

Uncommon Dialogue on Hydropower, River Restoration, and Public Safety

January 2022 Update

The following e-mail provides updates from January 2022 on recent and upcoming activities within the Uncommon Dialogue (UCD) on Hydropower, River Restoration, and Public Safety.

Steering Committee (SC)

The Planning Group is developing a 2022 Process Plan organizing the 2022 efforts based on discussions with the Steering Committee in December. The 2022 Process Plan will be shared once it is ready. The next Steering Committee meeting will be in March 2022 and the Facilitation Team will be scheduling soon.

Working Group (WG) 1 Accelerate Development of Hydropower Technologies and Practices to Improve Generation Efficiency, Environmental Performance, and Solar and Wind Integration

In January, WG1 has been revising the technology white paper based on feedback from participants. WG1 is preparing a revised draft for distribution to WG1 and the Steering Committee for review. Once the paper is finalized it will then be circulated to Uncommon Dialogue participants for sign-on.

WG 2 Dam Safety

WG2 is developing a plan for 2022, based on the value that WG2 can provide on relevant topic areas. In 2022, WG2 plans to convene a workshop or a series of small group conversations centered around dam safety and dam removal needs and consider collaborative opportunities for the UCD.

WG 3&5 Increase Basin-Scale Decision-Making and Access to River-Related Data and Advance Effective River Restoration through Improved Off-site Mitigation Strategies

The basin-scale subgroup met in January and will hold three “Lunch-and-Learn” sessions with basin-scale licensees in February to further explore approaches to basin-scale licensing. The Subgroup will develop a document outlining issues, challenges, and successes surrounding different approaches to basin-scale planning. The WG 3/5 co-chairs will meet in February to discuss scheduling the next WG3/5 meeting and launching a Mitigation subgroup.

WG 4 Improve the Measurement, Valuation of, and Compensation for Hydropower Flexibility and Reliability Services and Support for Enhanced Environmental Performance

In 2021, WG4 met as three subcommittees and worked on a variety of topics, including drafting the original tax package that was included in the proposed 21st Century Dams Act. In 2022, WG4 will meet as a full working group instead of in subcommittees. The WG4 co-chairs will meet in February to discuss next steps for WG4 in 2022. WG4 may draft white papers on relevant topics to determine actionable outcomes. Potential topics for WG4 to explore further in 2022 include how to incentivize hydropower that goes “above and beyond,” grid valuation, and methane/life cycle emissions.

WG 6 Improve Federal Hydropower Licensing, Relicensing, and License Surrender Processes

The WG6 drafting team has been meeting throughout January to revise the Federal Power Act redline document. The WG6 drafting convened a roundtable with tribes, federal and state agencies, and the full WG6 to discuss the concepts under consideration. On January 13, the WG6 co-chairs presented concepts under review to the Association of Clean Water Administrators (ACWA) to increase state agency involvement in WG6. In February, WG6 will continue its efforts on the FPA redline document to finalize a package to share with the Steering Committee for final review and sign-on. It is anticipated that the final document will be distributed for review in February. Stay tuned!

WG 7 Policy, Strategy, and Implementation of the 3 Rs (Rehabilitation, Retrofit, and Removal)

Members of WG7 continue to work on various legislative topics including the Water Resources Development Act Reconciliation (WRDA), and the 21st Century Dams Act. WG7 is also focusing on the implementation of the Infrastructure Bill, including outreach to the various agencies receiving funding to summarize the intent behind the 3R's recommendations. WG7 will closely coordinate with WG6 on legislative outreach for the upcoming FPA redline document.

Tribal Engagement

The Tribal Participation Group met on February 3rd to receive a briefing from WG6 on the FPA concepts and to discuss the next steps for tribal engagement in 2022.

On behalf of the Uncommon Dialogue convenors and facilitation team, we look forward to working with you and new participants in 2022 and thank you for your hard work. If there are others you think would like to get engaged with the Uncommon Dialogue, please forward their contact information to Katy Kennedy (kkennedy@kearnswest.com).

For more information on the Uncommon Dialogue, refer to Stanford's Uncommon Dialogue website: <https://woods.stanford.edu/research/hydropower>.

Please feel free to contact Dan Reicher (dreicher@stanford.edu (<mailto:dreicher@stanford.edu>)) or Kelsey Rugani (krugani@kearnswest.com (<mailto:krugani@kearnswest.com>)) if you have any questions!