

Columbia Basin Collaborative Structured Decision Making Sub-group

Meeting Summary

Wednesday, August 7, 2024, from 1:00pm – 3:00pm PT/ 2:00pm – 4:00pm MT

Attendees

Sub-group Members in Attendance: Art Martin (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife), B.J Kieffer (Spokane Tribe of Indians), Gary Marston (Trout Unlimited), Jan Ohlberger (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife), Jay Hesse (Nez Perce Tribe Department of Fisheries), Jeremiah Bonifer (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation), Jody Lando (Bonneville Power Administration), Kevin Scribner (Salmon-Safe), Laura Brown (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife), Leslie Druffel (The McGregor Company), Rene Henery (Trout Unlimited), Toby Harbison (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife), Tom Iverson (Yakama Nation Fisheries), and Trevor Hutton (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife)

Facilitation Team: Colin Johnson (Kearns & West) and Samantha Meysohn (Kearns & West).

Welcome, Agenda Review, and Context

Samantha Meysohn, Kearns & West (K&W), welcomed members to the Structured Decision Making (SDM) sub-group meeting as part of the Columbia Basin Collaborative (CBC). Samantha reviewed meeting guidelines and provided an overview of the agenda. The topics included: 1) Structured Decision Making Proposal, 2) Sub-group Work Plan, and 3) SCEE Values. Samantha acknowledged that new members have joined the sub-group since the Integration/Recommendations Group (I/RG) meeting in June 2024, and invited all subgroup members to introduce themselves.

Recap of I/RG Discussion

Samantha provided a high-level overview of the SDM discussion at the June I/RG meeting and shared that there was general support for piloting the SDM proposal. The proposal is the focus of CBC efforts for the coming months and will lead to the development of a plan to de-list Mid-Columbia Steelhead. The de-listing of Mid-Columbia Steelhead could provide a significant win for the CBC and would be a good place to test the proposed approach. The I/RG is interested in seeing a straightforward approach that will support decision making. An important step for the sub-group is to explore the social, cultural, economic, and ecological (SCEE) values outlined by the Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force (CBPTF) as these are central to ensuring the pilot moves towards the goals of the CBC. Samantha highlighted that resources to complete the pilot are limited, and the capacity of sub-group members needs to be considered. The sub-group can identify where additional resources are needed as part of the planning process.

SDM sub-group members shared the following comments:

- The SDM process helps to break goals into achievable pieces, and the pilot provides an opportunity to test its applicability in other parts of the basin.
 - SDM provides a transparent common story that everyone is bought into about how the system operates currently, a common suite of objectives to work towards, and a conceptual model for how different actions lead to the achievement of objectives.

- SDM, in the absence of a decision, can still help build consensus as it involves the creation of a common understanding.
- Mid-Columbia Steelhead were selected for the pilot as there are ongoing efforts in the Mid-Columbia that can be built upon and that provide opportunities for collaboration with other lead entities.
 - De-listing Mid-Columbia steelhead is seen as achievable and would have collateral benefits for other stocks.
- There is significant information available in the CBPTF Phase 2 Report to support and complement the proposed decision making process.
- A member asked if de-listing was the goal rather than the quantitative goals in the CBPTF report. Another work group member shared that the hope is for de-listing Mid-Columbia Steelhead to be one step toward achieving the larger CBPTF quantitative goals and aligns with the qualitative CBPTF goals.

Structured Decision Making Proposal

Samantha reviewed the eight-step process outlined in the SDM proposal:

1. Ensure that all participants in the SDM pilot clearly understand both the quantitative and qualitative goals of the CBP and the Social, Cultural, Economic, and Ecological (SCEE) values identified in the CBPTF Phase 2 Report.
2. Look at the scenarios that were developed as part of the CBPTF Phase 2 Report and identify all the actions (e.g., habitat restoration, predator control action, hydro action, etc.) that collectively make up the scenarios.
3. Identify any other actions that may need to be explored, that were not identified with the CBPTF Scenarios.
4. Ensure that there is agreement on the use of existing analyses, coupled with supplemental analyses as needed (e.g., salmon slider, heat map, etc.) and how they will be used to assess scenarios.
5. Assess and summarize the benefits, i.e., reduction in the level of each heat map impact factor, of each action on the salmon stock(s) (e.g., Mid-Columbia Steelhead).
6. Consider and analyze the temporal dimensions of the impacts of each action to determine when benefits will be realized when considering scenarios that meet the CBP goals.
7. Analyze each action to determine the impacts on the SCEE values.
8. Create a scenario by combining the actions that will positively impact Mid-Columbia Steelhead and achieve SCEE outcomes, and bring the scenario, along with the analysis, to the Integration/Recommendation Group for review and consideration.

