

UPPER COLUMBIA SALMON RECOVERY BOARD
DRAFT MEETING (Webinar) SUMMARY
November 4, 2021

Board Members Present:

Chair, Chelan County: Bob Bugert; **Vice-Chair, Douglas County:** ABSENT; **Okanogan County:** Andy Hover; **Yakama Nation:** Shannon Adams; **Colville Confederated Tribes:** Chuck Brushwood

Staff Present: Melody Kreimes, Sarah Walker, Tracy Bowerman, Caitlin Vanderpool, Ryan Niemeyer, Nicole Jordan, Dave Hecker, Alicia Meier

Others Present:

Bonneville Environmental Foundation: Robert Warren; **Bureau of Reclamation:** Steve Kolk; **Cascadia Conservation District:** Ryan Williams, Mark Ingman; **Cascade Fisheries:** Jason Lundgren; **Chelan County Natural Resource Department:** Mike Kaputa; **Douglas County PUD:** Tom Kahler; **Hood Canal Coordinating Council:** Scott Brewer, Haley Harguth; **Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation:** Jessica Goldberg; **Trout Unlimited:** Lisa Pelly; **Yakama Nation:** Brandon Rogers; **Washington State Representative:** Keith Goehner

The virtual meeting was called to order at 1:01 PM by Chair Bob Bugert.

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Bugert welcomed everyone to the meeting and did a roll call on who was present via telephone and webinar. Marc Straub was unable to attend the meeting, however a quorum was still met with the attending members of the Board. Chair Bugert welcomed and introduced Dave Hecker the new UCSRB Lead Entity staff. Chair Bugert reviewed the draft agenda for today's meeting.

Chuck Brushwood made a motion to approve the November 4, 2021 agenda as presented. Commissioner Hover seconded the motion and all approved.

1. Regular Business

Chair Bugert asked for comments or revisions to the September 23, 2021 UCSRB meeting summary. No comments or revisions were offered, and the summary was approved.

Commissioner Hover made a motion to approve the September 23, 2021 UCSRB meeting summary. Chuck Brushwood seconded the motion and all approved.

2. Ruckelshaus Center Regional Evaluation Workshop

Chair Bugert reviewed the task to create a Regional Evaluation committee that was discussed at the September 23, 2021 UCSRB Board meeting. The committee consists of Chair Bugert, Chuck Brushwood, Melody Kreimes, and Robert Warren. The committee meet with Ruckelshaus staff in October to work on how to move forward on key actions and recommendations of the Regional Evaluation. Melody gave a summary of the topics that have received general support and on which UCSRB is already moving forward:

- Expansion of all-H integration
- Funding for adaptive response for projects post-construction
- PRCC and Trib Committees increased feedback on project designs to increase likelihood of funding project construction
- Greater outreach funding
- Permit streamlining

Melody also reviewed a list of other topics that have come up after discussions with WAT's, Implementation Team, RTT, and sponsors over the last several months.

- Reinstated dedicated NOAA Fisheries salmon recovery coordinator for the region
- Contracted "on-call" engineer to help sponsors with complexities of permitting
- Develop strategy to better understand and integrate the social, cultural and/or economic aspects of salmon recovery to build broader support for projects, perhaps using contracted social scientist.
- Greater clarity on the role of the Implementation Team

The current goal of this workshop is to explore and discuss these topics. The following questions were raised by the Board members which concluded in discussion from Board members, UCSRB staff, and partners.

