Snake River Salmon Recovery

Date: January 28, 2025
Place: Dayton Best Western
Format: Regular Meeting started at 4:00 p.m.
Board Members in Person: Marty Hall (CC), Mike Denny (WW), Kris Fischer (CTUIR), Billy Bowles (GC), Jon Jones (WC), Don Jackson (CC)
Board Members on Phone: Jerimiah Bonifer (CTUIR), Bradley Johnson (AC), Sean Thurston (CC), Justin Dixon (GC), Betha Clayton (WC)
Others in Person: Steve Martin (SRSRB), Kris Buelow (SRSRB), Ali Fitzgerald (SRSRB), Washington Conservation Crew members: Andrew, Adam, Claire, Brian, Tebow Conner,
Others on Phone: Reid Camp (SRSRB), Dave Karl (WDFW)

Verify Quorum / Agenda Approval and Public Comment

SRSRB Chair Bowles called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm and verified a quorum (6 in person, 4 on phone). A motion was made by Mike Denny to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Jon Jones and passed by consensus.

Action – A motion was made by Marty Hall to approve the consent agenda as presented which included two items (1) November and December 2024 expenses and (2) December 2024 meeting notes. It was seconded by Kris Fischer and the Board approved the motion by consensus.

Discussion Items:

Columbia Basin Collaborative, Mid C steelhead structured decision making— Steve summarized the work of the Columbia Basin Collaborative, comprised of stakeholders in MT, ID, WA, CA, and OR to develop a vision for Columbia basin including restoration, and ESA recovery but it lacks specificity. The collaborative asked the Mid-C DPS organizations what it would take to make the Walla Walla/Touchet MPG viable again. Steve and Jerimiah have been working on this. As background, for any population to be viable, it has to be below <20% abundance/productivity risk and also have spatial structure and diversity. The Touchet population is high risk, while the Walla Walla/Umatilla populations are moderate risk. Discussion of how do we get to low risk? Issues directly impacting these populations include Bennington passage, Mill passage, McKay passage, poor water quality and habitat issues, pre-spawn mortality, overshoot issues, and predation.

Walla Walla Watershed WW2050 update: Steve summarized the work of the WWW 20250 process to protect water as well as fish and agriculture. Jacobs engineering firm prepared a presentation of work to date including options to meet fish needs and maintain agricultural viability through possible options such as reservoir storage or pump exchange or a hybrid approach. Jerimiah Bonnifer was also heavily involved. The report recommended a hybrid approach to include a new 20,000 acft lake in Oregon which will be partially filled with high

flows and Columbia River pump exchange and use that water during the summer for irrigation. The reservoir-only option was too risky and the pump-only project was too expensive. Details to follow.

Tucannon PA 5 – 15 Assessment – Science and Leadership meeting, March 11 at the Water Center and March 12 field trip This area of the Tucannon has high salmon potential but also has infrastructure present. The assessment, funded by BPA and SRFB, is looking at how to balance the needs of infrastructure while supporting floodplain and fish habitat as much as possible. The co-managers leadership team is working to look at that reach and potential options that benefit flood control, restoration, fish, fire risk reduction and develop a plan. Rainbow lake rehab is $3.5M so looking at all the potential options in that area for other things. A consultant is working on the assessment. Discussion among board members on potential options to consider and focus of restoration including where to focus on spawning locations. The Science and Leadership meeting is March 11/12th at WWCC. The Big 4 Project is related to upper area spawning.

Columbia Basin toxics clean up program—Reid summarized a new bill, HB 2514, that created a new plan to identify toxic point source locations. Now there is a program to fund cleanup of those areas in WRIA 32. DOE will present on this at next RTT. Anything that could prevent future toxic releases could be eligible (ie riparian projects or other existing projects with a riparian component as a buffer). Pre-application phase opens in June. Focus will be on heavy metals, fertilizers, pesticides, etc. A lot of potential for projects in our areas.

HB-1290 Climate resiliency through a Water Quality Trading Program. Representative Dye proposed a bill to allow wastewater treatment plants that aren't meeting TMDLs for temperature for local circumstances be allowed to direct mitigation funding to helping eastside facilities meet their temperature or load requirements. Other bills introduced include recovery boards to allow for funding for maintenance of restoration projects HB5475. This could allow flexibility for our current regional allocation to be used for those maintenance projects. Another bill for a joint review committee for riparian programs funded by the state to determine effectiveness.

Eastern Washington Riparian Planting Symposium dates— Will be virtual now due to travel restrictions. Details to follow.

Update – Announcements and Items of Interest

- **Executive Call Actions –** No actions taken, open to all.
- **RTT meeting summary—** Reid summarized the RTT meeting including Bull Trout annual workgroup meeting, threats assessment, and basin-specific feedback. Other topics included partner updates and grant round updates. Steve let the SRSRB know Bennington Ladder was funded, weirs on fed portion funded, then another $6M for non-federal portion of notching weirs. February 19th is next meeting.
- **Lead Entity program grant round update-** 12 projects in the hopper for our regular grant round with an estimated $2-2.5M in funding anticipated. Last year there were two Mill Creek projects on FBRB list ranked 3 and 8, strong likelihood of getting both of those funded during the current legislative session. (Gose and Roosevelt).

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- **Regional monitoring proposals-** No applications submitted formally but discussion behind the scenes. Funding includes $950k for 2025 statewide. One potential project idea could include lower Columbia estuary bottlenecks (survival losses) as a joint project among several recovery regions or a Tucannon lifecycle model.
- **Washington State PCSRF application for FY 26—**Steve said most of our request is for capital project work (as opposed to operating dollars), 10% of the request can be for monitoring. That funding has historically gone to IMWs. Those are wrapping up so that funding is more available for monitoring elsewhere.
- **Letter of support for CTUIR Túuši Wána Floodplain and Fish Habitat Restoration Project on Touchet River.** Approve content of letter- BOR funds for Tuusi Wana. Marty made a motion to offer a letter of support, seconded by Mike Denny.
- **Introduction of Bertha Clayton:** The Board welcomed Bertha as the new Whitman County Commissioner on the board.
- **Discussion of hosting meeting at Dayton office instead of the hotel.**

Action: February 25th, 2025 board meeting to be held at the Dayton SRSRB office 410B East Main at 4 PM— A motion was made by Marty Hall and seconded by Jon Jones to hold the next Board meeting at the Dayton Best Western. The Board approved by consensus.

Meeting adjourned at 5:40 by Chair Bowles.

Insert Billy Bowles Signature once approved by the board:

Date: 2/25, 2025