

**Upper Salmon Basin Watershed Program  
Advisory Committee Meeting Notes  
Thursday, March 8, 2018 @ 1 p.m.  
Upper Salmon Basin Watershed Program – Salmon, Idaho**

**Present:** Shannon Williams (Chairperson; Lemhi County Extension), Tom Ford (USFS), Ken Miner (Lemhi County Commissioner), Bruce Mulkey (Lemhi Rancher), V. Don Olson (Lemhi Rancher), Harley Wallis (Pahsimeroi Rancher), Kevin Hoffman (Salmon River Rancher), Linda Price (BLM), Mark Olson (NRCS), Paddy Murphy (IDFG), Bob Minton (LSWCD, sub for Rusty Hamilton), Karryl Krieger (USFS, sub for Kelly Larkin), Daniel Bertram (USBWP), Abbie Gongloff (USBWP), Allen Bradbury (USBWP), Mike Edmondson (OSC), Matt Green (TU), Mike Demick (IDFG), Jim Roscoe (LRLT); Rosemary Furfey (NMFS, by phone)

**Welcome and Introductions**

**December 7, 2017 Meeting Notes:** Mulkey made a motion to approve. V. Olson seconded. All in favor.

**Presentations:**

- Spring/Summer Chinook and Steelhead Recovery Plans (Furfey) – Furfey presented on the final ESA Recovery Plan for Spring/Summer Chinook Salmon and Snake River Basin Steelhead (RP). She said NMFS had accepted every edit provided by the USBWP/OSC during the draft review process. The RP is voluntary and not regulatory, so partner participation is really needed to make them effective. Recovery actions listed in the RP will be the highest priority for Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Funds. The RP is intended to focus recovery actions and incorporate local work. They have a full life cycle approach, from individual populations with their individual attributes, up to the Evolutionarily Significant Units/Major Population Group (ESU/MPG) level. For recovery to be successful, each ESU/MPG from ID, WA, and OR needs to be viable, as the species is ESA listed/delisted at the ESU/MPG level. The RP used an abundance/productivity (A/P) viability curve to evaluate the viability of each MPG and to understand the risk level of each population. The Snake River Basin is unique in the wide range of elevation and the diverse environmental conditions where salmonids are present.

The RP management unit boundaries include Idaho (Salmon & Clearwater), southeast Washington, and northeast Oregon. Idaho's focus is on ESA delisting. The RP has three 'management unit' plans, each composed of the 4 H's: habitat, hydro, hatchery, and harvest, with modules on estuary, hydro, harvest, and ocean. Collectively, it is referred to as the "roll-up" plan for Snake River Spring/Summer Chinook (Sp/Su CH) and steelhead (SH). Three chapters: recovery goals and de-listing criteria (broad sense goals), recovery strategies and actions, and an estimate of time and cost, are ESA requirements. The recovery strategy is basically "protect the best, restore the rest", protect gains and address the 4 H's protective and restorative actions in concert.

There are five MPG's for Sp/Su CH: one in WA, two in OR, and three in the Salmon River Watershed (Upper Salmon, Lower Salmon, Middle Fork). There are nine populations of Sp/Su CH salmon in the Upper Salmon, which includes the extirpated Panther Creek population. These populations are all at high A/P risk, although gaps to meeting the low risk threshold vary considerably. The Pahsimeroi, Yankee Fork, and Camas populations have some of the largest gaps for CH.

Interior steelhead populations have a range of A/P risk, but there is insufficient data to generate gaps for all of the SH populations. Eleven of 12 Salmon Snake River steelhead MPG's are categorized at moderate viability, with the Panther Creek population categorized at high risk. Snake River steelhead need at least six of the populations viable, with two to be highly viable.

There are several possible recovery scenarios to move key populations out of high risk and into moderate or viable categories. Furfey listed MPG strategies for moving populations from high risk into viable categories. The list was extensive; some examples were to preserve, restore, or rehabilitate natural habitat-forming processes in areas with high intrinsic potential by reestablishing riparian areas and reconnecting floodplains; upgrade irrigation diversions to provide instream flow and fish passage; eliminate passage barriers and improve connectivity to historical habitat; and acquire irrigation flow by lease or purchase to improve instream flow in Lemhi River, among others.

Time estimates to recovery are 50 to 100 years. Costs for recovery of both species over a 10-year period are estimated at \$139 million. Costs are limited to actions that would not be implemented but for the recovery plan, i.e. it does not take BPA funded actions into account. The next steps are to share the RP information, work with partners and NMFS staff, and integrate the RP information into NMFS Section 7 Consultations.

