

SALMON RECOVERY FUNDING BOARD SUMMARIZED MEETING AGENDA AND ACTIONS
February 26, 2015

Item	Formal Action	Follow-up Action
December 2014 Meeting Summary	Decision: APPROVED	No follow-up action requested.
1. Management Report		
A. Director's Report	Briefing	
B. Legislative and Policy Updates	Briefing	
C. Survey Results from Applicants and Board Members	Briefing	As a result of the board member survey, staff will provide hard-copies of the presentations provided at each meeting to board members.
D. Performance Update	Briefing	
E. Financial Report (<i>written only</i>)		
2. Salmon Recovery Management Report		
A. Salmon Section Report	Briefing	
B. Governor's Salmon Recovery Office	Briefing	
C. Communications Strategy Update	Briefing	
D. Completed Project Highlights	Briefing	Staff will provide information on Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) funds used to acquire the properties for project Pt. Heyer Drift Cell Preservation 2011 (RCO Project 11-1282A).
3. Reports from Partners	Briefing	Chair Troutt and Director Cottingham will draft a letter to the Bonneville Power Administration that addresses fish passage issues due to dams on the Columbia River. The draft will be circulated to board members, and review by the Governor's Office.
4. Monitoring Updates		
A. Intensively Monitored Watershed (IMW) Funding Challenge	Decision: APPROVED	
B. SRFB Monitoring Program 2004-2014 Document	Briefing	Mr. Dublanica will email the formatted draft document to board members showing the funding that supports monitoring efforts.
C. Monitoring Video	Briefing	

5. Manual 18		
A. General Overview of Changes	Briefing	No follow-up action requested.
B. Monitoring Eligibility Policy Change	Decision: APPROVED	
6. South Fork Skokomish Canyon Fish Passage Assessment	Decision: APPROVED	No follow-up action requested.
7. Salmon Recovery Conference Update	Briefing	No follow-up action requested.
8. State of Salmon Report Presentation	Briefing	No follow-up action requested.
9. Mitigation Matching Project Update	Briefing	No follow-up action requested.
10. Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Changes	Briefing	Staff will begin drafting rule changes per the Administrative Procedure Act and follow up with a briefing at the May meeting.
11. Expanding the Grant Program to Include Large Capital Projects	Briefing	Staff will seek guidance from the Office of Financial Management (OFM), draft the proposal, and look to regional organizations, lead entities, and recovery partners for feedback by September 2016. Staff would then present the full proposal at the October 2015 meeting for the board's consideration.

SALMON RECOVERY FUNDING BOARD SUMMARY MINUTES

Date: February 26, 2015

Place: Olympia, WA

Salmon Recovery Funding Board Members Present:

David Troutt, Chair	Olympia	Carol Smith	Department of Ecology
Nancy Biery	Quilcene	Susan Cierebiej	Department of Transportation
Sam Mace	Spokane	Megan Duffy	Department of Natural Resources
Phil Rockefeller	Bainbridge Island	Brian Cochrane	Washington State Conservation Commission
		Erik Neatherlin	Department of Fish and Wildlife

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.

Opening and Welcome

Chair David Troutt called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. and the board members and attendees introduced themselves. The board welcomed two new members: Brian Cochrane, representing the Washington State Conservation Commission, and Erik Neatherlin, representing the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Amee Bahr called roll and a quorum was determined.

Agenda adoption

Moved by: Member Sam Mace

Seconded by: Member Nancy Biery

Motion: APPROVED

December 2014 Meeting Summary

Moved by: Member Nancy Biery

Seconded by: Member Phil Rockefeller

Motion: APPROVED

Director Kaleen Cottingham described the materials provided for the board for the day's meeting.

Management and Partner Reports

Item 1: Management Report

A. Director's Report: Director Cottingham shared the results of the State Auditor's completed accountability audit of RCO. The four areas of focus included grants, travel, cash receipts, and cash disbursements. There were no findings in this audit. Chair Troutt commended staff for the clean audit, and Member Biery seconded.

Director Cottingham provided updates on staff transitions, welcoming the new invasive species coordinator, Raquel Crosier, who began in January. Brian Abbott with the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office will go to Washington, D.C. later this year to advocate for the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PSCRF) award. RCO applies for PCSRF funds annually, receiving \$20.5M of the \$58M appropriation this year. The recent award, although slightly higher than what RCO received the prior year, will not cover expected costs. As for the state budget, RCO did not receive funding for the four additional salmon recovery funding requests for general fund money.

B. Legislative and Policy Updates: Wendy Brown, RCO Policy Director, provided an update on the current legislative session. The budget is expected to be rolled out near the end of March. The most recent forecast was somewhat favorable, although the demands on the budget far exceed the expected revenue. The Legislature requested information regarding salmon projects and funding, e.g., which programs support culvert work, Puget Sound, acquisitions, etc. Many legislators asked for information regarding salmon grants and the minimum state funding that RCO needs to match federal funding.

Director Cottingham met with Senator Curtis King to discuss the opportunity for a potential new grant program that would support culvert work by cities and counties. Senator King expressed interest in the work of RCO's work and the contribution of other programs to salmon recovery.

