additional study season if needed. SCE acknowledged that while they hope to achieve 100 percent agreement on the study plans with the resource agencies and tribes, there could be a few remaining issues that have to be resolved after the PAD is filed.

Audry Williams noted that once the Notice of Intent (NOI) is submitted along with the PAD, FERC will delegate authority to consult to the licensee. Formal consultation with the tribes will not start until that time.

### Overview of Revisions to the Study Plans

The Team has done architecture and archeology records searches at USFS and the Eastern Information Center; they have partial records from SCE but need to complete their search.

Audry described their intention to incorporate the archeology, architecture, and ethnography studies into a single study plan with three distinct sections. They are willing to consider a different organizational approach if any of the stakeholders feel strongly about it. The USFS and SCE has agreed on an area of project effects (APE) for the archelogy and architecture studies; the APE for the ethnography study will likely be different.

The Team explained that the assessment of unmapped ancillary facilities will be part of the architectural survey, since it will require them to be on the ground and cross-reference existing facilities with those Audry already has listed. This will be outlined as part of the study plan.

The group discussed the need to establish a study area and APE for the ethnographic study. The study area will be the broader area needed to understand the ethno-history of the region; it does not necessarily have to have a distinct boundary on a map, particularly for an ethnographic study which is examining the history of people who may have moved over time. In contrast, the APE is where direct project-effects are anticipated (e.g. area in which traditional cultural places could be impacted by project facilities or operations). The group agreed that for the ethnographic study they will consider the Owens Valley broadly. The APE will not be defined exactly in the study plan; once the NOI is filed and SCE is officially designated to consult on behalf of FERC, they will meet with the tribes, agree on an APE, and draft a letter to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

Monty Bengochia explained that the Bishop Paiute are interested in focusing on their traditional food sources and the impacts that a shift away from those foods have had on their health. He described a dramatic change in the springs, trees, and wildlife of the Owens Valley within his lifetime. He emphasized the tribes' interest in holistic resource management, which acknowledges the interconnectedness of natural resources and the fact that all forms of life are important to the food chain and to human well-being. They would like to identify what can be done regionally to improve ecosystem health, water quality, tribal nutrition, and family unity – all of which they see as connected. He noted the tribe's positive relationship with USFS and SCE over the years.

Audry suggested that the ethnographic study could focus on diet and traditional food sources/first foods and identify changes over time. By focusing on the Owens Valley, the study will capture the ethno-history of the region and the cumulative effects of various influences on the tribes, in addition to tracking those tribes who may have travelled into the Bishop Creek watershed for food and/or gatherings and identifying areas around the Project that may need specific protection. Monty suggested that the Cultural Resource Task Force that works on Owens Lake might be a good resource for the Team. He agreed to follow up with his Tribal Council regarding potential focus areas for the ethnographic study, get their guidance, and reconnect with Audry and Lynn [ACTION ITEM].

SCE and USFS agreed that at some point in the process they plan to include non-federally recognized tribes. Audry also proposed reaching out to western Sierra tribes who may use the creeks farther up in

the watershed [ACTION ITEM]. Monty agreed that contacting the North Fork Mono Tribe was a good idea, since the snowpack sustains tribes on both sides of the mountains.

**Action items include:**

- Kearns & West will:
  - Poll for January TWG meetings and send out invitations.
  - Finalize August meeting summary.
- Kleinschmidt/HRA will:
  - Confirm with Greg Haverstock whether BLM has any additional cultural resource objectives/relevant management plans/concerns about the draft study plants.
  - Provide updates to study plans as a track changes version.
  - Distribute another draft study plan in mid/late November.
- SCE/ Audry Williams will:
  - Mail CDs with the final draft study plans and PAD to tribal contacts.
  - Reach out to Western Sierra tribes (e.g. North Fork Mono Tribe) to see if they are interested in participating in the relicensing.
- Monty Bengochia will:
  - Discuss the ethnographic study and potential areas of focus, as well as the proposed Owens Valley-wide study area, with his tribal council to get their input; he will get back to Lynn Compas and Audry Williams with their input.

