



**MEETING NOTES – AUGUST 27, 2013**

**Place:** Roland Schirman’s Home on 120 Weinhard Road, Dayton, Washington

**Format:** Dinner Meeting, starting at 5:30 pm

**Board Members Present:** Brad Johnson (AC), Brian Shinn (AC), Dick Ducharme (CC), Roland Schirman (CC), Mike Talbot (CC), Billy Bowles (GC), Del Groat (GC), Bob Johnson (GC), Kelly Farnsworth (WC), Art Swannack (WC), Perry Dozier (WWC), Yancey Reser (WWC).

**Board Members on Phone:**

**Others Present:** Steve Martin (SRSRB), Kris Buelow (SRSRB), Terry Bruegman (CCD), Brian Burns (TSS), Dave Karl (WDFW), Glen Mendel (WDFW), Bryan Cook (USFWS), Larry Hooker (WWCCD), Chris Hyland (WWWMP).

**Others on Phone:** Diane Driscoll (NOAA), Erin Kuttel (USFWS).

**Welcome**

Chair, Del Groat, called the meeting to order and verified a quorum. (12 present, 0 on the phone for a total of 12). Del welcomed everyone to the dinner meeting.

**Introduction of Guests and Public Comment:**

All Board Members and Guests conducted a round table of introductions and affiliations.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

❖ **Approve 13<sup>th</sup> Month Expenses**

<b>RCO (HCSR)</b>	\$8,916.08	<b>BPA3 (HCB3)</b>	\$ 15.69	<b>IMW3 (HCS3)</b>	\$27,680.30
<b>WDFW (HCFW)</b>	\$6,238.52	<b>BPA4 (HCB4)</b>	\$653.25		

❖ **Approve July 2013 Expenses**

<b>RCO (HCSR)</b>	\$12,670.46	<b>BPA3 (HCB3)</b>	\$145.71	<b>IMW3 (HCS3)</b>	\$148.90
<b>WDFW (HCFW)</b>	\$173.83	<b>BPA4 (HCB4)</b>	\$6,605.21		

**Approve July 23, 2013 Meeting Notes**

**ACTION 1:** Motion was made by Art Swannack and seconded by Kelly Farnsworth to accept the Consent Agenda, as presented.

**ACTION 2:** Brian Shinn made a motion to approve the 13<sup>th</sup> Month Expenditures and Art Swannack seconded the motion.

**ACTION 3:** Billy Bowles made a motion to approve the July 2013 Expenses and Roland Schirman seconded this motion.

**ACTION 4:** A motion was made by Billy Bowles to approve the July 23, 2013 Meeting Notes with the exception of Bob Johnson, who needs to be included as in attendance, this was seconded by Brian Shinn. All four motions were approved by Board consensus.

**Discussion: Tucannon Steelhead Fishery Update by Glen Mendel**

Must have critical threshold of about 290 before any fishing can occur and we are very close to that number. This is a constraining factor that needs to be monitored very closely. Annual harvest has been about 1,000 and the average wild fish has been 186 (on average) in the Tucannon but does not include additional tributaries (Penawawa, Almota, etc.) When empirical data from these tributaries, plus estimated abundance, the critical threshold of 280 is very close. Based on this information an assessment of measures to reduce risk to wild fish was conducted and the recommendation from the SRSRB and WDFW. Hatchery fish are returning heavily/large numbers and tend to return earlier than wild fish. Current estimate is 500 stray hatchery origins, ad-clipped fish that will spawn with native stock. WDFW asked NOAA what is worse – 5% incidental mortality on wild fish or 500 hatchery spawners. NOAA concurred but required the retention of any/all hatchery fish and close the upper river above Marengo. Need to clearly define the mouth of the

Voting Board Members: Perry Dozier, Yancey Reser, Stuart Durfee, Dick Ducharme, Roland Schirman, Mike Talbot, Brian Shinn, Brad Johnson, Jerry Hendrickson, Bob Johnson, Bill Bowles, Del Groat, Kelly Farnsworth, Art Swannack, Gary Ryan, Confederated Tribe of Umatilla Indian Reservation.

