

**Columbia Basin Collaborative
Biological Sub-Group**

Thursday, April 28, 2022 from 10am-1pm PT/11am-2pm MT

Meeting Summary

Attendees

Participants: Casey Baldwin (Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation), Ed Bowles (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife), Chris Cleveland (Shoshone Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley), Dennis Daw (Fort McDermitt Shoshone and Paiute), Patty Dornbusch (National Marine Fisheries Service), Tim Dykstra (Army Corps of Engineers), Mike Edmondson (Idaho Office of Species Conservation), Sarah Fesenmyer (Bureau of Reclamation), Andrew Gingerich (Benton PUD), Conor Giorgi (Spokane Tribe of Indians), Calla Hagle (Burns Paiute Tribe), Brandon Haslick (Burns Paiute Tribe), Jay Hesse (Nez Perce Tribe), Charlene Hurst (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife), Tom Iverson (Yakama Nation Fisheries), Gary James (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation), Tucker Jones (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife), Bob Lessard (Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission invited by CTUIR), Steve Manlow (Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board), Gary Marston (Trout Unlimited), Rob Masonis (Trout Unlimited), Guy Norman (Office of Governor Jay Inslee), Dan Rawding (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife), Lawrence Schwabe (Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde), Brandon Weems (Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde).

Observers: Tracy Bowerman (Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board) and Denny Rohr (D. Rohr & Associates, Inc.)

Facilitation team: Liz Mack (Kearns & West) and Samantha Meysohn (Kearns & West)

Welcome, Agenda Review, Updates, and Introductions

Liz Mack, Kearns & West, provided an overview of the agenda and meeting guidelines. The topics included: 1) Overview and Context, 2) Columbia Basin Partnership Data, 3) Proposed Biological Matrices, 4) Additional Uses of CBPTF Data and Process Thoughts, and 5) Confirm Next Steps, Upcoming Meeting Topics, and Summary. The Sub-group members introduced themselves.

Overview and Context

Liz invited Guy Norman, Office of Governor Jay Inslee, to share an overview and context of the Biological Sub-group. Guy reminded the group that the Biological Sub-group was formed to establish credible science to serve as the underpinning for the Columbia Basin Collaborative (CBC) process.

Integration/Recommendations Group Members delegated representatives to become familiar with the science from the Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force (CBPTF). The Topic Specific Work Groups will begin discussions about recommendations based on the scientific foundation of the CBPTF report. Since several participants in the CBC were not involved in the CBPTF, the Biological Sub-group provides an opportunity for all to understand the CBPTF information and agree on its use.

Columbia Basin Partnership Data

Liz invited Tucker Jones, ODFW, to share background on the CBPTF information. The data was developed by and gained broad-based support from a diverse group of sovereigns and stakeholders technical and policy staff. Methods for developing the goals and data were not uniform across the threat categories or stocks. The quantitative goals were developed to capture recovery metrics. Low-end goals are consistent

with delisting criteria for the stocks based on abundance, and although explicitly stated, would also require the other parameters for recovery, e.g., diversity, distribution, and productivity. High-end goals are consistent with broad-sense healthy and harvestable levels.

The “heatmap” (Table 13 in the CBPTF Report) shows the impacts based on the threat categories on the various stocks. Hydropower impacts were parsed out by direct impacts, indirect impacts, and blocked areas. Only 24 out of the 27 stocks were included in the heatmap due to relative information; the remaining three stocks did not have sufficient data to be included.

Putting together the current status, goals, and impacts can help the CBC to identify areas to address urgently and potential actions to make a difference in the system.

Proposed Biological Matrices

Guy presented on the Biological Matrices that combine the CBPTF's current status, goals, and impacts. The purpose of the matrices is to provide a scientific foundation to focus on specific actions. The priority rankings are not absolute and other factors may be considered to investigate actions. Guy noted that data for each stock has an accompanying story. He reviewed the biological matrices for each threat category.

Liz invited Sub-group members to ask clarifying questions and discuss the presentation. A high-level summary is below:

- A few members identified minor mistakes in the Biological Matrices. Guy encouraged group members to provide edits for quality control.
- Some members stated that the CBPTF data focused on the stock level, but it is important to take a deeper dive into the impacts of the threats across each stock. For instance, some stocks have sub-populations across a watershed; looking at a stock as a whole, the threats may not account for the different impacts on the sub-populations. Members were concerned that the nuances of the impacts were lost in the matrices. Guy shared that the data includes Evolutionarily Significant Units and emphasized that the Topic Specific Work Groups (TSWG) would provide space and opportunity to dive deeper into the specific threats.
 - A few members emphasized that the Snake River and Upper Columbia stocks’ nuances are missed because of how blockages impact upstream and downstream stocks.
- Several members asked about the sources of the CBPTF data. During the CBPTF process, technical workgroups looked at every watershed and were comprised of tribal, state, federal, and stakeholder technical and policy staff. The background for the quantitative goals is documented in [Appendix A](#) and the threat impact data is in [Appendix C](#) of the CBPTF report.
- Some members noted that the data were missing timeframe information. A member noted that the temporal aspects of recovery actions were also missing. For example, addressing impacts on tributary habitat would be a long-term effort, whereas other short-term actions, e.g., hydro-operations, could make immediate differences for the stocks.
- A few members shared concerns about how to integrate the impacts across the threat categories. For instance, increases in hatchery production could unintentionally influence predation. Analyzing how the threat categories interplay will be important to make lasting and positive impacts for fish. Guy agreed that having a workgroup to look at integration could be a way to address this concern.
- Several members shared concerns that the threats facing stocks listed as “back burner” or “good shape” would not be addressed because of how the matrices convey priority.

