

Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council

Meeting Summary

Friday, April 21, 2006, 9:30 – 2:30 | Edmonds City hall

Welcome and New Shared Strategy Staff Introduction

Jim Kramer and Jagoda Perich-Anderson welcomed the Recovery Council members and observers and provided a brief overview of the meeting's discussion topics. The Council welcomed new Shared Strategy staff:

- > Patricia Chambers – Communications Associate
(206) 447-7052 – work (206) 920 2050 – cell
pchambers@sharedsalmonstrategy.org
- > Chris Sargeant – Adaptive Management/All-H Integration Associate
(206) 447-4008 – work (425) 820-1321 – cell
csargeant@sharedsalmonstrategy.org
Note: Chris Sargeant was unable to attend the meeting

SRFB Regional Funding Allocation Decision

The Council reviewed and discussed the outcome of the SFRB proposal to allocate at least 90 percent of the available 2006 funds according to the eight salmon recovery regions of the state, and reserve approximately 10% of funds for discretionary use. The preliminary funding distributions across the state regions proposed by the SRFB at their April meeting are as follows:

- > Puget Sound & Hood Canal: 45%
- > Lower Columbia: 15%
- > Upper Columbia: 11%
- > Snake Region: 9%
- > Northeast Region: 2%
- > Coastal Region: 8%

The board is expected to make its final decision on the proposed process at its June 8 and 9 meeting in Walla Walla.

Overall, the Puget Sound & Hood Canal region received a 15-20% reduction in its allocation of funds compared to years past (a previous proposal had considered a 50% reduction). Leaders in other regions of the state responded positively to Puget Sound's willingness to accept this reduction in SRFB funding for the benefit of the state-wide salmon recovery effort.

The Council discussed the following points regarding the SRFB funding allocation decision:

- > Puget Sound's position on the region's funding allocation sets a positive direction for the state and will hopefully help strengthen a coalition among the 8 regions to increase funds available for salmon recovery to all regions collectively.
- > The funding allocation that would be finalized by the SRFB is only for 2006. The SRFB recognizes that funding allocation will be a "moving target" based on assessed needs and requirements. The SRFB is currently discussing keeping the same allocation for two or more years, but it is still under consideration.

- > The SRFB has determined that the issue of “equity” among regions will be based on the unique needs for salmon recovery in each region. All regions will receive SRFB funding, but it is not required that all regions receive equal funding.

The Recovery Council expressed general approval for the SRFB funding allocation decision for the Puget Sound Region inclusive of Hood Canal, and for collaboration with the other state regions.

SRFB “Homework” Assigned to Regions

At its April 6th meeting, the SRFB distributed a set of “homework” questions for the regions to answer by May 17th. The questions pertain to each region’s allocation process of SRFB funds. The SRFB “homework” questions are as follows:

1. How will the SRFB be able to ensure the best investments in salmon recovery are being made?
2. How can the SRFB ensure equity in salmon recovery efforts?
3. How can the SRFB assess the performance of regions and lead entities?

The Council reviewed and discussed the following proposed response outline presented by the Council staff:

1. Process and criteria for allocating funds:
 - The region will involve Lead Entities and ensure their continued key role in the process. (Watershed Leads will be asked to provide specifics on how they are or propose to continue involving citizen and technical committees)
 - The region would ensure “equitable distribution of funds.”
 - Partially funded projects would be handled through the three-year plans
2. Technical review process
 - The TRT review in May would document rationale and results of the watershed and ESU criteria
 - The review would consider both regional and local needs
3. Evaluation process and criteria
 - Consistency with the recovery plan
 - Process and criteria would be within and across watersheds
 - The process and criteria would incorporate factors for non-listed species

Points to convey in the response to SRFB questions include:

- > The region would ensure the best investments are made by applying criteria to investment scenarios and developing a verification and accountability system
- > Equity would be ensured because no watershed will be left behind; the region will be investing in key priorities in each watershed.
- > Performance assessment would take place through adaptive management and monitoring efforts and will ensure that priority actions are continually emerging over time.

The Council expressed general consensus on the outline of responses to the SRFB allocation questions assigned to the region. Council members also determined that a Recovery Council leadership delegation address integration issues with the Hood Canal Coordinating Council (HCCC) to answer the SRFB questions related to this issue.

The following Council members volunteered for the leadership delegation:

- > Scott Chitwood
- > David Troutt
- > Debby Hyde
- > Jayni Kamin

A couple of additional members may be asked to participate as well, particularly elected officials.