## II. October 10 Technical Working Group Meeting

### Attendees

Tristan Leong, USFS (phone)
Sheila Irons, USFS
Kary Schlick, USFS
Todd Ellsworth, USFS
Diana Pietrasanta, USFS
LeeAnn Murphy, USFS
Chase Hildeburn, SWRCB (phone)
Nick Buckmaster, CDFW
Steve Parmenter, CDFW
Rose Banks, CDFW
BryAnna Vaughn, Bishop Paiute Tribe
Kelly Larimer, Kleinschmidt
Tyler Kreider, Kleinschmidt (phone)
Finlay Anderson, Kleinschmidt
Brandon Kulik, Kleinschmidt
Matt Harper, Kleinschmidt
Edith Read, E Read and Associates
Brad Blood, Psomas
Michael Donovan, Psomas
Matthew Woodhall, SCE
Martin Ostendorf, SCE
Samantha Nelson, SCE
Vince White, SCE
Al Partridge, SCE
Mike Harty, Kearns & West
Terra Alpaugh, Kearns & West

### Updates & Actions Items

Finlay Anderson explained that today's goal is identifying where key decisions about study plan content still need to be made and either making them or establishing a process via which they will be made. He

reminded participants that the Team will be using this feedback develop a final draft of the study plans for distribution in mid-November. At that time, the Team will also distribute updated PAD sections.

The group reviewed the status of August action items. Outstanding action items included:

- Reaching out to Pat Brown regarding local bats [ACTION ITEM].
- Reaching out to USFS regarding any relevant resources on winter recreation use in the Project area [ACTION ITEM].

In addition, Terra Alpaugh reported that she has received not comments on the August meeting summary and is finalizing it.

### Aquatic Study Plans

*Bishop Creek Fish Distribution Baseline* and *Bishop Creek Reservoir Distribution*

Brandon Kulik explained that based on comments at the August TWG, the Team split the fish distribution study into two separate studies – one focused on instream fish populations and the other on reservoir populations. For the riverine study, they expanded the study area, and while their focus will remain on trout population metrics, they will also monitor for other species including suckers and dace. They will revisit all the riverine sites used during past monitoring in order to establish population trends over time. For the reservoir study, they will focus on suckers, doing boat electrofishing and possibly netting later in year, collecting cartilage for sucker aging information, and looking for evidence of spawning in the spring; they will also use this as an opportunity to collect water quality information. The Team will also collect information on other aquatic species they encounter during monitoring.

The Team asked for guidance on what specific trout population metrics would be most useful to the agencies in both the reservoir and stream studies. CDFW explained that their central question is why there appears to be a lack of recruitment to larger size classes in the trout population. In sampling years, there was abundant reproduction but most of those fish do not appear to survive year one or two based on their size. Despite plentiful invertebrate populations for food, they are either dying or staying small. Therefore, CDFW would like the study to collect data on age structure to ground-truth the length-age distribution curves they generally use to estimate age; otherwise, the metrics used in the Sada study were adequate for the level of reach characterization they are looking for.

CDFW thought that age information and its implications could potentially inform the design or interpretation of the instream flow study, *i.e*. are flows and habitat availability a limiting factor for fish in the reach? Or did the old IFIM accurately characterize flows needed to provide adequate habitat? Brandon pointed out that there numerous potential limiting factors, including flows, substrate type and quantity, water quality, water temperature, food quantity, predation, etc. that could easily influence population and growth rates. He also clarified that PHABSIM is a hydraulic model that rates quality of habitat, but is not a population assessment tool; it needs to be combined with habitat mapping to characterize habitat availability for fish. CDFW agreed and emphasized that the studies are interrelated and should be designed with that in mind.

