

Columbia River Regional Forum
System Configuration Team Meeting
16 April 2026
Official Notes

Representatives of Corps, ODFW, WDFW, BPA, NOAA, and others participated in today's SCT hybrid meeting facilitated by Ida Royer and hosted via Microsoft Teams.

Draft and final SCT notes are available on the COE's TMT website under the FPOM link. See the final page of these minutes for the list of attendees of today's meeting.

1. February and March Minutes

- Minutes were not ready for review.
- All minutes should be available for the May meeting and SCT will be able to review those minutes at that time.

2. Budget Update

- FY27 President's Budget (PBud): \$15.25 M
 - Columbia: \$6.15 M
 - Willamette \$9.1 M
- FY26 Appropriations: \$56.78M
- FY28 Budget is currently being routed.

Tom Lorz, Umatilla/CRITFC, asked if Royer could send the latest budget numbers out.

Royer said that she could do that. Royer said that the PBud was the total. She said that the full CRFM breakdown could not be provided and not publicly available. Once it is available she would share it.

Lorz asked if she could talk about the capability she had requested.

Royer said that her official talking point on capability is that it is the President's budget.

Chane said that there was an update last Friday, they had published all of the total amounts for the program (\$15.25M) and they also provided the breakout. He said that was what he was tracking from the Columbia River to the Willamette River. The thing that was not available was what was the budget translated to the “J Sheet”, or the Congressional Justification Sheet for that budget. They should be approved at posted by tomorrow. When the J Sheet is released and publicly available it will show the list of projects that were funded in FY27. Until it is publicly available, they could not talk about the line items specifically. They are waiting for the J Sheet to be published and then they would have all the information for the projects that were submitted under the PBud. Until then they just have the breakout between Columbia – Willamette and the total. Chane shared the numbers for the breakout between the Columbia and the Willamette. The Fish Managers (FM) all voiced concerns. Chane said that the Project List should be available on Friday. Chane shared via chat a link for the website with the updated for FY27 and where the J Sheet would be published.

| *Chane, Ian B CIV USARMY CENWD (USA)9:08 AM*

| <https://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Budget/#Budget%20Information>

| *Laurie Porter (CRITFC) (Unverified)9:11 AM*

| *Can you bring up a spreadsheet or bullet points of how this differs from 2026 and what the J sheet for 2026 looks like just so we can look at the differences.*

| *Royer, Ida M CIV USARMY CENWP (USA)9:13 AM*

| *I will send out the FY26 J-sheet to the group with an email with the FY27 numbers. I may wait until the FY27 J-sheet is published so I can provide all the information at once.*

Charles Morrill, WDFW, asked again what they put in for capability. Chane reminded him that the PBud reflects their capability and that was where we are at. Morrill said that he understood what the PBud was, it was what was given. He asked what the Corps had requested. Chane said that was one of the things that had changed in how the Corps used to do business, right now their PBud is their capability. That is the way they have been directed. Lorz asked if they could even share the projects that they had thought they could work on. Chane said that they could not express anything that would show capability beyond the PBud because the PBud reflects their capability. Lorz said that the region would have to look at this at a different angle because the Corps' response was ludicrous. Chane said that he understood.

Chane shared that there was a Budget Appropriations Hearing going on with the Corps happening at the same time as this meeting. He shared the meeting link in chat. He said that it would give a little more context to the current discussion.

| *Chane, Ian B CIV USARMY CENWD (USA)9:13 AM*

| *<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v4xjNoRQHFM>*

Lorz said that the region was sending people to help the Corps get funding and to say that the capability was \$15.25M is flabbergasting. He said that he would talk to Policy.

Chane apologized that he could not say more, it is hard to talk about what cannot be talked about. He said that it puts them in a tough spot. He said that he understood the frustration.

Lorz said what was more frustrating is that, like last year, they got the Corps earmarks. He said that they would keep trying to do that, but it makes the job harder to help the Corps. It is a high level of frustration on all sides.

Chane said that the Corps see that and they get it. It was just that their hands were tied as they are.

Laurie Porter, CRITFC, asked what the legal authority that the Corps was being directed that they were not able to even provide their capabilities. She said, though she is not a governmental lawyer or policy person, that she thought that it was a requirement that the region works together and that the Corps was allowed and able to give their capabilities. She asked what was the law that they were being told not to discuss these things and is it legal.

