Snake River Salmon Recovery

Date: August 24th, 2021
Place: Dayton Best Western
Format: Regular Meeting started at 6:00 p.m.
Board Members in Person: Jon Jones (WC), Sean Thurston (CC), Marty Hall (CC), and Kris Fischer (CTUIR)
Board Members on Phone: Michael Largent (WC), Brad Johnson (AC), Brian Shinn (AC), Larry Hooker (WW), Justin Dixon (GC), Bill Bowles (GC),
Others in Person: Ali Fitzgerald (SRSRB), John Foltz (SRSRB), and Charles Eaton (CC).
Others on Phone: Roland Schirman (Citizen), Joanna Cowles-Cleveland (WWCCD), Steven Bennett (Eco-Logical Research), Jennifer Boie (Palouse CD), Jay Hesse (NPT), Jodi Prout (Palouse CD), Ryan Boylan (Palouse CD), Ryan Kinser (NPT), Aneesha Dieu (CCD), and Megan Stewart (ACCD).

Verify Quorum / Public Comment

SRSRB Chair Bowles called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm and verified a quorum (4 in person, 6 via phone) No public comment. A motion was made by Brian Shinn to approve the agenda. It was seconded by Michael Largent and the Board approved the motion.

Approve Agenda and Consent Agenda:

1. July 2021 Expenses as follows:
   (H2SR) RCO: $17,776.43
   (H2FW) LE: $2,870.80
   (H2B4) BPA: $14,014.59
   13th Month 2021 Expenses as follows:
   (H2SR) RCO: (-$2,870.80)
   (H2FW) LE: $4,761.99

2. July 27th, 2021 Meeting Notes

Action 1 – A motion was made by Justin Dixon to approve the July 27th, 2021 meeting notes and July/13th month monthly expenses. Jon Jones seconded the motion and the Board approved the motion.

Follow Up: Questions on Snake River Spring/Summer Chinook Declines –Jay Hesse, Biological Services Division Director, Nez Perce Tribe Department of Fisheries Resource Management – Jay answered a few follow up questions from the July Board meeting. Data looks to suggest improving runs based on 2019-2020 plus returning jack numbers. Is that not the case? Yes, it looks positive but that's only looking at one year of data. Population changes are inherently stochastic and that data also looks at hatchery and natural origin combined, not just natural. Jack numbers are less predictive of natural origin fish as well. We could have a small bump but nothing that would get us out of the woods so to speak.

Do projections and modeling consider ocean conditions and predation? They are not specific attributes but the general trends are inherent to the data.

How would an alternative trend timeframe change future projections? If you increase the timeframe to 15 years, the decline is less steep but still a significant decline. 10 years is the standard as it represents 2 full life cycles standard in population dynamics.

Where can we find data on 2021 returns for natural origin fish? Not yet available as runs are not finished. Estimates won't be available until winter, but will be available.

Presentation: Management Implications of Intensively Monitored Watersheds: Asotin Creek IMW Example – Steve Bennett presented the history of the Asotin IMW which is one of 20 IMWs, and has been ongoing for 14 years.

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IMWs were developed to test specific experimental questions and answer if various restoration practices are improving habitat and fish populations. The Asotin is a watershed-scale experiment involving the installation of Post-Assisted Log Structures to provide a low-cost method of increasing instream habitat and letting the stream do the work. PALS are designed to add instream habitat and overbank flow, and increase instream complexity at a lower cost/mile than heavily engineered projects. About 40% of the study area has now been treated with ongoing adaptive management and maintenance to continue through 2025.

Key results include increased wood frequency (300-800%), increases in pool frequency (30-50%), increases in geomorphic units (60%), increases in fish abundance (15-34%), increases in biomass (8-36%), and increases in production (40-50%). A restoration manual has been created and is in wide circulation currently. Management implications include recognizing that restoration will take time. Degradation has occurred over hundreds of years so restoring streams requires ongoing work to fully restore. Future work should include long term monitoring and examining the habitat response to floodplain and in channel work. See the Asotin IMW management implications summary handout for additional detail.

Sean was interested to know if the monitoring effort included flow monitoring and if there was evidence of decreased peak flow and increased late season flow. Steve noted that they are monitoring flow and temperature, but these data have not been presented yet – early indications that there are improvements in temperature (decreased peak temperature) and have other studies going on elsewhere to answer flow questions. There is anecdotal evidence of increased flow due to beaver dams in the Bridge Creek IMW, but more research is needed there.