CDFW noted that there have been internal questions about whether to manage for, or to deemphasize brown trout in Bishop Creek, since they are not a native species. They explained that there are no native trout in Bishop Creek and that native species are Owens sucker and spotted dace but that they do not

know how far up the creek they would have historically colonized. With this in mind, CDFW has considered three management options:

1. Try to eliminate brown trout, which would be the best option for native species. Practically, however, CDFW believes that this is infeasible because anglers would move the trout back in.
2. De-emphasize brown trout. However, changing conditions to handicap brown trout may also handicap native species since they thrive in similar conditions. In addition, purposely reducing brown trout populations potentially diminishes a recreational resource protected by the public trust; diminishing the public trust is only justifiable if there is a countervailing benefit – which would be difficult to argue since the potential measures would not improve conditions for native species.
3. Acknowledge that Bishop Creek is an ecologically-impaired system and manage for brown trout angling, which promotes a public trust resource. CDFW has determined that option three is likely the most pragmatic, though they are trying to think of additional, creative ways to benefit native biota in the Project area.

USFS proposed moving frog analysis from the wildlife study plan to the aquatic study plan. Given that yellow-legged frogs are largely aquatic and their egg masses should coincide with fish spawning, it would be more efficient to look for them while doing fish sampling. Samplers should flush the edges of the riparian zone and follow a visual encounter protocol. The Team agreed to move the frog into the Aquatic Plan and refer to that section in the Wildlife Plan.

The Relicensing Team asked for more context on the agency request for bathymetric mapping. CDFW explained suckers need shallow littoral benches to spawn on. A bathymetric map of the reservoir plus a water stage model will enable them to determine the extent to which the operations plan for the new license will facilitate sucker spawning in June. It will also enable them to analyze the extent of overwintering habitat: if there is not enough habitat for fish to survive the winter, then it is not a good investment to stock the reservoirs after September; if there is enough habitat, then fall stocking allows fish to overwinter and grow for better spring fishing. Brandon clarified that they would be looking for maps with more detail in the littoral fluctuation zone and less resolution in the deep zones; CDFW confirmed.

CDFW appreciated the changes to the reservoir study and will provide further written comments. USFS requested that some characterization of fish populations in Longley Reservoir be added to provide a baseline assessment. Vince White confirmed that Longley is filled in summer, used to supplement flows in the fall, and drained of useable storage (above the natural lake level) by winter. Brandon agreed to add a presence/absence study at Longley with field methods commensurate with the logistics of getting in and out of the reservoir and a sample of minimum 50 fish. CDFW and USFS noted that Longley would be one place where it might be possible to remove brown trout and manage for amphibians; however, the first step would be to determine whether frogs in the reservoir are chytrid positive.

### *Assessment of Instream Flow Conditions*

Based on comments during the August TWGs, the Team has unbundled instream flow from geology and soils, which will be addressed in a separate study. For instream flows, they plan to conduct a phased approach; initially look at the historic IFIM study to determine how much of it remains useful, potentially

incorporating some field work to fill gaps. Brandon noted that in order to exactly resurvey transects they would have to find the exact head and tail pin of each transect, which may be difficult given incomplete documentation; they may have to rely on general study sites instead which are relatively easy to relocate, and then approximate transect locations. Only partial sets of data are available from the original study; Edison is searching the archives for any additional documentation. The Team will also conduct a mesohabitat survey to confirm that whether the relative distribution of pools, riffles, and runs looks about the same as at the time of the 1986 study. Further scoping would be done subsequent to evaluating mesohabitats and old study sites.

The IFIM study could help agencies better understand how to tweak flows to achieve management objectives. Brandon provided the example that if they discover a relict population of suckers in the stream, they might tweak flows to help their spring spawning and hinder the brown trout's fall spawning period.

CDFW reported that their water branch modeling staff reviewed the old IFIM and expressed concerns about the lack of correlation between brown trout populations and the existing habitat suitability criteria; the model outputs do not consistently match where brown trout are in the steam. CDFW will share a memo from their water branch as well as a link to CDFW methodology for IFIM studies [ACTION ITEM]. Brandon observed that the habitat suitability curves were developed in this region and should represent regional brown trout needs and behavior, but also that the curves are 30 years old and need to be compared with newer literature.

