



## Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board

August 6, 2021  
Board Meeting  
Conference Call/Webinar

Draft Minutes  
For Approval: October 1, 2021

**Present:** Dan Cothren, Paul Greenlee, Richard Mahar, Hal Mahnke, Todd Olson, Ann Rivers, Gary Stamper, Don Swanson, Olaf Thomason, Jade Unger, Dennis Weber, Del Wilson, and Rudy Salakory, TAC Chairman

**Absent:** Taylor Aalvik, Lee Grose, Gary Medvigy - Chairman Olson excused the absent members.

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** No announcements.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

- Tova Tillinghast, Underwood Conservation District: She stated it is worth noting that projects in the Wind River Watershed consistently score lower than other projects in the region. The LCFRB sponsored a habitat strategy in 2016/2017 with the idea that it would help improve the scoring and receiving funds for the Wind River. She noted that it seems they may be held at an unnecessary disadvantage and she would like to work with staff to improve the scoring process. It is worth noting that the Stabler Bend Side Channel project is the highest priority for steelhead recovery in the Wind River watershed, which is designated a wild gene bank and cold water refuge. She explained that even though the project is the highest priority it has been challenging to get into the fundable range on the project list.

### **PARTNER REPORTS:**

- Megan Duffy, Director, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO):
  - Ms. Duffy introduced herself and stated she is the new RCO director as of May 1, 2021. She noted she is a lawyer by training and had the opportunity to work on the HB 2836 Salmon Recovery Act and the HB 2514 Watershed Planning Act. In 2008, she started working at the RCO under Kaleen Cottingham doing most of the policy work for the Salmon Recovery Funding Board and then moved to the GSRO as the Executive Coordinator. In addition, Ms. Duffy indicated that she worked for Peter Goldmark as the Deputy for Aquatic Lands in the Geology Division, and as a Deputy Director of the Liquor and Cannabis Control Board before moving to the RCO in May 2021. During this first three months she has been focused on meeting with Salmon Recovery Partners, NW Indian Fisheries Commission, the Council of Regions, and state agencies, trying to get a good sense of salmon Recovery gaps and challenges in the region. Ms. Duffy stated the RCO is part of the Governor's Natural Resources Sub-Cabinet which has not met in a while, but added that Salmon Recovery is a priority for the Governor for the remainder of his term. Ms. Duffy emphasized that the RCO is here to support the Salmon Recovery Boards, regional recovery organizations, and Lead Entities.
    - Board member Weber complimented Ms. Duffy and the RCO on the work she does with all the programs, and thank her for her support.
- Erik Neatherlin, Executive Coordinator, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO):
  - Mr. Neatherlin stated he came to the GSRO from WDFW where he oversaw the Science Programs. He worked closely with the Lead Entities and Directors across the state. He added that prior to going to WDFW he worked in a non-governmental role and focused on research.

He has worked in salmon recovery for the last 15 – 20 years. He explained that the GSRO office was set up in statute with a primary role to support the regions, and coordinate activities between the regions and the Governor’s office with the statewide strategy that was adopted in 1999. In addition, his role is to act as a liaison with the Tribes, state legislators, and federal delegations. Mr. Neatherlin stated he works closely with Director Manlow and his colleagues across the state and with the Council of Regions. He has been in the position approximately two years and initially the goal was to get out and meet with all of the regions. He noted he is behind schedule due to COVID. He looks at his role as supporting the work that is being done on the ground by the salmon recovery partners.

Mr. Neatherlin named a few of the high priority actions the GSRO is currently working on, including, working with the Governor’s office, other state agencies and their staff as they update the Statewide Strategy which is currently in the Governor’s office. On the federal side, he coordinates with other states on the Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) making sure we continue to secure federal dollars to anchor the state funds to support the regions. He noted he prepares an annual letter from the PCSRF’s five western states (CA, OR, ID, WA, AK). Senator Cantwell was the champion of the Senate letter, and Representative Rick Larson was the champion and submitted a letter for the House. He explained he is also working closely with delegation on the infrastructure discussions that are happening around the increasing funding for passage and salmon recovery to build resiliency.

- Board member Greenlee stated he is on a number of Boards and understands attending meetings on a rotating basis. He suggested having informal discussions with the regional directors to see what is coming up on their agendas and use that information when choosing which meetings to attend.
  - Board member Greenlee commented that he looked at the Bonneville fish counts this morning and the water coming through the dam is at 72 degrees which is awfully close to fatal for Chinook. He referenced possible use of hatcheries to improve the genetics of fish so they can adapt to climate change, using the Sandy River as an example of shifted run timing.
  - Board member Weber asked Mr. Neatherlin is regular communication with Director Manlow’s predecessor, Jeff Breckel. Mr. Neatherlin stated yes. Board member Weber added that Mr. Breckel is familiar with this regions status of having a lot of unencumbered spawning streams by dams and/or urban development, and highlighted that increasing and improving habitat will move us closer to success. He thanked Mr. Neatherlin for the support his office has given and the reallocation of resources.
- Jeannie Abbott, Program Coordinator, Governor’s Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO):
    - Ms. Abbott stated her first real job was with the Cowlitz Conservation District at a time when the LCFRB was being established. She then moved to the Pierce Conservation District, DNR Forest Practices Program, and WDFW, before going to the GSRO. She explained her roles as the contract manager for the LCFRB’s regional and lead entity contracts, the lead on the PCSRF application, and coordinating the Salmon Recovery Conference.

Chairman Olson thanked the partners for their support to the LCFRB. He added that we look forward to working with them, they are welcome to attend future meetings. Director Manlow expressed his appreciation as well.

## **BUSINESS MEETING**

### Item #1 Consent Agenda and Director's Report

Chairman Olson explained that beginning this meeting and all for future meetings, after discussions with Director Manlow and a few other Board members, Director Manlow will prepare a written Director's Report. He noted that questions can be addressed at the end of the meeting or by contacting staff directly.

Board member Greenlee moved and Board member Mahnke seconded to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted. No discussion. Motion carried.

### Item #2 Allocation of Funds to the Klickitat Lead Entity for Projects in the White Salmon Subbasin

Director Manlow presented the item to the Board, explaining that in 2017, the Board made the decision to allocate up to 2.7% of the Lower Columbia total regional allocation available to the Klickitat County Lead Entity to projects that support the Lower Columbia populations in the White Salmon. He noted that this year the Snake River Salmon Recovery Board (SRSRB) has also provided funds to the LCFRB, with resulted in additional dollars that could be allocated to projects. After talking with project sponsors, staff is recommending that \$7,305 of those funds be added to the Klickitat LE's base allocation to fund the Upper Rattlesnake Creek Conservation project #21-1241 for a total allocation of \$115,305.

No questions or comments from the Board.

Board member Greenlee moved and Board member Swanson seconded to make \$115,305 available for the Klickitat County Lead Entity's 2021 Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) proposals in the White Salmon Watershed. No discussion. Motion carried.

### Item #3 Approval of the 2021 SRFB Monitoring Project

Director Manlow presented the item to the Board, noting that in December 2020 the Board authorized making up to 10% of the regional SRFB allocation available for monitoring projects in 2021. After deducting \$115,305 for the Klickitat Lead Entity, this would result in approximately \$389,200 being designated for monitoring proposals. He noted the current monitoring proposal request total is \$100,000.

Director Manlow provided broader context for our SRFB project list as a whole. He stated this was a competitive year for projects. The SRFB list contains 8 habitat projects, 1 monitoring project, and 10 alternate projects for a total ask of \$6.2 million, and we only had \$3.8 million to allocate, making this a highly competitive grant round. He noted that on average, the Board funds about 10 projects per year.

Director Manlow stated staff will be working with the Board over the next couple of months on the Focused Habitat Investment Strategy, diving deeper into how projects could be more effective and meaningful for high priority populations.

Director Manlow noted that some of the projects that are not above the funding line may be funded, partially or in full, through other programs, including Clark County Clean Water Restoration Fund, Fish Barrier Removal Board, and Tacoma Power CRR funds.

Director Manlow offered his thanks to the SRFB for adding funds for monitoring this year, the Snake River Salmon Recovery Board for the additional funding they provided, and to the TAC members, Review Panel, and Ameer Bahr for their support of the grant round.

Questions and comments from the Board:

- Board member Greenlee asked if there is a score for match. Director Manlow stated the amount of match is considered in scoring through the scoring questions and criteria. Equal project types generally score higher if more match is offered in the proposal.
- Chairman Olson expressed his thanks to the sponsors, Rudy Salakory (TAC Chair), and the TAC members who were engaged in the review process. He added his appreciation to the Snake River Salmon Recovery Board for the additional funds.
- Board member Greenlee suggested the Board draft a letter or make certificates to be issued to the sponsors, TAC members, and review committee. Chairman Olson stated he would follow up with Ms. Smeeth when she returns from vacation.
- