

**SALMON RECOVERY FUNDING BOARD SUMMARIZED MEETING AGENDA AND ACTIONS**  
**March 20, 2014**

---

**Agenda Items without Formal Action**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Follow-up Actions</b>
Item 1: Management Report	An annual presentation by fiscal and performance management staff was requested.
Item 2: Salmon Recovery Management Report	A presentation on the Habitat Work Schedule was requested for a future board meeting.
Item 3: Reports from Partners	No follow-up action requested.
Item 4: Puget Sound Steelhead Plan Status	No follow-up action requested.
Item 5: Riparian Buffer Update	Staff will initiate public comment on a proposed riparian buffer guideline.
Item 9: Overview of WDFW's Habitat Program	No follow-up action requested.

**Agenda Items with Formal Action**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Formal Action</b>	<b>Follow-up Actions</b>
Minutes	Approved December meeting minutes	No follow-up action requested.
Item 6: Early Action PSAR Project Approval	Approved Skagit River System Cooperative Project (#14-1058)	No follow-up action requested.
Item 7: Monitoring	<p>Approved revised strategic plan language.</p> <p>Approved an initial annual budget of \$50,000 for the creation and recruitment of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board Monitoring Panel.</p> <p>Approved the role/assignments for the Monitoring Panel.</p> <p>Approved up to \$2 million of returned funds per year over three years to implement projects within three Intensively Monitored Watersheds (Lower Columbia, Straits, and Hood Canal).</p>	No follow-up action requested.

	<p>Approved recommendations to advance the overall recovery monitoring needs for the board and the regional recovery delisting requirements.</p> <p>Approved Tetra Tech effectiveness monitoring contract.</p> <p>Approved funding for monitoring video.</p>	
Item 8: Conference and Lead Entity Support	<p>Approved \$99,800 for the Salmon Recovery Conference.</p> <p>Approved \$1,000 for the Future of Our Salmon Conference.</p> <p>Approved up to \$50,000 for reallocation of Lead Entity funds to support the priorities of the Washington Salmon Coalition.</p>	No follow-up action requested.

## SALMON RECOVERY FUNDING BOARD SUMMARY MINUTES

**Date:** March 20, 2014

**Place:** Olympia, WA

### **Salmon Recovery Funding Board Members Participating:**

---

<b>David Troutt, Chair</b>	Olympia	<b>Megan Duffy</b>	Department of Natural Resources
<b>Phil Rockefeller</b>	NWPCC	<b>Bob Cusimano</b>	Department of Ecology
<b>Nancy Biery</b>	Quilcene	<b>Jennifer Quan</b>	Department of Fish and Wildlife
<b>Bob Bugert</b>	Wenatchee	<b>Susan Cierebiej</b>	Department of Transportation
<b>Sam Mace</b>	Spokane		

---

**It is intended that this summary be used with the materials provided in advance of the meeting. The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) retains a recording as the formal record of the meeting.**

Board member Carol Smith was excused.

### **Opening and Welcome**

Chair David Troutt called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. and a quorum was determined.

Sam Mace, new citizen member, introduced herself. Member Mace is from Spokane and has 20 years of salmon recovery experience.

Bob Cusimano, new representative of the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology), introduced himself. Member Cusimano is Ecology's Environmental Assessment acting Program Manager.

The remaining members of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) introduced themselves, followed by staff and other members of the audience.

### **Bob Bugert moved to adopt the agenda.**

**Seconded by:** Nancy Biery

**Motion:** APPROVED

### **Bob Bugert moved to approve the minutes from December 2013.**

**Seconded by:** Nancy Biery

**Motion:** APPROVED

## Briefings

### Item 1: Management Report

Director Cottingham introduced Cindy Gower, who is filling in as the administrative support for the meeting. Ameer Bahr will join RCO in early April and will provide board meeting support in the future.

Director Cottingham is looking forward to a meeting next week with Governor Inslee. Chair Troutt, RCO staff member Dave Caudill, and small forest landowner Sam Madsen will present information related to culvert removal, salmon recovery, and inter-agency efforts to provide excellent customer service.

Governor Inslee surprised RCO staff by dropping by for a visit to celebrate the agency's fiftieth anniversary in January.

Director Cottingham updated the board on the Public Lands Inventory. RCO has contracted a consultant to design the Public Lands Inventory Web site, which will be completed by June 2014.

RCO staff will support the newly created Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Outdoor Recreation. The Task Force will complete a report by September 2014.

Director Cottingham summarized that this will be a busy summer for RCO.

