

Columbia Basin Collaborative Hatcheries/Harvest Work Group

Meeting Summary

Friday, February 23rd, 9:00am – 12:00pm PT/ 10:00am – 1:00pm MT

Attendees

Participants: Amelia Johnson (Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board), Andrew Gibbs (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife), Brad Halverson (NW Steelheaders), Brent Hall (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation), Casey Baldwin (Colville Tribes), Chris Sullivan (Idaho Fish and Game), Cory Kamphaus (Yakama Nation Fisheries), David Bain (Orca Conservancy), Eric Kinne (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife), Gary James (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation), Gary Marston (Wild Steelheaders United), Ian Chane (United States Army Corps of Engineers), Jeff Whisler (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife), Joe Zendt (Yakama Nation Fisheries), John Powell (Idaho Fish and Game), Joseph Oatman (Nez Perce Tribe), Maureen Hess (Northwest Power and Conservation Council), Robert Sudar (Independent Salmon Distributor), Scott Patterson (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife), Stuart Crane (Yakama Nation Water Resources Program), Stuart Rosenberger (Idaho Power), Susan Bishop (NOAA), Tom Iverson (Yakama Nation Fisheries), Tucker Jones (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife)

Observers: Bill Bosch (Yakama Nation Fisheries Program), Dennis Rohr (DRohr & Associates, Inc.), Heather Nicholson (Heather Nicholson Insurance), Jeromy Jording (NOAA), Mark Martin (Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association), Mitch Silvers (US Senator Mike Crapo)

Facilitation Team: Amira Streeter (Kearns & West), and Grant Simmons (Kearns & West)

Welcome, Agenda Review, and Updates

Amira started the meeting by providing an overview of the meeting guidelines and reviewed the agenda. This meeting consisted of 1) Recap I/RG Meeting and Consensus, 2) General Poll on Recommendations, 3) Review of selected recommendation #1, 4) Review of selected recommendation #2, 5) Next Steps.

Recap I/RG Meeting and Consensus

Amira recapped the I/RG meeting held on Thursday, January 26. During this meeting, the I/RG reviewed a high-level overview of the draft recommended actions from each of the CBC work groups. Amira shared a few key takeaways from the I/RG meeting. The I/RG had questions on the scope and scale of the recommendations and directed the work groups to balance broad

recommendations with more detail and geographic specificity. The I/RG also noted that the work groups should connect the recommended actions with the Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force (CBPTF) goals. Lastly, the I/RG requested that the work groups weave social, cultural, economic, and ecological considerations into their recommendations.

Amira the group what takeaways came out of the most recent CBC Integrations/Recommendations Group Meeting. The group offered the following input:

- Work group members emphasized that at the I/RG meeting, there was a strong call for specificity and bold actions.
- Work members discussed the objective of the harvest and hatchery goals in relation to the Columbia Basin Partnership goals. One member recommended that this group view the Columbia Basin Partnership document to see what actions have already been outlined and to identify major gaps. Other members noted that the hatchery goals and harvest goals were identified in the task force, and the first two recommendations are key to achieving partnership goals. Another member stated that checking if the task force items are consistent would still be a good idea but also that the strategy section of the phase II report is for regional consideration, not recommendations.
- Multiple members discussed the need to meet mitigation obligations. One member pointed out that the first two hatchery recommendations address this. Another member emphasized the need for mitigation goals and medium-high goals to align, with all three goals working together to avoid conflicts with the goals of the Columbia Basin Partnership.

Amira reviewed the process for submitting recommendations to the I/RG, discussed how those recommendations will be managed by the I/RG, and described the iterative process through which the I/RG may return recommendations to the work group for refinement. If a recommendation is fully discussed by the I/RG but a consensus cannot be reached, then that recommendation will not go forward from the Columbia Basin Collaborative (CBC).

General Poll on Recommendations

Amira explained that the group would complete a poll to determine which recommendation the meeting time would be spent developing. The group would complete a poll to select a recommendation from the hatchery recommendations and one poll to select a recommendation harvest recommendations.

Amira shared the most current version of the hatchery recommendations.

Current Hatchery Work Group Recommendations

Hatchery Recommendation #1

Review hatchery release and adult return data, and other appropriate metrics throughout the Basin to comprehensively understand mitigation performance.

Recommended Actions:

- Ensure Columbia Basin hatcheries are managed to meet mitigation goals on annual basis, contribute to achieving CBP quantitative hatchery goals, while ensuring conservation and supporting rebuilding of wild/natural runs.
- Support existing efforts that are gathering hatchery release and adult return data, and other appropriate metrics and make it accessible to understand mitigation performance.

