

# Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council <sup>1</sup>

## Meeting Summary

Wednesday, February 15, 2006, 9:30 – 2:30 | Edmonds City Hall, Edmonds, WA

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### Introduction and Overview of the Expanded Council and its Purpose

Jim Kramer welcomed new Council members and presented an overview of Shared Strategy's history and development of the Puget Sound Recovery Plan, and the challenges the region faces for salmon recovery. He also highlighted the Salmon Recovery Council's overall purpose and 2006 priorities.

#### Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council Purpose:

- > Provide leadership for recovery plan implementation
- > Guide the overall work program
- > Direct sub-committee work and review products

### Presentation and Discussion on Council Structure

Jagoda Perich-Anderson provided an overview of the membership and organization of the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council and the active and proposed subcommittees.

Council membership is at 34 members and includes:

Federal agencies: NOAA, USFWS, EPA, Corp of Engineers

Four tribal representatives

State agencies: DOE, DFW, PSAT, DNR

14 watershed representatives

2 business representatives

2 agriculture/forestry representatives

2 environmental representatives

Long Live the Kings

Bill Ruckelshaus, Chair

Topics for which the Council has current or proposed sub-committees include: protection, h-integration, water quantity, finance, climate change, adaptive management and monitoring

Discussion included the roles of the Staff Workgroup and Technical Recovery Team (TRT) and how their activities support the Council.

The Staff Workgroup will provide policy analysis and support, assist with plan implementation, and act as the Council's "think tank" and staff group. The role of the TRT is to provide technical analysis and recommendations on salmon recovery, conduct technical reviews, and provide technical guidance and assistance to watersheds.

Implementation Leads from all the watersheds across the Sound will also meet regularly to discuss proposals, upcoming issues and provide policy analysis and support.

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<sup>1</sup> There was consensus among the Council members that a new name for the Development Committee was needed since membership has been expanded and the group will be primarily addressing Recovery Plan implementation issues. Through an informal voting process, the members agreed on the "Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council" as their new official name.

The Council was briefed on the general approach and deliverables on the following 2006 Work Program Priorities:

- > Initiating the financing strategy
- > Matching funding to watershed 3-year implementation plans
- > Gathering commitments from regional partners/parties to implement the recovery plan
- > Conducting pilots to assess the effectiveness of existing habitat protection efforts to achieve results for fish
- > Advancing the recovery plan's water quantity strategies
- > Developing the regional adaptive management components of the Recovery Plan
- > Advancing habitat, hatchery, & harvest integration efforts
- > Assisting NOAA fisheries in formally adopting the Recovery Plan

There was overall consensus among the Council on the work program priorities presented.

### Process for Decision-making

Bill Ross presented a proposed set of ground rules for the Council and an approach for decision-making. The proposed process for decision-making is to use consensus as the objective for all of the Council's decisions where possible. Consensus is defined as a desired outcome each person can live with. "Live with" means that at a minimum no one actively opposes a decision and ideally there is strong support for it by all Council members. When reaching consensus is not possible, the proposal suggested using a super majority voting process. This would require 2/3 support from the watershed representatives and 2/3 support from the entire Council for passage. Council members made the following points during the discussion:

- > The Council should strive to reach consensus whenever possible. The proposed super majority approach should be implemented only when consensus cannot be reached.
- > A clarification is needed whether the 2/3 majority is of those present at meetings or of the total membership.
- > A decision-making process is needed for time sensitive situations when full consensus cannot be reached.
- > There are some situations such as funding decisions, where it may not be appropriate for some government agency representatives to participate in the final decision. For these circumstances, those Council members can abstain.
- > Tribal members of the Council noted that greater tribal representation may be needed in the decision-making process if some form of voting is adopted. The preference is to have consensus be the only decision-making method used.
- > Distributing meeting materials and decision points in advance of meetings will be important to facilitate the Council's decision making ability.
- > The question of whether to have a "quorum" or not was raised but no conclusion was reached.

The Council did not reach a final conclusion on the decision-making process on the question of whether a back-up voting process is needed and/or appropriate. The Council will consider the comments and present revised options for decision making at its March Council meeting.

