

Columbia Basin Collaborative Structured Decision Making Steelhead Pilot Sub-group

Meeting Summary

Friday, September 20, 2024, from 9:00am – 11:00am PT/ 10:00am – 12:00pm MT

Attendees

Sub-group Members in Attendance: Art Martin (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife), Brent Hall (Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs), Cindy Studebaker (United States Army Corps of Engineers), 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), Robert Lessard (Columbia River Inter-tribal Fish Commission), Scott Hoefler (Bureau of Reclamation), Toby Harbison (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife), Tom Iverson (Yakama Nation Fisheries), Trevor Hutton (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife), and Urban Eberhart (Kittitas Reclamation District)

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) Renaming the Sub-group, 2) Columbia Basin Partnership Report Review Check-in, and 3) Sub-group Work Plan.

Renaming the SDM Sub-group

In response to feedback shared by members of the SDM sub-group, the decision was made to select a new group name. Sub-group members discussed the rationale for renaming the group.

- The new name should clearly reflect the sub-group's charge.
 - SDM should still be part of the name to convey an emphasis on the specific process for generating common understanding, developing transparency, and reaching group decisions.
 - Sub-group members advocated for including the term "pilot" in the new name to show that an idea is being tested and it may involve adaptive management.
 - Sub-group members suggested that the title should be specific to the stock the group is piloting.
- The new name should avoid potential confusion with other ongoing processes in the basin.
 - Sub-group members requested that "Mid-Columbia" not be included in the name as there are concurrent processes in this region of the basin.

The sub-group decided to move forward with the name SDM: Steelhead Pilot.

Columbia Basin Partnership Report Review Check-in

Samantha recapped that between the meeting on August 7, 2024, and today, the sub-group members were asked to review the Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force (CBPTF) Phase 2 Report to ensure understanding of the qualitative and quantitative goals and the social, cultural, economic, and ecological (SCEE) values.

The work group members shared updates about work they had done since the August 7 Sub-group Meeting. Tom Iverson, Yakama Nation Fisheries, shared a spreadsheet that compiled the different scenario actions. The spreadsheet highlighted proposed recovery actions where there was significant agreement among the authors. Kevin Scribner, Salmon-Safe, tried to track down CBPTF meeting minutes to show the process by which this agreement was reached.

- A sub-group member described a process used in another SDM project for building agreement around a scenario focused on values. Participants were asked to identify ways of knowing that a value was met and how that measurable proxy could then map to a component or mechanism in the conceptual model for achieving recovery. Through this process, the group was able to identify a small number of values that were agreed upon by everyone in the process.
- The sub-group agreed on the importance of developing a shared understanding of the SCEE values and agreement on how the values will be incorporated into an SDM process.
- A member proposed a three-step process for the pilot to evaluate SCEE values:
 - 1) Develop a conceptual model for the species and system that synthesizes and visualizes all elements, relationships, and mechanisms to create a common story.
 - 2) Map the SCEE values and associated quantitative metrics to the components of the conceptual model
 - 3) Map the different analytical tools and information resources to the elements of the conceptual model.
 - The member explained that this process would support transparency around the range of understanding of different facets of the system, allow members to characterize the elements and relationships of the conceptual model differently, and position the group for the development of a decision support model if needed.

To further support the review process, the facilitation team developed a document summarizing the quantitative and qualitative goals and the SCEE values from the CBPTF Report.

Samantha invited sub-group members to share takeaways and questions from their review of the report. The questions would be captured and shared with the CBPTF alumni during the webinar and included in the FAQs:

- A member expressed concerns about the salmon slider tool and asked about the extent to which the tool was used to assess the scenarios.
 - Members shared that the scenarios were not assessed for feasibility, but that the salmon slider was one of a multitude of other tools used to develop the scenarios.
 - A member added that the salmon slider tool and the heat map, were not used as much as initially intended.
 - The member explained that the salmon slider tool compiles information about run sizes, known mortality rates, production styles, and incorporates ecological knowledge to look at impacts to stocks. The tool looks at what impacts occur,

where impacts occur, where focus can be put on reducing impacts, and where there may be too much focus currently.