Chane said that was a tough one to answer. He said that he had said earlier that there was a hearing going on with the Appropriations Committee with the Corps

of Engineers and that was a topic that came up at that meeting. He said that he could not speak to it but he would appreciate it they would watch the hearing. He said that he had put the YouTube link in the chat. He said that there are some questions being raised about that in the meeting.

Royer said that she would suggest if the region had concerns that the Corps works in the Executive Branch, so they do have a chain of command that they follow. If there are concerns elevate them to counsel or pursue any avenues that the region feels like it should take. She said that she did not think that she or Chane could speak on the legality at their level.

Van Dyke asked Chane if the Budget Hearing link was something that was active at the time of the SCT meeting or if it was something that was recorded.

Chane said that it was active, but it was being recorded. He said that he was watching it right before the SCT meeting.

Porter thanked Royer and Chane. She reiterated that she is a technical representative, but she had that question because she felt like we needed to get to the bottom of that.

Chane said as Royer said that there are avenues outside of this forum. He said that the region understood how the Corps vertically aligns, through their Headquarters, through the Assistant Secretary of the Army office and then to the Office of Management Budget, that is how the Corps' budget works. And then Congress issues the budget so that is the chain that is above them. And as Royer said they are at the bottom of that one. Process wise that is how they function for their budgets. Unfortunately, they cannot go beyond what their current guidance is, that is the direction that they have been given.

Lorz asked if Congress gave some directive questions, would they be able to respond to that or was it going to go through an interesting legal fandango.

Chane said that was a hard one because they obviously answer the technical questions when they get requests from Congress, but they are at the bottom of that tunnel. So, it has to go through all the vertical steps before it gets to them so yes they will answer to Congress if they are asked but it will depend on if they get asked.

Lorz said that was part of the reason he was asking because those are some of the types of questions and the few things that they can fuss with is one option because he did not know how they were going to meet their biological requirements with \$6.1M in CRFM. He said that he was wildly impressed that it was even an

argument that someone was going to try to pull off. He said that he looks forward to this in future discussions.

Chane said understood.

Van Dyke to add to the thought, he said that he knew that they would try to respond but they really did not have more than what they already have on what they could do. He asked if the Corps was actually talking to the President about this, were they being asked by the President the poignant questions about the need for dollars.

Royer said that any budget related, budgets go up and information comes down through the chain that Chane had mentioned. She said that there certainly may be discussion between OMB, which is the Executive Office of the President and the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, and the Corps Headquarters communicates with the ASA. That is how communication happens, including the budget.

Van Dyke asked if the ASA was where they were getting questions.

Chane said if they got questions, they would come through the ASA. They could come from OMB through ASA. That is how their team works, if there is an upper-level question coming from the Executive through OMB it comes down through ASA, through Headquarters and then to them.

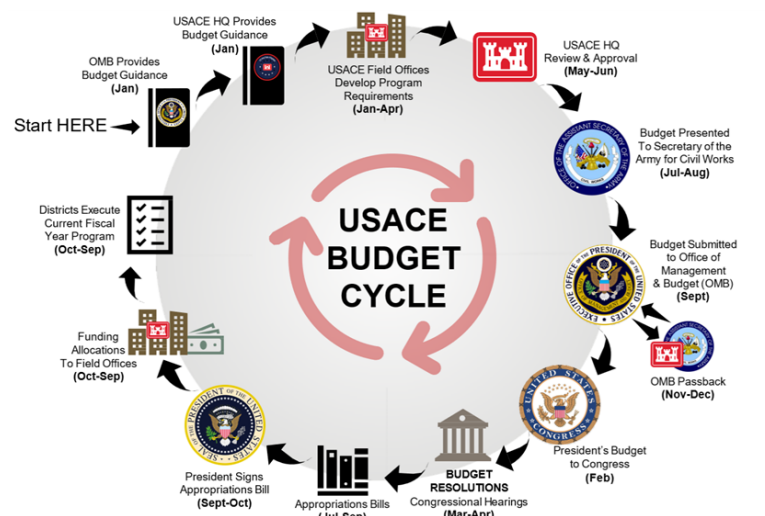
Van Dyke said that we are talking fifth-level, eighth level, maybe even less than that, who are providing messages rather than actually doing anything. He said that he knows that Royer realizes this as the Fish Managers (FM) do that this is the term that Lorz used, “poppycock”. He said that he thought it was sequestering, what was going on here, and that is the kind of thing that really frustrates people about the government and red tape. It is emphasized in this process pretty heavily right now and he was sure that everyone was feeling it. He said for us to talk about it and understand the process is important to know, even if we are being demoted to a lower stage or not. The actions still require that lower stage to provide the detail. It is just that the detail is not being requested or not quite making it up. He said that this was not new for this year it has been around for a while. He said that he appreciated the Corps for being open about it and recognized that they were not going to be able to say much today because they are being told not to.