### Geology and Soils Proposed Study Plan

Tyler Kreider described the agency concern motivating a proposed geology and soils study plan: Bishop Creek reaches below intake forebays have the potential to have a low sediment supply; intake forebays are potential sediment traps and may contribute to the observed low levels of fine substrates. With this in mind, the proposed study goals are to estimate what flows mobilize sediment and large woody debris in the system in general; characterize sediment input/retention due to project operations and maintenance; and evaluate how operations could be modified to provide sediment transport flows. This understanding will clarify the potential for sediment accumulation behind intake and diversion dams, inform riparian and fisheries habitat assessments, and provide a basis for future O&M permitting needs. Using existing stream gage, stream slope, and cross-sectional data to inform the FlowSed model, they will be able to estimate sediment particle size mobility at specific flows by reach as well as annual sediment loading within the study area.

Tyler clarified that they are measuring the channel at the bankfull flow to see if it is moving sediment or whether it needs spill flows to increase sediment transport. Assessing and measuring sediment transport across a range of flows would be a much greater level of effort. He explained that the study methodology was developed to answer the questions USFS put forth about sediment transport. To that end, they will produce an annual sediment budget -- coarsely estimating how much sediment is moving -- and define the extent to which large wood is an important component of in-stream habitat in the Creek.

BryAnna Vaughn noted that during a recent benthic invertebrate study she saw a lot of sediment downstream, below Plant 6. She was curious where sediment that flows through the Project is expected

to go. Finlay agreed that they will need to consider the potential impacts of any sediment management regime on downstream users, since they do not want to transport sediment into broad areas where it settles and smothers habitat. The Team will consider whether the study area should extend below Powerhouse 6 to assess those kinds of impacts.

Edith Read advised that estimating bankfull indicators can be difficult using the proposed Rosgen geomorphology approach; they should expect to get a range for the bankfull discharge of each reach rather than a single number.

CDFW advised adding photo points to the information being collected. CDFW also advised against using IFIM study location points to estimate each reach's sediment; because each reservoir is a sediment trap, they recommend picking a site close to the bottom of the reach near the impoundment. Tyler agreed and said they intend to try to line up the IFIM with the areas above each impoundment. He also explained that the proposal does not include South Lake and Lake Sabrina because they are so deep any sediment would be difficult to mobilize. CDFW agreed with his rationale and observed that much of the in-stream sediment come off lateral moraines below the dam sites, so it is of a different composition and source than in-reservoir sediment anyway.

This new study plan will be distributed in November along with the other revised study plans.

### Hydrology Discussion

Finlay reminded the group that at the August meetings Vince White presented his analysis of the unimpaired hydrograph of Bishop Creek, which will be further developed in the Project Operations Model. USFS had requested the use of the Indicators of Hydrologic Alteration (IHA) Model; Finlay asked what additional information about Project impacts the agencies would be trying to glean from that analysis.

Tristan Leong said that USFS just wants a baseline, i.e. a point from which to measure how the Project has changed hydrology and flow regimes in Bishop Creek. They want information on flows that, when paired with the results of the geomorphology study, provide a sense of how often sediment-bearing flows would have occurred naturally as opposed to with the Project in place. Finlay reminded TWG participants that FERC will consider a "no action alternative" under NEPA but that will be a review of the existing project as operated now, not a no or pre-project analysis. Tristan clarified that he is not interested in using pre-project conditions as a measure of the Project's environmental impacts; rather, USFS is interested in fostering riparian recruitment and needs to know what flows to emulate in order to recreate the ideal environment for native biota.

Vince's analysis did calculate quantities of water and the anticipated time of year for those flows. At a basic level, this information has been incorporated into the PAD operations section, but that section can be expanded. Vince and Finlay agreed to schedule a webinar with USFS hydrologists to explain the analysis and documentation [ACTION ITEM].

### Operations Model

The operations model is intended to help stakeholders understand how operations and hydrology interact and to clarify where there is flexibility and where there are constraints operationally. The model will incorporate historic stream gage, reservoir storage, and snowpack data along with information on the hydraulics of the system and flow requirements set by the Chandler Decree, Power Sales Agreement, and existing FERC license. Therefore, the model will be able to tell you whether a certain combination of operational decisions is feasible or not given infrastructural and legal constraints.

