

**SALMON RECOVERY FUNDING BOARD SUMMARIZED MEETING AGENDA AND ACTIONS**  
**October 15-16, 2015**

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<b>Item</b>	<b>Formal Action</b>	<b>Follow-up Action</b>
May 6, 2015 Meeting Summary	Decision: APPROVED	No follow-up action requested.
1. Director's Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director's Report</li> <li>• Legislative and Policy Updates</li> </ul>	Briefing	No follow-up action requested.
2. Salmon Recovery Management Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governor's Salmon Recovery Office</li> <li>• Salmon Section Report</li> </ul>	Briefing	GSRO will send invitations to tribal representatives to participate in the Salmon Recovery Network (SRNet) and offer presentations about the SRNet as requested.
3. Reports from Partners	Briefing	The board requested ongoing briefings regarding the updates to regional recovery plans, as described by the Council of Regions.
4. Monitoring Program Update and Decisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Effectiveness Contract</li> <li>• Status and Trends / Fish In-Fish Out Contract</li> <li>• Intensively Monitored Watershed (IMW) Contracts</li> <li>• Monitoring Panel Contracts</li> <li>• Overview of Monitoring Proposals and IMW Treatments</li> </ul>	Decision: APPROVED	Chair Troutt requested further details be provided to the board to inform a full discussion regarding the scope of IMW monitoring work.  Chair Troutt designated a subcommittee that will work with GSRO to finalize the monitoring contracts.
5. Board Strategic Plan Update and New Biennial Workplan	Briefing	Bob Bugert replaces David Troutt on the subcommittee working with GSRO to finalize the Strategic Plan and Workplan for discussion at the December meeting.
6. Administrative and Policy Impacts from New Federal Omni-Circular Rules	Briefing	No follow-up action requested.
7. Washington Administrative Code Update	Briefing	No follow-up action requested.
8. Early Action Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Project Approval	Decision: APPROVED	

<b>Item</b>	<b>Formal Action</b>	<b>Follow-up Action</b>
9. Conversion Request: Holmes Property Boundary Adjustment (RCO Project #04-1680)	Decision: APPROVED	
10. Follow-Up on Expanding the Grant Program to Include Large Capital Projects for 2017-19 Biennium	Briefing	Staff will provide a follow up presentation to the board at the December 2015 meeting.
11. Overview of New Grant Programs Assigned to the Recreation and Conservation Office	Briefing	No follow-up action requested.
12. Overview of Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program and the Puget Sound Nearshore Estuary Restoration Program	Briefing	No follow-up action requested.
13. Introduction to Skagit Delta Restoration Projects and North Sound Estuary Restoration Tour Overview	Briefing	No follow-up action requested.

## **SALMON RECOVERY FUNDING BOARD SUMMARY MINUTES**

**Date:** October 15, 2015

**Place:** La Conner, WA

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

<b>David Troutt, Chair</b>	Olympia	<b>Carol Smith</b>	Department of Ecology
<b>Nancy Biery</b>	Quilcene	<b>Susan Cierebiej</b>	Department of Transportation
<b>Bob Bugert</b>	Wenatchee	<b>Brian Cochran</b>	Washington State Conservation Commission
<b>Phil Rockefeller</b>	Bainbridge Island	<b>Erik Neatherlin</b>	Department of Fish and Wildlife

**It is intended that this summary be used with the materials provided in advance of the meeting.**

*NOTE: The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) normally retains a recording as the formal record of the meeting; due to technical difficulties during the October meeting, a recording is not available.*

### **Opening and Welcome**

Chair David Troutt called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m. Staff called roll and a quorum was determined. Member Duffy was excused; Member Biery was excused from the meeting early.

Chair Troutt discussed the effects of the summer drought and ocean conditions on the salmon runs in numbers, health, and size of the species, emphasizing how everyday actions affect overall efforts to restore salmon.

### **Agenda adoption**

**Moved by:** Member Bob Bugert

**Seconded by:** Member Nancy Biery

**Motion:** APPROVED

### **May 2015 Meeting Summary**

**Moved by:** Member Bob Bugert

**Seconded by:** Member Nancy Biery

**Motion:** APPROVED

### **Management and Partner Reports**

#### **Item 1: Director's Report**

**Director's Report:** Director Cottingham shared information about the new Omni-Circular rules and the updates to project agreements made to reflect these changes. The rules affect grants that receive federal funds or use state funds to match federal funds.