Ms. Brown shared that the legislative session is reaching the bill cut-off date. Most bills RCO monitored have died, with the exception of [House Bill 5013](#). This bill restricts the conversion of agricultural land could impact future restoration efforts, specifically naming the Washington Department of Transportation

(WSDOT) as unable to use these lands for mitigation. RCO had been monitoring [Senate Bill 5551](#), which prevents awarding salmon recovery funding to groups that have sued Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) regarding hatchery issues, but the bill died in committee. RCO will continue to track [House Bill 1270](#) regarding new fish hatchery management structure and [House Bill 1000](#) about leasing water rights. [Senate Bill 5739, which](#) is no longer active, would have protected salmon spawning beds. [Senate Bill 5759, which is also no longer](#) active, would have limited DNR's ability to participate in habitat conservation plans (HCPs).

Nearly all of the governor-appointed board members are pending before the Senate for confirmation. The confirmation hearings are not scheduled at this time.

C. Survey Results: Jennifer Masterson, Data and Special Projects Manager, provided an overview of grant applicant and board member responses to a 2014 survey.

The grant round survey to applicants will support future process improvements. Ms. Masterson presented the applicant response data as outlined in the statistics and graphs in the board materials (Item 1C). Based on the survey results, RCO established several key action items for the 2015-16 grant round:

- Continue to simplify the RCO/SRFB grant round process for 2016.
- Improve and streamline the relationship between SRFB and local processes and deadlines.
- Evaluate whether to continue or improve the application workshop/webinar.
- Review applicant survey results with Technical Review Panel members and discuss potential improvements.
- Evaluate whether to continue to distribute applicant surveys annually or biennially.

Next, Ms. Masterson presented the results from the board member survey, which was distributed in late 2014. Key action items resulting from the survey include:

- The board should review its strategic plan.
- Improve linkages between meeting topics and the strategic plan.
- Discuss how to provide clarified fund status information.
- Improve the visual aspects of PowerPoint presentations.

In response to a board survey result about PowerPoint presentations, Director Cottingham noted that RCO staff typically fine-tunes presentations up to the day of the meeting, so it is difficult to provide an accurate copy of the slides in advance. She proposed that staff provide them the day of the meeting.

Item 2: Salmon Recovery Management Report

Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO): Brian Abbott, Executive Coordinator, provided an update on the [State of Salmon in Watersheds](#) (SOSiW) report, published February 2, 2015. He thanked his staff, particularly Jennifer Johnson, for their efforts in this work. He provided an overview of the items discussed later in the agenda, including IMW and monitoring updates, the upcoming Salmon Recovery Conference, and four videos developed to inform a broader audience about board-funded monitoring efforts.

Mr. Abbott provided a brief update on the Salmon Recovery Funding Board Monitoring Panel, the Fish Barrier Removal Board (FBRB), the regional organizations development of three-year work plans, and state and federal budget documents provided to congressional staffers so they understand RCO's budget and needs.

Chair Troutt asked for clarification on the roles and coordination of the FBRB. Mr. Abbott shared that WDFW chairs the board and the goal is to coordinate efforts. Member Biery asked about the FBRB goals

and actions, specifically whether they are working with regions and lead entities. If the FBRB develops focus areas, where these efforts would occur and how would they be implemented. Mr. Abbott explained that is early in the process, but collaboration and communication will continue between Lead Entities and the FBRB on these issues.

RCO submitted the final draft of the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) request, asking for \$25M. The agency should know the award amount in June, after which applications are matched to the award amount in coordination with other partners.

Mr. Abbott shared information about a 45-minute work session presented to the Senate Natural Resources and Parks Committee that described funding, set up, successes, and challenges of salmon recovery within Washington State. RCO and GSRO co-presented with the Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board.

The salmon recovery communications strategy continues to move forward, with progress occurring in the contributing lead entities. RCO selected Triangle Associates to support the workgroup and facilitate meetings, with the first meeting scheduled for March 2, 2015. Pyramid Communications will brief regional areas on the importance of developing a region-specific communications strategy to help develop individual proposals for planning and implementation. Regional area briefings will strengthen their ability to identify region-specific needs and independently lead while operating in a coordinated network. Pyramid Communications built templates for partner organizations to use so the messaging frameworks remain consistent. Mr. Abbott described region-specific progress on respective proposals and unique communication plans including timeline, agendas, overall goals, and resources needed.

Recreation and Conservation Office, Salmon Section: Kat Moore, Salmon Section Manager, provided a brief update on the 2014 grant round. The board materials include details about funded projects, closed projects, and director authority regarding project amendments. Staff provided presentations regarding the 2015 grant round and the application workshop will occur on March 16, 2015. The salmon staff held a joint staff meeting with the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) in Tacoma to talk about roles, grant round improvements, coordination, and progress.

The Review Panel will meet on March 30, 2015 to discuss applicant feedback and schedule project site visits.

Item 2D: Completed Project Highlights

RCO Salmon Grant Managers Mike Ramsey, Alice Rubin, and Elizabeth Butler presented information on three recently closed projects.

Mr. Ramsey presented information about Maynard Nearshore Restoration (RCO Project [11-1314R](#)). This project restored 1,800 feet of shoreline through the removal of an old railroad grade and former lumber mill site. This is critical habitat for Hood Canal Summer Chum, Puget Sound Chinook, and a multitude of other nearshore dependent species, such as migratory birds, forage fish and shellfish. Member Cochrane asked about the crossings on Hwy 101. Mr. Ramsey indicated the collaboration that occurred between agencies to help the success of the restoration project.

