

Uncommon Dialogue on Hydropower, River Restoration, and Public Safety

February 2024 Update

This email provides updates on recent and upcoming activities within the Uncommon Dialogue (UCD) on Hydropower, River Restoration, and Public Safety.

Plenary Group and Planning Group

December Plenary Meeting: The Uncommon Dialogue Plenary Group met in December to reflect on progress made in 2023 and what's ahead for 2024. The meeting was well attended, with around 90 participants. The Planning Group continues to meet regularly to discuss working group activities, coordination between working groups, and assessing participation. Also, the Planning Group is drafting a Governance Charter, available for review in 2024.

Spring Plenary Meeting: The Planning Group is beginning to plan for a hybrid Plenary meeting sometime this Spring 2024. The meeting will take place in-person with an option to participate virtually. More information will be shared in the coming weeks.

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

Innovations for Sustainability Workshop and Planning for Additional Workshops: The WG 1 co-chairs continue planning for a three-part workshop series on hydropower technology and innovation. The co-chairs collaborated with the WG 4 co-chairs to host the Innovation for Sustainability workshop, which took place on February 1, 2024, and concentrated on water quality. The co-chairs are working with WG 2 on the second workshop, Innovations for Safety, which will be scheduled for late February/early March. The third workshop, Innovations for Efficiency, Optimization, and Asset Management, will occur later in Spring 2024.

WG 2 Dam Safety

Dam Safety Policy Issues, Convening WG 2, and Innovations for Sustainability Workshop: The WG 2 co-chairs are developing a list of known policy issues in dam safety for review by WG 2 and discussion by a broader coalition during the Innovations for Safety workshop. The first WG 2 meeting was held on January 31, where the group identified existing policy areas that the Uncommon Dialogue may be able to address through its unique partnerships. Please reach out to Morgan Nachman (mnachman@kearnswest.com (<mailto:mnachman@kearnswest.com>)) if you're interested in participating in WG 2.

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

Basin-Scale White Paper: Basin-scale subgroup members continue to revise the draft white paper, *A Basin-Scale Approach: Options, Best Practices, and Recommendations to Advance Basin-Scale Planning and Licensing*. WG 3&5 will reconvene after an updated draft has been shared for review.

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

EEP Policy Document Continues Development: WG 4 members continue to refine the draft policy document on qualifying hydropower projects for enhanced environmental performance. WG 4 anticipates the document will be ready to share more broadly in the coming months. Before the end of 2024, WG 4 members will advance discussions toward a policy approach for attributing greenhouse gas emissions from waterbodies and conduct a case study using the hydropower flexibility tool.

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

Licensing Reform Proposal: The WG 6 Drafting Team (DT) continues to refine the collection of proposed reforms to the Federal Power Act on hydropower licensing, relicensing, and license surrender developed in WG 6. The group has been responding to technical assistance requests and continues to collaborate across the Uncommon Dialogue industry, tribal, and conservation caucuses.

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

Implementation Tracking: WG 7 continues to meet bi-weekly to track implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and other policies that advance the 3Rs. In 2024, the group plans to create educational materials and conduct outreach about IIJA implementation, as well as develop a proposal for a new market mechanism to advance the 3Rs.

If you are interested in participating in WG 7, please reach out to Katy Kennedy (kkennedy@kearnswest.com (<mailto:kkennedy@kearnswest.com>)).

WG 8 Workforce Development

First Working Group Meeting: WG 8 met in December to discuss the WG's mission and scope. They identified a few topics to orient the group's work: compiling existing information to understand the state of the workforce, marketing, education, and determining what data or information is missing.

In 2024, the WG plans to begin a Workforce Gap Analysis and a concept paper on creating an inclusive workplace.

Tribal Engagement

Expanding Tribal Engagement: Ridges to Riffles of Northern California is planning a meeting of the Tribal Participants Group and a listening session to hear directly from tribes on their priorities for the Uncommon Dialogue.

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 (<mailto: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!