There were no questions or discussion from the Advisory Committee.

- Snyder Easement (Roscoe) – Roscoe presented on the Lemhi Regional Land Trust proposed conservation easement (CE) of the Little Springs Creek-Snyder Ranch. The Snyder Ranch CE is a carryover project from another CE that fell through, and will use BPA funding. It consists of one large parcel (1,550) with 3 mi of Lemhi River, 0.6 mi of Mill Creek, and 1 mi of Little Springs, and two parcels (450 acres) of sage grouse habitat and wet meadow. There is an upward trend on the property in riparian and streambank condition, and CH redds have been recorded on the property. A water savings of 4 cfs through a previous agreement are set to expire in 2030, but would become permanent as part of the CE. Past grading for the railroad has isolated the floodplain in this area. The CE will allow continued use of agriculture. Habitat improvement may be completed if funding is available. The Snyder CE complements the upstream Cottom Lane CE and the downstream Tyler CE and Amonson work. There may be additional opportunities downstream. There are a few issues to be worked out with the BLM due to non-straight property lines.

There were no questions or discussion from the Advisory Committee.

- Little Sawmill Creek Restoration (Green) – This project has joint sponsorship from Trout Unlimited for restoration and the LSWCD for irrigation. Green reviewed the restoration project components which include moving a calving facility and corrals off of Little Sawmill Creek, restoring 0.21 mi of Little Sawmill and 0.09 mi of Indian Springs, and removing an old fish screen from Indian Springs. Irrigation actions by LSWCD include a new pivot to replace flood irrigation, a gravity pipeline, and a new pump station using screened Lemhi River water. Temperature data shows that Indian Springs is approximately 6° cooler than the Lemhi River in the summer. The actions on Little Sawmill are a vehicle to get fish up into Indian Springs to take advantage of that cooler water. The project is scheduled for fall 2018.

Williams had a question on the increased number of fish that would utilize the project area after completion. Green couldn't say an expected number, but the habitat increase and colder water should draw them in. IDFG has electrofished the site in the past and TU will continue to monitor it for use.

## Old Business

- Upper Salmon Diversion and Screening BiOps (Ford) – USFS had a meeting in November and received comments. Many comments were the same for each diversion. USFS is now reviewing the BA and will submit it by 3/18/18 to NMFS and USFWS. Bertram asked to see a copy. USFS is actively issuing 14-15 ditch bill EA's with no consideration of alternatives (as there are none to consider). Carter Borden is continuing to help analyze the diversions. The Sawtooth Natural Resource Area received a Notice of Intent to sue in December.

## New Business

- Membership (Bertram) – The last two Advisory meetings did not reach a quorum in attendance. The group discussed having fewer meetings and replacing some current members. Bertram reminded members that per the charter, they are able to assign substitutes if they are unable to make a meeting. Mark Davidson let Bertram know that he would like to step down unless the meetings are reduced to 2x/yr. Davidson suggested that Justin Petty, TNC, replace him as the non-profit representative. The group discussed moving to quarterly board meetings. M. Olson made a motion to do so if the charter allowed it. Murphy seconded, and all were in favor. Bertram will check the Advisory Committee Charter and report back. He will also reach out to Kristin Troy to see if she would like to continue her role as the recreation representative. Matt Green is interested in fulfilling that role if she is unable to continue in that capacity. Miner expressed interest in having Green fulfill either the rec or the nonprofit position.

**Tech Team Update** (Bertram) – Bertram gave the tech team update as Windy Schoby is on maternity leave. The tech team received the same presentation from Rosemary Furfey on the NMFS Recovery Plans. They also received a presentation by Matt Belnap, IDFG, on the status of steelhead in Upper Salmon River tributaries. Belnap reported that Carmen Creek had a 50% hatchery to wild return ratio, while Iron Creek had 100%. IDFG decreased their hatchery release sites from 12 to three. The remaining three release sites are the Pahsimeroi, Sawtooth, and Yankee Fork. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the Lemhi Hole used to have better fishing because it was a release site. Fish pull into tribs when the temperatures are around 4-5° C. The original 12 hatchery release sites were for fisherman, not species recovery.