The process will be subject to review and modification as needed. The goal is to identify useful actions to implement in the Mid-Columbia, understand the likely outcomes of those actions, and bring scenarios forward to the I/RG to determine next steps.

SDM sub-group members questioned whether the SCEE values established by the CBPTF are defined well enough to understand how they will be impacted by specific actions. Members agreed to revisit these SCEE values to ensure they are still relevant and to find agreement and alignment on them. Members clarified that the goal in reviewing the SCEE values should be to identify gaps and build on what has already been developed.

Members did not share any additional comments on the proposal.

Sub-group Work Plan

Samantha previewed a blank work plan and asked members to consider what is needed to accomplish each step in the proposal, who should be responsible for each step, the timing for each step, and the resources needed. A sub-group member shared that a six-month timeline was set for the pilot and that it would coincide with a pause in discussions of other CBC topics. The sub-group members discussed what is needed to complete each step in the process.

Step 1: Ensure that all participants in the SDM pilot clearly understand both the quantitative and qualitative goals of the CBP and the Social, Cultural, Economic, and Ecological (SCEE) values identified in the CBPTF Phase 2 Report.

Sub-group members discussed the following regarding the completion of Step 1:

- All members will need to understand the qualitative and quantitative goals outlined by the CBP.
 - All members will need to have access to the CBPTF Phase 2 Report.
 - Members who helped develop the CBP goals, or have a strong understanding of the goals, should be a resource to help newer members understand the concepts, technical information, and broader contexts.
 - Kevin Scribner, Salmon-Safe, will review archived meeting notes from the CBP goal and SCEE value development process to identify consistent questions and discussion topics raised by the CBPTF.
 - All members will be responsible for reviewing the CBPTF Phase 2 Report, as well as any other resources developed to help with understanding the CBP goals and SCEE values.
 - Members proposed hosting a webinar or panel in early October 2024 comprised of CBPTF members who helped to develop the CBP goals, and to create an FAQ to address questions from sub-group members. Members will need time to review the CBPTF Phase 2 report before questions can be developed.
 - A sub-group member offered to contact alumni of the CBPTF to request their participation and support.
 - Members proposed implementing some form of assessment to ensure members have a comprehensive understanding of the CBP goals and SCEE values.
 - Members asked if there would be one process focused on accomplishing CBP goals and one focused on SCEE values. The understanding following the I/RG meeting is that a single process should be used to both accomplish goals and meet SCEE values.
 - A group member suggested a prototype SDM process that is shorter than the full SDM process and may fit within the proposed time frame more effectively. The group member shared an article outlining the process with the other sub-group members.
 - The shorter SDM model may help to move a recommendation forward to the larger group sooner. If not, then it may reveal the need for additional quantitative models to look at different interactions between actions, and to test hypotheses in order to achieve the necessary agreement to move a recommendation forward.
 - A final step in the process could include a distillation of qualitative and quantitative goals and a list of SCEE values that all members agree on.
 - Some SCEE values can be rolled up into single goals so long as the core component of the value is maintained.
 - Members shared that the CBPTF took steps to streamline the list of SCEE values during the development process.

- The final list of SCEE values should aim to capture as much of what is important to members as possible, be refined as needed, and ultimately consist of a list that members are comfortable moving forward with.

Samantha reviewed a list of identified resources to complete Step 1, including the SDM Prototype Article and the CBPTF Phase 2 report. Members were asked to suggest additional needed resources.

- Members asked for a list of contacts who would be able to answer specific questions related to the CBP goals and SCEE values.
 - A member suggested referencing the CBPTF Phase 2 report and reaching out to the authors of specific sections.
 - Members were asked to share questions with the facilitation team so they could be collected for the FAQ document.
 - Rene Henery, Trout Unlimited, offered to answer any general questions about the SDM process.
 - Leslie Druffel, The McGregor Company, offered to be the point person for sections of the CBPTF Phase 2 that David Doeringsfeld worked on.
 - Members proposed reaching out to Ray Beamesderfer, who helped to develop the salmon slider tool, and Jason Dunham, USGS, who has done a lot of work on SDM.

Step 2. Look at the scenarios that were developed as part of the CBPTF Phase 2 Report and identify all the actions (e.g., habitat restoration, predator control action, hydro action, etc.) that collectively make up the scenarios.