- The salmon slider tool was not intended as a highly mechanistic biological tool however it was objective and consistent in where impacts were identified.
- Objections to using the tool include a lack of precision, the absence of a temporal component, and that it does not deal with biodiversity.

A member emphasized the need to ensure actions are drilled down to the stock level for the pilot since the scenarios, and many of the tools used to create the scenarios, took a basin-wide approach.

The facilitation team invited the sub-group members to share additional questions and feedback for the webinar and FAQ over email.

Kevin Scribner provided an update on the recruitment of CBPTF alumni to take part in a webinar at the October 19 SDM Steelhead Pilot sub-group meeting, and suggested additional alumni to reach out. The facilitation team will work to prepare the panel.

Sub-group Work Plan

Samantha shared the work plan that the sub-group members began developing at the previous meeting on August 7. The work plan outlines the eight steps of the SDM proposal that had been shared with the Integration/Recommendations Group (I/RG). Members are asked to consider who should be responsible for each step, the timing for each step, and the resources needed. Members filled out the first three steps of the work plan, and began discussing the fourth step, during the previous meeting on August 7.

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.

Samantha asked the sub-group members to consider the following questions when discussing Step 4:

1. How will the sub-group consider the analytical tools?
2. Who will be responsible?
3. On what time frame can this be accomplished?

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

- Members expressed an interest in compiling the existing analytical tools and assessing each tool as a group. The members proposed having someone with a deep understanding of each tool describe that tool for the group.
 - Members expressed concerns that this analysis would be difficult to accomplish within the six-month period designated for the pilot, and that the capacity of members is limited.
 - A member proposed having a point person from the sub-group for each tool who can then send questions to the tool developers.
 - A member shared that the heat map incorporated all of the empirical data that its developers were able to find, and that the heat map provides enough information to move the pilot forward. Additional tools can be identified later in the process once the sub-group is aware of gaps in the analysis.
 - The sub-group was reminded that this pilot can serve as a proof-of-concept, and additional analytical tools can be incorporated if the project is continued.

- A member shared an interest in identifying analytical tools that can inform the SCEE side of the analysis.
- A member shared that there are ample life cycle models, in addition to the Salmon Analyzer, that can be used for this pilot since the focus is on a specific species.
- Many work group members emphasized the importance of not repeating conversations that occurred during the CBPTF process during the development and application of the Salmon Analyzer Tool. Other members shared that they still had questions about the Tool, and addressing these questions will be critical to building agreement on how the tool is used in the SDM analysis.

The sub-group members agreed that due to time constraints it was best to work with tools like the heat map which could help move the pilot forward. The sub-group members asked that Robert Lessard, Columbia River Inter-tribal Fish Commission, be the responsible point person for the salmon slider tool and heat map and provide an overview for the sub-group on the previous conversations had in the CBPTF process including the strengths and limitations of those tools. The sub-group also agreed to bring forward Mid-Columbia steelhead-specific life cycle models and other analyses to help address questions and bridge knowledge gaps.

Another work group member suggested mapping the pilot process onto the six steps of SDM outlined in the Environmental Science & Policy article titled Prototyping Structured Decision Making for Water Resource Management in the San Francisco Bay-Delta to track progress and determine what still needs to happen in the pilot effort. This could serve as a roadmap to help guide the pilot.

Confirm Next Steps and Action Items

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 Appendix D to ensure understanding of the quantitative and qualitative goals and SCEE values.
- **All:** Develop questions for the panelists to address during the webinar and include in the FAQ.
- **All:** Complete a brief feedback survey to share your thoughts/feedback on the meeting.
- **KW/Kevin S:** Continue to organize a panel of colleagues for the October 18 webinar.
- **K&W:** Organize and circulate questions shared by the SDM Steelhead Pilot Project Sub-group.
- **K&W:** Draft a summary of the CBC SDM Steelhead Pilot Project September 20 Meeting and share with the Sub-group by end of day 10/18.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00am PT/12:00pm MT