## Discussion of Congressional Letter for Continued Support

The Council discussed the draft letter to the Congressional Delegation to be sent by Bill Ruckelshaus on behalf of the Recovery Council. They acknowledged that other groups and entities with overlapping or complementary interests would also be approaching the Delegation. They agreed that this letter should retain its current focus and that in the future, the Council may want to discuss how to coordinate other requests.

## Update Puget Sound Recovery Plan and Public Meetings

Council members received an update and overview on the public meetings process for the Puget Sound Recovery Plan. Jagoda Perich-Anderson reported that the overall response from the public as well as the press has been supportive of the Recovery Plan or has emphasized the importance of issues identified in the plan (e.g. water quantity, adaptive management). Upon request, NOAA extended the public comment period to March 16<sup>th</sup>. NOAA will consider all comments and publish a response in the Federal Register. It anticipates adopting the Plan by the middle of 2006.

Meanwhile contributors to the Recovery Plan are beginning to implement the strategies and actions in it. NOAA will continue to work collaboratively with Shared Strategy participants during the implementation phase.

## Update on the Puget Sound Partnership

Jim Kramer provided an overview and update on the Puget Sound Partnership and its integration with the Regional Salmon Recovery effort. The Partnership is a public/private initiative led by Governor Gregoire to make high-level recommendations on a comprehensive plan for integrating the work of local, state, tribal and federal governments with private sector and citizen efforts to protect and restore the Sound. The Partnership is co-chaired by the Governor, Billy Frank, Jr., and Bill Ruckelshaus. The Salmon Recovery Plan will be one of the key components of the plan and the Council may be asked to provide input and/or assistance for the issues that overlap. Brad Ack and Jim Kramer are project co-managers and staff the Partnership.

## Presentation and Discussion on H-integration: Hatchery, Habitat, & Harvest

Council members discussed the work under way to advance H-integration in accordance with the Recovery Plan and in the context of recent questions and potential legal actions about harvest management and how it relates to recovery goals. The Council's predecessor commissioned an all-H leadership and work group to make progress on these issues this year. Sara LaBorde explained that the leadership and work group are charged with:

1. Establishing a common set of goals reflecting salmon recovery needs and community values at the fish, watershed and regional level. This will require commitment from people with the authority to implement actions in each H and a process that responds to the needs, rights, and viewpoints of all.
2. Developing an implementation schedule, milestones, budget and measures of success.
3. Conducting initial analyses using existing tools in all Puget Sound watersheds and identify changes (if any needed) for management actions in the H-sectors to meet viable salmon population goals.
4. Developing an accountability/verification system to ensure each H-sector is implementing its part of the plan in an open, transparent and accessible manner.

Jeff Koenings outlined Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) efforts to implement H-integration within the agency and in partnership with tribal co-managers across local watersheds.

- > WDFW is in the planning stage with individual tribes regarding the strategy and approach to advance H-integration.
- > WDFW is concurrently working on an interdepartmental strategic plan to coordinate efforts among the various departments in support of H-integration efforts.
- > Preparation is under way for the Pacific Salmon Treaty negotiations with Canada and Alaska. Director Koenings indicated his belief that H-integration would be a key component in those negotiations to demonstrate that significant measures are being taken to reduce impact on wild fish through harvest, hatchery, and habitat related actions.

The Council identified the following issues during the discussion on H-integration:

- > The Recovery Plan identifies the importance of modifying the terms of the US-Canada Salmon Treaty, otherwise ESU recovery is in question.
- > A significant piece of H-integration is to build trust among the hatchery, harvest, and habitat managers. Council members confirmed the importance of developing a verification system to ensure each H-sector is implementing its part of the plan in an open, transparent and accessible manner.
- > There needs to be a strong communication effort about H-integration to convey that substantive progress is happening.
- > It is important to keep timeframes in mind for the objectives of H-integration and not insist on a level of scientific certainty that is not yet attainable. For the near-term, transparency for the initial steps taken by the watersheds and corresponding goals should be the primary objective. For the long-term, additional scientific certainty will be more important.

The Council expressed overall support for the all-H Leadership Group and the game plan described above.