Director Cottingham briefly updated the board on RCO staff changes and welcomed Josh Lambert, a new Salmon Section Outdoor Grant Manager, who will manage the Lower Columbia region and Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIA) 8.

Director Cottingham provided an update on the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) review that is currently underway. In the recent legislative session, the Legislature included a proviso for a review of the WWRP via a stakeholder process. The purpose is to examine potential statutory revisions. Facilitators Jim Waldo and Jane North were contracted to support the review process.

Director Cottingham shared that her annual review as director of the RCO by the Recreation Conservation Funding Board (RCFB) will occur next month. Each year in preparation of the review she conducts a self-assessment of her performance in the agency, which she will share with the board.

**Legislative and Policy Updates:** Wendy Brown, RCO Policy Director, provided an overview of the recent legislative session, as well as a summary of the operating and capital budgets as they affect salmon-related activity. RCO will manage two new grant programs: the Chehalis Catastrophic Flood Relief Program and the Washington Coastal Restoration Program.

The capital budget included two provisos for RCO funds: 1) \$500,000 of salmon state funds were allocated to the City of Bothell to preserve a portion of the [Wayne Golf Course](#) along the Sammamish riverfront for fish habitat; and 2) \$300,000 in Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) funds will go to purchase 25 acres of forestland at the [Illahee Forest Preserve](#).

Ms. Brown provided an update on the Joint Legislative and Audit Review Committee (JLARC), which has been directed to conduct a review of recreation and conservation programs in place since 1990. The goal of the review is to examine land acquisitions across the state in all programs as well as regulations for land protection in various programs (e.g., hydraulic permits, forest practice permits, shoreline management, etc.). Programs they examine may include the salmon state funding program, PSAR, and the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP). RCO anticipates providing information to support this effort beginning December 1, 2016.

Ms. Brown reported that during the 2016 supplemental budget session, or short session, RCO intends to submit three decision packages: reauthorization of the Washington Invasive Species Council (WISC), reauthorization of the Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group (Lands Group), and potential statutory changes to the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) that may result from the facilitated stakeholder review process currently underway.

## **Item 2: Salmon Recovery Management Report**

**Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO):** Brian Abbott, Executive Coordinator, provided an update on the regional and lead entity contracts for 2015-17. RCO and Ecology collaborated in establishing a work group that will coordinate natural resource grant programs and maximize the benefits of public investments.

Mr. Abbott provided a brief update on the communication strategy and the progress of the Salmon Recovery Network (SRNet). Working with Triangle Associates, the SRNet forum held their third meeting on October 14, 2015. During this meeting, they intend to finalize their charter and workplan. Mr. Abbot shared information about the progress of each region's specific communications work and provided a handout to the board.

Chair Troutt asked about the inclusion of tribal representatives in the SRNet process. Mr. Abbott stated that GSRO would send a letter to the tribes and invite them to participate in the network. Chair Troutt also asked if SRNet would offer presentations to the tribes.

Member Biery acknowledged the tremendous progress made in setting a clear direction and moving forward prior to the start of the next legislative session.

Mr. Abbott shared that each region used board-funding to complete a communications strategy, which emphasizes telling the story of salmon in a targeted way. Mr. Abbott provided examples, highlighting a video from the Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board. The Puget Sound region will develop a training workshop to determine next steps for the communication plan.

Member Bugert asked about the regions' funding sources. Mr. Abbott explained that funds mainly include Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funds (PCSRF) and a mix of other funding sources.

**Salmon Grant Management Report:** Tara Galuska, Salmon Section Manager, provided a brief update on the 2014 and 2015 grant rounds. The board materials include details about funded projects, closed projects, director authority regarding project amendments, the Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFFPP), and the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP).

Ms. Galuska provided further updates on the collaboration between herself, Mr. Abbott, and Director Cottingham and the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) to establish a work group dedicated to the coordination of state natural resource grant programs. Other partners include Department of Fish and Wildlife, the State Conservation Commission, and Puget Sound Partnership. The committee will develop a workplan to share resources, streamline processes, and help grant recipients strengthen communication, grant timelines, and acquisitions to increase efficiency.

Chair Troutt asked about project partner involvement to help the process. Ms. Galuska emphasized bringing the agencies together initially, and then bringing partners into the conversation. Director Cottingham explained that the intent was not to create one system.

Member Bugert asked about a timeline and potential changes to board programs. Ms. Galuska agreed to provide progress reports and updates on potential major changes.