Tucannon because regulation in the Tucannon will be different than the Snake. The public was presented with two options and resoundingly preferred option 2 – keep 2 hatchery fish but fishery closes February. NOAA agreed and there will be an emergency fishing regulation for the Tucannon.

Glen also noted they were concerned about getting enough brood stock for a marked smolt release in 2014. About 40,000 will be ad-clipped of the roughly 90,000 juveniles they have on hand. At 1.5% smolt to adult, the expectation is that there will be 600 ad-clipped offspring from endemic adults. The intent is to ramp this up to full production of 150,000. First 50,000 will not be marked. It is expected that BPA will fund the space to rear 150,000 smolts.

Dick Ducharme graciously thanked Glen for his efforts to keep this fishery open and he noted that getting approval from NOAA is not easy. Glen did a great job of assessing data and working with the Board and the public in providing information and opportunity to provide input and perspectives.

### **Discussion: Mill Creek Passage Preferred Alternative**

Glen introduced all the Mill Creek work group participants in attendance and noted that he work group has been meeting for more than 10 years. The group assembled in response to the USACOE Walla Walla basin habitat and watershed reconnaissance report but he was not happy with the report because it ignored Mill Creek. Mill Creek is very visible and kills a lot of fish – it should not have been ignored by that study and he wanted to raise awareness and profile of this issue. In 2002, there was an incident where 16 steelhead were killed below Bennington Dam which prompted the agencies to assemble and begin discussions on what needs to be done system wide in Mill Creek. Glen provided a handout with the above information and additional information. Goals of that group are to determine passage problems, solutions by reach and priorities. Everyone agreed that maintaining flood capacity is paramount and can't be compromised by any recommendations. Over the course of 5 years this group identified the limiting factors and approach to improve passage. Flood control district and USACOE reluctantly agreed initially but now support the passage projects. Options like trap and haul or using Yellowhawk were assessed but were determined not feasible. In 2010, the Tri State Steelheaders received funding from the SRSRB to develop conceptual designs. Subsequently, the SRSRB has funded a physical model, assessments and designs and then actual passage projects. CTUIR funded passage at Gose Street. Dave noted that a fish physiology study would need to be done because fish passage criteria exist for culverts but not for a 2-mile series of inconsistent geometries. Steve provided a map with key locations marked with push pins. Dianne noted that the intent is to get passage for most species/age classes under most flows. The designs are not so ambitious as to provide passage for all species and life stages under every flow condition. Glen pointed out the blue and red matrix that shows reaches and their level of pass ability noting that the handout was based on conditions prior to the transitions and the Colville/Spokane reach construction. Theme is to slowly turn the red cells to blue cells. Some MCWG member expressed a vision of more than just ESA recovery. They believe passage in Mill Creek provides great opportunities to go beyond recovery to restoration. We need to get the MCWG and the SRSRB to partner if we see mutual goals.

Art asked about the other options that were assessed and Glen replied we will go through that as we work down the list of issues. Brian noted that the assessment and associated reports are available on the TSS website. Kris can cross post these on our website.

Roland noted that the “project” could consume our entire project budget for the next 5 or more years. Glen replied that this and other questions along with responses are in the handout that we will work through. Some years have seen several hundred adults above Bennington. Art asked how they got there and Bryan Cook noted that 15% of adults go up Yellowhawk and 85% go up the Mill Creek channel.

Dick Ducharme asked about data to track adults. He also asked about the structural integrity of the channel noting he heard that it is marginally acceptable. Who then is responsible for “re-constructing”? Glen said entities would have to petition the USACOE for a project funding. Conversely, Bennington dam fish passage is being funded internally by USACOE because it is owned and operated by the USACOE. The process is incredibly lengthy even with internal funding.

Since this a federal works project turned over to a local jurisdiction, why are we the primary source of funding for restoration? This is partially true but there has been other money invested in passage (Gose Street, Bennington, 1135 feasibility, WDFW, RFEF, etc.)

Dianne commented that the WW Population by itself cannot be delisted – this occurs at the DPS scale. Each MPG much have a highly viable population or two along with a maintain population and once each MPG meets that target then the DPS can be considered. The WW is part of the Umatilla/WW/Touchet MPG. Two have to be highly viable and one needs to reach maintenance status. Yakima, John Day, Klickitat, Umatilla, Walla areas are in this DPS. It is possible for the WW population to achieve de-listing without the Mill Creek for abundance and productivity but not for spatial

structure. In this case, the Touchet would have to be highly viable but getting Touchet to high viability will cost more than fixing passage in Mill Creek.