Ms. Rubin presented information about Hamilton Creek Restoration, Phase II (RCO Project [10-1028R](#)). This project supported the installment of log jams through 2,250 feet of the main stem, scoured new pools, created an island network, sorted spawning gravels, created overhead cover, and stabilized eroding stream banks by planting over 4,500 trees. These efforts created three new side channels, including over 1,000 feet of new complex rearing and spawning habitat for Lower Columbia Coho, chum, winter

steelhead, and Chinook. Please view a short video, listed in the project attachments, about the chum channel [here](#).

Ms. Butler presented information about Pt. Heyer Drift Cell Preservation 2011 (RCO Project [11-1282A](#)). The project included a fee simple acquisition of six target parcels located in the Pt. Heyer Drift Cell, adding approximately 10 acres of marine forested feeder bluff, 7 acres of coniferous forest uplands, 7 acres of tidelands, and over 1000 feet of shoreline to the Natural Area. Chair Troutt asked Ms. Butler to provide information on Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) funds used to acquire the properties.

Item 3: Reports from Partners

Council of Regions Report (COR): Jeff Breckel, Chair, provided an overview of the current issues facing the Council of Regions. Mr. Breckel touched on the efforts of each region to support the communication and outreach strategy, the partnerships among regions with NOAA pertaining to the 5-year status review, better data collection efforts, contributions to the *State of Salmon* report, and the Fish Barrier Removal Board. Mr. Breckel indicated that monitoring continues to be the key in showing accurate data progress, trends, and habitat concerns.

Chair Troutt commented on the collaboration between the board, the lead entities, and the regions. The board understands the needs regarding monitoring and hopes to continue collaborating with the regions to find comprehensive solutions.

Washington Salmon Coalition (WSC): Darcy Batura, Chair, and Amy Hatch-Winecka, Vice Chair, thanked the board for the opportunity to attend. Ms. Hatch-Winecka provided a summary of the lead entity legislative day, where appointments with local representatives provide an opportunity to share program and project successes. The [Washington Salmon Coalition Advocacy Handbook: A Guide for Communicating with Lawmakers](#) describes legislative communication goals and guides these outreach efforts. Other updates included regional planning meetings, funding priorities and requests, lead entity transitions and partner retreats, updates on regional-specific accomplishments, and the continued work as part of the Salmon Recovery Network. Please find full details regarding these issues in the WSC's report included in the board materials.

Ms. Batura thanked the board for their contributions to support lead entity efforts and shared the goals supported by the provided funding. Ms. Hatch-Winecka acknowledged and thanked Barbara Rosentkotter, as she retires this year. Chair Troutt and Director Cottingham thanked the Washington Salmon Coalition for their work and collaboration.

Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups (RFEGs): Colleen Thompson, Managing Director, shared information about recent goals and progress including contract workshops to better project implementation. She provided updates on legislative outreach and advocacy, including several events with state and federal representatives. Ms. Thompson distributed annual reports to the board.

Chair Troutt inquired about the RFEG budget and the amount of board funding that supports RFEGs. Ms. Thompson noted some capacity challenges, often due to the complexity of salmon recovery projects. She added that some funding comes from federal sources but still encourages full board support. Mr. Abbott noted that 18% of the funding supports RFEG.

Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR): Member Megan Duffy summarized the bills currently monitored by DNR this legislative session. Specifically Senate Bill 5559 regarding habitat conservation plans (HCPs) for over water and log structures. Chair Troutt asked about the specific target of the bill.

Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT): Member Cierebiej shared information about WSDOT projects that support salmon recovery and fish passage while addressing environmental deficiencies and stormwater. She noted 10 barriers corrected so far this biennium. A budget request submitted this session includes a funding package that would allow an additional 12 projects each biennium. If all funding requests are approved for the 2015-17 biennium, WSDOT could correct up to 50 barriers and have \$12 million available in stormwater retrofits.

Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC): Member Cochrane provided a brief update on the Regional Conservation Partnership Program award of \$5.5M by USDA to Palouse Conservation District for farm conservation practices aimed at sediment Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) load reduction in the Palouse River watershed with a one-to-one match.

Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology): Member Smith shared information about the forecasts for the next biennium specifically around the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) account which is used to address water quality. She shared a concern regarding the oil-by-rail transport issues as trains pass through Puget Sound and the Columbia River. Ecology will monitor this issue, since the emergency support funding is currently inadequate.

Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NWPPCC): Member Phil Rockefeller provided information on the Columbia River Basin on salmon recovery and mitigation efforts, including the NWPPCC Fish and Wildlife Program. He explained in-depth history, goals, and authorities of the program as they align with federal and state priorities. Member Rockefeller emphasized the need to coordinate strategies, programs, and funding to support successful salmon recovery efforts. He encourages future conversations and collaboration to resolve these ongoing, long-term habitat issues. When tribes and regions express priorities, an obligation exists to coordinate and make these changes happen. Chair Troutt thanked Mr. Rockefeller for his continued support.

More information about this program may be found at: <https://www.nwcouncil.org/fw/>.

