

The Columbia Basin Collaborative

Recommendation 2-20-25

Introduction

The Columbia Basin Collaborative (CBC) charter aims to achieve the quantitative and qualitative goals for salmon and steelhead documented in the Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force (CBPTF) Phase 1 and 2 Reports, as adopted by the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC). The CBPTF “explored the various limiting factors that impact salmon and steelhead across their life cycles. The results of the analyses show that no single strategy (e.g., reducing predation, increasing habitat, reducing harvest) will achieve the Goals on its own. Instead, improvements in multiple factors will be needed to increase abundance to desired levels for most stocks. Together, these improvements create synergies that compound benefits greater than those achievable through single actions.”

The CBPTF also identified that, “reliable and predictable funding is essential. Funding must be targeted to achieve the Partnership’s Quantitative and Qualitative Goals. New funding sources should be identified. Funding must come from multiple sources, consider the burden across communities, and account for past, present, and potential impacts.”

The CBC agrees with these MAFAC-adopted objectives and hence the recommendations below are aimed to help achieve those CBPTF Goals. No one recommendation can meet these goals alone.

The parties of the CBC have come to consensus that this recommendation is valid for implementer consideration. As stated in the Charter, “sovereigns with management decision-making authority will review recommendations and make independent decisions to implement or support actions. The CBC itself is not a management decision-making body but will strive to support its recommendations through to implementation.”

Recommendation: Monitor Progress on the CBPTF Goals

The region should fund basin-wide reporting of salmon abundance, survival, and trends to track progress towards the Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force Goals.

In the Columbia River Basin, stocks are monitored by fish and wildlife managers differently across geographies and jurisdictions. Without a coordinated, basin-wide monitoring effort, it is challenging to understand how progress is being made towards meeting the goals in the Partnership Report. This basin-wide effort should take into consideration gaps in monitoring at the stock level, identify information required to assess effectiveness and progress towards CBP goals, where needed identify appropriate surrogates of survival for stocks with insufficient monitoring information, assemble the existing information under a common interface, and distill the information into a useable public-facing tool that can be accessible to the public. Several regional planning documents¹ have identified monitoring progress towards the CBPTF goals across the basin as a priority, including:

- The [Phase 2 Report of the Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force of the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee](#) outlines a strategy to, “expand monitoring and assessment efforts to assess status and progress toward salmon and steelhead recovery.”
- The [Northwest Power and Conservation Council Columbia River Basin Fish & Wildlife Program 2020 Addendum](#) states, “the Council expects work implemented under the program will contribute toward achieving these distributed targets along the way to achieving the overarching program goal, and thus the Council will track progress toward these distributed abundance targets as part of program performance.”
- The [Independent Scientific Advisory Board’s 2024 review of the Council’s Columbia River Basin Fish & Wildlife Program](#) provided several recommendations for improvement including to, “Establish Strategy Performance Indicators to be tracked for each salmon and steelhead stock for the major subbasins.”
- The [Columbia Basin Restoration Initiative](#)’s recommended approach for ensuring accountability to fisheries recovery goals outlines their aim to, “establish a long-term biological performance monitoring and reporting program to measure progress and support accountability towards the qualitative and quantitative recovery and abundance goals identified in the CBP Phase II Report.”

In addition to monitoring abundance and survival, the Phase 2 report calls for monitoring:

1. Toxics (p 121)
2. Specifically which habitat improvements produce results (p 134 and p 289 for estuary specific)
3. Project effectiveness monitoring (p 140, includes #2 habitat)
4. Early detection monitoring of predators and invasives (p 147)
5. Natural/Hatchery composition of spawners (p 150,151)

A basin-wide monitoring effort should consider all of these components.

¹ Referencing these planning documents does not indicate the Columbia Basin Collaborative’s endorsement of the efforts.