

# Columbia Basin Collaborative Hatcheries/Harvest Work Group

## Meeting Summary

Tuesday, March 21st, 1:00pm – 4:00pm PT/ 2:00pm – 5:00pm MT

### Attendees

**Participants:** BJ Kieffer (Spokane Tribe), Brad Halverson (NW Steelheaders), Casey Baldwin (Colville Tribes), Chris Sullivan (Idaho Fish and Game), David Bain (Orca Conservancy), David Moskowitz (The Conservation Angler), Eric Kinne (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife), Gary Marston (Wild Steelheaders United), Jay Hesse (Nez Perce Tribe), Joseph Oatman (Nez Perce Tribe), Joel Kawhara (Coastal Trollers Association), John Simpson (Idaho Water Users), Maureen Hess (Northwest Power and Conservation Council), Rebecca Johnson (Nez Perce Tribe), 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), Tom Scibbner (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), Jerry Klemm (Port of Lewiston), Jim Bryne (Citizen), Lyman Jim (Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs), Mark Martin (Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association), Mitch Silvers (US Senator Mike Crapo), Paul Arrington (Idaho Water Users)

**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) Review and Discussion of Harvest Recommendation #5, 2) Review and Discussion of Hatchery Recommendation #2, 3) Next Steps.

### Review and Discussion of Harvest Recommendation #5

Joe Oatman provided a presentation on the draft harvest recommendation:

Amira led the discussion on this recommendation, reminding the group that this was one of the recommendations that the group agreed to focus on from the last meeting. Amira asked the group for their initial thoughts and input on the recommendation concept and requested suggestions on alternate language, if any.

*Draft Harvest Recommendation: 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:

- Work group members noted their appreciation for Joe's effort in crafting the recommendation. Many noted that this recommendation could serve as a template for similar harvest recommendations for other fisheries. Several members noted that they liked the recommendation's specificity. One member noted they had no problem with the recommendation as a template, but wanted to ensure that all user groups, including non-tribal commercial and recreational harvesters, are recognized as important and referenced in the recommendations.
- Two members expressed their hesitation with the tentative action items laid out by the action items and stated that the items don't align with recovery and prioritizing the need for recovery to achieve the high and medium goals of the Columbia Basin Partnership (CBP). They suggested that the work group submit no recommendation for harvest. Multiple members stated that they believe that fisheries are connected to conservation and recovery and that they disagreed with the idea of not submitting a harvest recommendation. One member noted that if no harvest component came out of the recommendations now, it would be unlikely it could be added in later.
- One work group member stressed the important of harvest of salmon as a food source that needs to be recovered, not simply an economic tool.
- One member stated that they wanted this recommendation to have language that accounts for what to do when there are increased numbers of salmon in the basin. This member raised the question of whether more fish meant more harvest and whether the increase in harvest would be mandated by NOAA Fisheries.
- One member stated that the group should communicate better amongst themselves in between meetings and that there were discussions in between meetings of which group members were unaware.
- One member stated that hatchery production is crucial to reach the long-term goals of rebuilding salmon populations in the Basin. Several others stated similar views throughout the meeting and one member noted that the CBP goals are based on the idea that hatchery and harvest happen simultaneously.
- Several members mentioned that the CBC process framework is still in its early stages, and recommendations will be needed to achieve the partnership's goals. A meeting is scheduled in April for the I/RG to discuss the recommendations further.
- One member stated the importance of considering tribal rights and interests in regards to harvest and their commitment to the project as well as the value of fish in tribal

communities to feed people and make a living off the resources. They said that people who are a soft or hard no should look at the qualitative piece of the harvest recommendations.

Amira then showed the work group the other recommendations that they had come up with relating to harvest:

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

*Harvest Recommendation #4 : 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 #5 : 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.*
- Work group members discussed the other harvest recommendations and the focus on this recommendation. One member stated that Harvest Recommendation #4 affects both harvest and hatcheries equally. They also noted that Harvest Recommendations #2 and #3 could likely be combined. Several members volunteered to help reflect Recommendation #2 and #3 more in Recommendation #5 by meeting in between this meeting and the next Hatcheries & Harvest meeting.
- One member stated that they believe that centering recommendation #3 around pHOs and hatchery risk is essential, and modeling tools should be used to evaluate outdated escapement goals.

- One member said that Recommendation #5 should capture the importance of adaptive management. Another member agreed to help with that component.
- One member focused on the climate change component of Recommendation #4. They noted that the Northwest Fisheries Science Center has conducted significant research on climate change, particularly on the effects of annual changes on forecasting salmon abundances. They offered to collect and present the documentation to assist in making recommendations to address the climate change issue at a future I/RG meeting.

## Review and Discussion of Hatchery Recommendation #2

Joe Oatman, Nez Perce Tribe, introduced the proposed recommendation:

*Hatchery Recommendation Draft: 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.*

Maureen Hess, Northwest Power and Conservation Council, and Becky Johnson, Nez Perce Tribe, presented the filled out recommended action form. She noted that these improvements have been needed over time, and currently there is not enough funding to keep up with them and there is roughly a billion dollars backlog in upgrades and improvements needed. She also noted that these backlogs have created safety issues. Both Joe and Maureen stated that they believed this recommendation is consistent with the goals of the CBP and the CBC.

The group offered the following input during the feedback and Q+A portion of the agenda:

- One member expressed concern about cost, stating that construction projects are now costing twice as much when compared to projects two to three years ago.
- Multiple members discussed additions to the list. One member stated that there are multiple projects that have emerged since 2020 that should be included. Another member stated that the group is not responsible for continuously updating that list and also reminded the group that this list has already been presented to congress.
- Question: Is there going to be an opportunity to review the list of construction projects? An update is likely needed on an annual basis or at least since the list was created.
  - Answer: The list provided was developed in 2020 and each individually funded hatchery program has its own management which contributed to it. Although the list hasn't been updated since 2020, the cost amount will not be less when it's updated.
- One member stated that because NOAA doesn't want loss in the Basin, there needs to be harvest on the hatchery stocks to supplement the natural fish stock. This aspect of hatcheries and harvest is a part of the CBP goals that were adopted by the CBC.
- One member expressed their concern about the infrastructural recommendation for hatcheries, stating that investing a billion dollars into a system that hasn't undergone a

comprehensive review is irresponsible. They noted they proposed a comprehensive basin-wide review at an earlier meeting, which was not well-received.

- One member stated that they thought an important piece of context for the work group in considering this recommendation is that the recommendation was directly submitted to the I/RG by tribal agencies.
- Multiple members agreed that the recommendation could be revised or have added language to reflect the conservation goals of the Columbia Basin Partnership.
- Work members discussed the need to meet obligations to tribes. One member stated said that habitat conservation would take a long time, and that the government will need to meet their obligations to the tribes in the meantime. One member suggested adding language acknowledging this as a temporary and backlogged effort, and others agreed.
- One member questioned the need to discuss this if the recommendation was already adopted by other forums. They also stated that this recommendation was currently a “no” for them.

Because this feedback was received, the work group did not reach consensus on the hatchery recommendation.

### Next steps

Amira reviewed proposed next steps with the work group. The group discussed meeting again soon.

### Action Items:

- KW: Write meeting summary and distribute to work group, schedule next meeting.
- Joel Kawahara: Coordinate with KW on a presentation about the climate impact study from the Northwest Science Center.
- Subgroups: Meet soon to discuss feedback received at this meeting.