Snake River Salmon Recovery

Date: March 26th, 2024
Place: Dayton Best Western
Format: Regular Meeting started at 4:00 p.m.
Board Members in Person: Jon Jones (WC), Marty Hall (CC), Larry Hooker (WW), Mike Denny (WW), Brian Shinn (AC), Sean Thurston (CC), Bradley Johnson (AC), Kris Fischer, (CTUIR) Jerimiah Bonifer (CTUIR)and Jerry Hendrickson (AC)
Board Members on Phone: Billy Bowles (GC), Michael Largent (WC)
Others in Person: Steve Martin, (SRSRB), Kris Buelow (SRSRB), Ali Fitzgerald (SRSRB), and Roland Schirman (Citizen).
Others on Phone: Joanna Cowles (WWCCD) and Ali Fitzgerald (SRSRB)

Verify Quorum / Agenda Approval and Public Comment

SRSRB vice-chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm and verified a quorum (10 in person, 2 on phone).
No public comment was provided.

A motion was made by Brian Shinn to approve the agenda. It was seconded by Jon Jones and the Board approved the motion by consensus.

Action – A motion was made by Brian Shinn to approve the consent agenda as presented which included four items (1) February 2024 expenses (2) Updated by-laws dated March 26, 2024, and (3) February 27, 2024 meeting notes. Jon Jones seconded the motion and the Board approved the motion by consensus.

Discussion Items:

- **Columbia Basin Restoration Initiative (CBRI)**

Jerimiah Bonifer (CTUIR Fish Program Director) provided an overview of the CBRI and noted that the report is available on-line at Columbia Basin Restoration Initiative_Public Version_Clean v.2 (DEC 2023) (critfc.org). In summary, there has been ongoing litigation over the operation of the Columbia Basin hydropower system that has been expensive and length which leaves uncertainty for hydropower operations and uncertainty for meeting ESA and trust obligations. The CBRI is intended to provide a 10-year process framework by which high priority actions (listed in the report) are funded through renewed or new commitments while alternative services, e.g., energy, transportation/navigation, and recreation, that are currently provided by the four lower Snake River dams are assessed. The culmination of the initiative is a memorandum of understanding between the 6 sovereigns and the US Government.

- **Board Member absence status review**

Steve noted at the last board meeting that a few board members have not met the attendance targets identified in the by laws and that it is up to the Board of County Commissioners to appoint citizen representatives from their respective counties. Garfield and Whitman counties each have a vacancy and a member from each of Columbia and Whitman county have not met the attendance target. Commissioners are aware of the situation and will work to get seats filled to the extent possible.

- **North of Falcon Meeting scheduled for March 27th in Clarkston at WWCC campus**

Steve mentioned that the annual East of McNary (north of falcon sub-area) recreational fishing season for salmon and steelhead meeting is tomorrow in Clarkston at 6PM and encouraged participation. The allotment of harvestable impacts has been set, the process is to allocate those impacts seasonally, and geographically. Ice Harbor and Little Goose are likely spring chinook fishery locations and are likely to be open on a rotating basis in May but those details will be discussed with public input tomorrow. Fall chinook fisheries are likely to be a bubble around Lyons Ferry fish hatchery and the confluence of the Snake and Clearwater.

- **State of Washington budget for salmon is $195M but if public repeals carbon initiative, large capital projects will not receive funding and the total will decrease to ~$170M**

Steve reminded the Board that the state legislature has approved ~$25 Million for large capital projects ($1M to $5M projects) to be funded with revenue generated from the carbon initiative/climate commitment act. This initiative is subject to repeal by public vote so the funding is not guaranteed. If the initiative is repealed, there will be a statewide list of large capital projects for consideration from potential future fund sources. This account is unique in that each of the seven recovery regions prepares independent lists but they lists are ranked at the state wide scale so this means the program is a statewide competitive grant opportunity unlike our traditional Lead Entity program that receives a certain amount of funding annually and the Board ranks the projects within each region.

- **Asotin Intensively Monitored Watershed situation update**

Steve noted that Anabranch Solutions, LLC requested financial support to continue the monitoring component of the IMW The monitoring budget, which comes from Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission has been flat lined since 2010 at approximately $220,000. With additional data and research needs and with inflation, continuation of the monitoring simply could not be continued without additional support. Bennet will participate in the April meeting of the Board and provide an update.

Action Items

- **Letter of Support for the WDFW Sponsored Mill Creek Assessment**

Motion made by Larry Hooker to approve the letter which was seconded by Marty Hall. The motion was unanimously approved by a vote of the Board.

- **Contract to Anabranch Solutions to support ongoing IMW monitoring for April 1, 2024 for a 12-month period not to exceed $60,000**

After discussion about the amount of budget Steve noted that he misunderstood the request to include PIT tags but the $60,000 amount does not include approximately $20,000 for PIT Tags. Brian Shinn made a motion to approve a contract to Anabranch for ongoing IMW monitoring support in an amount up to $78,000 for a 12-month period effective April 1, 2024. The motion was seconded by Mike Denney and was unanimously approved by a vote of the Board.

Update – Announcements and Items of Interest

- **Executive Call Actions –** No actions taken

- **Lead Entity Grant Round and RTT Update**

Ali provided an overview of the draft project list and noted that the next two days the Lead Entity Committee will be evaluating the draft proposals and scoring them to provide preliminary feedback to the sponsors. The project tour is scheduled for May 6 through May 9 and a detailed itinerary will be distributed once the final project list is known and the logistics figured out.

Kris Fischer noted that Jared McKee with US Fish and Wildlife presented a methodology to calculate floodplain area and potential gains in floodplain connectivity with restoration actions. The method is standardized for area so the result is a percentage, not an absolute number. This allows projects of different size to be compared to each other on percent gain approach.

Action: April 23rd, 2024 Board meeting to be held at the Best Western in Dayton, WA at 6 PM — A motion was made by Larry Hooker and seconded by Sean Thurston to hold the next Board meeting on April 23rd, 2024 at the Best Western in Dayton, WA at 6 PM. The Board approved by consensus.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 by Vice Chair Johnson.

Signed By: _____ Date: April 23, 2024

Bill Bowles, Chair, Snake River Salmon Recovery Board