### Budget, Legislative, and Policy Update

Nona Snell, Policy Director, shared that the Legislature adjourned on March 13th. Legislators passed a supplemental operating budget that made changes to the biennial budget. The changes to RCO's budget were mainly technical, although it included additional funding for the Outdoor Recreation Task Force and for an economic study of outdoor recreation. This was the first time since 1996 that a capital budget was not passed.

A culvert removal bill passed, which Brian Abbott will address during his presentation. An Invasive Species bill also passed. This bill helps the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) respond to aquatic invasive species in coordination with the Invasive Species Council.

Two bills were passed that may impact the board and board members. Meeting agendas must now be posted online 24 hours in advance. RCO generally posts agendas two weeks in advance of meetings, so this bill should not have an impact on the board. Another bill will require board members to participate in public records and open public meeting training. No explicit guidance was provided for existing board members, although new members are expected to complete training within 90 days of assuming the duties of office. The Attorney General's office has already launched initial training videos on their website and RCO staff will communicate more information as it becomes available.

Additionally, changes to the administrative code are currently in the queue. Leslie Connelly, Policy Specialist, will work with the board to make changes that include an update to the name of RCO (formally changing it from the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation to the Recreation and Conservation Office). There is a minimum 45-day public comment period for changes to the administrative code. If there are no objections from the public, the board can adopt changes and staff will post them in the public register. A formal public hearing will address any objections from the public; this process will take approximately 5 months.

Director Cottingham pointed out that the management report includes written financial and performance

reports. Member Bugert suggested that staff make an annual fiscal and performance management presentation to the board after the end of each fiscal year.

## Item 2: Salmon Recovery Management Report

Tara Galuska, Salmon Section Manager, shared that last year the board funded approximately 140 projects. Some early action projects will be presented throughout the year, with the majority of funding decisions scheduled in December.

Manual 18 is updated and has gone out to stakeholders for review. It is now posted to the RCO website. Staff and the review panel recently met and will schedule site visits. The upcoming grant round has an application webinar scheduled. The Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFFPP), run by RCO staff member Dave Caudill, received \$10 million in 2012 and \$2 million in 2013 for project funding. Mr. Caudill is placing 52 projects under agreement, with construction scheduled in the coming year.

The Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP), staffed by RCO's Mike Ramsey, includes \$10 million in state funding. Mr. Ramsey is placing 14 estuary projects under contract. An additional eight projects under that program received over \$2.3 million in funding from the Environmental Protection Agency's National Estuary Program for beach restoration projects.

Included in the board materials was a list of recently closed projects with links to the RCO website. Forty-seven projects closed since the last board meeting. Included is a list of amendments, which include project cost changes.

Member Bugert asked if the number of amendments listed was typical. Ms. Galuska responded in the affirmative, and clarified that minor amendments such as time extensions are not included in the board materials because they are director-approved. Director Cottingham clarified that a subcommittee previously approved all amendments, but the board decided that the Director should have discretion to approve minor amendments.

## Governor's Salmon Recovery Office

Brian Abbott, Executive Coordinator of the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO), shared that the competitive procurement process for the GSRO communications plan was completed. Pyramid Communications was the chosen consultant and a work group was established. The work group includes two board members (Biery and Quan), RCO and Puget Sound Partnership communication staff, Darcy Batura of the Washington Salmon Coalition, and two members of the Council of Regions. The work group asked the Executive Directors from the regional organizations to review materials. Some initial work products are expected by May.

Member Biery confirmed that she felt the work group is making good progress. Mr. Abbott confirmed, in response to a question from Chair Troutt, that Barbara Cairns is the project lead for Pyramid. Member Bugert inquired whether the monitoring video (Item 7C of the board materials) would be coordinated with the communication plan work group. Mr. Abbott responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Abbott updated the board on the Mitigation Matching Project, initially funded with \$100,000 earmarked in the salmon capital budget passed last July. The pilot project will attempt to match transportation mitigation obligations with local salmon habitat restoration projects, using existing state technologies. The consultant

selected for this project is Eldred and Associates of Everett. Previous attempts at this work have not been successful, but there are now additional tools available. A product is expected by the end of the year.

Chair Troutt asked if the pilot project will improve the habitat baseline, instead of just holding steady with mitigation. Mr. Abbott responded that, although he couldn't answer yet, that concept had been discussed.

The Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) application was submitted March 19; RCO requested the maximum of \$25 million. Last year RCO received \$20 million. RCO should know the funding level in June or later.

Mr. Abbott related that GSRO asked each regional organization to identify, for budget request purposes: A) specific monitoring activities, B) who will implement the monitoring work, C) the gaps between state and local monitoring, and D) the monitoring needs for 10 years.