USFS asked whether the model would be able model the impacts of a monsoon season on the system. USFS staff reported that all USFS models predict that the eastern Sierra will have a monsoon season in the summer within 20 to 30 years and to prepare for that. Edith Read agreed that the ability to assess the impacts of a monsoon combined with recent fires would be informative. Vince explained that the present hydrographic record does not have monsoon data, though they could construct an artificial hydrograph to test those kinds of flows.

SCE observed that the model will be validated and calibrated using historical data, so they will need to be cognizant of how that impacts its ability to predict future operational needs. USFS asked whether rain gage data could be used to measure increased precipitation to feed into the model; Vince explained that rain gages provide some information but that it is difficult to differentiate ordinary snow melt from monsoon precipitation and induced-snowmelt when they occur simultaneously. SCE is exploring adding gaging and new technologies to help. USFS suggested using the tool to run alternative hydrologies to better understand future conditions.

The team plans to develop a first iteration of the Operations Model by early 2019, so that they can use it as a tool to identify and answer questions relevant to the other study plans. Ultimately, the focus of the Operations Model will be to develop specific PM&Es. Finlay suggested that they combine a review of the Operation Model along with hydrologic analysis in a webinar for interested agency personnel [ACTION ITEM].

## Botanical Study Plans

### *Assessment of Bishop Creek Riparian Community*

Edith Read gave a brief presentation to review the vegetation parameters that have been collected along Bishop Creek during monitoring under the current license. USFS had shared a paper outlining an alternative modeling approach to predict species response to flow regimes; USFS clarified that they recommended that approach because of its macroscopic analysis of guilds, which enables you to model changes you could expect in response to a change in operations. Edith suggested that rather than switching protocols entirely, they could reanalyze existing data using the paper's approach of grouping species into "guilds" (rather than using the existing "riparian" versus "upland" distinction) and evaluating change over time in relation to stream flow. This will allow them to maintain the continuity of their long-term data collection and to glean new insights from that existing data. The TWG supported this approach.

### *Project Vegetation Community Assessment (study under consideration), Assessment of Invasive Plants,* and *Assessment of Special Status Plants*

Edith explained the purpose of the invasive and special status plant study plans as two-fold: (1) to provide an environmental assessment of the Project in areas where operations occur and (2) to develop protocols for surveys to be done in advance of individual projects proposed during the license period.

USFS explained that they would like a baseline assessment of the vegetation community but that the level-of-specificity is up for discussion. For instance, it could take the form of a simple GIS exercise looking at how plant community types have shifted over the past decades and what might be due to Project impacts. Edith explained that the PAD contains descriptions of broad vegetation communities. Given that project-level mapping of vegetation would be somewhat coarse, the kinds of small features that are important for special status plans would likely be overlooked; therefore, she is unclear on the utility of that kind of mapping when there are not any significant changes being proposed to the Project.

Based on past surveys, they have a relatively reliable baseline for special status plants in the watershed as a whole. They still need a better baseline for invasive plants, which is why the study plan proposes doing invasive surveys around the facilities. They will record any special status plants during those surveys but do not plan to do the multi-season, multi-year studies required to accurately catalogue all the special status plants. USFS agreed that they are not asking for a survey of the entire project area but proposed that perhaps they can do additional analysis on existing data to get a better sense of baseline conditions. Edith and USFS botanists will set up a meeting to discuss how best to do this, including potentially using USFS GIS vegetation maps [ACTION ITEM]. They will also include aquatic invasive and special status plants in that discussion.

### Terrestrial Study Plans

*Wildlife Study Plans*

Brad Blood reported that since the last meeting, he has combined the terrestrial studies into a single Wildlife Study Plan but that the scopes of those studies did not change. He has rearranged some of the tables to reflect the likelihood of finding certain species during surveys; the plans also now emphasize that any surveys will include looking for bird species of conservation concern and MIS species.

At the August meetings, the TWG discussed willow flycatchers. Based on eBird reports, Brad assumes that they are present around the Project area. Therefore, he plans to map the quality of habitat around the project facilities, so that if any projects are proposed in those areas, SCE can implement appropriate monitoring protocols. CDFW agreed that assessing impacts on a project-by-project basis makes sense. They also pointed out that if a project is done in nesting season, SCE would need an incidental take permit unless they have already done a survey in the area.