## **Item 3: Reports from Partners**

**Council of Regions Report (COR):** Jeff Breckel, Chair of COR, provided information about two key areas that the regions have worked on in recent years. First, he discussed the importance of the

communications strategy to inform all people within the region about salmon recovery. With everyone working together across regions and the state to restore salmon populations, the Coalition continues to build momentum.

He discussed monitoring as the second area of focus, which includes the work of the Monitoring Panel. All regions agree on the important issues of: measuring progress towards salmon recovery; abundance and productivity; understanding how programs work; and knowing where to find both achievements and gaps. In order to advance recovery plans, regions need to adapt analytical techniques, strengthen underlying strategies, develop lifecycle monitoring, and utilize data to create robust, technically sound recovery plans.

Chair Troutt asked about adaptive management and whether the regions' actions plans are consistent or different from the original recovery plans. Mr. Breckel explained that there is some uncertainty due to data gaps; more information is needed to assess and develop adequate recovery plans.

Member Neatherlin asked about five-year status review and communication plan information that may be used in adaptive management practices. Mr. Breckel indicated that the communications and outreach plan would incorporate the five-year adaptive management plan. Member Neatherlin requested further updates on what worked, what did not work, and perspectives from the communication strategy process.

Mr. Breckel stated that after the last five-year strategy discussion with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the regions did not feel adequate recognition for their work. The most current strategy focuses on engagement and active participation, which may lead to comprehensive data regarding status.

Mr. Alex Conley stated that NOAA did a good job with input, but did not discuss or bring the COR into the picture to determine the realities of the salmon recovery. Mr. Conley emphasized the need for partnership, good analysis of results, and representation of the actual work. Member Biery asked if any communication could help with the NOAA review process. Mr. Conley explained that there was significant communication about Washington's current standing with recovery goals leading up to the report, but little communication shared after receiving the data. Chair Troutt emphasized that communication to the regions is key and that NOAA should understand this concern.

**Washington Salmon Coalition (WSC):** Amy Hatch-Winecka, WSC Chair, Darcy Batura exiting chair, and John Foltz, Vice Chair of WSC, provided an update on the current work of the WSC, details of which are included in the board materials (Item 3).

Mr. Foltz provided an update on several lead entities' current projects and the regional areas meeting in October. Mr. Foltz reviewed WSC's internal and external goals developed at their June meeting. WSC will continue to participate in SRNet to create connections, develop the 2017-19 biennium legislative request, and implement unmet scopes of work and capacity needs. WSC scheduled an in-person meeting in December in Olympia, which will focus on communications, outreach, and the legislative session.

Ms. Winecka provided a summary of the WSC response to climate change as requested by the board in May. These include implementing actions, addressing climate change in local strategies and priorities, and further communications and outreach regarding climate change. Ms. Winecka reviewed the responses and relevant topics related to climate change on a statewide level. WSC will provide a more in-depth presentation of their climate change-related proposals at the December meeting.

Chair Troutt thanked Ms. Batura for her role as the WSC Chair and for all of her hard work. Member Bugert thanked the WSC for their report, the response from the lead entities, and taking steps to communicate, increase support, and reduce the effects of climate change. Member Bugert encouraged

the COR to communicate with the congressional delegation regarding climate change priorities.

**Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups (RFEs):** Colleen Thompson, Managing Director, provided an update on the RFE's September strategic planning meeting. Topics included developing a new name, logo, and annual reporting needs for communicating a sense of place. Ms. Thompson emphasized working with SRNet to identify robust, sustainable capacity funding.

Alison Studley, Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group, thanked the board and welcomed them to the Skagit. Ms. Studley emphasized the collaboration of local groups to move projects forward, explaining that education and outreach play a key roles in the Skagit's efforts to apply real-world examples to school-age kids, increase community knowledge-base, and encourage leaders for the next generation. The recent Skagit River Salmon Festival had 6,000 in attendance along with conservation groups. Ms. Studley updated the board on the change in projects over the last 25 years with complexity, phasing, prioritization, and construction. Ms. Studley thanked the combined funding efforts to move complex projects forward to completion.

**Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT):** Member Cierebiej shared information on behalf of WSDOT. The Connecting Washington funding package provides WSDOT \$300M for fish barrier correction projects through 2031. The current funding plan also provides \$136M of current law (existing) transportation funding through the 2029-2031 biennium for barrier corrections, bringing their total fish passage funding to \$436 million through 2031. WSDOT plans to construct 44 fish passage projects statewide with dedicated funding during the 15-17 biennium, including correcting 34 injunction barriers. Additionally, WSDOT expects to correct other barriers this biennium through larger, transportation projects funded through Connecting Washington, although they are still working to identify those projects.

**Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW):** Member Neatherlin provided an update on the new director of the fish program, Ron Warren. Mr. Neatherlin stated that WDFW secured funding for early marine survival and steelhead license plates will be implemented to support this work.

**NW Power and Conservation Council:** Phil Rockefeller, member, provided an update regarding a letter of solicitation from the Council. The letter's intent was to determine the habitat feasibility of working above Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee Dams to reintroduce salmon. Mr. Rockefeller thanked the board for encouraging federal agencies to take the request seriously. He emphasized that the combination of public and board support and commitments to clean energy and the environment will encourage salmon recovery efforts beyond major obstacles. Mr. Rockefeller noted that the detrimental summer weather led to massive mortality of salmon species within the Columbia River, emphasizing the need for climate change strategies.

Chair Troutt thank Mr. Rockefeller for his continued work and acknowledged the great magnitude of work involved in moving salmon above the dams. Mr. Rockefeller expressed appreciation to Billy Frank Jr. for his work in emphasizing the importance of future generations and the need to protect them.

**Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology):** Member Smith described how the stream gauging works: stream flows are used to develop a drought index and review historical flows. Storms do not majorly influence the overall index. She shared that Ecology continues to monitor "the blob" (a warm water anomaly in the Pacific Ocean) and record high water temperatures within the Puget Sound. Member Smith indicated that high salinity levels allow oxygen to mix, however, high salinity could cause stress to species found within the Puget Sound. Member Smith shared that the Floodplain by Design budget received \$30 million for projects. Draft guidelines have been published for the next grant cycle; proposals are due 1/29/16.

**Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC):** Member Cochrane provided a brief update on the WSCC budget, which did not receive funding for burned areas resulting from summer fires. He emphasized that funding for wildfires continues to be important. Member Cochrane stated that \$7.5 million went to preservation of farmlands and \$5 million went to conservation improvements at dairies. Member Cochrane provided a handout to the board which discussed addressing critical areas and farmland while bringing money directly to counties.

**Break 11:40 a.m. – 11:46 a.m.**

## **Board Business: Decisions**

### **Item 4: Monitoring Program Update and Decisions**

Brian Abbott, Executive Director, Keith Dublanica, GSRO Science Coordinator, and Dr. Marnie Tyler, Monitoring Panel Chair, provided an update on the Salmon Recovery Funding Board Monitoring Panel (Monitoring Panel). Mr. Abbott thanked everyone involved who provided evaluation materials, participated in discussions, and dedicated efforts to get the Monitoring Panel running effectively. The Monitoring Panel will continue to update the monitoring strategy, develop an adaptive management framework, and provide funding recommendations.

The Monitoring Panel asked the board to adopt their recommendations (outlined in the board materials, Item 4), to continue to provide support from the 2015 PSCRF award, and to work with the Monitoring Panel to adopt the adaptive management plan. Mr. Abbott and Mr. Dublanica outlined the monitoring program funding range and components.

Dr. Tyler thanked the board for their interest in monitoring and provided an updated report on Monitoring Panel actions. She reviewed the Monitoring Panel scope of work components, provided information on each IMW project and on project effectiveness, extending monitoring, deferring riparian habitat protection projects, and fish-use monitoring to determine more robust sampling.

Member Bugert asked about the availability of statistical analysis data regarding Hood Canal conditions. Dr. Tyler stated that the principal investigator assumptions and broad ranges of information could affect the overall numbers of salmon. The Monitoring Panel will know more in June 2016 if the analysis comes in line with funding requirement.

Member Rockefeller asked about the location of the target streams in the Hood Canal. Dr. Tyler explained that the streams affected include Big Beef, Stavis, and Anderson Creeks.

Chair Troutt asked about tribal harvest numbers over time. Dr. Tyler responded that the numbers have increased, especially in the Skokomish and Suquamish; however, further information is needed to interpret study results.

Member Smith commented on the potential for IMW scope expansion without the support of increased funding, adding that the Monitoring Panel will need to address budgets. She stated the importance of knowing which program pays for certain components of project as well as understanding contract time constraints, in order to avoid continued strain on partners. Mr. Abbott and Dr. Tyler agreed, and shared that there is flexibility in the contract scheduling.

Chair Troutt encouraged the panel to refocus resources and determine number of possible monitoring projects. Member Smith shared that an Ecology template exists, should issues arise regarding new monitoring and data management.

**Lunch 1:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

**Public Comment:**

**Bruce Crawford**, the main architect for effectiveness design and monitoring, provided comment on the monitoring program. Mr. Crawford thanked the board for their continued efforts towards monitoring. Mr. Crawford suggested that the RCO website include his report on effectiveness monitoring. Regarding a focus on encouraging greater fish populations, Mr. Crawford stated that an ideal IMW would allow reasonable change within a given period. Mr. Crawford approved of the information provided by the Monitoring Panel, including the strengths and weaknesses, and encouraged the continuation of monitoring for fish abundance related to Tetra Tech projects. Mr. Crawford requested that the board increase funding within the Lower Columbia River.

Member Rockefeller asked for clarification on the request for extended project funding. Mr. Crawford referred to the deferment of Tetra Tech monitoring, which will reach the extent of the established 10-year monitoring period in 2016. Statistically significant information exists, but there is need to complete the study and continue the sampling and monitoring work.

Member Bugert asked about the coordination between Bonneville Power Administration and the board. Mr. Crawford described the issues involved include the biological opinion regarding Snake River dam removal and existing habitat. Mr. Crawford stated that it is difficult to prove that one population per river in an evolutionary significant unit and limited habitat data can answer these questions.

**Joy Juelson**, Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board, highlighted comments from the region's letter submitted to the board. Ms. Juelson agreed with the need for a robust sampling plan, but stated that suspending monitoring in 2016 raises concerns. Current, available data helps bring projects forward. Other programs, including 31 sites within the Upper Columbia, directly relate to the effective use of models; Ms. Juelson would like to continue current modeling while looking at alternatives. Ms. Juelson encouraged more communication between Monitoring Panel and the regions.

Mr. Rockefeller asked how long it would take to complete a robust sampling plan. Jennifer O'Neal, Principal Investigator, stated that completion is anticipated by 2017.

**Jennifer O'Neal**, Principle Investigator, thanked the board and the opportunity to communicate useful information regarding salmon recovery. Ms. O'Neal expressed appreciation for the Monitoring Panel's efforts. Some recommendations brought to the Monitoring Panel by the Principal Investigators emphasize the need to continue sampling in 2016. Ms. O'Neal stated the importance of capturing current hydrologic data to plan for future climate scenarios. To reduce sampling this year would put sampling behind schedule and would result in an inaccurate picture of fish use.

**Alex Conley**, Yakima Basin Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board, commented on the improvement of effectiveness monitoring over the last 10 years and the continued need to hold existing programs accountable. He asked the board to consider future implications, including what effectiveness monitoring may look like five years from now. Mr. Conley emphasized the need to know whether strategies and implementation work, whether the projects improve salmon, and what threats may exist. He also stated the importance of comparing and aligning monitoring effectiveness and the recovery plans in order to accomplish long-term goals.

**Jeff Breckel**, Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board and Chair of the Council of Regions, thanked the board for their efforts regarding monitoring and effectiveness. Monitoring remains a key regional issue, requiring coordination and collaboration to find the most accurate data. Mr. Breckel stated that the

Monitoring Panel needs to ask the right questions in order to make decisions. He added that it is necessary to have a technically sound program that gives the right information regarding decisions in order to accomplish tasks. There is strong agreement among the regions around the potential of effectiveness monitoring; however, there needs to be a full analysis of the current data collected first. He stated the importance of talking to the regions regarding needs before making decisions, and of Fish in /Fish out monitoring and funding. He concluded by discussing the need to identify high priority areas, key biological indicators, and finding gaps within the NOAA guidelines for recovery.

Director Cottingham asked about the scale of increasing monitoring. Ms. O'Neal described some available options, including costs.

Chair Trout asked if the data answers questions surrounding monitoring. Dr. Tyler explained that funding does not allow for fully answering the data questions. Ms. O'Neal emphasized the need for more integration between watersheds and current projects.

Member Rockefeller asked about the most effective and useful way to reach the end goal. Dr. Tyler stated the need for effective fish monitoring within the IMW. Member Rockefeller asked about identifying benefits if long-term effectiveness monitoring is not added from the IMW's currently under analysis. Dr. Tyler stated the IMW goal includes project effectiveness as well as status and trends monitoring. Ms. O'Neal indicated that analysis continues to improve but the need exists to examine current work in order to establish a baseline.