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW): Member Neatherlin provided an update on the new WDFW director who recently met with the salmon recovery regions. He shared information about the federal and state funding gaps that may present challenges in the next few years. Mr. Neatherlin stated that early marine survival research for steelhead would likely receive funds in the next biennium with a goal of setting population and habitat for steelhead in Puget Sound. He shared information on the agency requests that are now part of the Governor's budget to support salmon recovery.

General Public Comment

No public comment provided at this time.

Break 11:15 – 11:35 a.m.

Board Business: Briefings

Item 4A: Intensively Monitored Watershed (IMW) Funding Challenge

Mr. Abbott provided an update on funding IMW projects within Washington State specifically related to the NOAA Science Center. The challenge involves using capital funds for monitoring. To resolve this issue, staff from GSRO worked with NOAA and Ecology to find alternate funding solutions.

It now appears that the Science Center may be able to accept federal dollars. For the funding issues, Mr. Abbott referred to the options presented in Item 4A of the board materials (IMW Funding Challenge).

- The NOAA Science Center remaining funds not utilized that could fill the gap is roughly \$85,000.

- The Department of Ecology holds \$90,000 in unspent monitoring funds.
- If neither of the above are available, staff recommends using funds set aside for 2015 IMW projects. If moving funds represents the only option it would move \$170,000 from IMW projects to monitoring, leaving \$1,830,000 available for 2015 IMW projects.

Motion: Move to direct the RCO director to fill the Intensively Monitored Watershed (IMW) funding gap as set forth in the staff memo, either by relying on NOAA and unspent Ecology IMW funds or secondarily, by utilizing Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) funds previously committed to IMW projects.

Moved by: Member Nancy Biery

Seconded by: Member Phil Rockefeller

Motion: APPROVED

Item 4B: SRFB Monitoring Program 2004-2014 History Document

Keith Dublanica, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office, provided a brief ten-year history of the SRFB's monitoring strategy. The 2003 monitoring strategy, written by Bruce Crawford, established the methodology, criteria, and categories within the board's three broad monitoring areas: reach-scale effectiveness monitoring, fish in/fish out, and intensively monitored watersheds (IMWs). In 2013, Stillwater Sciences and RCO developed and updated Monitoring Investment Strategy. Mr. Crawford authored a ten-year history document, reviewed by the monitoring panel and practitioners in January 2015.

The summary document provides review material for the joint monitoring panel and practitioner work-session scheduled for March 30, 2015. Board members are invited to attend all or part of this all-day work-session with the monitoring panel and practitioners (provided they do not constitute a quorum). The board will review the final document at the May 2015 meeting, with adoption at the October 2015 meeting.

Chair Troutt acknowledged Mr. Crawford, seated in the audience, and thanked him for his efforts.

Member Rockefeller asked if the historical summary will include information about the funding that supports monitoring efforts. Mr. Dublanica confirmed that the summary would include funding information to present an accurate picture. He will send an electronic copy of the formatted draft document for board members to view.

Item 4C: SRFB Monitoring Video

Jennifer Johnson, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office, shared information on the development of four monitoring videos produced by Wahoo Films of Bend, Oregon. GSRO consulted with Tetra Tech and the Departments of Fish and Wildlife and Ecology to develop video scripts and concepts. The short video clips capture late summer and fall seasons of 2014 throughout Washington State, to show spawning salmon through field interviews, graphics, stock, proprietary, and supplemental aerial footage. The board provided positive feedback on the content of the videos and the message.

All four videos are available on RCO's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/WashingtonRCO>.

Lunch 12:15 p.m. – 1:05 p.m.

General Public Comment:

Jeanette Dorner discussed the Smith Island Project, located in the Snohomish estuary. The large, complex restoration project is the largest contract that RCO currently holds (about \$16M). The project aims to restore 328 acres of farmland through strategic land acquisitions and by removing dikes. The estuary

represents an opportunity of grand scale to restore rich habitat and ecosystem function. Conflicts have arisen over the agricultural uses of the land under consideration. The Snohomish County Council also acts as the Diking District; for the project to move forward, the District must vote to approve the design/scope. Uncertainty exists as to whether the project will move forward. The Puget Sound Partnership drafted a letter to advocate for the project sponsor. Further letters and public comment are encouraged to keep momentum in the restoration efforts.

Chair Troutt noted that RCO will draft a letter of support and suggested that the board draft one as well. Member Biery asked that Chair Troutt attend the meeting of the Diking District to represent the board, read the draft letters from the board and from RCO, and provide comment.

Director Cottingham shared the draft language of the letter RCO intends to send and offered to draft a similar letter on the board's behalf.

Member Rockefeller inquired about the biological opinion for Puget Sound. Director Cottingham noted that in Puget Sound there are federally approved recovery plans for Chinook and Hood Canal summer chum. Ms. Dorner noted that the Smith Island Project is a benchmark in state and federal salmon recovery plans.

Member Neatherlin inquired about the arguments stated in opposition to the project. Ms. Dorner shared that the bill in favor of agriculture lands, that testimony provided opposed estuarine restoration due to loss of ag land. Member Neatherlin emphasized the value in receiving clarification on the opposing arguments in order for Chair Troutt to prepare science-based documentation for discussion at the Diking District meeting.