Mike Ackerman, QCI, discussed a study being done on radiotagged fish, with the goal of knowing where and when salmonids go. The study will continue for a few years, and they will increase the number of tagged fish. Edmondson reported the IRA has determined a capacity estimate for CH for rearing and redd habitat. They are now working on establishing capacity for winter habitat. QCI will get the data worked up to present to the Advisory Committee.

Adair Muth has moved to Boise and is now working for OSC. USBWP has a position open until 3/12. Bertram would like an Advisory Committee representative to sit on the interview panel who is involved with the ag community. Mulkey volunteered.

## USBWP Project Updates –

- Upper Pratt Creek Access and Flow Enhancement Project (Bradbury) – This project is on Phil Moulton's property. Phase 1 began last fall. The contractor completed the installation of a pivot and pipeline and will complete the work on the gravity system this spring. Phase 2 will begin in the fall with the consolidation of the upper two diversions. PCSRF funding was recently obtained for this phase. BLM is finishing up their part with the pipeline right of way and biological assessment.
- Eighteenmile Beyeler (Bradbury) – This project is on Karl Tyler and Carl Ellsworth's property and addresses Merrill Beyeler's diversion. The channel relocation portion of the project is complete except for some cleanup. The pipeline, fish screen and pumps will be installed this spring pending weather conditions.

- Pratt Creek Channel Restoration, Bridge, and Hedt Irrigation (Gongloff) - This project will re-channel Pratt Creek more in its historic location. Designs are at 30%. Project will be implemented in late summer-fall 2018.
- Rattlesnake Culverts to Bridge (Gongloff) – This project is in development and addresses two culverts on Rattlesnake Creek downstream of Elk Bend that were eroded in high water. The Lemhi Soil and Water Conservation District agreed to sponsor the project. A US Fish and Wildlife grant will help install the project. IDFG may have a bridge available.
- Little Sawmill Creek Restoration (Gongloff) – Update under presentations.
- Beaver Mimicry (Bertram) – Planning on installing an additional 15 structures this spring prior to high flow.

### **Advisory Committee Membership Update**

- **Bureau of Land Management** (Price) – Since the change in USA administration, BLM has received five priorities from the Department of Interior (DOI). Every dollar is now being scrutinized through the Washington D.C. BLM office and DOI, which is slowing down activity. Price has been told she needs to reduce staff by 10%. They have also received direction to streamline their NEPA and EIS' to under 100 pages and to complete them within a year. Environmental Assessments to date have not received page/time limits. As a result, BLM is making a push for more cat X's. The local office is adding more redd surveys to avoid punishing ranchers for doing conservation projects to open fish habitat. They are looking at surveying with drones flown by IDFG.
- **Governor's Office of Species Conservation** (Edmondson) – OSC has two positions open for a CFO and legal counsel. The OSC budget presented to JFAC was accepted.
- **Idaho Department of Fish and Game** (Murphy) – The steelhead run was very late this year, fishing is good. Next year the steelhead forecast isn't good. IDFG has been hazing and shooting elk/deer over the winter. Murphy has filled five positions since November.
- **Landowner – East Fork** (Baker) – Not present.
- **Landowners – Lemhi** (V. Olson/Mulkey) – Calving is almost over. It was an easier winter with good snow pack up high.
- **Landowner – Main Salmon** (Hoffman) – Haven't seen many elk. There is an LSWCD meeting tonight.
- **Landowner – Pahsimeroi** (Wallis) – There hasn't been any snow on the ground in the Pahsimeroi this year.
- **Lemhi SWCD** (Minton) – No update.
- **Lemhi County Commissioner** (Miner) – Stanley has lost of snow. He encourages ranchers to participate in the forest plan. The road department had a better time with this easier winter.
- **Non-agency fish and wildlife interest** (Davidson) – Not present.
- **NRCS** (M. Olson) – Olson has returned from his detail. NRCS can hire up to 150 employees nationwide. The organization is going through some changes at the higher levels and streamlining processes. The Farm Bill may be on time this year.
- **Recreation interest** (Green) – Green reported the ramp at Corn Creek was completed by USFS and it is much improved. He appreciated Windy Schoby's help with the ramp project. Most people leave their hoods up at Corn Creek due to pack rats.
- **UI Cooperative Extension – Salmon** (Williams) – Lemhi County Cattlemen's Winter School was successful. Bev Hall has retired and Taylor Smith has been hired in her stead. They have received funding for range monitoring help again. Ag week is coming up.