Member Cusimano asked what the final budget request document would look like. Mr. Abbott and Director Cottingham confirmed that there is a template, provided by the Office of Financial Management.

Member Quan stated that the need for monitoring is greater than what is reasonable given the current budget situation. She suggested that all members coordinate closely. Director Cottingham said she hopes we will have final, coordinated budget requests complete for the August board meeting so the board can review and prioritize them before they are due to the Office of Financial Management in September.

Mr. Abbott informed the board that a fish passage bill (HB 2251) passed this session. The bill is currently a policy bill that lays out a statewide fish passage program. This aligns with the "extinction is not an option" statewide strategy. WDFW will occupy a leadership position on a board that will replace the fish passage task force. The goal of the legislation is to coordinate and combine resources. The GSRO will participate in this effort and commit to its success.

#### State of Salmon and Habitat Work Schedule

Jennifer Johnson, Implementation Coordinator for the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office, gave a summary of the status of the State of Salmon Report and the Habitat Work Schedule (HWS) data system. In 2012, the hard-copy State of Salmon report transitioned over to a Web site. For the 2014 update, the goal is to work with WDFW and Washington tribes to better align data and messages. HWS is currently integrating data from the existing PRISM data management system. New staff member Kiri Kreamer will work with Ms. Johnson to increase data quality and consistency.

Chair Troutt asked if staff are working with HWS system users. Ms. Johnson responded in the affirmative.

Member Bugert asked if legislators use the State of Salmon report. Ms. Johnson responded that, although it is hard to quantify its use, the executive summary (16 pages) is widely distributed. Regional organizations and others take the report to Washington, D.C. In addition, the salmon recovery videos posted on the Web site communicate a similar message.

Member Cierebiej asked if HWS only captures data related to board grants. Ms. Johnson responded that one of the main differences between HWS and PRISM is that HWS intends to include all salmon recovery-related projects in the state of Washington. GSRO staff are working with Ecology staff to get additional data on regulatory programs. Member Biery asked if the State of Salmon report executive summary is on RCO's Web

site. Ms. Johnson responded in the affirmative and agreed to distribute the report URL and hard copies to board members before their departure from the meeting.

Director Cottingham related that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service pays for HWS. As federal funding is vulnerable, RCO is hoping to get funding from the state to support the system into the future. Funding totals approximate \$620,000 annually.

Chair Troutt asked for a presentation on HWS at a future board meeting.

### Data Exchange Network

Keith Dublanica, Science Coordinator for the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office, presented information on juvenile and adult salmon data networks. GSRO participated in the administration of the Juvenile Migrant Exchange (JMX) contract, funded by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This data exchange between agencies allows for better co-management of Washington state fisheries. While the JMX is not a public data portal, the public are able to access information gleaned from the JMX through the WDFW's Salmonscape. The Adult Migrant Exchange (AMX) is currently a proposal under consideration by the EPA. GSRO joined the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission and (NWIFC) the WDFW to submit a proposal to EPA to assess spawning ground and hatchery returns of adult salmon. A decision from EPA is expected in late spring. If this nearly \$500,000 request is awarded it will go into effect October 1, 2014. The award will be for three years. This project, like others in the data exchange, builds on previous successful projects.

Chair Troutt asked if real-time harvest data would be included in the data exchange, to which Mr. Dublanica responded that was a possibility.

Member Bugert commented that this presentation on data networks brought to mind the amount of coordination necessary for salmon recovery.

### Item 3: Reports from Partners

Jeff Breckel, Council of Regions, noted that the fish passage bill mentioned during the Salmon Recovery Report is of interest to the Council of Regions because the council has been working to better coordinate priorities related to barrier removal on private vs. public roads. Mr. Breckel is involved in the communications plan (outlined during the Salmon Recovery Report) and agrees that much progress has been made. He stated that the Council of Regions wants more than just a public relations effort for the communications plan and that he believes the work group will create some useful tools. In the future, the board may need to consider how best to implement those tools. Additionally, Mr. Breckel said he anticipates working with GSRO on monitoring efforts to make both projects and programs more effective. For the State of the Salmon report, Council of Regions is working with GSRO to consider how to better report progress and translate data outputs into outcomes, despite data gaps and other reporting challenges.

Darcy Batura, Washington Salmon Coalition, invited Amy Hatch-Winecka to join her for the Washington Salmon Coalition report. Ms. Batura reminded the board that Lead Entities are currently completing pre-work to ensure that proposed projects are well thought out and will be implemented as proposed. In addition, legislative outreach was successfully completed January 22-23. Lead Entities were highlighted as the backbone of salmon recovery efforts during outreach activities. Ms. Hatch-Winecka updated the board on the lead entity retreat, which focused on training, fostering communication, and building partnerships. The training was held

February 25-27 at Lake Quinault Lodge. In closing, Ms. Batura recognized new Lead Entity coordinators. She shared with the board that there has recently been 44 percent turnover in Lead Entity coordinator positions, which emphasizes the need for training.

Lance Winecka, Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups, introduced Colleen Thompson, the new managing director for the Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group (RFEG) Coalition, who will attend future meetings on Mr. Winecka's behalf. Based on direction from the legislature, RFEGs and WDFW have met to address their budgeting challenges. It appears RFEGs will receive some federal funding for fiscal year 2014 to support local restoration and communities. RFEGs continue to work with Sen. Murray and others to highlight achievements, since there is no guarantee for funding. RFEGs have completed 411 board-funded projects since 1999, totaling over \$70 million. RFEGs would like to provide comments on any potential decision on the implementation of riparian buffer guidelines.

Chair Troutt thanked RFEGs for implementing 20 percent of the board's total projects; Member Bugert additionally thanked RFEGs for their efforts, specifically in volunteer coordination.

Phil Rockefeller shared some background on the Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NWPPCC), created in 1980. NWPPCC hopes to have a draft fish and wildlife program released in April or May 2014. So far, the NWPPCC has gathered public responses on their fish and wildlife program from over 400 individuals. In the latest draft program, the NWPPCC plans to address adaptive management, water quality and toxics issues, and mitigation for river blockages. Member Rockefeller also introduced the Columbia River Inter-tribal Fish Commission Future of Our Salmon Conference (discussed under Item 8B). He shared that NWPPCC recently released a report on the state of the Columbia River Basin.

Megan Duffy, Department of Natural Resources, shared information about the Teanaway Community Forest Trust, which purchased over 50,000 acres as first state-owned community forest in Washington. The Department of Natural Resources and WDFW will jointly manage the community forest. An advisory committee is working on a management plan, with a first meeting scheduled for March 31. During the legislative session there were several bills of interest to the Department of Natural Resources. These included funding for ocean acidification efforts and direction related to derelict vessels. The Department of Natural Resources is working to meet the 2016 deadline for the removal of fish barriers. A small percentage of barriers were suggested for a time extension.

Jennifer Quan, Department of Fish and Wildlife, shared additional information about the stakeholders involved in the Teanaway Community Forest and how it fits in with the Governor's environmental priorities. Member Quan suggested that the Teanaway is unique in that it is working to balance habitat and fish needs with human water needs. The Teanaway was the state's first step in implementation of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan. Member Quan also shared that a treaty is being worked out with Canada to address cross-border fish takes. WDFW recently re-launched the spatial database called Salmonscape, which is on a GIS server platform. Salmonscape and WDFW's Salmon Conservation Reporting Engine (SCoRE) provide data to the public and are inputs to the State of Salmon Report.

Chair Troutt commented that the Columbia Basin seems to be the best current example of a salmon recovery success story.

Bob Cusimano, Department of Ecology, shared that the new water quality program manager, Heather Bartlett, has an interest in highlighting the linkages between fish recovery and water quality. Ecology is interested in ocean acidification and working with EPA and others to look at modeling techniques to understand the sources that contribute to ocean acidification.

Member Rockefeller commented that ocean acidification might have an impact on the food web, particularly in areas such as the Columbia River plume. Members Cusimano and Rockefeller agreed that both adaptation and mitigation strategies need to be considered.

Susan Cierebiej, Washington Department of Transportation, highlighted an engineered logjam that is under construction on the Skagit River. Construction is going well and the project is on-track to finish in April. Observation shows that juvenile fish use the site. There has been notable media coverage of the project on KING5 news and KPLU.

General Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

*Break from 10:55-11:00am.*

## **BRIEFINGS**

### **Item 4: Puget Sound Steelhead Status**

Elizabeth Babcock, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries; Jeanette Dorner and Tristan Peter-Contesse, Puget Sound Partnership; jointly presented information on the current status of steelhead in Puget Sound. The official fish of the State of Washington is the steelhead, which was listed as threatened in 2007. We continue to see troubling declines in most steelhead populations in Washington. Primary factors identified as contributing to steelhead decline include habitat loss and degradation, followed by hatchery management. The presenters updated the board on the formation of the Steelhead Recovery Team, implementation of watershed pilot projects, and the timeline and process to create a steelhead recovery plan.

Member Bugert asked a question on funding. The presenters responded that the board approved \$250,000 of funding, with \$50,000 for the recovery work plan.

Member Rockefeller commented that in Columbia Basin steelhead are a particular concern and one factor contributing to their decline appears to be avian predation.

Member Cierebiej asked whether part of this effort included the study of Columbia River steelhead survival. The presenters responded in the affirmative and added that there is an emphasis on open dialogue and sharing lessons learned.

Member Quan commented that freshwater factors influencing the steelhead population are being examined. Steelhead represent a major WDFW priority and the agency is excited to take an active role in recovery efforts.

Chair Troutt shared that the Nisqually freshwater habitat is currently in a better place than it has been in 100 years, but some of its at-risk populations are not bouncing back as expected. He agrees that avian predation is

potentially an issue. He shared that an increase in harbor porpoise populations may also have an impact.

Member Cusimano commented that, from a water quality perspective, it seems that algal blooms and plankton communities may also have an impact on steelhead populations.

### Item 5: Riparian Buffer Update

Leslie Connelly, RCO; Jim Weber, NW Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC); and Steve Landino, NOAA; presented options related to riparian buffer guidelines. Ms. Connelly presented a case study that compared riparian buffers for recently funded projects with NOAA's buffer width recommendations for Puget Sound agricultural lands and Ecology's buffer width criteria for western and eastern Washington. This case study showed that a riparian buffer guideline would not have significantly impacted riparian restoration projects approved during the last grant cycle.

Member Bugert asked whether Ms. Connelly noted the reasons why the three projects in the case study did not meet the riparian buffer recommendations. Ms. Connelly responded that one project had recent fires and degraded soil conditions. The other two had Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) elements leveraged as match.

Member Rockefeller commented that public feedback at a previous meeting suggested that projects might not get off the ground if there were buffer requirements. He asked if this was considered in the case study, as owners might be scared away from participating in programs. Ms. Connelly responded that the retrospective nature of this study could not address this issue as there was no requirement at the time and staff could not determine whether landowners would have been discouraged.

Chair Troutt thanked Ms. Connelly for her hard work on this challenging project. He commented that we have created a "risk-reward" process for project approval, where projects with issues do not clear early hurdles towards approval.

Ms. Connelly summarized for the board a variety of options related to the implementation of riparian buffer widths. The suggested questions for consideration included: *Does the board want to implement a minimum buffer width, and if so should they be a guideline or criteria? What buffer widths should be implemented? For what type of land use should they be applied?*

After a question from Member Cusimano, Ms. Connelly clarified that project applications do not currently collect riparian buffer width data.

Member Quan asked a question about how projects are currently evaluated for riparian buffer widths. Ms. Galuska clarified that each lead entity has its own evaluation point system. If we provided a guideline, lead entities could potentially incorporate that into their point systems for the evaluation of project applications.

Ms. Connelly's recommendation was for the board to adopt a policy that applies NOAA's recommended minimum riparian buffer widths as a guideline for projects with a riparian habitat objective in the Puget Sound region for all landscapes. Project sponsors in Puget Sound would include a written justification as to why the proposal is for a smaller buffer if the proposed riparian project does not meet NOAA's minimum buffer width recommendations. Ms. Connelly also recommend the board encourage the other regions to work with NOAA and the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office to develop minimum buffer width guidelines, as needed by region,

in order to address regional landscapes and riparian buffer needs. Ms. Connelly suggested that the board's next step be to solicit public comment on their adopted path forward.

Jim Weber, NWIFC, commented that tribes would like to work with state and federal partners to make sure diverse government programs align with overall salmon recovery goals. Mr. Weber stated that voluntary and regulatory standards should be consistent when it comes to land use, water quality, and salmon recovery efforts. As there are a number of landowners who do not believe they are legally bound to be good stewards, Mr. Weber pointed out that salmon recovery programs should focus on voluntary participation. He reminded the board not to make the perfect the enemy of the good.

As Chinook continue to decline, Mr. Weber stated that tribes are asking agencies to send clear signals. Mr. Weber urged the board to take the lead and communicate the minimum acceptable buffer. NWIFC thinks there is a market for grants that call for good stewardship. In closing, Mr. Weber stated that although the staff recommendation wouldn't have been his first choice, he believes it makes a lot of sense for Puget Sound and would send a clear signal but still leaves some flexibility.

Member Cusimano commented that Ecology has not had any difficulty finding projects that meet the riparian buffer requirements adopted by Ecology. Additionally, he believes that CREP projects will often exceed Ecology's requirements.

Steve Landino, NOAA Fisheries, commented that in the early 2000's several federal agencies and other stakeholders participated and drafted a science-based buffer proposal document. That proposal led to the creation of the table included in the board materials called the "NOAA Buffer Table." Stakeholders negotiated the buffer widths in the table and, although based on science, widths are lower than originally suggested due to compromise with stakeholders. When created, these buffer widths were not intended to only apply to Puget Sound. Mr. Landino also stated that NOAA is discussing how to incentivize states incorporating NOAA recommendations when it distributes its Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Funds. In closing, Mr. Landino said that he supports the staff recommendation.