Presentation: Partner Update: Low-Tech Process Based Restoration Outreach video Megan Stewart Asotin County Conservation District Coordinator — Megan introduced a landowner outreach video that ACCD created to help demonstrate the habitat restoration work that has been done and how landowners can get involved. This video was particularly useful when COVID restrictions limited staff ability to meet with the public and allowed a way to distribute information accordingly. The video can be viewed on YouTube at: https://youtu.be/4DP5RWGIlY8.

Presentation: Whitman County Salmon Recovery Efforts with Palouse Conservation District Brad Johnson, Middle Snake Watershed Manager, Ryan Boylan, Research and Monitoring Coordinator, and Jodi Prout, Education and Outreach Coordinator — Ryan Boylan gave an overview of ongoing work in Whitman County including a monitoring program to determine effectiveness of conservation practices in the Palouse, water quality monitoring including nutrients, sediment, temperature, and flow among other variables, and new ways to generate reports for landowners participating in their programs to see the data. Jodi Prout summarized outreach and education efforts including 31 workshops and events, 60+ publications or displays, 16 adopt-a-stream events as well as Plant the Palouse and Orca Recovery events. The storymap presentation has been deferred until another meeting due to time.

Presentation/Discussion: Overview of the Columbia County Flood Control Zone District – Charles Eaton, Columbia County Flood Control District Administrator —This topic was introduced at the previous meeting with discussion about potentially working with the Columbia County Flood Control Zone District (CCFCZD) in a Partner capacity with a request for a follow up presentation from Charles Eaton. Chuck provided some background information about the CCFCZD and its role. The CCFCZD was initiated in 2019 has separate jurisdiction from the county as identified in RCW 86.14, but would week to coordinate their work with salmon recovery work ongoing in the basin. Chuck noted that there have been 7 declared flood emergencies since 1964 in Columbia County, that there are 13 counties with Flood Control Zone Districts and that Walla Walla is the only other in our region (Mill Creek).

The CCFCZD is interested in seeking a partnership of sorts with SRSRB that could support both flood risk and habitat goals with the objective of taking a holistic view of project work. The potential options that the CCFCZD could provide include early participation in design review and vetting of both flood risk and habitat projects to ensure mutually beneficial, project outreach and support between the SRSRB and the CCFCZD with landowners, coordinated support on writing grant proposals for projects, construction support to regional project sponsors, permit reviews and assistance on floodplain development permit requirements (FEMA), etc. Chuck noted that almost all Columbia County waterways have floodplains defined by FEMA.

There was some discussion of cost of the partnership and if other local flood control districts would expect similar funding. Expected funding is up for discussion and the CCFCZD could use whatever might be available. They are in process of applying for a DOE Floodplain grant to update the comprehensive flood management plan which will set the tone for the flood management program. The SRSRB wants to ensure the potential partnership focuses on collaborative

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efforts that does not go against fish habitat as our main driving factor for SRSRB funds. Justin asked if the CCFCZD was in support of our work – Chuck noted that in most cases yes and that there aren't concerns, though they did work with CCD to remove a structure on a project and are working with CTUIR on design reviews. Brad noted that any funding provided will have to be utilized with a "fish lens" on; Brian also noted that we need to work together on these things but that the Board cannot do flood relief projects as the primary focus.

Justin Dixon made a motion asking for a follow-up discussion that would dive into the details, potential scope of work for a partner contract, and time needed for future discussion and consideration. Brian Shinn seconded the motion which passed by consensus.

Update – Announcements and Items of Interest

Executive Call Actions – No actions taken.

RTT update — In addition to several updates already presented to the SRSRB in earlier presentations, the USFWS bull trout 5-year stock status review will be out for comment in early 2022.

Walla Walla Spring Chinook Hatchery Dedication Announcement — The in-person dedication has been cancelled but will have a remote call-in format. Details were provided in an email to Board members in an email from Gary James.

September Meeting Preparations — The legislative outreach meeting will be at Roland's house. There will be an overview of the SRSRB followed by some brief presentations on the Tucannon summarizing a few take home messages that Kris shared last month and from the Asotin IMW that Steve Bennett presented at this meeting. If Board members have other items or discussion questions for the meeting, please let John know.

Action: September 28th, 2021 for next Board meeting to be held at past member Roland Schirman's Residence in Dayton, WA at 4:00 PM. —A motion was made by Justin Dixon and seconded by Brian Shinn to hold the next Board meeting on September 28th, 2021 at Roland Schirman's house in Dayton, WA at 4:00 PM. The Board approved by consensus.

Meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m. by Chair Bowles

Signed By: Bradley Johnson - Co-Chair Date: 10/26/2021
Bill Bowles, Chair, Snake River Salmon Recovery Board