- What would be the goal of the on-call engineer be?
 - ✓ This would be pre-design work for any sponsors in assessing viability of a project and potential roadblocks at a high level. This would be a small portion of money/retainer for an on-call engineer. Not proposing to bring an engineer on staff at UCSRB
 - ✓ Sponsors agreed that it wouldn't hurt to have an on-call engineer as a resource for pre-design questions on projects. TU and CF have used pro-bono Engineers in pre-design work, who they then contract with when they receive project design funding.
 - ✓ One concern was having two separate engineers looking at a project from a feasibility perspective and then turning it over to another design engineer. Better to bring in a firm to look at the project and carry it all the way through.
 - ✓ Determination of an on-call engineer is not a high priority in moving projects forward. Current struggles are:
 - How to get the difficult large-scale projects which will need more money to complete?
 - Focus on landowner communications to target these large-scale targeted reaches (whole scale ecosystems). Need for engineer on retainer would be useful for large reach-scale.
 - FEMA requirements for modeling efforts to help reduce the cost.
- Potential need of a social scientist and economist
 - ✓ Scott Brewer and Haley Harguth with Hood Canal Coordinating Council (HCC) discussed how integrating social science/economic info their region has aided their watershed action plan. The Hood Canal area relies heavily on natural resources such as fish and shellfish so the importance of natural resources to human wellbeing is critical. In 2014, HCCC went through a robust process to determine socioeconomic local indicators. One outcome of this work was to establish a Shellfish Initiative Action Plan.
 - ✓ Another example is Puget Sound Partnership Vital Signs, which are used to measure ecosystem health that guide the assessment of progress toward Puget Sound salmon recovery goals. These indicators are specific measures of Puget Sound conditions, including human wellbeing. <https://www.psp.wa.gov/evaluating-vital-signs.php>
 - ✓ Chelan County Natural Resource Department shared local indicators as sponsored by the Port. <http://chelandouglastrends.com/index.cfm>
 - It was noted that these trends appear to be mostly summary level economic and quantitative indicators that do not provide much by themselves to inform resource decision making. Whereas the HCC work is measuring public involvement in stewardship and direct public involvement in cultural practices.
 - These indicators are not integrated into the salmon recovery effort

Some discussions from the Board and sponsor included:

- Participants are struggling to understand how an outside social scientist can help us better understand and address social and cultural barriers expanded salmon recovery.
- It isn't simply finding win-win ways for salmon habitat projects to also benefit landowners, irrigation districts, and humans. There are true cultural differences between the salmon recovery "communities" and many of the communities in the UC.
- If we want to better understand UC community members, for example in Johnson Creek area, we don't need a social scientist out there, we need to listen to the ranchers. Many ranchers still have concerns associated with salmon habitat restoration and ESA-listed fish restricting their land uses.
- Salmon recovery practitioners need to gain trust through personal relationships and address false dichotomy that it is fish or farms. We can have both.
- Sponsors utilizing UCSRB Board members for communication with landowners.

Other ideas discussed related to how to improve regional recovery efforts:

- Keep working towards larger-scale/whole reach projects. Infrastructure Bill for funding may help. UCSRB has worked with sponsors to develop list of potential infrastructure projects, tribes are doing the same. UCSRB staff actively messaging to agencies re: UC needs for infrastructure project funding.
- Some strategic thinking/planning around our implementation strategy. UCSRB is initiating Prioritization Step 3: Feasibility Assessment close coordination with RTT, WATs, etc. This should help the region identify specific bottlenecks to implementing high priority projects, and daylight what, if anything, can be done to address those. Some examples might be:
 1. Funding coordination needed for multimillion dollar projects
 2. Technical support for designing and permitting highly complex projects
 3. Building social capital – this leads us back to how will we gain a better understanding of how to do this. If we knew how to do this, wouldn't we be doing so already? We do know where we have unwilling landowners, but perhaps we need to better understand the landowners concerns
- Need to accelerate all-H integration efforts because we will not be able to achieve recovery goals through habitat restoration alone.

Next Steps:

- *Melody, Chair Bugert, Chuck Brushwood, and Robert Warren meet and bring findings to February Board meeting.*

4. Break

5. UCSRB Executive Director Hiring Process

Melody reviewed the steps and timeline of a hiring process for a new Executive Director (ED) that includes both UCSRB staff rep and Board members to ensure a successful transition. Chair Bugert and Commissioner Hover will be available to join in weekly staff meetings to discuss staff concerns and to take a more active role until a new ED is hired. The first review of applications will be December 2 when the Board will be given a form to review and rank all the candidates based on job requirements to determine if there are sufficient applicants to move forward with interviews or to extend or expand the search. The Board discussed having flexibility in the hiring process for second interviews, candidates meeting the staff and partners, etc.

Next Steps:

- *Melody to email interview questions and ranking form for ED to Chair Bugert to be reviewed by Chelan County Human Resource staff.*
- *Melody to email ED hiring process document to Andy with dates to see if any need to be changed.*

Commissioner Hover made a motion to approve the Executive Director Hiring Process as presented. Chuck Brushwood seconded the motion and all approved.

6. Public Comments & Questions

There were no public comments.

7. Wrap-up and Adjourn Meeting

Chair Bugert thanked everyone for attending the UCSRB virtual meeting, and adjourned the meeting, at 3:58 pm. Next Board meeting will be Thursday December 9, 2021.