Please see Appendix A and Appendix B for copies of the letters drafted and sent to the Snohomish County Council.

Board Business: Decisions

Item 5A: Manual 18 – General Overview of Changes

Kathryn Moore, Senior Grants Manager, presented information on proposed administrative revisions to the *Salmon Recovery Grants Manual 18: Policies and Project Selection*. Staff received feedback from lead entities, the technical review panel, RCO staff, and the grant applicant survey. In addition to formatting and grammatical changes, RCO staff updated the 2015 grant schedule, provided more detail on project proposals goals and objectives as well as guidance on riparian buffers, updated language on long-term compliance obligations, provided new cost estimate examples, and created a PRISM-based submittal process for ranked project lists. The final version of Manual 18 is available on the RCO website and a workshop will occur in March regarding changes and the application process.

Ms. Moore discussed potential changes to the 2016 grant cycle based on feedback from sponsors and lead entity coordinators. These changes would include timing of site visits, final application deadlines, coordinating timing of SRFB review panel visits with lead entity review and ranking, timing of the SRFB funding meeting, coordinating project proposal with lead entity requirements, and coordinating with other funding programs like ESRP, Floodplains by Design, and PSAR. A committee will develop these recommendations to present to the board in September or December 2015.

Item 5B: Monitoring Eligibility Policy Change

Brian Abbott, GSRO Executive Coordinator, briefed the board on the proposed policy change to expand monitoring as an eligible grant round project type with a number of conditions. Mr. Abbott summarized the proposed language and criteria as outlined in Item 5B of the board materials.

The new policy would change the balance between on-the-ground projects and monitoring. The proposed policy change would allow regional organizations the option of using up to 10% of its annual funding on monitoring projects. Several conditions exist for eligible monitoring activities and prohibits the use of state bond funds. If approved, Manual 18 will reflect appropriate language for monitoring eligibility in the 2015 grant round.

Director Cottingham noted that federal funds must support the program. Chair Troutt inquired about the design component of projects and if the monitoring or review panel would assess projects with established criteria, consistent methodologies, and protocols. He emphasized the need for the monitoring panel to know their role from the beginning. Member Smith asked if this counts as part of the 10% monitoring requirements for federal funding. Mr. Abbott indicated in the affirmative that the pressure may chip away at the big picture around state-wide versus regional monitoring, as both are necessary.

Public Comment

Jeff Breckel shared that the lead entities and directors collaborated to develop the proposed language. The funding does not support major monitoring needs but will help regions fund current data gaps. Regional consultation with lead entities will support project flexibility, as well as thorough review and evaluation of the design.

Member Rockefeller asked about the amount of funds that would be used to support local monitoring. Mr. Breckel estimated that the amount would not exceed 10% of a regional allocation. This may represent a significant amount of funding, but respective salmon recovery boards would need to assess whether they want/can dedicate this funding, which could be used on other projects. It is a judgment call, balanced on region-specific needs.

Please see Appendix C for additional comment provided to the board.

Motion: Move to approve the proposed language as presented in the staff memo for including monitoring as an eligible project category in the Salmon Recovery Funding Board grant program, and include the appropriate language in the 2015 grant round manual.

Moved: Member Nancy Biery

Seconded: Member Sam Mace

Discussion: Member Smith stated her concern that these efforts should not undermine broader statewide efforts. Chair Troutt concurred.

Action: APPROVED

Item 6: South Fork Skokomish Canyon Fish Passage Assessment

Mike Ramsey, Grant Manager, provided an update on the South Fork Skokomish Canyon Fish Passage Assessment ([14-1334P](#)). This project will assess the four sites identified by WDFW to determine the passability at various flows and develop design concepts for fish passage improvements if appropriate.

The Hood Canal Coordinating Council (HCCC) received funding for the 2014 grant round minus \$175,437 set aside for the South Fork project at the December 2014 meeting. A meeting held on January 5, 2015 with stakeholders, RCO staff, and review panel members clarified misconceptions about the initial proposal. The sponsor provided justification by providing previous hydraulic and fluvial geomorphic assessments for the upper South Fork Skokomish and technical advice received from agency staff and qualified consultants. The following conditions will apply to this project: the scope of work will include compiling various existing hydrology, hydraulic, and geomorphic assessments relevant for restoring Spring Chinook passage conditions. This information and on the ground data will inform and identify

conceptual design alternatives. The sponsor will convene a technical advisory group to develop the conceptual design alternative after completing the initial field measurements and modeling work.

Member Rockefeller inquired about potential design modifications should problems arise and the landowner acknowledgement. Mr. Ramsey provided options such as boulder-blasting and creating a fish-way. The landowner, Green Diamond, signed an acknowledgement form, not a landowner agreement. Evan Bauder indicated that some concerns exist around the elevation needed to ensure fish passage. The sponsor stated that the purpose is data collection to determine the best approach and urged the board to encourage potential solutions.

Public Comment

No public comment was provided at this time.

Motion: Move to approve \$175,437 in Salmon Recovery Funding Board funds for the South Fork Skokomish Canyon Fish Passage Assessment, RCO Project 14-1334P.