Member Cusimano asked a question about NOAA's buffer table and why the staff recommendation includes only Puget Sound. Ms. Connelly clarified that staff took a conservative approach and NOAA's recommendations are explicitly for only Puget Sound. Mr. Landino agreed that NOAA's official recommendations are for only Puget Sound, but those recommendations were designed with the entire state in mind.

Chair Troutt asked if NOAA would support statewide implementation. Mr. Landino responded he believed so, but could not definitively respond at this time.

#### General Public Comment:

Jeff Breckel, Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board, is generally supportive of this recommendation but believes there are other factors for consideration. He recommended guidelines as a pilot approach, paired with deliberative monitoring. Depending on the project sponsor, this riparian buffer guideline might or might not have an impact. Mr. Breckel shared that the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board collects riparian buffer width metrics on applications and then looks at soils, invasives, diversity of plant types, and other factors to understand the big picture at a proposed project site. Mr. Breckel agreed there are benefits to riparian buffers, but his board is struggling with how to implement them in the context of a voluntary program.

Darcy Batura, Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board, commented that it seems that around the state riparian buffer benefits are sometimes included in other project types. Ms. Batura asked about the interaction between riparian buffers and areas with fruit trees and perennials. In summary, Ms. Batura shares the board's desire to approve projects with sufficient riparian buffers. However, she is concerned that setting new standards may alienate partners and accomplish little that is not already included in project reviews. Ms. Batura stated that landowners make decisions based on their perception of the program and their role in it. She urged the board to communicate that riparian buffer widths are an issue in salmon recovery instead of adding requirements.

Ms. Connelly clarified that the staff recommendation would only apply to projects with a riparian habitat objective.

Todd Bolster, NWIFC, provided comment related to landowner desire to implement projects. Mr. Bolster quoted the Washington State Constitution, which states that use of public funds are for public benefit, not private benefit. NWIFC supports the current staff recommendation.

Member Rockefeller would like RCO staff to include some questions for the public to consider when it releases the recommendation to the public, particularly related to the flexible review process of projects that will not meet the minimum guideline and reasons why a buffer might be smaller than the guideline.

Member Quan asked whether board guidelines should be consistent with Ecology's. Chair Troutt added that, if NOAA is looking to add riparian buffer criteria for their funds in the next couple of years, we might want to expand the recommendations across the state. Member Mace agreed that we might want to strive for a statewide approach.

Member Quan asked, for purposes of board discussion, if we are being too prescriptive.

Member Bugert agreed that he would like to hear from the public on what types of landowner incentives might be effective to encourage their participation in salmon recovery.

Member Duffy pointed out that it would be helpful to know what the range of requirements are for each region. Chair Troutt agreed.

The board asked staff to collect public comment on statewide riparian buffer guidelines. Staff were instructed to ask the public what would be a good reason for a smaller buffer and how to improve landowner incentives. Feedback was also requested on how to incentivize funding projects with larger buffers (such as lowering the match requirement or scoring things differently at the lead entity level).

*Lunch 1:10-1:45 p.m.*

#### **Item 6: Early Action PSAR Project Approval Request**

RCO staff member Marc Duboiski informed the board that Skagit River System Cooperative has applied for a feasibility and preliminary design grant through their lead entity, the Skagit Watershed Council. The Similk Beach Estuary Restoration Feasibility project (#14-1058), requests \$284,750 in Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR funds). With a match of \$50,250, the total project cost equals \$335,000. The project proposes to analyze and design an approach to reconnect a salt marsh measuring approximately 17 acres to Similk Bay in north Puget Sound. This project would create pocket estuary habitat critical to the rearing of

juvenile Chinook salmon as they out-migrate from the Skagit River. A county road currently disconnects the project site from the bay.

Mr. Duboiski responded to a board member question that the county road (Satterlee Rd), built approximately 8 feet above sea level, currently keeps water out of the estuary. He clarified that the project could move forward without completely removing the road.

Member Cierebiej asked a question about whether natural processes would keep the estuary open. Mr. Duboiski acknowledged her concern and said that analysis would include review of that issue.

Member Cusimano asked about limiting factors on the Skagit River.

**Bob Bugert moved to approve up to \$284,750 to fund the early action Skagit River System Cooperative Project (#14-1058).**

**Seconded by: Nancy Biery**

**Motion: APPROVED**

#### Item 7A: Revised Monitoring Recommendations from the Stillwater Report and Subcommittee Discussions

GSRO staff members Brian Abbott and Keith Dublanica presented revised monitoring recommendations from the Stillwater Report and subcommittee discussions. They suggested the board update the board strategic plan, create a monitoring panel, update and finalize the board monitoring strategy, create a functional adaptive management system, implement projects within intensively monitored watersheds (IMWs), and coordinate with other statewide monitoring efforts such as the Pacific Northwest Aquatic Monitoring Partnership (PNAMP). Staff also recommended that the board align all monitoring funding or program decisions with the federal fiscal year and explore monitoring as an eligible grant round project type.

On the suggestion that the board allocate up to \$2 million of returned funds per year over three years to projects within three Intensively Monitored Watersheds (Lower Columbia, Straits, and Hood Canal), Member Quan commented that she felt that funding stability for Lead Entities would be helpful, as it is difficult to plan from year to year.

Mr. Abbott clarified that current expected restoration projects presented to the board do not yet total \$2 million, but he anticipates additional projects may emerge for future consideration.

Member Bugert asked about the likelihood that the budget request for additional funds in the state salmon capital budget for the 2015-17 biennium would be successful. Director Cottingham responded that is unknown at this time, and that the board will discuss budgets in August.

#### General Public Comment:

Jeff Breckel, Council of Regions, supports the creation of a Monitoring Panel. He related that the regions do not agree on the IMW funding. Additionally, Mr. Breckel requested that the board focus on project effectiveness to get more value out of projects. He is concerned about the use of returned funds for Fish In/Fish Out efforts. Mr. Breckel related that the COR would like to see monitoring as a grant-eligible project type.

**Phil Rockefeller moved to approve the revised strategic plan language included in Attachment C of the board materials.**

**Seconded by: Bob Bugert**

**Motion: APPROVED**

**Phil Rockefeller moved to approve an initial annual budget of \$50,000 for the creation and recruitment of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board Monitoring Panel, to be made up of people with relevant monitoring credentials and practical policy experience.**

**Seconded by: Nancy Biery**

**Motion: APPROVED**

**Phil Rockefeller moved that the Monitoring Panel update and finalize the board's draft monitoring strategy, with staffing from GSRO.**

**Seconded by: Nancy Biery**

**Motion: APPROVED**

**Phil Rockefeller moved that the Monitoring Panel develop an adaptive management program per the recommendations of the board subcommittee, including guidance from GSRO.**

**Seconded by: Bob Bugert**

**Motion: APPROVED**

**Bob Bugert moved that the board adopt the recommendations outlined in Memo 7A (#5) to implement projects within three Intensively Monitored Watersheds (Lower Columbia, Straits, and Hood Canal) by allocating up to \$2 million of returned funds per year over three years.**

**Seconded by: Phil Rockefeller**

**Motion: APPROVED**

**Phil Rockefeller moved that the board adopt the recommendations outlined in Memo 7A (#6) to advance the overall recovery monitoring needs for the board and the regional recovery delisting requirements.**

**Seconded by: Nancy Biery**

**Motion: APPROVED**

The board decided by consensus that they will align all monitoring funding or program decisions with the federal fiscal year. They will explore making monitoring an eligible grant round project type.

#### **Item 7B: Tetra Tech Effectiveness Monitoring Contract 2014 Scope of Work**

GSRO staff member Keith Dublanica and Jennifer O'Neal of Tetra Tech provided details of the requested time extension and budget increase for Tetra Tech's effectiveness monitoring contract. Tetra Tech proposed to complete monitoring at 19 total sites in 2014 and 21 sites in 2015.

**Phil Rockefeller moved to approve \$225,463 of PCSRF funds to continue the existing project effectiveness program with Tetra Tech through September 30, 2014.**

**Seconded by: Nancy Biery**

**Motion: APPROVED**

#### Item 7C: Funding for Monitoring Video

GSRO staff members Brian Abbott and Keith Dublanica presented a request for funding of a monitoring video. The message of the video will reinforce the themes the board endorsed from the Stillwater Sciences Report and tell the story of inter-agency monitoring collaboration.

Mr. Abbott responded to a question that the previous video on salmon recovery cost approximately \$42,000.

**Bob Bugert moved to approve \$32,000 of PCSRF return funds for the development of a video to highlight board monitoring program goals and the role of monitoring in getting to a delisting decision.**

**Seconded by: Nancy Biery**

**Motion: APPROVED**

*Break from 10:55-11:00 am.*

#### Item 8C: Reallocation of Lead Entity Funds to Support the Priorities of the Washington Salmon Coalition

*(This item was presented out of order to accommodate participant schedules.)*

GSRO staff members Brian Abbott and Lloyd Moody presented a request to approve the use of up to \$50,000 in anticipated unspent lead entity capacity funds between May 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015 to support the statewide efforts of the Washington Salmon Coalition.