Yancey asked how much the flow in Yellowhawk and Garrison would be changed once Mill Creek is improved. Similarly how could flow be changed between mouth of Yellowhawk and Mill Creek? Glen replied that by-in large, the timing of adult passage is not the low summer flow period except for the tail end of spring Chinook/end of June. This passage initiative is just about structural changes to the channel and that over venues are addressing/considering stream flow decisions/management. Our initiative is to do the best we can to get as far with passage as we can without changes to water management. Glen reminded us that in 2005, a test was run where 10 cfs was sent down mill creek which was a disaster to do in the summer because this water became hot and killed fish.

Art noted that we are going to end up with a semi-impassable channel no matter we come up with. Glen replied that by-in large passage is largely provided when the majority of fish need to migrate.

In terms of prioritizing our funding, is this the best investment or should we re-direct these funds to other projects/areas? Glen noted that passage is the most immediate project category and that without passage it is very unlikely de-listing will occur as discussed above.

Seepage loss is known as are gaining reaches. Really can't incorporate loss and gain into designs so this is not an influential issue for designs or passage. With regards to liability, the designs receive the highest level of scrutiny and are based on years of assessment, physical model and design by stamped engineers.

In the spring during smolt imprinting, the majority of flow is going down Mill Creek not Yellowhawk are the majority of smolts. The other problem is Yellowhawk is squeezed by development, urbanization, lawns, and in really poor habitat condition.

Dick noted that Yellowhawk has been treated poorly and has not apparently been a priority of watershed planning or recovery planning so it continues to get further degraded.

Brian Shinn noted we determined a few years ago that incremental improvements do not achieve comprehensive fish passage as the blue and red cells make it look like incremental improvements do indeed lead to comprehensive fish passage. Glen replied that the column needs to be blue vertically for a fish to get through all reaches. But Dave noted that the more blue the more passable the channel – incremental improvements do make the 2-mile reach increasingly more passable. All this said the concern is that this project will take 10 million and 10 years but it was noted that the same could be said for meeting our recovery objectives in all watersheds. Brian suggested we reconsider how we are approaching this elephant – we should partner on pursuing additional funding.

The importance of Mill Creek for recovery and restoration has been demonstrated and we need to figure out how to get it funded. Either (1) make a commitment by the SRSRB to allocate some level of funding, (2) find other funding or (3) both in concert. Brain noted that we are regional organization that should be working at the regional scale irrespective of political boundaries. Bob asked how much money on a sustained annual basis would make this project "meaningful". Glen noted that about \$400,000 or \$500,000 a year would make meaningful improvements. Billy said it is inappropriate to pre-allocate funding to this project when we have equal priorities elsewhere.

Dave commented that BPA has provided fish passage funding to the CTUIR. There is money from BPA for fish passage in the basin. The CTUIR has decided to hold onto their funds to address the Bennington dam passage project. Glen also noted that since the UACOE is not pursuing 1135 that they could abort their requirement for local match (CTUIR) and get funding from Congress.

#### **ACTION 5: 2013-2015 Scope of Work and Budgets**

Steve reported that the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) approved both of our budget requests on August 22 in the amount of \$333,500 for the Regional Organization and \$65,000 for the Lead Entity Program. The allocation of those budgets (staff, goods/supplies, contract services, etc.) has been discussed at recent SRSRB meetings and the key tenants have been (1) keep partner contracts intact (do not reduce), (2) do not request more funding from SRFB than the previous request, (3) add a staff member to serve as Lead Entity and RTT coordinator and move Kris into a key coordination and support role for the Tucannon Habitat BiOp programmatic. In addition, the administrative position was increased from 16 hours a month to 21 hours a month with additional duties added.

Noted was Kris's move to 90% BPA later this year, Steve and Kris's salaries are adjusted by 2% COLA (but since Kris will only be billing against RCO for a few more months his 2% COLA has little effect on the RCO budget), Deb increases to 21 hours a week and a new position is scheduled to be filled later this fall. The 2% COLA amounts to about \$3,000 increase in the RCO/SRFB budget for staff. Deb and the new person are not included in the COLA, as they will both be new positions with new salary rates.