Finlay asked all TWG participants to flag when and where permits will be needed for any of the studies, so that they can incorporate those into their planning process [ACTION ITEM].

USFS and CDFW committed to sending Brad data on Big Horn sheep for inclusion in the PAD [ACTION ITEM].

### Recreation Study Plans

*Project Boundary and Lands*

Matt Harper reminded TWG members that compared to a typical study this study plan is more of an administrative exercise to ensure that the Project boundary to be proposed in a final license application adequately encompasses all Project features. Based on USFS comments from the August meetings, Matt assured the group that roads and trails in the McGee Creek area will be included in this study; in the near term, he plans to identify current and future laydown areas to ensure they are incorporated into the Project boundary. USFS asked if the Team has identified and catalogued any spoil piles from construction. Matt committed to meeting with Al Partridge and the SCE operations staff to identify any current or proposed spoil piles, lay down areas, and/or borrow pits, as well as current or potential Project roads and provide that information to the USFS [ACTION ITEM]. There was also a USFS request to fully include the Sabrina Trailhead in the Project boundary.

*Facilities Condition and Public Accessibility*

Matt explained that in the newest study plan, individual sites located adjacent to Lake Sabrina, South Lake, and Intake No. 2 Reservoir were combined into general recreational areas and differentiated from other sites based on the higher level of effort and more detailed assessment that will be performed at these more closely Project-related areas. USFS asked him to ensure that the back side of Lake Sabrina, where there is boat-in access, is included in the study area since dispersed use is common there. The Team noted that they plan to broadly assess for dispersed use impacts at these sites and will then need to ground truth those areas for more detailed impact. In the near term, the Team will work with USFS to define the parameters and goals of this dispersed use assessment [ACTION ITEM].

The Team asked USFS to further explain the anticipated scope of their request to include a Project visual and aesthetics discussion and evaluation and what information gaps it might filled. USFS explained that the Inyo Forest Plan has visual quality objectives that they want to ensure consistency with, especially if any changes are made to recreation facilities. USFS Inyo staff noted that they do not have a landscape architect on staff, which will be necessary to help with these kinds of assessments; the USFS regional office said they can help fund a landscape architect for the forest. Diana Pietrasanta will follow up with Nora Gamino regarding standards for colors, etc. to share with the Team [ACTION ITEM]. The Team proposed to perform this analysis at the three identified Project-related recreation areas mentioned previously (South Lake, Lake Sabrina, and Intake No. 2 Reservoir); USFS supported this idea.

USFS also wants to have a conversation about how people obtain information about the Project (e.g. website, kiosks).

*Recreation Use and Needs*

Matt explained that based on comments from the August TWG meetings, this study plan was changed to include a targeted angler survey at specific sites and to also include Longley Lake Trailhead in the general recreation surveys.

The targeted angler survey was initially proposed to be performed at each of the three main recreation areas (South Lake, Lake Sabrina, and Intake No. 2 Reservoir) as well as Plant 2, Plant 4, and Plant 5. CDFW suggested providing the angler surveys at campgrounds – specifically, Forks, Big Trees, and Four Jeffrey campgrounds – rather than just intakes in order to capture perspectives from stream fishermen

(as opposed to those primarily using the reservoirs). While some of those fishermen will be using areas without a direct Project nexus, it is preferable to get as much information as possible about use and then sort out what is Project-induced. CDFW also suggested that Weir Lake be included in the targeted angler surveys to be performed at South Lake. The Team agreed to switch the intake survey sites with the suggested campground survey sites and to ensure Weir Lake is included in the South Lake Recreation Area targeted angler surveys.

USFS asked how the Team plans to examine displaced recreation (e.g. people who intended to fish at the reservoir but ended up fishing downstream due to lack of parking). The Team explained that the recreation use and needs assessment will help to clarify the reasons various people are recreating and where. The Team suggested including an additional survey point down the road from the reservoirs.

CDFW suggested adding a trail camera to the Longley Lake trail to establish whether people are fishing at Longley Lake; USFS and SCE expressed concern over having a camera in the wilderness and suggested they may be able to get the same information from the targeted angler surveys.