Moved by: Member Nancy Biery

Seconded by: Member Phil Rockefeller

Discussion: Member Rockefeller asked whether Spring Chinook navigate this stream and whether the low-flow scenarios were tested. Mr. Ramsey noted that Spring Chinook historically used the river and plans exist to reintroduce the species. The sponsor shared that previous historic reports indicated the need for restoration efforts and funding would support design and planning to fill a data gap. The project is part of the Skokomish regional recovery plan, but delayed relative to other plan metrics. The sponsor added that the project would need to conduct a study during low-flow seasons to determine the potential impacts to fish passage.

Member Rockefeller expressed concern that money expended may document an unfixable fish passage problem. Chair Troutt requested clarification on the problem resolution.

Tom Slocum, review panel member, confirmed that the review panel expressed similar concerns regarding fish passage. He spoke on behalf of the review panel, confirming their support of data collection in the design and planning phase of this project while emphasizing that potential future projects implement appropriate restoration actions.

Ms. Dorner shared that the Skokomish Tribe plans to introduce Spring Chinook and this project is critical to that work. She shared that the region supports the tribe in this effort. More data is needed, and they are grateful for the extra time allowed to consider this project.

Chair Troutt summarized the review process that the project traversed, noting the board should not debate recovery plan goals and metrics.

Decision: APPROVED

Board Business: Briefings

Item 7: Salmon Recovery Conference Update

Brian Abbott and Sarah Gage of the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office provided an update on the 2015 Salmon Recovery Conference. RCO, GSRO, the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) and Long Live the Kings developed the following goals for the conference: 1) showcase salmon recovery projects in Washington State with an emphasis on lessons learned and problems solved; 2) include subject matter on habitat restoration, preservation, and hatchery reform; 3) include a breadth of salmon recovery

with diverse interests and geographies; and 4) to operate the conference in a fiscally sound manner. So far, sponsor engagement effectively has secured funding and support for the conference in the amount of \$31K.

The salmon recovery community responded enthusiastically to the call for abstracts, submitting nearly 200 abstracts covering a wide range of topics. The 2015 conference will be two and half days this year, including plenary and breakout sessions involving 23 topics. The schedule will include networking opportunities. Ms. Gage listed several businesses, vendors, and participating agencies.

Member Biery encouraged local government engagement to support community education and involvement. She suggested a "Salmon 101" session in collaboration with Brian Abbott to support basic salmon recovery awareness efforts.

Item 8: State of Salmon Report Presentation

Jennifer Johnson, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office Implementation Coordinator, and Scott Boettcher, RCO consultant, presented the new biennial State of Salmon in Watersheds report. Ms. Johnson shared a hardcopy of the executive summary, also published online at www.stateofsalmon.wa.gov. RCW 77.85.020 requires GSRO produce this biennial report for the Legislature.

The 2014 report: (1) displays data at both regional and state scales, (2) contains indicators of adult and juvenile fish abundance, watershed health, and recovery plan implementation, (3) highlights information gaps and needs, and (4) includes trends in funding, watershed plan program updates, and challenges to salmon recovery.

Mr. Boettcher discussed the development process, particularly including the goal to set up RCO and GSRO to maintain the website and data independently. The Department of Ecology supports these efforts. Other updates include the story map tool, intended to share statewide salmon recovery efforts specific to Washington's methodologies and real-time data across tribes, local, and state government. The goal is to de-mystify the work and complex projects in progress across the state. Access the story maps [here](#).

Ms. Johnson demonstrated various elements of the State of Salmon website, including the narrative summary pages, indicators of salmon abundance, regional data contributions, and connections to <http://www.data.wa.gov>. The new automation tool was also demonstrated. It displays WDFW's live fish abundance data organized by recovery region. Ms. Johnson thanked the agencies involved that provided data for the website and the report.

Mr. Boettcher demonstrated the new story map tool. These "salmon stories" represent a collaborative effort from tribes, agencies, and salmon recovery organizations and highlight watershed-scale salmon recovery with imagery and easy-to-read story maps.

Chair Troutt enthusiastically thanked the efforts of this year's SOS report. He emphasized how the report is inclusive and wonderful, especially the connection to the tribal community.

Break 2:45 – 3:12 p.m.

Chair Troutt invited Jeff Breckel to speak. Mr. Breckel commented on Member Rockefeller's remarks during the round-table updates. He encourages the board to engage in the process of thoughtful, transparent, technically sound feasibility of move fish above dams in the lower Columbia River region. The goal is to restore historic migration abilities.

Chair Troutt would like to draft a letter in support of the goals outlined by Mr. Breckel. Member Mace

seconded. Member Rockefeller noted that the long, ongoing process of restoration above dams; a letter issued within the next several days would be timely. There is still a question of the addressee, perhaps the Bonneville Power Administration. Member Biery suggested providing a copy to the Governor as well as members of Congress. Member Rockefeller clarified that this letter would support the exploration of options, available science, and feasibility, and suggested a measured response.

Chair Troutt and Director Cottingham will draft a letter and circulate the draft to board members. The intention is to draft a letter to BPA Administrator, with a copy to the Governor's Office.

Please see Appendix D for a copy of the letter drafted to the BPA Administrator.