Brian Shinn moved to approve 2013-2015 SOW and Budget and the motion was seconded by Kelly Farnsworth. The motion was approved by consensus of the Board.

**Confirm, September 24, 2013 SRSRB Meeting at the Quality Inn, Clarkston, WA @ 6 p.m.**

**ACTION 6:** This meeting was confirmed, as approved, to be held at the Quality Inn in Clarkston, WA on September 24, 2013 at 6 p.m. A motion was made by Dick Ducharme and seconded by Billy Bowles. The Board approved by consensus.

Steve noted that the October 16/17 SRFB meeting will be in Dayton and board members asked that he send a reminder soon.

Chair Del Groat then adjourned the meeting at 8:10 pm.

Review of Tasks					
Action Title	Motion	Second	Consensus	Vote	Pass
<b>Action 1:</b> Motion made by Art Swannack and seconded by Kelly Farnsworth except the consent Agenda, as presented, by consensus.	Art Swannack	Kelly Farnsworth	Yes		
<b>Action 2:</b> Brian Shinn made a motion to approve the 13 <sup>th</sup> Month Expenditures, which was seconded by Art Swannack. The Board approved this motion by consensus.	Brian Shinn	Art Swannack	Yes		
<b>Action 3:</b> A motion was made by Billy Bowles to approve the July 2013 Expenses, Roland Schirman provided the second and it was approved by consensus.	Billy Bowles	Roland Schirman	Yes		
<b>Action 4:</b> Motion made by Billy Bowles and seconded by Brian Shinn to approve the July 23, 2013 Meeting Notes with the exception of Bob Johnson, who needs to be included as in attendance. It was approved by Board consensus.	Billy Bowles	Brian Shinn	Yes		
<b>Action 5:</b> Motion to approve the 2013-2015 SOW and Budget was made by Brian Shinn and seconded by Kelly Farnsworth. The motion was approved by Board consensus.	Brian Shinn	Kelly Farnsworth	Yes		
<b>Action 6:</b> A motion was made by Dick Ducharme and seconded by Billy Bowles to confirm the next meeting at the Quality Inn in Clarkston, WA on September 24, 2013 @ 6 p.m. The Board approved by consensus.	Dick Ducharme	Billy Bowles	Yes		

**Approval Of Meeting Minutes**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed By: \_\_\_\_\_

Del Groat, Chairman SRSRB

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Attendance

Name	Attendance for July 2012 – June 2013												
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun		
*Brian Shinn	Yes												
Brad Johnson	Yes												
Jerry Hendrickson	Yes												
Dick Ducharme	Yes												
Roland Schirman	Yes												
*Mike Talbot	Yes												
*Bob Johnson	No												
Del Groat	Yes												
Billy Bowles	Yes												
*Perry Dozier	No												
Yancey Reser	No												
Stuart Durfee	Yes												
Kelly Farnsworth	-Yes												
Art Swannack	Yes												
Gary James	-Yes												
Jed Volkman	No												
Jonathan Thompson	No												
Gary Ryan	Yes												

\*County Commissioner  
 ! First Meeting as Board Member  
 #Last meeting as a SRSRB Board Member  
 - Call In

## ACRONYMS

AC: Asotin County  
ACCD: Asotin County Conservation District  
APUD: Asotin Public Utility District  
BPA: Bonneville Power Administration  
CC: Columbia County  
CCD: Columbia County Conservation  
CTUIR: Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation  
GC : Garfield County  
IMW: Intensively Monitored Watershed  
NPT: Nez Perce Tribe  
PCD: Pomeroy Conservation District  
RCO: Recreation Conservation Office  
RTT: Regional Technical Team  
SRFB: Snake River Funding Board  
SRSRB: Snake River Salmon Recovery Board  
Tuc Geo: Tucannon Geomorphic Assessment & Design  
USFS: United States Forest Service  
WC: Whitman County  
WDFW: Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife  
WWC: Walla Walla County  
WWCCD: Walla Walla County Conservation District  
WWWMP: Walla Walla Watershed Management Partnership