

Columbia Basin Collaborative Charter Review Subgroup Meeting

Meeting Summary

Tuesday, March 5th, 2024, from 1:00 – 3:00pm PT/ 2:00 – 4:00pm MT

Attendees

Working Group Members in Attendance: Anna Brady (Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation), B.J. Kieffer (Spokane Tribe of Indians), Brent Hall (Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs), Ed Bowles (State of Oregon), Humaira Falkenberg (Pacific County Public Utility District), Jeremiah Bonifer (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indians), Jim McKenna (State of Oregon), Kevin Scribner (Salmon Safe), Liliana Elliott (Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation), Michael Garrity (State of Washington), Michael Tehan (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries), Paul Arrington (Idaho Water Users Association), Robert Lessard (Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission), Robert Masonis (Trout Unlimited), Roland Springer (Bureau of Reclamation), Scott Hoefler (Bureau of Reclamation), Ted Knight (Spokane Tribe of Indians), and Tom Iverson (Yakama Nation)

Facilitation Team: Grant Simmons (Kearns & West), Liz Mack (Kearns & West), and Samantha Meysohn (Kearns & West).

Welcome, Agenda Review, and Updates

Liz Mack, Kearns & West, provided an overview of the agenda and meeting guidelines. The topics included: 1) Columbia Basin Collaborative (CBC) process feedback, 2) CBC charter revisions proposals, and 3) Confirm next steps and action items.

CBC Process Feedback

Liz reviewed the CBC's foundation including the four governor's letter and the initial proposed process for the group. Liz then went over process feedback, as well as work group feedback, shared during the recent caucus conversations and Integration/Recommendation Group (I/RG) meetings. In addition, she went over the current CBC charter, showcasing what the current charter states regarding consensus, the role of sovereigns, and leadership, emphasizing that this meeting was focused specifically on possible changes to the charter. The group had the following question:

- Question: What does "sovereigns" mean in the context of this feedback?
 - *Answer: Tribes, states, and federal agencies that have direct authority over an area. Stakeholders are the non-sovereign entities that interact differently with the area they represent.*
- One member pointed out that the original scope of the CBC was to focus on just salmon and steelhead and that it would be beneficial for this group to confirm this same scope moving forward. They also noted that how the CBC interacts with other similar efforts is an important consideration in these charter conversations.

CBC Charter Revisions Proposals

Liz shared options for addressing concerns from recent caucus conversations and I/RG meetings. She encouraged participants to consider if concerns could be addressed by clarifying the interpretation of the charter or if suggested edits to the current charter were needed.

The group had the following input:

- One member emphasized that the current suggested edits are simply suggestions and that there are other ways to potentially change the charter.
- One member expressed the notion that the CBC has tried to tackle all aspects of salmon recovery at the same time, leading to a stretched focus on easily achievable goals and avoidance of contentious issues.
- Members discussed recommendations, with multiple members voicing a desire to have clearer definitions of a recommendation. Multiple members also expressed a desire for a more structured process of getting recommendations to decision makers. Members pointed out this question ties into the larger overarching goals of the CBC. One member suggested that lobbying Congress to implement I/RG recommendations could be a valuable endeavor for the group.
- Members discussed consensus at the I/RG level.
 - Several members noted the importance of seeking consensus but noted that it is a time-consuming process.
 - One member emphasized the need for all voices in the CBC to feel valued, even those in opposition to certain ideas.
 - Multiple members expressed that lack of consensus should not keep good ideas from moving forward and noted that it would be beneficial for decision-makers to have access to all options without filters, allowing every option to be transformed into action if decision-makers desire.
 - Multiple members also expressed that decision-makers could be overwhelmed by too much information and a lack of clear guidance in such a scenario.
 - One member stated that they support presenting ideas with evidence and indicating agreement levels but opposed the CBC making recommendations without consensus.
 - One member suggested an edit to the charter where sovereigns within the I/RG come to consensus on recommendations if the full I/RG is unable to reach consensus.
 - Liz noted that based on the current charter, CBC entities can advance initiatives on their own prerogative regardless of I/RG consensus for recommendations.
- Members discussed consensus at the work group level.
 - Multiple members expressed concern over the current requirements that allow any single entity to veto a recommendation from moving forward at the work group level. They expressed interest in exploring a different requirement for the work groups. This proposal could follow a model similar to the Supreme Court, where diverse opinions are documented, such as in a minority report.
 - Members expressed an interest in recommendations to move forward to the I/RG in the absence of complete consensus.
 - Another member stated that they had concerns about a work group making decisions without considering minority views. They stated they believe the CBC should recommend based on consensus and present all viewpoints when consensus is lacking.

- Multiple members stated a need for the CBC to lean into active collaboration as a group. If not, the process may not distinguish itself from other similar processes in the Columbia Basin.
- One member stated that some entities may be entering into litigation with other members of the basin which could be a barrier to free-flowing discourse within the CBC.
- Multiple members expressed the potential time-consuming nature of discussions surrounding the charter and decision-making support.
- One member suggested concurrently addressing the purpose and focus of the CBC overall along with reexamining forums to streamline decision-making and resource allocation.
- One member suggested that the NOAA five-year review and the CBRI actions could provide good ideas for recommendations to be considered in the CBC.
- One member noted that the topic of CBC Leadership still needs to be addressed and the group agreed to further discuss this and the roles of sovereigns at their next meeting.

Confirm Next Steps and Action Items

Action items from this meeting included the following:

- **All:** Fill out [doodle poll](#) for the next Charter Review Sub-group Meeting.
- **All:** Review the existing CBC charter and caucus feedback, and plan to bring ideas forward at the next meeting, considering if changes do or do not require revisions to the charter.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00pm PT.