Item 9: Mitigation Matching Project Update

Jennifer Johnson, GSRO, along with consultants from Eldred & Associates and Cardno ENTRIX (Jennifer Aylor and Sky Miller) presented an update on the mitigation matching project. Mitigation matching can optimize the benefits of salmon recovery, habitat protection, and restoration by identifying salmon recovery projects that align with transportation mitigation obligations. Working with WSDOT, RCO is providing access to RCO habitat project lists and mapped locations in order to identify potential mitigation projects more efficiently. GSRO and RCO staff will work on a factsheet and other tools that will help inform partners on the progress of this work.

Ms. Aylor summarized and presented the in-development map-viewer tool that displays transportation projects matched with habitat restoration and protection projects, focused on mitigation and setting aside wetlands that enhance salmon restoration. Ms. Aylor provided history and development of the project specific to Washington's regional and statewide data. Mr. Miller provided an overview of the data inputs and matching methodologies. He provided some examples of local matching opportunities and mitigation sites, discussing potential challenges. One problem noted is that the Endangered Species Act requires avoidance and minimization of salmonid impacts, but not mitigation.

The team demonstrated the online matching tool's interactive features. With a secure login to protect data integrity, users can access additional information, site details, involved partners, and contributing agencies.

Ms. Aylor discussed potential opportunities that may support WSDOT in mitigation options. Ms. Johnson discussed next steps, such as adding more Habitat Work Schedule projects to the map-viewer, and continuing to explore user interfaces and data sharing between RCO and WSDOT.

Chair Troutt commented on the importance of mitigation, specifically paying attention to the life stage or history of salmonid species and plan to accommodate these cycles. Mr. Miller indicated that, with NOAA's direction, they look for limiting factor sites that help reach the mitigation goal, similar to those approved in estuarine and salmon spawning habitat.

Chair Troutt asked if the same impacts that the tool mitigates against remain in a given watershed. Mr. Miller confirmed this, stating that the benefits stay within the watershed.

Member Cochrane wondered if this would promote competition among sites for board funds and how these efforts would be coordinated. Ms. Johnson replied that competition may be a good thing as it indicates solid funding; development is a reality, so the key is to consider this when asking questions about how this tool will support mitigation projects. Ms. Aylor added that they have explored the question of coordinated inputs and impacts, especially in terms of regulation and funding sources.

Item 10: Washington Administrative Code Changes – Phase II Overview

Leslie Connelly, RCO's Policy Specialist, presented an overview of phase II of the proposed changes to Title 420 of the Washington Administrative Code (WAC). Title 420 covers general grant program requirements of the board and the administration of grant programs. Ms. Connelly provided background on the process for updating RCO rules and procedures in WAC. In RCW 77.85.120, the board is designated with the authority to establish rules that will support accomplishment of their work as set forth in statute.

Substantive changes to the WAC have not been made since 2001. In 2014, Phase I of the WAC changes included changing the agency name to the "Recreation and Conservation Office." Ms. Connelly then provided a summary of the changes proposed for Phase II. Details of each change is documented in Item 10 of the board materials.

Ms. Connelly summarized the next steps and schedule for adopting rule changes to the WAC. An initial draft of revisions was submitted on February 4, 2015 and the "Notice of Inquiry" was published February 18, 2015. As there will be some substantive changes, a public hearing will be held at the next board meeting, with an effective date of June 7, 2015.

The board discussed timelines, constraints, and opportunity to review the changes prior to the public hearing.

RCO staff will begin to draft rule changes per the Administrative Procedure Act, submitting them to the board individually for comment. Ms. Connelly suggested providing sections of changes as they are updated. Stakeholder feedback will be sought from lead entities, regions, project sponsors, and interested parties.

Item 11: Expanding the Grant Program to Include Large Capital Projects

Brian Abbott, GSRO, summarized the concept of developing a capital budget requests for the 2017-19 biennium. The purpose is to create a capital funding source for large-scale fish benefit projects needed to fully implement Salmon Recovery Plans outside of the Puget Sound region. He noted the past success of projects in the Puget Sound region, and described the foundational principles of the grant program concept: 1) add to the salmon recovery effort and not realign or take resources from existing capital programs, 2) consist of an open and transparent selection and prioritization process, and 3) utilize the current Review Panel process.

Feedback and drafting the request would need to be in place by September 2016. At that time, RCO would present the Governor and Legislature with a fully developed process and ranked list for inclusion in the 2017-19 capital budget.

Director Cottingham suggested collaborating with the Office of Financial Management, to ensure that the efforts will not be rejected immediately when submitted in September. RCO and GSRO staff would seek input from OFM, draft the proposal, and look to regional organizations, lead entities, and recovery partners for feedback by September 2016. The board would consider a full proposal at the October 2015 meeting.

Director Cottingham and Chair Troutt noted the importance of highlighting the program components as they address gaps in salmon recovery efforts for projects that are not eligible for the existing grant rounds.

Closing

The next board meeting is scheduled for May 6-7, 2015 in Olympia.

Chair Troutt adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Approved by:



David Troutt, Chair

5/6/15

Date

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STATE OF WASHINGTON

RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

February 27, 2015

Snohomish County Council
Robert J. Drewel Building, 8th Floor
3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S 609
Everett, WA 98201

RE: Smith Island Estuarine Restoration Project

Dear Council Members Dave Somers, Brian Sullivan, Stephanie Wright, Terry Ryan and Ken Klein:

The Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) is pleased to support the Smith Island Estuarine Restoration project. Composed of five citizens appointed by the Governor, and five state agency directors, the SRFB brings together the experiences and viewpoints of citizens and state natural resource agencies, to provide grants for salmon habitat protection and restoration. State and federal funding flows through the SRFB via a locally-based process that prioritizes actions to achieve salmon recovery statewide.

To date, the Smith Island Estuarine Restoration project has successfully competed for more than \$17 million dollars in funding from the SRFB and other grant programs. The Smith Island project has been successful in competing for recovery funding, in large part, because it is an integral part of the federally-approved salmon recovery plan under the Endangered Species Act. Research shows that one of the greatest limiting factors for Chinook salmon population recovery is the extensive Snohomish River estuary habitat loss important for early stage rearing. Today, fewer than 1,700 acres of estuarine tidal marsh remain connected and accessible to salmonids. A decline in excess of 80% of the historic area.

It is very exciting to see the progress being made on Smith Island. These types of projects take strong leadership, multiple partners, and significant investments of time and resources. Investing in salmon recovery is also good for the economy. In addition to increasing opportunities for commercial and recreational fishing, project design and construction contracts bring millions to local businesses. We want to thank the County for its leadership on this important restoration project, and urge you continue to support implementation.

Sincerely,

David Troutt, Chair
Salmon Recovery Funding Board



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STATE OF WASHINGTON

RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

February 26, 2015

Snohomish County Council
Robert J. Drewel Building, 8th Floor
3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S 609
Everett, WA 98201

RE: Smith Island Estuarine Restoration Project

Dear Council Members Dave Somers, Brian Sullivan, Stephanie Wright, Terry Ryan and Ken Klein:

The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) is pleased to support the Smith Island Estuarine Restoration project. RCO is a small state agency that manages grant programs to create outdoor recreation opportunities, protect the best of the state's wildlife habitat and farmland, and help recover salmon.

To date, the Smith Island project has successfully competed for ten RCO administered salmon recovery and habitat restoration grants totaling nearly \$17 million dollars. These grants supported land acquisition, planning, design and permitting. Grant funds continue to be available for implementation of this regionally significant restoration project. This is an impressive project in scope and scale and represents the highest value project agreement administered by my agency.

I want to thank the County for its leadership on the restoration of the Estuary, and urge you to continue to support its construction. Re-establishing a properly functioning, self-sustaining estuarine tidal marsh ecosystem will provide critical rearing habitat for endangered Chinook salmon in the Snohomish River basin. Thank you for your commitment to this project.

Sincerely,

Kaleen Cottingham
Director





February 26, 2015

Salmon Recovery Funding Board
c/o David Troutt, Chair
1111 Washington ST SE
Olympia, WA 98501

Dear Chairman Troutt and Distinguished Board Members,

I am writing to share with you the **Skagit Watershed Council' support for changing the monitoring eligibility policy** before you today. The potential change has been well vetted statewide and as far as we know there is 100% support for this discretionary policy as outlined in the briefing materials.

The Skagit Watershed Council is a non-profit organization dedicated to habitat recovery that would enable sustainable salmon and trout fisheries in the Skagit and Samish Watersheds. Our membership now includes 33 governments and NGOs, representing the broad spectrum of interests in salmon recovery in this large and productive basin.

From the Skagit perspective, **this modest change in policy has complete concurrence at both the technical and policy levels.** While our habitat protection and restoration work must continue as our main priority, the **need to answer ever-more-critical questions of the status and trends of the fish and habitat they depend on will become the defining conversation of the next 10 years.**

Without this change in policy, we will continue to be poorly equipped to state with confidence the long-term effectiveness of our actions, and will lack information critical to informing course corrections.

Thank you for your consideration of this modest but important policy change,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard Brocksmith". The signature is written in a cursive style and is set against a light blue rectangular background.

Richard Brocksmith

Executive Director

Cc: Jeanette Dorner, Puget Sound Partnership
Brian Abbott, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office

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March 9, 2015

Elliott Mainzer, Administrator
Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, OR 97208-3621

Dear Administrator Mainzer:

The Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) has been overseeing and coordinating the distribution of state and federal resources toward the recovery of salmon and their habitat since 2000. These investments are managed by the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office.

We are pleased to offer our strong support for the recently revised Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program adopted in October 2014 by the Northwest Power and Conservation Council. We encourage the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), and the other federal- action agencies with assets and responsibilities in the Columbia Basin, to extend tangible and on-going financial and technical support for the phased assessment of the feasibility of re-introducing salmonids above the Army Corps of Engineers Chief Joseph Dam, and the Bureau of Reclamation Grand Coulee Dam. Such an assessment would explore the biological and economic feasibility of providing upstream and downstream fish passage at the dams, and review the complexities of re-introducing salmon species to their historic habitat.

The 199 river miles of mainstem along with the increased tributary access above these federal dams are of regional significance and historically supported several stocks of salmon. Reconnecting this habitat would provide significant economic, tribal, cultural, and community benefits.

The SRFB stands ready to collaborate with you, and the many others engaged in the management of the Columbia River Basin resources, in proceeding down a carefully-managed pathway to assess the feasibility of re-introducing salmonids to these inaccessible areas.

We thank you for your consideration in this timely matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Trout".

David Trout, Chair
Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board