- A member noted that it is important to engage in population-specific actions.
- A few members noted that the CBPTF data are missing the past few years of abundance data.
- A few members emphasized the importance of considering the impacts of hydropower in the mainstem with latent mortality.
- Several members noted that the CBPTF worked for three years to develop the information and had support from 25 organizations. Several members expressed a strong interest in moving forward with the data rather than spending time to re-do the CBPTF's work. A few members identified the need to determine ways to augment existing information, identify new processes, and develop new legislation or take actions to help achieve the goals. Several members emphasized that it would be better to try something than to look for the perfect approach.
- A member proposed looking at each stock rather than at the threat categories to sequence actions to achieve goals.
- A few members shared that Washington's recovery plans identified specific actions and strategies to address key threats to move forward on recovery goals.

Additional Uses of CBPTF Data and Process Thoughts

Liz invited Gary James, CTUIR, to share his proposed approach for using CBPTF information and process the next steps.

Gary outlined steps for coordinating the I/RG and technical workgroups. He proposed that the workgroups utilize the Salmon Analyzer to assess how proposed actions could impact stocks. He then encouraged the groups to identify entities responsible for implementing actions. He shared a proposed schedule for next steps.

Gary shared examples of how the Salmon Analyzer tool could be used to look at ways of reducing mortality. He provided an example for Mid-Columbia Summer Chinook, and how a combination of actions such as removing the latent and mainstem hydropower impacts, could help recover this stock to meet high-end goals. Gary provided another example that showed no combination of factors would immediately meet the low-end goals of Snake River Spring Chinook within one salmon life cycle. He shared a concern that the heatmap does not accurately reflect the Snake River populations.

Gary reviewed the list of implementers and suggested that funding could be provided to the main implementer to help them take action to help salmon. He also noted that many entities need to be involved to make actions happen.

Liz opened the floor to questions and discussions with the Sub-group. A high-level overview is below:

- Several members expressed appreciation for Gary's work and the step-by-step approach for how the TSWG coordinates with the I/RG.
- A member shared that Gary's approach is similar to the Lower Columbia River Recovery process.
- Several members recommended using the Salmon Analyzer to:
 - help prioritize actions for recommendations
 - determine how to direct resources
 - generate hypotheses for how actions could impact salmon stocks
 - provide a relative performance indicator for actions
 - identify gaps and areas for further action
 - provide a perspective of the magnitude of impacts projects could have

- A member noted that the Salmon Analyzer does not capture the feasibility of proposed actions. The TSWG should develop sideboards and metrics for success and recommend adaptive management to ensure the intended impact.
- Several members shared concerns about using the Salmon Analyzer as a predictive tool. Members who were involved with the creation of the Salmon Analyzer tool clarified that the model includes life cycle analyses that examine pathways to achieve the goals. The heatmap information went into the analyzer. The CBPTF members at the time expressed concerns about the tool, as well, and therefore the CBPTF report includes information about the limitations of and appropriate uses for the tool.
- A member felt that the Salmon Analyzer looks at stocks in one area but does not capture the synergy across stocks. They suggested that the CBC should look at broadly beneficial actions across stocks.
- A member noted that Salmon Analyzer looks at only one generation. Some actions may require more time to make significant impacts to achieve goals.

Liz invited the Project Team members to share thoughts on next steps. The project team members noted the following:

- It will be helpful for the Biological Sub-group to continue discussions at a second meeting.
- It is important to share a common understanding of the threats.
- The feasibility of actions needs to be assessed.
- Looking at the threat categories does not preclude looking at stock-specific threats nor the need to integrate across threats.
- Organizations and entities working on Salmon Recovery have proposed actions, and it would be helpful to see how actions could impact the stocks.
- The CBPTF information can be useful as a foundation for the CBC.

Confirm Next Steps, Upcoming Meeting Topics, and Summary

Liz summarized that at the next meeting, the group can discuss:

- The role of the Salmon Analyzer
- The organization of the TSWG
- Agreement on the CBPTF information and how to move forward with the workgroups.

Liz reviewed the following actions items:

- All: Reach out to Guy Norman if you see errors in the Biological Matrices or have concerns with the CBPTF information.
- All: Reach out to the Project Team (Guy/Mike/Tucker) with ideas of how to use the CBPTF information and next steps for the topic-specific workgroups by end of day, Thursday, May 19.
- KW: Circulate presentation information from the 4/28 Biological sub-group meeting (attached).
- KW: Circulate the Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force Appendix Information ([Appendix A starting on page 159](#) and [Appendix C](#))
- KW: Draft a meeting summary and share with the Biological Sub-group by end of day, Thursday, 5/26

Meeting adjourned at 1:00pm PT/ 2:00pm MT