

**Date:** July 28, 2020

**Place:** Virtual Meeting

**Format:** Regular Meeting started at 6:03 p.m.

**Board Members on Phone:** Jon Jones (WC), Michael Largent (WC), Roland Schirman (CC), Michael Talbott (CC), Brad Johnson (AC) Larry Hooker (WW), Brian Shinn (AC), Bill Bowles (GC), Kris Fischer (CTUIR), Jerry Hendrickson (AC) and Todd Kimball (WW).

**Others on Phone:** Chris Hyland (WWWMP), Aneesha Dieu (CCD), Terry Bruegman (CCD), Ali Fitzgerald (SRSRB), John Foltz (SRSRB), Joanna Cowles-Cleveland (WWCCD), Kris Buelow (SRSRB).

### Verify Quorum / Public Comment

SRSRB Chairman Bowles called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm and verified a quorum (11 present via phone). No public comment. A motion was made by Jerry Hendrickson to approve the agenda. It was seconded by Brad Johnson and the Board approved the motion.

### Approve Agenda and Consent Agenda:

1. June 2020 Expenses as follows:
  - (H2SR) RCO: \$24,076.16
  - (H2FW) LE: \$3,212.45
  - (H2B2) BPA: \$13,646.29
2. June 23rd, 2020 Meeting notes

**Action 1** – A motion was made by Roland Schirman to approve the June 23<sup>th</sup>, 2020 meeting notes and June expenses. The motion was seconded by Brian Shinn and the Board approved the motion.

### Update – Announcements and Items of Interest

**Executive Call Actions** – No action taken

**RTT update**— John provided a few brief updates including that the WA Bull Trout USFWS 5-yr Review is kicking off. The USFWS and SEWA partners are working together to conduct the review similar to salmon stock status reviews. Erik Neatherlin, Executive Coordinator for GSRO updated the RTT on the statewide salmon recovery strategy. Update and timeline was released and will culminate with document that has MOU's with all state and some federal agencies to implement statewide strategy. John will invite Erik for an in depth presentation later this fall when draft plan released. Joe Bumgarner also presented results for the Tucannon hatchery trap and weir study looking at impacts and timing of Chinook, steelhead, and bull trout movements through that weir/trap. John is planning to invite Joe to present to SRSRB as well. Board staff working with RTT to update regional priority maps based on recent geomorphic assessments and additional relevant info.

**SRFB Targeted Investment Comments (Due August 17<sup>th</sup>)** –SRFB is currently accepting comments on the draft targeted investment policy. SRSRB staff are not planning to weigh in with formal comments unless needed. We have previously received this funding for Mid-C steelhead recovery for Mill Creek fish passage implementation. The draft policy currently is focusing on Emergency responses (i.e. 2020 flooding), other potential priorities such as species viability/recovery, flood risk reduction, and orca task force outcome advances. It is unlikely that there will be funding available for targeted investments given budget considerations but policy will be there if/when time comes.



**SRFB Monitoring Policy Comments** – SRFB is currently looking for feedback on draft monitoring policy that would identify monitoring and data gaps and how to best address them. John has been very engaged in this discussion to date and does not feel that the Board needs to formally weigh in now.

**Action: Approve Ranked Project List for SRFB** – Ali summarized progress for the 2020 SRFB grant round including current project status reviews from SRFB review panel as well as results of the June 18<sup>th</sup> Final scoring meeting. No fatal flaws were identified in any projects and while the grant round was dramatically different from previous years; the LE Committee felt we still came away with a strong project list. Ali is waiting for final clearance of all projects by the SRFB review panel and will submit the ranked list to SRFB by the August 14<sup>th</sup> deadline. The Grant Awards meeting is scheduled for September 13<sup>th</sup> and will be held remotely. Roland Schirman made a motion to approve the ranked project list as recommended by the Lead Entity Committee with the one change as a result of CCD voluntarily shifting Tucannon PA-38 Design to first alternate. Larry Hooker seconded and the motion passed by consensus. Bradly Johnson abstained.

**Action: Fish and Wildlife Commission Harvest Policy C-3620 Letter** – John updated the SRSRB on the harvest policy and that it is currently moving quickly with limited opportunities for public engagement. John has been engaged with other stakeholder conversations with other recovery regions that showed interest. As currently drafted, the policy does not consider modifying upriver allocation. A meeting is scheduled for July 31 to set timeline and goals for broodstock/escapement. John expressed concern that there likely won't be enough time to get all counties to sign onto a drafted letter and that the best approach is to submit a letter from the SRSRB as soon as possible with an additional opportunity for counties to submit follow up letters during the decision process. Michael Talbott made a motion to submit a letter from the SRSRB. Bradly Johnson seconded the motion and it passed by consensus; CTUIR abstained. John will still try to get a letter signed by the County Commissioners ahead of the next Commission meeting in September.

**Discussion: Cost of Living Allowance Verification**—John presented potential options for staff COLAs and asked for guidance from the SRSRB if there was support for them. State agencies cancelled planned COLAs for staff over \$50k/yr while Walla Walla Community College is moving forward with 3% COLAs as planned. The SRSRB historically follows WWCC guidelines but several board members were unsure if staff should be considered state or college employees and whether receiving COLAs could trigger an audit. Generally, the SRSRB was supportive of COLAs and recommended that staff receive 3% provided we receive clarification on if staff were considered college employees or not. John will get clarification on this determination and inform the SRSRB accordingly.

**Discussion: Potential Budget Reduction Request from Recreation and Conservation Office** – RCO has asked Lead Entities to prepare for a 15% budget reduction of operating funds for the 2021-2023 biennium. The Snake Region has some carryover funds from previous biennium due to delays in reaching a state budget for the FY19-21 biennium. John felt we had sufficient flexibility in our budgets that we could help absorb some of the budget shortfalls for other lead entities if the SRSRB was supportive. The maximum we could potentially contribute is \$20k. Board members were concerned that our contribution could affect potential future allocations or could cause our budgets to become too tight should we continue to sustain cuts into the future. John told the SRSRB that our carryover funds are on top of our allocation and we have no guarantees we can even carry those funds forward and they might be forfeited anyways. This would provide an opportunity to help other regions that have shifted money to our projects in previous years and return the favor. Ultimately, the SRSRB was supportive of contributing up to \$20k should it be needed to help absorb the budget reductions for Lead Entities statewide.

**Action: Letters of support for BMLT conservation easement applications** – John summarized BMLT's request for letters of support of several large easement projects in the works. Four projects would extinguish development rights but maintain farmland and wildlife habitat preservation while also maintained assessed property values. Brian Shinn made a



motion to submit letters of support for each proposed easement project. Brad Johnson seconded the motion and it passed by consensus.

**Discussion: August Board Meeting**— John asked the SRSRB for guidance on how best to proceed with the August meeting which is typically held at Roland’s house as a barbeque hosting our district 9 and 16 legislators. The group felt that it was unlikely we would be able to host an in-person event given existing restrictions but did not want to completely miss the opportunity for outreach. Ultimately, the group felt we should postpone the meeting to see if it could potentially be held in the fall, either in person or remotely if needed. November is a potentially good time, as we will know who our legislators are at that point.

**Action: Approve August 25, 2020 for next Board meeting to be in Dayton, WA at the Best Western starting at 6:00 PM.**

– A motion was made by Michael Talbott and seconded by Brian Shinn to hold the next Board meeting on August 25, 2020 in Dayton, WA at 6:00 PM. The Board approved by consensus.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m. by Chair Bowles

Signed By:   
Bill Bowles, Chair, Snake River Salmon Recovery Board