Sub-group members discussed the following regarding the completion of Step 2:

- Kevin Scribner and Tom Iverson, Yakama Nation, who were involved in the CBPTF, will collaborate to review meeting minutes from the CBPTF process and develop a summary of background information on the CBP goals and SCEE value development process. Tom cited a presentation, given to the CBC in June 2022, that summarized the actions from the scenarios, that could complement this background information.
- A member proposed creating a table that visually relates the list of proposed actions from the CBPTF Phase 2 report scenarios to the corresponding SCEE values. This table could eventually become a conceptual model to be used as an assessment tool for identifying gaps in actions.
 - Rene Henery, Leslie Druffel, and Gary Marston, Trout Unlimited, volunteered to support material review and table development.
 - All sub-group members will be responsible for reviewing the summary, presentation, and table.
- Members set a deadline of mid-October 2024 to complete step two.

Members identified the following resources necessary to complete the process:

- The presentation given to the CBC in June 2022, which provided background on the CBP goal and SCEE value development process and a collation of the scenarios.
- An initial excel spreadsheet used to align and rank actions pulled from the CBPTF scenarios with SCEE values.
- A final excel spreadsheet that aligns all impact areas for each stock, the stock's priority, and the stock's current status with the actions that relate to that stock.

Step 3: Identify any other actions that may need to be explored, that were not identified with the CBPTF Scenarios.

Sub-group members agreed that Step 2 and Step 3 should happen concurrently, and the sub-group should look to complete these steps by mid-October. Members proposed completing Step 3 between sub-group meetings.

Sub-group members discussed the following regarding the completion of Step 3:

- By reviewing the summaries of actions for each scenario, the group can identify gaps and additional actions that may be needed to reach CBP goals and SCEE values.
 - A group member proposed using a survey tool to identify missing actions once the review is complete.
- Members proposed reviewing the Mid-Columbia Steelhead Recovery Plan, the Walla Walla 2050 Recovery Plan, and the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan.
 - A group member suggested that members familiar with each plan meet to distill the plan into parts that are relevant to the process of meeting the CBP goals and SCEE values.
 - Kevin Scriber, Tom Iverson, and Jeremiah Bonifer, CTUIR, volunteered to work on this effort. Urban Eberhart, Kittitas Reclamation District, was suggested as another expert to consult.
 - Members suggested creating a shared folder that can be accessed by the sub-group, serve as a place to share resources, and contain background information on the actions, CBP goals, and SCEE values.

Members identified the following resources necessary to complete the process:

- A shared site for members to access, share, and add resources as the process progresses.
- A shared spreadsheet for members to add actions and resources that are identified while reviewing the background documents.

Step 4: Ensure that there is agreement on the use of existing analyses, coupled with supplemental analyses as needed (e.g., salmon slider, heat map, etc.) and how they will be used to assess scenarios.

Sub-group members discussed the following regarding the completion of Step 4:

- A member shared that Bob Lessard (Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission), is interested in adapting the salmon slider tool and heat map to include the impacts on SCEE values from salmon recovery actions.
 - Incorporating SCEE values into the salmon slider tool and heat map, and creating an automated and visual representation of how actions would impact those values, aligns with the SDM process.
 - Members stated that, given the scale of this project, this approach would serve to create focus on what information needs to be pulled into the SDM process, and what scenarios will have the greatest impact on Mid-Columbia Steelhead.
 - A member highlighted the importance of agreement on the selected modeling tool to evaluate the scenarios. The sub-group should identify potential gaps in the slider tool and decide if an additional modeling framework is needed to effectively evaluate actions and desired outcomes. The member highlighted a temporal component and linkages with limiting factors as pieces to include in the salmon slider tool.
 - A member from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) stated that their department is currently working on management strategy evaluation tools based on integrated population modeling which could be informative to this process.

- A member posited that Steps 4-6 are interconnected and could be considered part of one large effort.

Sub-group members agreed to continue the discussion of Steps 4-6 at the September SDM Sub-group meeting.

SCEE Values

Sub-group members will review the CBPTF Phase 2 Report and prepare to discuss SCEE values at the SDM Sub-group meeting in September.

Confirm Next Steps

Samantha thanked the sub-group members for their time and efforts before reviewing action items from the meeting.

Action Items

- **All:** Review Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force (CBPTF) Phase 2 Report and familiarize with quantitative and qualitative goals and SCEE values.
- **All:** Develop questions to include in the FAQ and address during the webinar.
- **All:** Complete a brief feedback survey to share your thoughts/feedback on the meeting.
- **Kevin S:** Outreach to colleagues to contribute to the FAQ and webinar.
- **K&W:** Reach out to schedule monthly meetings of the SDM Sub-group.
- **K&W:** Develop a summary of the CBC SDM Sub-group August 7 Meeting and share with SDM Sub-group by end of day 8/29.
- **K&W:** Set-up a shared folder for the SDM Sub-group.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00pm PT/3:00pm MT