Action Items: The Council staff will prepare responses to the SRFB assigned “homework” questions based on the proposed outline with Council suggestions and specifics from Watershed Leads and Lead Entity Coordinators. A draft response will be sent to the Council members for their review prior to the final response by the staff. Any issues will be discussed at the May 16th Watershed lead meeting before the staff sends the final draft to the SRFB. The Council staff will also recruit Council members to the Leadership Delegation to meet with the HCCC to address the SRFB’s questions about integration.

Rationale for Funding Priorities and Watershed Criteria for Three-year Plans

The Council confirmed that having criteria for what this region believes is important to achieve in the first three years of implementation is an important step in the development of investment scenarios. They agreed that to attract funding, this region needs to demonstrate to funders that we identified the “right” programs based on objective criteria, and that we have a well-thought out and disciplined strategy with an accountability and tracking system.

The Council reviewed and accepted the following salmon recovery objectives for the first three years as follows:

- > Improve the level and certainty of protection for habitat *and* for the 22 existing Chinook populations
- > Ensure that protection and restoration preserves and restores ecosystem processes for Chinook as well as other species.
- > Advance the integrated management of harvest, hatchery, and habitat
- > Continue to expand and deepen individual and community support for key priorities
- > Develop and implement the adaptive management and monitoring program

The Council received confirmation that watershed areas are now using the following criteria as they prepare their three-year watershed work programs:

Watershed Technical Criteria for funding projects (three-year plans):

- > Address key limiting factors
- > Likely produce early improvements in one or more Viable Salmon Population (VSP)
- > Habitat protection focused on critical near-term actions
- > Sequenced per TRT guidance document
- > Sequenced to re-establish natural production if needed
- > Consistent with May 2005 TRT recommendations and December 2005 NOAA Supplement

Watershed Policy Criteria for funding projects (three-year plans):

- > Benefit Chinook and other salmon species
- > Part of larger efforts (e.g. comprehensive monitoring)
- > Builds capacity to implement 10-year program

- > Reflects the most efficient and effective option
- > Broadens and deepens community engagement

The Council identified or confirmed the following items during the discussion:

- > In a few select locations, there currently is a organizational differences between local Watershed Groups that submitted recovery chapters for their areas and Lead Entities. Some Council members noted the role of Lead Entities in has not been clear in the process, especially in that the priorities being considered in the three-year work programs are broader and more comprehensive than SRFB project lists.
- > It is important to clarify the role of and affirm the importance of Lead Entities in the salmon recovery process.
- > It is important to begin thinking about the capacity building needed for the three year work programs outlined by watersheds since to achieve the first increment of the 10-year goals and actions is likely to require an increase in capacity (e.g. staff, project sponsors, technical assistance, select prioritized assessments, etc.)

Action Item: Recovery Council staff will work with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to produce and distribute a memorandum requesting input from Watershed Leads and Lead Entities about how they are or propose to incorporate the Lead Entity process into implementing their local recovery plans.

Draft ESU-scale Criteria for Developing Investment Scenarios

Investment Scenarios will be developed for consideration by the Council that will weigh ESU-wide criteria in different ways to display the balances between multiple objectives and interests. Each scenario will present different tradeoffs, but the objective of each should be to achieve progress on the ESU recovery criteria and local recovery goals. It is important to note that the three-year work programs are a strategic investment tool to begin to build the foundation to recover salmon, and that they are more than just “ a listing of projects.”

The Council discussed and evaluated the following proposed draft ESU-wide criteria for developing investment scenarios for the region:

Proposed ESU-scale Technical Criteria for funding projects

- > Ensure the highest risk populations do not disappear
- > Ensure more robust populations continue to provide insurance of ESU resilience (e.g. “strongholds”)
- > Early VSP improvements for indigenous, natural-origin populations

Note: These criteria are in addition to the ESU recovery criteria and could apply to all salmon species

Proposed ESU-scale Policy Criteria for funding projects

- > Preparedness to implement ESU and local priorities
- > Identifies a clear path to building capacity where needed and encourage regional resource management to achieve synergistic effects
- > Responsiveness to emerging funding opportunities
- > Broadens and deepens support/engagement for key priorities
- > Appropriate implementation pace for 10-year goals

Examples of Types of Investment Scenarios

- > Until new funds come “on-line”, maintain recent average proportional levels
- > Emphasize protection of highest risk
- > Balance highest risk and protect strongholds
- > Focus early improvements on indigenous, natural origin fish
- > Focus on primary (low risk) populations
- > Focus on priority suites of actions across the ESU to achieve objectives for first three years

