

**June 27, 2024**

**UCSRB Board of Directors Mtg. Summary**

**Douglas County Transportation & Land Services Building – East Wenatchee, WA**

**9:00 am to 3:00 pm**



### Formal Approvals

Item	Action-Decision
Agenda for June 27, 2024 Board of Directors Meeting	Approved and posted online at: <a href="#">UCSRB Agenda</a>
Summary for April 25, 2024 Board of Directors Meeting	Approved and posted online at: <a href="#">UCSRB Summary</a>
Disbursement summary for March 2024	Approved
Disbursement summary for April 2024	Approved
Disbursement summary for May 2024	Approved
Draft 18-month budget	Approved with amendments
Amendment to RCO grant	Approved
2022 Annual Report on environmental conditions and status of fish populations to be submitted to NOAA	Approved
Permission to surplus unused office equipment	Approved

Present: Board Chair Chuck Brushwood (Colville Confederated Tribes), Vice-chair Douglas County Commissioner Marc Straub, Treasurer Chelan County Commissioner Shon Smith, Okanogan County Commissioner Andy Hover; UCSRB Executive Director Amanda Ward, UCSRB staff - Elaine Sivey, Ryan Niemeyer, Ariel Edwards, Gabby Vermeire, Julie Foss, Mike Kaputa (CCNR), Brock Hoenes (WDFW), Laura Robinson (UCUT), Casey Baldwin (CCT), Charlie Snow (WDFW).

Present remotely: Shannon Adams (Yakama Nation), Meghan Camp (UCSRB), Tom Bildeau (Coeur d'Alene tribes), Ruby Gaston (Office of Rep. Kim Schrier).

#### 1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Brushwood welcomed everyone to the meeting at 9:00 am and participants introduced themselves.

#### 2. Regular Business

Chair Brushwood reviewed the agenda for the meeting and asked if there were any corrections or additional items to be added to the agenda.

Commissioner Hover requested a discussion on the NCWFHC be added to the agenda.

*Commissioner Hover made a motion to approve the April 25, 2024 agenda as amended. Vice Chair Straub seconded the motion and all approved.*

The meeting summary from the April 25, 2024 Board of Directors meeting was shared.

*Commissioner Hover made a motion to approve the April 25, 2024 Board of Directors meeting summary as presented. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion and all approved.*

Amanda Ward introduced incoming Accounting Manager Julie Foss. Accounting Manager Elaine Sivey will be retiring as of June 29. Julie has many years of accounting experience and has been training with Elaine for two weeks.

#### 3. Finance and Operations

Elaine Sivey reviewed UCSRB's financial reports.

#### **Statement of Financial Position – May 31, 2024**

Elaine noted that the checking account and restricted cash were part of the same account but were shown as divided per the accountability audit's recommendation. Grant money that is received as a lump sum ahead of being billed, such as the BEF grant, is shown as restricted cash.

Elaine advised that she and Juie had sent out invoices for almost \$200,000 in the past two weeks which would soon be reflected in the accounts receivable. The lower accrued revenue, compared to that of last year, is primarily a timing issue related to billing and unbilled expenses not showing as accounts receivable. Elaine noted that all assets were recorded in the report and were fully depreciated. Liabilities included accrued payroll for both 2024 and 2025. Accrued leave is less in 2024 compared to 2023 due to staff turnover and a decrease in number of employees.

#### **Budget vs. Actual – July 2023 through June 2024**

The budget vs. actual reflects organization spending for 91% of the fiscal year. Elaine noted that while payroll spending stood at 73%, increased staffing was helping to increase payroll expenditures. Spending for outreach is down, but there will be expenditures at the end of June for this item.

Elaine advised that she expected UCSRB to be slightly over the budgeted amount for data and stewardship. This is due to an unexpected expense towards the Snow2Flow website tool - the web hosting vendor 3 Sherpas had unknowingly been collecting charges for the Amazon data service on their credit card and had recently sent UCSRB a bill for about three years' worth of charges. The Board asked if this item was in the original budget; Elaine advised it was not. The Board discussed the Snow2Flow tool, its origins, and asked if it was being used enough to justify the ongoing expense (~ \$200/month). Staff will follow up and report on the related website data use and analytics at the next Board meeting.

Spending on community engagement relates to support for the WAT's, RTT, and CAC. Elaine advised that the \$18,000 budgeted for a facilitator for the NCWFHC will not be spent in the near term. All other NCWFHC spending is for Claire Thompson's time and meeting expenses.

Board expenses only comprise snacks and meeting lunches and are lower than budgeted for. Administrative expenditures are expected to come in on budget for the year.

#### **Current Grant Activity - July 2023 through May 2024**

Elaine reported on activity in current UCSRB income contracts and grants.

**BEF** – Work underway. Total grant funds received prior to billing as restricted cash.

**BPA** – Spending on this contract will increase since new hire Meghan Camp is now onboard. Ryan and Ariel Edwards are supporting science work for this grant.

**CCT** – New contract received and subcontractors engaged, but no invoices received to date.

**DNR** – This grant supports NCWFHC meetings and associated activities.

**RCO LE** – We are on track to spend all RCO money.

**TWS** – This grant will supplement NCWFHC expenses. This grant end date is September 30, 2024, but funds will likely rollover if not spent.

**YN** –Spending continues on the \$24,000 of funds carried over from the previous contract. These funds have been dedicated to planning and support for UCSRB’s 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in October. The current six month contract through September 2024 is also active.

### **Operating Reserve Activity**

Elaine reported that the only unexpected activity was a surprise \$150 unrestricted donation received via the Community Foundation.

### **Disbursement summary – March, April, and May 2024**

Elaine presented the Board with the summary of organization expenditures for March, April and May 2024 including a detailed breakdown of all expenditures for this period.

*Vice Chair Straub made a motion to approve the disbursements summaries for March 2024, April 2024, and May 2024 as presented. Commissioner Hover seconded the motion and all approved.*

### **Annual Report Certification**

Elaine presented the Annual Report Certification from the WA state auditor. . UCSRB will not have a federal audit in 2025 because funds received fall short of the annual \$750K threshold. .It is expected the \$750K threshold will likely be raised in the future. Elaine said that she is willing to be available to assist with next year’s tax filing if required.

### **Draft Budget – July 2024 through December 2025**

Elaine provided the Board with a draft 18-month budget, prepared as requested at the last Board meeting. The Board inquired if the draft budget addressed capacity. Elaine said that while the budget didn’t address capacity specifically, there is enough funding to cover staff costs and deliverables should be met. If a decision was made to bring on additional staff, we would look for new funding to cover the additional cost. Currently, we have an increased general funds budget through RCO and a settled staffing level that is one less than in 2023.

The budget reflects lower BPA revenue, decreased because the UCSRB no longer provides direct biological expertise. Elaine noted that Ariel has the skills to provide this type of science support to the BPA Programmatic in the future.

The Board requested that the “Other” line item in Revenue be struck. The Board also asked that the budget be amended to show excess budget as a contra line item, so that cash in equals cash out. The contra account will reflect the estimated small grants funding UCSRB may apply for and/or receive. Elaine agreed to amend the budget to reflect that it was balanced between income and expenses. Elaine noted that \$10K was allocated in the budget for Board outreach. This includes travel expenses which could potentially be spent on Board travel to Olympia at the beginning of the next legislative session or to Washington DC. There is also money budgeted for strategic planning and a Board retreat.

Other line items in the draft budget include partner outreach, funds for UCSRB’s small grant, Snow2Flow, and a facilitator for the NCWFHC. Rent is budgeted at the current level but will likely change based on the potential reconfiguration of the office space.

*Commissioner Hover made a motion to approve the draft 18-month budget as amended. Vice Chair Straub seconded the motion and all approved.*

### **RCO – amendment to grant agreement**

This amendment to the biennial RCO contract provides funds for the second year of the Lead Entity program.

*Commissioner Hover made a motion to approve the RCO grant amendment. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion and all approved.*

### **2022 annual report to NOAA**

Ryan Niemeyer presented the Board with the 2022 Annual Report for approval. Per the UCSRB Recovery Plan, the organization must submit a report on salmon recovery in the region to NOAA every four years, however, the Board decided to submit a report every year to make collating regional data and synthesizing information easier. The annual report consists of two parts: the first, approved by the Board at the February 2024 meeting, provides information on completed projects within the region.

The second part presented for approval, reports on environmental conditions and status of fish populations. Three metrics related to salmon recovery are tracked: 1) Smolt survival during migration; 2) Smolt-to-adult return rates; and 3) Escapement estimates.

Smolt survival during migration for hatchery fish was the lowest on record despite lower travel times through powerhouses and increased flow as spill. The Board discussed what other factors might be causing a decline in this metric despite increased flows. Commissioner Hover requested more information relating to fish passage via powerhouse spill potentially leading to gas bubble toxicity in fish. Ryan will follow up on this for the next Board meeting.

Ryan reported that ocean conditions were average in 2022 based on a 25-factor estimate used by NOAA. Smolt-to-adult return rates for spring Chinook were down from the 2021 estimate, while steelhead were meeting the bare minimum for their replacement rate. The escapement estimate metric indicated an uptick in spring Chinook returning to spawning grounds, but an overall decrease in adult returns for natural origin fish.

*Commissioner Hover made a motion to approve the 2022 Annual Report on environmental conditions and status of fish populations to be submitted to NOAA. Vice Chair Straub seconded the motion and all approved.*

### **UCSRB 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Gabby Vermeire provided an update to the Board on planning for UCSRB's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, to be held on October 10. Gabby advised that the celebration would consist of a tour of the Leavenworth Fish Hatchery and project tours along with lunch and speaker presentations at Sleeping Lady Mountain Resort. Potential projects include the Merritt Oxbow (Cascade Fisheries), Nasan Creek (Yakama Nation), and Cascade Orchards (CCNRD and CCT).