Chane said that his comment was that they felt like they are the plankton at the bottom of the food chain but we all realize that plankton is very important. So they will continue to do their work and will continue to work with the region. It is

just that their ability to share information as they have in the past is a little different now. He said that he knows and directly heard the frustration and they feel the frustration as well through this because it did not make their work any easier. He said that he appreciated Van Dyke acknowledging that they are trying to do the best they can to get through this working with the region.

Lorz asked if by some miracle CRFM was able to get more funding or earmarks what process the Corps would use to make sure that money got allocated. He asked if the region was going to be able to do any of their normal stuff, like ranking.

Royer said that she thought that it was still worthwhile to go through the ranking process so that they have that. She shared that their discretion is much more limited these days however they do have vertical briefing so they can request modifications that may or may not be approved. If they understand priorities that would help them advocate for certain projects that are deemed important and they are not funded. She said that she thought it would still be helpful to go through the process of ranking.



Lorz said as soon as we are able to get a break out of 2027 the better. He said whenever they are able to share it please do. He said otherwise they are kind of working off FY26 as best they can.

Royer said thinking out loud, as we go through this process she will be able to share what is in the FY27 PBud and then if the region would like to request additional projects we could do that and include them in the ranking process. She said that would be one way to go about it. She said once the J Sheet was published and we are able to see the break out she could email that out and include the J

Sheet for FY26 as Porter had requested. She said that she would probably wait to send all of that until the J Sheet was published.

Chane shared that the first link he had posted was the Corps' public site and it would be where to find the information about the J sheets. It would also include the FY26 J Sheet and if they wanted to check on Friday for the FY27 J Sheet, it would be the first place that it would be listed.

Porter said that she had been told to remind the group when having the vertical discussions to continue to advocate for Pacific Lamprey and set asides where Lamprey would have their own line separated out, or the word "Pacific Lamprey" to be included in any and all report language. She said that was told to her by her Policy-level, if there is any opportunity to get the word "Pacific Lamprey" out there. She said that they like to say Pacific Lamprey, instead of just lamprey because they have decided that there may be some confusion going on in Washington DC between Sea Lamprey and Pacific Lamprey, so we say Pacific Lamprey.

Chane said that was how the budget is broken down these days, into the three components – Columbia, Willamette, and Lamprey. He said that the region would see that as you see the FY26 J Sheet as well. As we work to identify our requirements, that is how the requirements are submitted. He said that was what was reflected in the three different areas once the budget is approved. He said that he agreed with the Pacific part of that, he said that he grew up on Lake Erie so yes, very clear that it is Pacific Lamprey.

Morrill asked if there were any comments that Royer could share from what she had received from the region for FY28.

Royer said that she did receive some requests. She thanked those that sent some in but was unable to comment or respond but she did get them.

Chane said it was good timing because they are currently working the FY28 budget development. They could not comment but thanked the region.

Royer said that it would be an interesting budget year and Lorz responded with poppycock. Royer thanked the region for joining and having conversation even if it was one-sided. She said that they were still listening.

Next meeting: May 21, 2025

Agenda Topics:

- FY27 PBud

Today's Attendees:

Name	Affiliation
Charles Barnes	Corps
Christopher Peery	Corps
Christopher Yane	Corps
Ian Chane	Corps
Ryan Ashcroft	Corps
Trevor Conder	NOAA
Ida Royer	Corps (host)
Jay Hesse	
Ben Hausmann	BPA
Chris Magel	NOAA
Carolina Andes	BPA
Tom Lorz	Umatilla/CRITFC
Ralph Lampman	
Erick Van Dyke	ODFW
Laurie Porter	CRITFC
Charles Morrill	WDFW
Andrea Ausmus	BPA Notetaker

Minutes by Andrea Ausmus, CorSource Technology Group LLC, Contractor for Bonneville, amausmus@bpa.gov (503-230-4439).