HSU River Institute Meeting Minutes
February 26, 2014

1. Members present: Kathy Lee (Politics), Margaret Lang (ERE), Bill Trush (RI Co-Director, ESM), Alison O’Dowd (RI Co-Director, ESM), Mahesh Rao (Forestry), Darren Ward (Fisheries), and Jim Graham (ESM).

2. Action items:
   a. The River Institute webpage is up (www.humboldt.edu/riverinstitute). Please go to the ‘People’ page (http://humboldt.edu/riverinstitute/people.html) and send Alison O’Dowd (ap73@humboldt.edu) 1-2 sentences to add to your personal description. Also let Alison know if you want to be added or removed from the ‘People’ page. We need additional content for the website, so please send any additional content to Alison.
   b. Email Bill Trush (William.Trush@humboldt.edu) if you are interested in being involved in the Mekong River Don Sahong Power Project Review (see description below). This is an exciting opportunity to influence a large-scale project with enormous ecological implications. We would also like to showcase this project as what a HSU interdisciplinary research team is capable of.

3. Updates
   a. Mekong River Don Sahong Power Project Review – Bill Trush gave an overview of his initial investigation into a hydropower dam that is slated to be built in a critical reach of the river that will block a major fish migration pathway. Bill would like to build an interdisciplinary team at HSU (and with other partners such as the World Wildlife Fund, Brian Smith) in order to develop quantitative criteria for how to build a passage alternative if and when the dam is built. Bill has compiled photos and aerial images from the area to get a handle on the hydrology and geomorphology and when fish are moving through this reach. Bill would like to use satellite imagery to determine whitewater areas to evaluate for riffle crest dynamics and rating curves. Another goal of the project is to measure the migration capacity for the alternative channel. Email Bill if you are interested in getting involved in this project.
   b. Eel River Potter Valley Project Blockwater. Friends of the Eel River has plans to fund the River Institute to make recommendations for blockwater releases from Van Arsdale dam. The project will explore what flow will allow outmigration of fish and maintain productive riffles. The current blockwater release is 2500 acre-feet. This project will explore if 2500 ac-ft is an appropriate volume to release or if more/less is needed.
c. Cumulative Effects Workshop/Panel: CDF – Bill is considering joining the Effectiveness Monitoring Committee, but is open to another person in the RI to join instead of him.

d. Santa Ynez River Fish Migration Study: NMFS – we are wrapping up this project and submitted a final draft to NOAA in February.

e. Instream Flow Project on South Fork Eel River: EPA/CDFW - CalTrout and Trout Unlimited have applied to EPA for funding an instream flow demonstration project on the South Fork Eel River, with the intent of sub-contracting to the River Institute for doing fieldwork and analyses.

f. Salmonid Restoration Federation Conference (March); Bill is giving a talk on the Santa Ynez River and will also participate in a Fish Passage Workshop. Margaret Lang is presenting as well.

g. Sullivan Gulch Demonstration Stream. Bill has been taking students out to develop rating curve relationships with riffle crest dimensions. This stream is a great opportunity for research or to involve courses (such as Hydrology and Fisheries).

h. Riffle Crest Thalweg Draft Paper: Bill Trush and Gabe Rossi (MS in Engineering at HSU) are preparing a manuscript on how to use rifle crest thalweg depth measurements to develop instream flow thresholds for the SWRCB.

i. Mad River Wetland Design. Bill has been taking his ENVS450 (Applied Restoration) class to an off-channel wetland along the Mad River to have students evaluate an existing wetland project and to design a new one. Also a good location for student field trips and projects.

4. **Seminar.** We discussed the possibility of hosting one seminar per semester with a big name speaker from out of town. Nothing planned for this semester yet, so we’ll probably push this back to the fall semester.

5. **Prospective RI Board Members.** The RI Advisory Board needs to have 5 members (that includes both HSU and non-HSU personnel). The Advisory Board will provide feedback to the River Institute and assess if the projects are in line with the overall vision of the RI.

6. **Prospective RI WorkGroup Leaders.** The Mekong WorkGroup will be our first. Let us know if you want to get involved. Also let us know if you want to form another WorkGroup on a topic that you would like to pursue.

Next meeting: March 26, 2014, 2-3:30 pm HGH 113 (CANCELLED).