Chair Troutt suggested a discussion be held between now and December's meeting that allows for continued development of a better plan in 2016. Dr. Tyler indicated that not all the answers would be available in December. Ms. O'Neal stated information on parameters with costs could be brought to the board by December.

Member Neatherlin asked for clarification regarding the value of continued snapshot monitoring. Dr. Tyler stated that the Monitoring Panel has not reached consensus on the issue. Member Neatherlin encouraged more discussion regarding continued monitoring and potential improvements.

**Steve Martin**, Snake River Salmon Recovery Region, indicated that regional allocation funds went to monitoring the Asotin. The motion of the \$2.2 million provides \$180,000 to the Asotin for the completion of IMW monitoring, however, \$28,000 will continue the work.

**Motion:** Move to delegate authority to the RCO Director and GSRO to allocate up to \$2.2 million to monitoring elements, while tabling a decision on effectiveness monitoring until the December meeting. The Monitoring Panel will resubmit a request with new information to the board should the target range vary too greatly from the current request.

**Moved by:** Member Phil Rockefeller

**Seconded by:** Member Sam Mace

**Motion: Approved**

Member Bugert encouraged the inclusion of the Monitoring Panel recommendations and addressed the issue of potential scope expansion; he stated the need to include other partners regarding the allocation of the \$2.2 million.

Chair Troutt requested further details be provided to the board to inform a full discussion regarding the scope of IMW monitoring work.

Chair Troutt designated a subcommittee that will work with GSRO to finalize the monitoring contracts.

## **Board Business: Briefing**

### **Item 5: Board Strategic Plan Update and New Biennial Work Plan**

Mr. Abbott presented an update to the board's Strategic Plan. Mr. Abbott reviewed the board's goals and strategies, key actions around funding, process, coordination, accountability, resources, monitoring, support, and partners. Mr. Abbott provided details on the 2015-17 Work Plan items, which include telling the story of salmon recovery, strengthening funding, continued monitoring support, improving the efficiency of annual grant rounds, activity funding, collaboration priorities, and reflection/self-evaluation of performance measures.

Chair Troutt will review the work plan and provide comments to Mr. Abbott. Member Bugert will assume Chair Trout's place on the subcommittee. A revised strategic plan and work plan will be presented to the board at the December meeting.

### **Item 6: Administrative and Policy Impacts from New Federal Omni-Circular Rules**

Leslie Connelly, Natural Resource Policy Specialist, summarized the administrative and fiscal requirements for federal grant programs as of December 6, 2014. The federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) adopted new rules for all federal grant program administration, called the Omni-Circular, which RCO must apply to board grants or director-approved funding. The board currently administers PCSRF, NOAA, Department of Commerce, National Estuary Program (NEP), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) funds through the state capital budget via board programs and PSAR program. As a pass-through entity, RCO must meet all federal funding requirements.

Ms. Connelly reviewed the federal law and rules that apply to PCSRF and the NEP program, and provided information on areas where the Omni-Circular conflicts with board policies and in which federal program rules prevail. Ms. Connelly outlined ways to address the conflicts and indicated that staff will work on vetting the conflicts over the next year to streamline board policies with federal requirements. Conflicts between policies include pre-award costs/project start date, matching grants and indirect rates, project administration and indirect costs, and eligible/ineligible costs.

Ms. Connelly requested board direction to review and identify conflicting policies. If directed, an internal team of RCO staff will identify issues and report to the board at the December meeting. Member Bugert asked if a program-by-program search would ensure federal funds do not match other federal funds. Ms. Connelly affirmed that this process is currently underway.

### **Item 7: Washington Administrative Code Update**

Leslie Connelly, Natural Resource Policy Specialist, provided an update on the draft amendments to Title 420 of the Washington Administrative code (WAC). She requested feedback from the board on the revisions to two WAC sections and additional draft amendments. She reviewed feedback received from lead entities and revised the draft, but did not proceed with the formal rule-making. Definitions that will change include citizens committee, habitat project list, and habitat work schedule. Ms. Connelly shared that she will continue to draft the remaining sections through fall and winter.

Ms. Connelly will continue to involve lead entities and regional organizations in an informal process to discuss and review amendments before moving to final public comment and review. Depending on stakeholder feedback, the board could hold a public hearing in early 2016.

The board indicated that RCO should proceed with the formal public process. Director Cottingham emphasized the need to have the WAC and agreements align as soon as possible, with a public hearing held in March 2016. Ms. Connelly stated that the administrative rules must work for all Lead Entities.