- **U.S. Forest Service (Ford)** – Working on the Forest Plan Revision and identifying topics to focus on in the revision in order to start the NEPA process. The USFS recently won the Copper Basin Range lawsuit. Jay Winfield, District Ranger, accepted a position for the Washington Office and the USFS will be looking for a new ranger.

#### **Vacant Positions**

Shoshone – Bannock Tribe  
Custer County Commissioner

#### **Public Comment**

- None.

#### **Adjourn**

*The next Advisory Committee Meeting is scheduled for June 7, 2018.*

#### **Commonly used Acronyms:**

25/35	Minimum flows required at L-6
ACEP	Agricultural Conservation Easement Program
AEM	Action Effectiveness Monitoring
AFS	American Fisheries Society
ANS	Aquatic Nuisance Species
AREMP	Aquatic and Riparian Effectiveness Monitoring Program
BA	Biological Assessment
BACI	Before, After, Control, Impact (study design type)
BEF	Bonneville Environmental Foundation
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BMS	Beaver Mimicry Structure
BO/BiOp	Biological Opinion
BPA	Bonneville Power Administration
CHaMP	Columbia Habitat Monitoring Program
CMZ	Channel Migration Zone
CREP	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
CRSO	Columbia River System Operations
CSWCD	Custer Soil and Water Conservation District
CWT	Coded Wire Tags
DEQ	Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
DPS	Distinct Population Segment
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
ELJ	Engineered Log Jam

EQIP	Environmental Quality Incentives Program
ESA	Endangered Species Act
ESU	Evolutionarily Significant Unit
FCRPS	Federal Columbia River Power System
FIA	Forest Inventory and Analysis program (USFS)
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act
Four "H"s	The four factors affecting salmon recovery: Hatchery, Hydro, Habitat, Harvest
GIS	Geographic Information System
GM	Geometric Mean
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
HGMP	Hatchery Genetic Management Plan
HPA	Hydraulic Project Approval
HSRG	Hatchery Scientific Review Group
IDFG	Idaho Department of Fish and Game
IDWR	Idaho Department of Water Resources
IMW	Intensively Monitored Watershed
IS	Implementation Schedule
ISEMP	Integrated Status and Effectiveness Monitoring Project
ISRP	Independent Scientific Review Panel
IT	Implementation Team
L-x	L- "fill in the blank" refers to any Lemhi River Diversion e.g. L-63
IWRB	Idaho Water Resource Board
LRBM	Lemhi River Basin Model (Mike Basin Model for the Lemhi)
LRLT	Lemhi Regional Land Trust
LSWCD	Lemhi Soil and Water Conservation District
LW/LWD	Large Wood/Large Woody Debris
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPG	Major Population Group
NFF	National Forest Foundation
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NPCC	Northwest Power and Conservation Council
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
OSC	Idaho Governor's Office of Species Conservation
P-x	P- "fill in the blank" refers to any Pahsimeroi River Diversion e.g. P-16
PCSRF	Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund
PHABSIM	Physical Habitat Simulation
PIBO	PACFISH/INFISH* Biological Opinion
PIT Tag	Passive Integrated Transponder Tag
PNAMP	Pacific Northwest Aquatic Monitoring Partnership
QAQC	Quality Assurance, Quality Control

QRF	Quantile Regression Forests
RA	Reach Assessment
RFP	Request for Proposals
RM	River Mile
RM&E	Research, Monitoring and Evaluation
RPA	Reasonable and Prudent Alternative(s)
S-x	S- "fill in the blank" refers to any Salmon River Diversion e.g. S-22
SBT	Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
SNRA	Sawtooth National Recreation Area
SOW	Statement of Work
STEM Database	Status, Trend and Effectiveness Monitoring database at NOAA's Northwest Fisheries Science Center
TA	Tributary Assessment
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TRM&E	Tributary Research, Monitoring and Evaluation
TRT	Technical Recovery Team (NOAA)
TT	USBWP Technical Team
TU	Trout Unlimited
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USBR	Bureau of Reclamation
USBWP	Upper Salmon Basin Watershed Program
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS	US Forest Service
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	US Geological Survey
VSP	Viable Salmonid Population
WAC	USBWP Advisory Committee
WAG	DEQ Watershed Advisory Group
WRP	Wetland Reserve Program
*PACFISH/ INFISH	The PACFISH/INFISH Biological Opinion (PIBO) Effectiveness Monitoring Program was initiated in 1998 to provide a consistent framework for monitoring aquatic and riparian resources on most Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands within the Upper Columbia River Basin.