Hatchery Recommendation #2

Repair, maintain, and build improvements to existing infrastructure and find sources of funding for deferred maintenance and system upgrades, including new equipment (capital investments). Enhance infrastructure to be climate change resilient. Utilize summary of Infrastructure needs and associated costs for Columbia basin federally funded hatcheries developed by state, federal, and tribal managers.

Recommended Actions:

- Update prioritization lists of infrastructure needs on a continuous basis
- Use lists to advocate for and request funding, especially from new sources

Hatchery Recommendation #3

Provide assessments of pHOS by increasing funding for parentage identification (tagging) to better evaluate hatchery percentages in natural spawning returns.

Recommended Actions:

- Support additional funding for assessments using existing parentage-based tagging baselines to evaluate hatchery contributions to natural spawning aggregations.
- Monitoring should be supporting achieving progress of recovery goals.

She then shared a poll with the group to ask which recommendations the group should focus on during the meeting. After voting, the group had selected Harvest Recommendation #2.

Amira then shared the most current version of the harvest recommendations.

Current Harvest Work Group Recommendations**Harvest Recommendation #1**

Develop sufficient and stable funding for additional monitoring tools and technology to assess catches and returns to optimize in-season management, including tagging.

- For example, increase sample rates with additional funding to provide more boots on the ground, improve software technology to analyze sample data in real time and increase PIT tag arrays in geographical strategic areas. In some cases, consider improving electronic reporting of catch for commercial and recreational fisheries.

Recommended Actions:

- Assess the funding sources to bolster existing systems.

Harvest Recommendation #2 (combined with #3)

Enhance forecast models by ensuring complete basin-wide run reconstruction is implemented to develop accurate database for forecasts **to help develop an accurate pre-season models and in-season models of run sizes, include improving the adult fish sampling facility at Bonneville Dam.**

Harvest Recommendation #4

Enhance run size updates by expanding monitoring and recording of real-time measures of effort, encounter, and harvest rates.

Harvest Recommendation #5

Assess how climate change is impacting salmon at all life stages and effecting harvest opportunities.

Recommended Actions:

- Collect and gather existing information and data related to climate change effects on salmon / steelhead.
 - Use information for forecast modeling for in-season
 - Include ocean changes, freshwater carrying capacity, and impacts to productivity
 - Ecosystem changes caused by climate change

Harvest Recommendation #6

Support and enhance current and future tribal fisheries, management, and fishing-based economies that the CBP healthy and harvestable goals would provide for salmon and steelhead in the basin.

She then shared a poll with the group to ask for input for which ones the group should focus on. After voting, the group selected Hatchery Recommendation #6.

Work group members made the following comments:

- Question: Are we building out from the Columbia Basin Partnership or addressing new things? Answer: This is an overarching type goal, this process should be additive.
- One member stated that they think harvest recommendation #6 is currently at odds with SCEE goals.

Hatchery Recommendation #2

Amira led the discussion by pulling up the draft text for Hatchery Recommendation #2:

Hatchery Recommendation #2: Repair, maintain, and build improvements to existing infrastructure and find sources of funding for deferred maintenance and system upgrades, including new equipment (capital investments). Enhance infrastructure to be climate change resilient. Utilize summary of Infrastructure needs and associated costs for Columbia basin federally funded hatcheries developed by state, federal, and tribal managers.

Recommended Actions:

- Update prioritization lists of infrastructure needs on a continuous basis
- Use lists to advocate for and request funding, especially from new sources

The group offered the following input:

- Work group members emphasized the importance of addressing deferred maintenance needs for infrastructure goals to continue the current level of mitigation. Another member stated that the recommendation needs to be clearer and specific on funding sources. One member suggested urging Congress to find funding to implement the backlog of hatchery infrastructure needs in the region. Another member pointed out that, in Washington State, Senator Cantwell mentioned hatchery money in the federal infrastructure bill and has acknowledged WDFW's request for hatchery repair money.
- Question: Is there a movement to ask Congress for funding? Answer: There was a letter from regional stakeholders two years ago that was sent to Congress.
- One member highlighted the need for hatcheries to play a big role in creating best practices for fishing and that updates are necessary for changes in practices.
- One member suggested identifying goals from the phase II report and getting a complete list of hatchery adult return goals per area.
- Question: How will maintenance be prioritized when updating these lists of hatchery updates? Would it tie back to hatchery performance goals? Answer: In Oregon State, water supply is the priority need followed by filtration and treatment, which is hatchery specific.