## **Board Business: Decision**

### **Item 8: Early Action Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Project Approval**

Tara Galuska, Salmon Section Manager, provided a summary of the early action PSAR request from the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP). For time sensitive projects, PSP sought early funding approval from the 2015-17 biennial budget in accordance with 2015 Manual 18, Appendix J. Ms. Galuska reviewed the criteria language in Manual 18 which allows for early funding of projects ready for construction or near completion. The North Olympic Peninsula Lead Entity requested that the board fund the Dungeness River Floodplain Restoration-Robinson Phase (#15-1055) sponsored by the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe. Ms. Galuska summarized the project proposal and the clearance from the board's review panel.

**Motion:** Move to approve \$1,157,700 PSAR funding for the RCO project 15-1055 Dungeness River Floodplain Restoration-Robinson Phase, described in Item 8, Attachment A of the meeting materials, and authorize the RCO director to enter into a project agreement.

**Board Discussion:** No further discussion at this time.

**Public Comment:** No comment provided at this time.

**Moved by:** Member Phil Rockefeller

**Seconded by:** Member Sam Mace

**Motion: Approved**

### **Item 9: Conversion Request: Holmes Property Boundary Adjustment (RCO Project #04-1680)**

Kay Caromile, Salmon Section Outdoor Grant Manager, summarized a request from the Yakama Nation to develop a salmon hatchery on a SRFB-funded acquisition, which is inconsistent with salmon recovery and conservation purposes. Ms. Caromile described a requested action that would allow a policy waiver for sponsor-owned land to replace property, and provided information on the Salmon Deed of Right conditions and how the proposed substitution of land conflicts with existing policy. The Yakama Nation requested that the board waive the policy so the replacement land would be considered eligible property for the proposed conversion. Staff recommended that the board approve the request.

**Motion:** Move to waive RCO policy to allow Yakama Nation owned property to be eligible as replacement property in the proposed conversion for RCO project #04-1680.

#### **Board Discussion:**

Chair Troutt asked about potential wetland improvements. Ms. Caromile replied that the tribe will work to improve wetland habitat, including breaching a concrete irrigation dyke and connect the wetland and the river oxbow. Member Bugert mentioned that the cost of mitigating the wetland impact would be greater than impacting the upland section of the conversion.

Member Rockefeller asked if the Attorney General's office agrees that the board holds the authority to waive this policy. Ms. Connelly indicated that, as an internal policy, the Attorney General confirmed that the board does have authority to waive the policy.

#### **Public Comment:**

Darcy Batura shared that the Lead Entity discussed with the request with the Yakama Nation and received overall positive response in support of the conversion.

**Moved by:** Member Bob Bugert

**Seconded by:** Member Sam Mace

**Motion: Approved**

## **Board Business: Briefing**

### **Item 10: Follow-Up on Expanding the Grant Program to Include Large Capital Projects for the 2017-19 Biennium**

Brian Abbott, GSRO Executive Coordinator, summarized the proposal to establish a grant category for large-scale, high-benefit fish projects outside of the Puget Sound region. Mr. Abbott requested board direction regarding pursuing a detailed proposal for discussion and public comment at the December 2015 meeting.

Member Bugert asked whether the proposal aligns with the work of the Fish Passage Barrier Removal Board. Mr. Abbott explained that the funding range varies depending on the funding agency.

Director Cottingham requested that priorities be established by August of 2016, in order to submit a timely budget request. Chair Troutt acknowledged the increasing difficulty for lead entities to accomplish large-scale projects based on current allocations, and agreed with moving forward to meet the August 2016 deadline. Director Cottingham emphasized that projects should clearly show the funding necessary to complete large-scale projects outside of the Puget Sound.

Mr. Alex Conley emphasized the importance of minimizing transaction and process related to funding, either by creating a new process or using the current allocation structure. Mr. Conley encouraged looking at the efficiencies and streamlining the process to allow money to get to projects and not just to the "framework." Ms. Galuska emphasized the importance of using the existing framework.

### **Item 11: Overview of New Grant Programs Assigned to the Recreation and Conservation Office**

Ms. Galuska, Salmon Section Manager, summarized the Coastal Restoration Initiative and the Catastrophic Flood Relief programs received and managed by the RCO salmon section in the Legislature's 2015-17 capital budget. RCO established both programs in PRISM for proposal and scope of work review as well as issuing project agreements.