The Council identified the following issues regarding the proposed ESU-scale criteria and investment scenarios:

- > The TRT will assist with applying the technical criteria to help inform investment scenarios and assess tradeoffs from a biological perspective.
- > Council members noted the importance of the Lead Entities’ role in the development of watershed three-year work programs and evaluation of priorities at both the watershed and ESU level. The more that Lead Entities are involved in this process, the more likely projects undertaken will be in line with the scenario that is chosen.
- > It may be important to consider the issue of de-listing or the pace of achieving de-listing status in terms of choosing a scenario. This would help address federal funders’ concerns about dollars needing to be spent on listed species.
- > An additional policy criterion to consider would be to demonstrate cost effectiveness and efficiency of projects. If there is no incentive to reduce costs and attain efficiency for projects funded, it will likely not happen. The TRT and RC policy work group review of the 3-year work programs looks at suites of actions and does not go down to the project-specific level.
- > Habitat protection is an important criterion that should be considered. Scenarios should take into account options that broaden, diversify, deepen, and reward good land use that protects habitat.
- > Some Council members suggested tracking compliance with state land use policies or ordinances (e.g. SMP, CAO) as a possible measure of habitat protection for salmon. Other Council members cautioned, however, the regional salmon recovery effort may lose support if we enter into the politics of local jurisdictions by tracking compliance with state laws and programs.
- > Non-compliance with state land use planning laws may not be a suitable indicator of land protection by a jurisdiction. A local jurisdiction may miss a deadline to update their ordinances in order to have the time to do it well and be consistent with their local recovery plan.
- > The San Juan Islands Protection Pilot project is currently working on assessing how well existing land protection tools, both regulatory and non-regulatory, are working to protect habitat for salmon. The process used in this pilot can hopefully be extrapolated for use throughout the region.
- > It will be important to convert the criteria to some form of metric if they are to be useful in conducting an objective review of any scenario or any watershed plan.
- > There will be a need to adapt criteria over time as progress is made in recovery.
- > The policy criteria needs more clarity and refinement and this is probably best done as the RC policy workgroup tries to apply them to the development of investment scenarios.

The Council overall supported the draft ESU scale criteria presented and asked that the following policy issues be considered in the development of investment scenarios as well:

1. Pace in which recovery would occur for listed species, especially for federal funds
2. Cost effectiveness of projects in comparison to other approaches that addresses the same issue or problem
3. Affirm or enhance the Lead Entity's role in implementation.

In regards to prioritizing habitat protection as a criterion, the staff recommended that, as the watershed plans are developed, they note what is the status of local governmental updates of SMPs and CAOs; what proportion of a watershed's three-year plan was devoted to habitat protection and what to habitat restoration; and what good ideas regarding habitat protection are in watershed plans for possible dissemination to other watersheds. As well, the Council should continue to build capacity to evaluate the effectiveness of efforts to protect habitat.

Council Decisions: The Council reached consensus and approved the criteria to be used in developing investment scenarios to be discussed at the May Council meeting.

The Council approved the following discussion and decision schedule for criteria and investment scenarios:

April 21 – May 19th: TRT and Staff Workgroup will develop the investment scenarios and refine the policy criteria per RC request

May 1st – May 12th: TRT and Staff Workgroup will review the 3-year work programs

May 16th: Watershed Lead Entity discussion regarding response to SRFB questions

May 17th and 19th: TRT and Staff Workgroup will finalize draft investment scenarios

May 25th: Recovery Council will review and discuss investment scenarios

May 25th - July 27th: General vetting and discussion of investment scenarios

July 27th: Recovery Council will select investment scenario

Action Item: Council staff, with the Staff Workgroup and TRT, will develop investment scenarios based on the criteria discussed and Council input provided.

Outreach to Governor and Legislators

The Council reviewed and discussed the proposal to send a Council delegation to meet with Governor Gregoire and key state legislators. The purpose of the meeting would be to reach out and educate the Governor and legislators about the regional salmon recovery plan as they begin their biennium budget discussion.

The Council had the following discussion regarding the proposal:

- > Conveying what we are trying to accomplish to the Governor and Legislators with the regional salmon plan and receiving an endorsement from the state will be very beneficial.
- > It will be important to give a unified message from a broad group of representatives from the region.
- > The ultimate goal of the meeting is to be on the Governor's radar screen and one of her priorities as she prepares her biennial budget.
- > It will be important to convey and receive support for the watershed-based community approach which Shared Strategy has taken as we begin the implementation phase of the Recovery Plan.