USFS suggested deploying several traffic counters at each site.

The next draft of the study plan will include questionnaires for both the general recreation survey and targeted angler survey. These questionnaires will be developed to establish current use and needs and, along with other data sources, will also be used to project future use and needs at the Project. The Team asked the TWG to be thinking about what specific questions need to be answered moving forward that will help formulate the surveys. CDFW requested that at least one question collect information on the economic benefits of fishing recreation (e.g. total days in the area; amount spent on the trip).

### Next Steps

The Team requested additional written comments by October 26th. The next round of study plan revisions will be completed and circulated in mid-November and will include a red line version to make it clear where changes have been made [ACTION ITEM].

The group agreed to focus on individual break out meetings in December; therefore, the proposed December group meetings will be cancelled and rescheduled for January [ACTION ITEM]. The Team will provide a detailed process memo outlining deliverables from now until study plan determination and will review that with the group in January [ACTION ITEM].

### Action Items

- **All TWG Participants:**
  - Provide written comments on the current draft study plans by Friday, Oct 26.
- **Kearns & West will:**
  - Poll for January TWG meetings (22, 23, 24) and send out invitations.
  - Finalize August meeting summary.
- **Kleinschmidt/Relicensing Team will:**

  - Confirm with Greg Haverstock whether BLM has any additional cultural resource objectives/relevant management plans/concerns about the draft study plants. [Lynn Compas]
  - [Aug Action Item] Reach out to Pat Brown re: local bats [Brad Blood]. [DONE]
  - Possibly schedule a call with CDFW water team re: IFIM [Brandon Kulik].
  - Schedule a webinar re: Vince's hydrologic analysis for agency hydrologists; after webinar.
  - Schedule a webinar re: operations modeling to review what model parameters the agencies think are important to include.
  - Work with SCE operations to identify locations of current and proposed spoil piles, lay down sites, and/or borrow pits, as well as current or potential Project roads and provide that information to USFS [Matt Harper]
  - Develop first version of operations model by Q1/Q2 of 2019.
  - Schedule a focused conversation with agency botanists (e.g. Blake) re: how to best establish baselines for sensitive and invasive plant species, including appropriate LOE and methods [Edith Read].
  - USFS to provide GIS Layers / Maps for Veg Classification [added and in-progress]
  - Schedule a meeting with USFS (Diana and Nora) to discuss an initial trails assessment and further define parameters and goals regarding dispersed use [Matt Harper].
  - Reaching out to USFS regarding any relevant resources on winter recreation use in the Project area [Matt Harper].
  - Distribute revised draft study plans and draft PAD sections in mid/late November; will include new geology/sediment study plan as described by Tyler in the meeting.
  - Provide updates to study plans as a track changes version.
  - Provide a detailed process memo from now until study plan determination.
  - Resource area leads will touch base with their TWG participants about studies in December.
- SCE/ Audry Williams will:
  - Mail CDs with the final draft study plans and PAD to tribal contacts.
  - Reach out to Western Sierra tribes (e.g. North Fork Mono Tribe) to see if they are interested in participating in the relicensing.
- Monty Bengochia will:
  - Discuss the ethnographic study and potential areas of focus, as well as the proposed Owens Valley-wide study area, with his tribal council to get their input; he will get back to Lynn Compas and Audry Williams with their input.
- CDFW will:
  - Share memo from their water branch on the adequacy of the existing IFIM study AND a link to CDFW's accepted methodology for IFIM studies.
  - Provide data on Big Horn Sheep to Brad Blood. [DONE]
  - Inform the Team if any of the proposed studies will require permits.
- USFS will:
  - Provide data on Big Horn Sheep and Migratory Bird Treaty Act to Brad Blood [DONE, Kary Schlick].
  - Liaise with Regional Office to access a landscape architect who can offer input on the visual and aesthetics component of the Recreation Facilities Condition Study.

- Ask Nora Gamino about color standards for USFS facilities/signage.
- Provide comments on potential nexus between Project and testing for fecal coliform/E.coli.