The Washington Coastal Restoration Initiative (WCRI) aims to conduct critical restoration work providing good-paying, sustainable natural resource jobs while protecting and restoring fish and wildlife, healthy forests, and water quality in coastal communities. The Catastrophic Flood Relief Program provides funding through OFM for basin planning and project to reduce and mitigate flood impacts and habitat restoration projects.

***Break 3:49 - 4:05 p.m.***

### **Item 12: Overview of the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program and the Puget Sound Nearshore Estuary Restoration Program**

Jennifer Quan and Theresa Mitchell, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), provided a summary of the Puget Sound Nearshore Estuary Restoration Program (PSNERP). Beginning in 2001, PSNERP sought to identify and restore the nearshore ecosystems in an efficient manner. Actions affecting the nearshore include diking, dredging, filling, and armoring. Strategic objectives include restoring connectivity of large river delta estuaries, number of coastal embayments, and the size and quality of beaches and bluffs.

The partnership between Washington State and the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) culminated in several projects moving forward. The Corps evaluated 500 sites, determined the ecosystem benefits, and came to a list of 36 projects, which will help implement salmon recovery plans within the Puget Sound.

Member Smith asked about measuring public approval of the specified projects and the funding request. Ms. Mitchell indicated that outreach to the public currently shares project location and implementation

details. Ms. Quan emphasized the challenge of working with the Corps and indicated that the current request is in the range of billions of dollars.

Member Bugert asked about monitoring and evaluation. Ms. Mitchell shared that a current monitoring plan exists, but not for individual projects. Member Bugert encouraged collaboration to ensure monitoring works for both agencies.

Jay Krienitz, DNR, and Mike Ramsey, RCO ESRP grant manager, provided a summary of the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP), this program implements nearshore ecosystem restoration by developing local and regional partnerships and strategies while supporting PSNERP. The program emphasizes natural processes to create nearshore structure, which provides important ecosystem functions.

Mr. Krienitz described the partnership between ESRP and RCO to accomplish projects through rigorous scientific process, streamlining funding, and projects. The ESRP program works to align projects at a reach scale, science program capacity, outreach and communication, investigate policy, and program solutions. Mr. Krienitz reviewed program policy, action agendas, the geographic focus of estuary areas, and how these aspects draw from PSNERP. Mr. Ramsey reviewed the funding received by ESRP projects.

Chair Troutt asked whether all the current nearshore projects would be implemented, and how that would change the current nearshore mapping. Ms. Mitchell explained that the result would be more natural shoreline. Member Neatherlin mentioned the large-scale marine survival project and how to use processes, function, and interact with the data to show what nearshore restoration accomplishes.

### **Item 13: Introduction to Skagit Delta Restoration Projects and North Sound Estuary Restoration Tour Overview**

Elizabeth Butler, Salmon Outdoor Grant Manager, provided an overview of the projects scheduled for the board tour. Steve Hinton, Skagit River System Cooperative, presented information on the Skagit Recovery Plan. Belinda Rotten, WDFW, presented information on the current projects within the Skagit. Jenna Friebe, WDFW and project manager for Fir Island Farm, presented information for future estuary restoration, including public outreach.

Chair Troutt asked about tribal involvement. Mr. Hinton indicated that the local region prioritizes efforts with allotted funding and tribal involvement. Local concerns include farmland and climate change, while connecting communities to move salmon recovery forward. Member Mace asked where the region finds farmland for conversion to conservation areas. Mr. Hinton indicated that the region focuses on lands that came into agriculture production relatively late compared to other lands in the industry.

### **Closing**

Chair Troutt adjourned the meeting at 5:45 p.m.

## SALMON RECOVERY FUNDING BOARD SUMMARY MINUTES

**Date:** October 16, 2015

**Place:** La Conner, WA

### Salmon Recovery Funding Board Members Present:

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<b>David Troutt, Chair</b>	Olympia	<b>Carol Smith</b>	Department of Ecology
<b>Nancy Biery</b>	Quilcene	<b>Susan Cierebiej</b>	Department of Transportation
<b>Bob Bugert</b>	Wenatchee	<b>Brian Cochran</b>	Washington State Conservation Commission
<b>Phil Rockefeller</b>	Bainbridge Island	<b>Erik Neatherlin</b>	Department of Fish and Wildlife

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The board began the tour of projects at 7:45 a.m. and proceeded as indicated on the agenda. The tour concluded at 2:15 p.m.

### Approved by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David Troutt, Chair

12/9/15  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date