The Council expressed approval and endorsed the proposal for a delegation to meet with the Governor and key legislators.

Action Items: Jim Kramer and Council Member Steve Mullet will draft a message to deliver to the Governor and Legislators on behalf of the region. Council staff will recruit a diverse group of representatives from the region for the Delegation.

Conservation Agreement

The Council reviewed and discussed the Conservation Agreement to be signed by the federal and state agencies and perhaps the tribes upon Recovery Plan adoption by NOAA. The purpose of the agreement would be to reinforce the implementation commitments.

The Council provided the following comments regarding the Conservation Agreement:

- > This will be a useful tool for watersheds and local governments to show that state and federal agencies are serious about meeting the commitments they made.
- > The document will be a symbolic agreement to show that the agencies and tribes are working together. More specific agreements could be developed in Attachment A, if needed.
- > Billy Frank's signature does not need to be on the document since he is not the representative for all the tribes. The agreement without tribal signatures will not diminish the role of the tribes in the recovery of salmon.
- > A brief statement in the document regarding water management issues (water supply, waste water, etc.) related to salmon should be included.

The Council expressed overall support for continuing to develop the Conservation Agreement.

Action Item: Council members are encouraged to send Jagoda Perich-Anderson any comments or suggested changes to the Conservation Agreement.

Recovery Plan Adoption Process

Elizabeth Babcock of NOAA Fisheries presented a brief update to the Council on the status of the Recovery Plan Adoption Process. The NOAA Fisheries Regional Office is currently reviewing comments and preparing responses. The plan will ultimately become NOAA fisheries' final recovery plan for the Puget Sound Chinook ESU.

NOAA Fisheries' Adoption Schedule for the Recovery Plan is as follows:

April through early May: Analyze comments and prepare draft responses

May through early June: Share draft responses and proposed actions with Shared Strategy and Liaisons as appropriate

May/June: Prepare final plan document

June/July: Final Plan and Responses

NOAA Fisheries will be working with the Recovery Council and its staff to develop any changes or responses based on NOAA's review and/or public comment in the same spirit of collaboration as the Recovery Plan was developed.

All H - Harvest, Habitat, & Hatchery and Adaptive Management Workshop – June 20 & 21st

Shared Strategy will be conducting the "All -H " workshop on June 20th and June 21st that will combine both the Adaptive Management (AM) and H-integration efforts. The overall objectives

of the two-day workshop will be to describe the proposed process, data needs, and tools to use to advance Puget Sound watersheds along the H-integration spectrum and hold discussions about how the regional adaptive management program is shaping up.

Council Members/Alternates Participating

Randy Acker	Washington Department of Natural Resources
Elizabeth Babcock	National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration – Fisheries
Bill Blake	Stillaguamish (watershed)
Scott Chitwood	Elwha/ Dungeness (watershed)
Jeff Dickison	Squaxin Tribe
Jeanette Dorner	Nisqually (watershed)
Tom Eaton	Environmental Protection Agency – Region 10
Don Davidson	Lake Washington / Cedar / Sammamish (watershed)
Mike Graham	Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
Michael Garrity	American Rivers
Debby Hyde	Puyallup/White & Clover/Chamber (watershed)
Jayni Kamen	South Sound / Nearshore (watershed)
Darlene Kordonowy	East Kitsap (watershed)
Randy Kinley	Lummi Nation
Steve Lewis	ESA Business Coalition
Sara La Borde	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Gwenn Maxfield	Island (watershed)
Jim Miller	Snohomish Basin (watershed)
Doug Morrill	Elwha / Dungeness (watershed)
Steve Mullet	Green/Duwamish (watershed)
Bob Nichols	Governor’s Salmon Recovery Office
Kevin Ranker	San Juan Islands (watershed)
Bruce Roll	Nooksack (watershed)
Joe Ryan	Washington Environmental Council
Bill Ruckelshaus	Chair
David Troutt	Nisqually Tribe
Josh Weiss	Washington Forest Protection Association
Chris Weller	Elwha / Dungeness (watershed)
Terry Williams	Tulalip Tribes
Terry Wright	NWIFC

It should be noted that representatives for some Council slots are still in the process of being filled.

Approximately 25-30 observers attended from local watershed areas, local governments and state agencies.