Director Cottingham clarified that she created this proposal based on feedback at the Lead Entity retreat.

**Bob Bugert moved to approve up to \$50,000 in anticipated unspent lead entity capacity funds to support WSC's mission and Action Plan.**

**Seconded by: Sam Mace**

**Motion: APPROVED**

#### *Recognition of Lloyd Moody*

GSRO Executive Coordinator Brian Abbott recognized Lloyd Moody for the five years he dedicated to the GSRO, particularly for his work with Lead Entities. Chair Troutt added his praise of Mr. Moody for his commitment and passion for salmon recovery. Member Bugert thanked Mr. Moody for his friendship and mentorship. Member Duffy additionally praised Mr. Moody for his dedication and hard work. Mr. Moody was presented with a plaque.

#### Item 8A: Salmon Recovery Conference 2015 Funding Request

GSRO Executive Coordinator Brian Abbott and RCO Salmon Section Manger Tara Galuska recommend that the board fund a portion of the salmon recovery conference for up to \$99,800 for a three-day event, held in May or June 2015. Some of this funding was written into the 2014 PCSRF application. The board contribution will cover the cost of RCO conference planning staff, the facility rental and meals, materials and advertising, and a video recording of conference sessions.

Staff are discussing a joint management approach to the conference with WDFW and Long Live the Kings.

Mr. Abbott responded to a question from Chair Troutt that RCO will host the event, but will contract help from other organizations. Member Quan commented that a co-management approach is an important process to better align our salmon recovery efforts with other organizations.

Member Biery asked whether the conference is consistent with the communications plan highlighted in the Salmon Recovery Management Report. Mr. Abbott confirmed. Member Biery also urged tribal participation.

Director Cottingham clarified that the costs of the conference covered the registration and participation of lead entity representatives.

Member Bugert asked how the cost of this proposed conference compared to the last conference. Mr. Abbott responded that there has been an increase from a cost of \$84,000 last year.

**Nancy Biery moved to approve \$99,800 of PCSRF funds for the 2015 Salmon Recovery Conference, to be held in May or June 2015.**

**Seconded by: Phil Rockefeller**

**Motion: APPROVED**

#### Item 8B: Funding for Future of Our Salmon Conference

GSRO Executive Coordinator Brian Abbott and RCO Salmon Section Manger Tara Galuska recommended the board sponsor the Columbia River Inter-tribal Fish Commission Future of Our Salmon Conference scheduled for April 23-24 at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland, Oregon. Mr. Abbott and Ms. Galuska requested the board consider sponsoring the conference at the \$1,000 level.

**Bob Bugert moved to approve \$1,000 of returned PCSRF funds for sponsorship of the Columbia River Inter-tribal Fish Commission's Future of Our Salmon Conference.**

**Seconded by: Sam Mace**

**Motion: APPROVED**

Chair Troutt was excused from the meeting at 4:13 pm.

#### Item 9: Overview of WDFW's Habitat Program

Lisa Veneroso, Margen Carlson, Tim Quinn, and Dave Price of WDFW presented highlights of their agency's habitat program. The program's three strategic priorities include fish passage, priority habitat and species work, and hydraulic permit authority.

Two policy priorities were summarized by Ms. Veneroso, including the fish passage federal culvert injunction and the recently passed fish passage legislation (2SHB 2251).

Mr. Price summarized WDFW's restoration efforts. Ms. Carlson discussed the WDFW's Priority Habitat and Species (PHS) section, particularly their work assisting local governments. The Growth Management Act and the Shoreline Management Act cite the use of the PHS. Although the use of PHS is not required, it receives heavy consideration by the courts.

Mr. Quinn discussed the science behind monitoring and highlighted Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) compliance and effectiveness monitoring and adaptive management.

Member Rockefeller asked about the Salmon and Steelhead Habitat Inventory and Assessment Program (SSHIAIP). The presenters responded that they have developed tools associated with SSHIAIP and data collection, but they are still working on the management of SSHIAIP components. Watershed characterization is an example from the presentation that is consistent with the "next generation" of SSHIAIP.

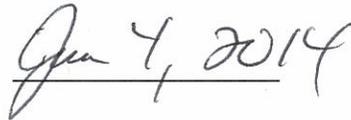
Member Bugert summarized the riparian buffer conversation earlier in the meeting and asked for WDFW feedback on public incentives to increase riparian buffer widths.

Meeting adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

Minutes approved by:



David Troutt, Chair



Date

