

UPPER COLUMBIA SALMON RECOVERY BOARD
DRAFT MEETING/FIELD TRIP SUMMARY
Confluence Technology Center
April 21, 2022

Board Members Present:

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

Staff Present: Melody Kreimes, Tracy Bowerman, Nicole Jordan, Dave Hecker, Sarah Walker, Elaine Sivey, Alicia Meier

Others Present:

Cascade Fisheries: Jason Lundgren, Aaron Rosenblum; **Chelan Douglas Land Trust:** Curt Soper, Angela Morris; **Okanogan Wenatchee National Forest:** Kristin Bail, Joshua Wilson, McLain Johnson, Erica Taeker; **RCO:** Megan Duffy, Erik Neatherlin, Jeannie Abbott; **Congresswoman Schrier Staff:** Eleanor Trenary

The meeting was called to order at 9:00am by Chair Shannon Adams.

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Adams welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the agenda for today's meeting and field trip.

1. Discussion of Aquatic and Terrestrial Restoration on Okanogan Wenatchee NF

Melody Kreimes discussed the UCSRB's role in supporting accelerated restoration on OWNF with the Forest Health Collaborative which is made up of 21 partners. Importance of continued partnership with the OWNF as the uplands have a significant impact on our streams and implementation of salmon recovery. Key components are alignment and coordination for large landscape restoration and increasing the pace of consultation. How can we better help communicate the message of what the OWNF needs?

The Infrastructure Funding Bill (\$24.6 million) has opened a lot of doors for providing capacity within the Forest Service as well as capacity of agencies such as NOAA to help with NMFS LESA Section 7 consultation and Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife. This funding will allow new relationships with the Forest Service and NOAA on aquatic and forest restoration projects with the addition of 2 staff in the Ellensburg office and 10 to 12 additional staff nationally.

Kristin Bail discussed the Central Washington Initiative which is funded under the Infrastructure Bill and is one of ten forests chosen to address the impacts of wildfire. What we need to focus on for these funds to get the most work done:

- ✓ How do we partner together?
- ✓ How to get good work done on the ground?
 - Help with House Bill 1168 to help fund state with implementation and planning support
- ✓ Capacity challenge with partner with regional level and national level what does assistance look like?
- ✓ WDFW has not gotten a bump in staffing in the Infrastructure Bill.
 - Looking at making the funding happen and how it will work.
 - Funds have been earmarked to help consultation partners

- ✓ Burned area recovery – invest in focused way to improve function of watersheds. Leverage and lean on agencies within the Department of Agriculture and Department of the Interior. The Infrastructure Bill funds will not cover all the need so we need to look for other funding sources to position ourselves.

Other opportunities from the Infrastructure Bill will be Legacy Roads and Trails and collaborative aquatic landscape restoration funding. There will be \$80 million available over the next 5 years for water quality and fish passage work. OWNF has just started reaching out to region on how these funds can be spent as well as looking for ways to multi-fund projects on a landscape level.

Question & Answer: Discussion:

- Agencies like DNR and DFW have the funds but cannot hire what contingencies do you have in mind to fill these positions?
 - ✓ Nationally the Forest Service is looking at all options after several years of erosion and the challenges of staffing up.
 - ✓ Trying to create opportunities to build partnerships.
 - ✓ New and aggressive hiring and outreach. Leaning in on Grants and Agreements and Good Neighbor.
 - ✓ Opportunity to work with tribal partners (Native American Tribes Act). How much and where?
 - ✓ Better share deeply scarce skills such as engineering and possibly pool more collectively among the agency.
 - ✓ Develop partnerships with colleges for entry level positions (start local and stay local)
 - ✓ Do the work differently with more people
- How do we priorities Tier 1 assessment units on FS lands?
 - ✓ Are there things we can do within the tributaries that the OWNF hasn't done before. Are there projects we can identify for Habitat Restoration? Partners such as TU, CF, Chelan County to compliment the restoration work.
 - ✓ Find ways for partners to do more work. Could this start with the wildfire risk program and transition to Legacy Roads and Aquatics?
 - ✓ Level that the work gets done needs to stay engaged.
 - ✓ Hearing from the partners they are not reaching their capacity yet. They have a long list of projects and they filter through them to see which projects are ripe.
 - ✓ Legislative interpretation help from the Forest Service to help meet needs.
- Would it be beneficial to invite the Forest Service to participate with State leadership. Now that the Infrastructure Bill has been passed GSRO is working with the Feds on how the money will be used.
 - ✓ Riparian discussion with agencies on breaking down silos. Include Tribal organization representation, EPA, NOAA, State Representatives on Transportation
 - ✓ Use local knowledge of these federal programs can we start earlier and leverage combined resources. Share what they know about decisions being made and how the money will flow.
 - ✓ How can we as a region be the most competitive?
- Opportunity for Counties and Forest Service to work together on capacity and experience for example with forest road work. Counties have the ability to use the funds quicker and more efficiently.
- Is any of the Infrastructure Bill funding going toward the issue of ocean conditions not supporting salmon?

- Collaborative Aquatic Restoration and Forest Health contact Dan Shively Director Natural Resources Forest Service Region 6.
- DNR conversations for implementation of Good Neighbor Authority? Importance to start conversations about what work looks like in 2024 with state partners.

2. Regular Business

Chair Adams asked for comments or revisions to the consent agenda. No comments or revisions were offered, and the consent agenda was approved.

- February 24, 2022 Board Meeting summary
- March 11, 2022 Special Board Meeting summary
- Chelan County Citizens Advisory Committee nominee
- Okanogan County Citizens Advisory Committee nominee

Andy Hover made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Straub seconded the motion and all approved.

3. Finance & Operations

Melody gave a brief update from the UCSRB Finance Committee and noted that election of the Finance Committee was not completed at our February Board meeting. Currently the Finance Committee Charter states that the Committee is comprised of any two Directors and the Executive Director. The Finance Committee recommends the Board consider updating the Charter to have the Treasurer/Secretary be one of the members on the Finance Committee along with one other nominated Director and the Executive Director. The Board asked that staff bring a proposed revised Charter to the June Board meeting for review and approval.

Commissioner Hover made a motion to nominate Bob Bugert, the current Secretary/Treasurer, to serve on the Finance Committee. Marc Straub seconded the motion and all approved.

Chuck Brushwood made a motion to nominate Andy Hover to serve on the Finance Committee. Marc Straub seconded the motion and all approved.

Elaine Sivey reviewed the budget to actuals showing we have expended 66% of our revenue for FY22 compared to being 75% through the budget year ending June 30, 2022. A few highlights from the budget to actual report are payroll is running high as staff changes to health care benefits were made during the open enrollment period and new staff became eligible for IRA contributions in January 2022. The outreach contract with Cramer Fish is underspent as work will be occurring this spring. Advertising is over budget as we have had several vacant positions to announce. Travel, training and meeting expenses continue to be underspent and may need to be reallocated .

Discussion & Next Steps:

- Do we budget for inflation?
 - ✓ always anticipate increase in health care costs
 - ✓ will take into consideration for FY23 budget
 - ✓ Melody is actively negotiating for increased contracts amount to keep up with inflation (new ED will need to continue these efforts)

- FY23 budget will include \$27,000 for a state and federal audit from SAO (other estimates obtained were higher)

Next Elaine discussed the profit and loss report showing the seven current grants. The OCR (contract ended in March) is completed and 96% expended, waiting on a few last invoices. The BPA Tech (ends 9/14/22) and RCO Admin contracts (ends 6/30/22) are 54% and 50% completed. The BPA Admin and Yakama Nation contracts are 33% completed and end in November. The RCO LE grant is 75% completed and the DNR grant is 69% and both run through June.

Melody asked the Board their preference on how to proceed with planning (in-person or virtual) for future Board meetings. All Directors stated their preference for Board meetings to be help in-person but would like to respect all comfort levels. The June Board meeting will be in-person.

Next Steps:

- *Alicia/Melody to amend Finance Committee Charter in track change mode for June Board meeting.*
- *Alicia to reserve a meeting location for June 23 Board Meeting*
- *Alicia update Finance Committee rotations*

4. Public Questions and Comments

There were no public comments.

5. Executive Session

The Directors and Alicia Meier reviewed rankings of the Executive Director candidates. It was determined 3 candidates ranked high enough to move forward to interviews. Directors agreed to proceed to the next step of contacting three top-ranking candidates to schedule interviews.

6. Lunch Break

7. Discussion of Salmon Recovery Efforts with Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO)

Megan Duffy with RCO discussed the status of the \$75 million current 2022 SRFB grant round which includes 22 applications and 7 targeted investment projects. \$25 million is going towards projects that are less than \$5 million and \$50 million is going towards projects that are more then \$5 million. There will be a new grant manager position and in June SRFB will be having a retreat to discuss the allocation of funding to take into account the core issues that challenge and create obstacles in the salmon recovery effort.

Capacity Funding Needed to Administer Increased Project Funding

Erik Neatherlin with GSRO shared that Katie Knight will be joining their team. The [Governor's Salmon Strategy Update](#) is a top priority and they are working with recovery boards, tribes, and state agencies with a focus on the following recommendations:

- Protect and restore vital salmon habitat
- Invest in clean water infrastructure for salmon and people
- Correct fish passage barriers and restore salmon access to historical habitat
- Build climate resiliency
- Align harvest, hatcheries, and hydropower with salmon recovery
- Address predation and food web issues for salmon

- Enhance commitments and coordination across agencies and programs
- Strengthen science, monitoring, and accountability

The UCSRB has been working on a project list with partners that prioritize this list of key strategies. Important questions like the integration of the All-H alignment and what the role is for each region? It was expressed that regions should communicate with state agencies the unique qualities of each region for meaningful dialog. The importance of educational and outreach opportunities within this funding has been an ongoing conversation and will become more comprehensive in FY23-25. RCO will be having a retreat in June to discuss proviso language, budget request for FY23-25, and funding system to deal with project cost increases (have set aside an additional \$250K plus the original \$500K).

The 2022 grant round for Targeted Investment \$2.5 million focusing on southern resident orca recovery. It is anticipated that 4 projects will make it through the grant round. There is an orca task force focusing on All-H integration actions that benefit Endangered Species Act – listed, natural origin salmon populations that are a high priority in the southern resident orca task force recommendations.

- Erik Neatherlin will send orca task force info and contact info for Tara Galuska, Orca Recovery Coordinator

In preparation for the Federal Infrastructure Bill look at all opportunities for potential salmon funding as there are many places it could be funded in this bill. The Wild Salmon Center prepared [Salmon Funding Opportunities in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#) which looks at the infrastructure package with a focus on salmon.

8. Wrap-Up and Adjourn Meeting

Chair Adams thanked everyone for attending the UCSRB meeting and field trip and adjourned the meeting at 3:00 pm. Next Board meeting will be Thursday June 23, 2022.