Once there is extra funding, the list of needs can expand, including for hatcheries that are 70-80 years old and require a lot of funding to update.

- Members discussed additional funding for these recommendations. One member mentioned that the Hatchery Scientific Review Group (HSRG) has made many recommendations, but no funding has come after. Another member noted that, even after the Columbia Basin Partnership, there has not been a big influx of funding from any sources, and they address issues they can. Another member stated that Washington relies on state capital funds to address problems at their hatcheries.
- Helen struggles with the conflict between maintaining hatcheries and aligning infrastructure improvement with current scientific recommendations from the HSRG.
- Amira asks for a solution to handle the conflict, and Helen suggests aligning hatchery rebuilding and infrastructure improvement with the current scientific recommendations of the HSRG.
- Members discussed the link between hatchery and infrastructure needs, and how to maximize the performance of the fish while ensuring infrastructure is in good condition. One member mentioned that the list of hatchery infrastructure needs was created by hatchery managers and is comprehensive and being updated.
- Members discussed the Hatchery Scientific Review Group (HSRG) recommendations and if they should be used as a reference in this recommendation. Several members agreed that not everyone in the basin is in agreement with the HSRG recommendations. Several members noted that HSRG policy was modified by the WDFW Commission a few years ago because it was not meeting original goals or timelines and potential success was moved much farther out into the future which made it less compatible with other obligations, like treaty salmon availability. Another member stated the policy was not given enough time to begin to see any of the positive outcomes as in many cases there had not been time for a single generation of adult returns after the implementation of the original policy and linked [to this document](#).
- Members discussed the metric of success for this recommendation. One member expressed hesitation to measuring success of hatcheries by performance, noting that doing so would ignore mitigation needs. Members recommended measuring success of hatcheries by mitigation goals. Other members disagreed, with one noting that many hatcheries were not built with mitigation goals in mind, thus it was an unfair performance metric. Others noted that mitigation obligation is defined differently across the basin. Another member stated that mitigation alone will not reach the adult goals of many of these programs.
- Multiple members agreed on the need to measure performance differently across the basin based on geographic specificity. One member noted that treaty rights should be left alone but also that applying a one-size fits all metric to all hatcheries in the Columbia is very difficult. Another member noted that certain issues, such as PHOs issues, reach across the entire basin while other issues, such as water supply issues, are only present in certain areas.
- Two members noted that this goal currently did not tie back to the Columbia Basin Partnership goals for high/medium/low abundance. One noted that HGMPs keep being discussed as a way to tie back, but the HGMPs are not designed to reach those. Another

member that if this group is to meet these mitigation responsibilities across the basin on an annual basis then it needs to be clear how these recommendations tie to the partnership goals that have already been agreed to.

Harvest Recommendation #6

Amira led the discussion by pulling up the draft text for Harvest Recommendation #6:

Harvest Recommendation #6: Support and enhance current and future tribal fisheries, management, and fishing-based economies that the CBP healthy and harvestable goals would provide for salmon and steelhead in the basin.

The group offered the following input:

- Members discussed the importance of fishing-based economies. Multiple members noted the economic decline of fishing-based economies along the Columbia due to lower adult returns. Another member noted that this economic decline in these communities has a cascading effect of licenses being sold out, people moving away, and noted that they believe it is partially a political issue.
- Other members discussed the importance of tribal fisheries. One member asserted that this recommendation is meant to focus specifically on the tribal piece. One member disagreed, stating that the recommendation applied to non-tribal fishing economies as well as tribes and that it would be helpful if this recommendation was split up to address the two different communities. Multiple members agreed with this proposition.
- Members discussed stock management in relation to escapement goals. One member emphasized the importance of adaptive stock management by adjusting escapement goals to what habitats can sustain. Another member recommended harvesting relative to stock presentation. A third member agreed that we need escapement goals, which we can achieve by focusing on significant investment.
- One member suggested that the recommendation include ensuring fisheries are prepared to expand capacity.
- One member stated that this recommendation's actionable steps did not currently fit into the overarching goal. They recommended the group bring specific actions to the next meeting.
- One member mentioned the impact of ESA limitations on fisheries and the usefulness of improved monitoring and enhanced tools besides hatcheries to build runs.

Next Steps

Amira asked the group about next steps. The group discussed meeting again before the next Science Integration Work Group Meeting. Members agreed to split up into groups to further the two recommendations.

Action Items

- KW: Write meeting summary and distribute to work group.
- Group: Coordinate a presentation about on conservation and escapement goals.
- Subgroups: Meet between now and the next work group meeting to enhance recommendations.