### **Discussion on Regional Priorities Development and Approach**

The Council reviewed the proposed approach for regional implementation priorities in each watershed and across the ESU for salmon recovery and discussed the timeline for developing a potential funding allocation strategy. This proposal is the same one that has been vetted with watershed groups, the former Development Committee and SRFB staff for the last several months and continues to be vetted as refinements are made. The outline for the proposed approach is as follows:

- > Watersheds would develop three to four year priority implementation plans.
- > The TRT would review the priority implementation plans for consistency with the Recovery Plan and scientific soundness.
- > The Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) would allocate funds to the 8 salmon recovery regions in Washington State.
- > The Council would allocate regional SRFB funds in accordance with agreed-upon allocation criteria consistent with ESU recovery.
- > The next SRFB funding round would support the first year of the three to four year priority implementation plans.

- > The priority implementation plans would also be used for fund raising with other sources.

Council members raised the following points during the discussion:

- > The proposed regional priorities and funding allocation strategy would reduce the paperwork required from the watersheds and increase the certainty of projects to be funded.
- > It will be important to think about how to balance targeting funds to address populations at greatest risk of extinction as well as priority actions that will boost the region's ability to make early and significant progress toward achieving recovery goals.
- > It will be important to coordinate state priorities such as TMDL, land acquisitions, and farm plans that overlap with the Salmon recovery plan in order to advocate successfully for funding through the state budget.
- > WA DFW and the tribes will need funding to perform H-integration. Hatchery and harvest should be added into the regional priorities for funding.
- > Launching too many projects at once in year one may be too much for some watersheds to handle. A recommendation was made for the contractual work to stay with the SRFB staff and managers.
- > It is important, especially at the local level, to leverage funding through federal reports produced by the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and other entities indicating corresponding needs and priorities that align with salmon recovery.
- > The proposed priorities and funding approach will serve as motivation to finish started projects and reinforce regional collaboration to attain funding.

There was support among the Council for the general proposed concept and approach for setting watershed and regional priorities. The Council will have its preliminary discussions about proposed prioritization criteria at the March 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

#### **2006 Meeting Schedule and Discussion Topics (note the schedule has expanded the timeframe in which to discuss topics and make decisions):**

- > February 15, 2006: Orientation, work program, & H-integration
- > March 23, 2006: Preliminary discussion regarding priorities and allocation criteria
- > April 21, 2006: Decision on criteria for allocation
- > May 25, 2006: Preliminary discussion of regional allocation proposal per criteria
- > July 27, 2006: Decision on regional allocation
- > September 13, 2006: Implementation issues & event
- > October 25-26, 2006: Shared Strategy event
- > November 15, 2006: Implementation issues & 2007 outlook

#### **Discussion topics for the March 23<sup>rd</sup> Council Meeting**

- > Confirm participation ground rules and decision-making process.
- > Preliminary discussion about proposed allocation criteria.
- > Progress report on H-integration efforts.
- > 2006 discussion and decision schedule synched with watershed representative's local decision processes.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM.

## Council Members/Alternates Participating

Brad Ack	Puget Sound Action Team
Ken Berg	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Elizabeth Babcock	National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration – Fisheries
Josh Baldi	Washington Department of Ecology
Bill Blake	Stillaguamish (watershed)
Kim Bredensteiner	Island County (watershed)
Barbara Cairns	Long Live the Kings
Scott Chitwood / Doug Morrill	Elwha / Dungeness (watershed)
John Crull	ESA Business Coalition
Tom Eaton	Environmental Protection Agency – Region 10
Mike Graham	Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
Jayni Kamin	South Sound / Nearshore (watershed)
William Knobloch	East Kitsap (watershed)
Jeff Koenigs	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Rob Masonis	American Rivers
Jim Miller	Snohomish Basin (watershed)
Steve Mullet	Green/Duwamish (watershed)
Kevin Ranker	San Juan Islands (watershed)
Bruce Roll	Nooksack (watershed)
Joe Ryan	Washington Environmental Council
Mike Shelby	Western Washington Agriculture Association
David Troutt	Nisqually Tribe
Jeannette Dorner	Nisqually (watershed)
Josh Weiss	Washington Forest Protection Association

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

Between 25-30 more people attended from local watershed areas, local governments and state agencies.