Gabby reviewed the proposed invitation list for the event. She has reached out to state and federal elected officials to put the date on their calendars early. Mike Kaputa, CCNRD, noted that October 10 was also the meeting date for the Icicle Creek work group. All agreed that there was potential for coordination between the work group and the UCSRB event. Mike and Amanda will investigate opportunities for collaboration. The Board did not have any further edits to the proposed invitation list.

### **Office lease proposal discussion**

Amanda Ward advised the Board that UCSRB's lease with JDSA would end in December, after which rent would increase from \$3.8K to approximately \$4.5K. The building manager has given UCSRB the option to decrease and reconfigure our office for a relative decrease in rent. Construction could begin as soon as we agreed to the plan, would allow us to retain seven offices. Rent would drop to \$2.1K/month during construction then would rise to approx. \$3.2K until the end of the year.

Amanda has investigated other commercial rental options in Wenatchee, but rents are generally high and there are financial and logistical costs to moving offices. Brock Hoenes, WDFW, suggested looking into the Department of Transportation office space in downtown Wenatchee. The Board agreed that staying in the same place with the decreased rent was preferable to the disruption in the workflow that moving would cause.

Amanda asked if the Board would like to convene to approve a new lease contract. Commissioner Smith said that the contract could be provided to the Chair and Vice Chair for their approval but that there was no need for a meeting with the entire Board.

### **Surplusing office equipment**

Amanda Ward asked for approval from the Board to surplus excess office materials that were old, broken and/or not being used, including computer equipment and office chairs.

*Commissioner Hover made a motion to approve surplusing unused UCSRB office equipment. Vice Chair Straub seconded the motion and all approved.*

Commissioner Hover added that UCSRB can surplus the equipment or get rid of it at the lowest possible cost to the organization.

### **NCWFHC**

Commissioner Hover requested an update on the NCWFHC. Amanda Ward advised that Coordinator Claire Thompson had given her notice and that UCSRB would be providing note-taking meeting support only for the Collaborative in the near future. Amanda is coordinating with Tiana Luke (NCWFHC Co-Chair) on re-advertising the position. Facilitation has been reinstated to the role, and the number of hours has been increased. She noted that there will be room to house the facilitator position in the UCSRB office, if necessary. The UCSRB is the Collaborative's fiscal sponsor.

### **Lunch**

### **Reintroduction of Salmon Above Chief Joseph**

Laura Robinson from Upper Columbia United Tribes and Casey Baldwin with the Colville Confederated Tribes presented on the phase 2 implementation plan (P2IP) for the reintroduction of salmon above Chief Joseph Dam.

The phases of the reintroduction plan are as follows: Phase 1 was evaluation of fish passage studies and feasibility investigations, which had promising results; Phase 2 will be testing feasibility and strengthening regional collaboration; Phase 3 will aim for permanent reintroduction of salmon in the blocked areas above Chief Joseph Dam.

For 2024 and the near term, the project will trap and transport adult salmon to spawning areas upstream of the dam and will conduct acoustic surveys on juvenile Chinook movement and survival. It will also seek to expand and improve hatchery fish rearing and acclimation as well as pursue additional grant funding, increase capacity for the tribes to do work, and move through the NEPA process.

### **Summer Steelhead in the Methow River Basin**

Charlie Snow from WDFW presented on the monitoring program for summer steelhead in the Methow River Basin.

The program studies hatchery fish propagation in the Methow and monitors hatchery programs for Wells dam and the Methow hatchery. Pit tags are preferred for monitoring spawning escapement over radio telemetry since they are a better way to measure abundance of the spawning population.

WDFW has genotyped 2,500 adult fish from 2009 to 2029, with the genetic origin of hatchery fish changing during the study. The study measured relative reproductive success (RRS) for hatchery fish vs. natural origin fish, which is defined in the UCSRB Recovery Plan as being a sustainable return if there are at least 1.1 recruits per spawner. The study has found that productivity for hatchery fish is lower at every life stage than for wild fish. Future research will investigate the productivity of wild fish with hatchery parents and if they inherit the low productivity of their parents.

The Board questioned if poor ocean conditions could be leading to lower escapement measures for returning. Charlie responded that little was known of the ocean portion of the steelhead lifecycle, and that they may be using entirely different food sources than we expect them to.

### **Future agenda items**

The Board requested more information on the following topics at September's Board meeting:

- Spill from dams – salmon mortality as a result of toxic air bubble syndrome caused by spill through hydrodams
- Review Snow2Flow web tool – is it being used enough to justify its cost? Could Forest Service potentially help pay for this tool?

### **Public comments**

Chair Brushwood asked if there were any public comments. No public comments were noted.

*Commissioner Hover made a motion to go to Executive Session for the performance review of Executive Director Amanda Ward (RCW 42.30.110) Vice Chair Straub seconded the motion and all approved.*

**The meeting went into Executive Session for a performance review for UCSRB executive director Amanda Ward pursuant to RCW 42.30.110 subsection G at 2:35 pm.**

**Wrap-Up and Adjourn Meeting**

Chair Brushwood thanked everyone for attending the meeting and adjourned at 3:14 pm.

**Next scheduled Board meeting – Thursday, September 26, 2024.**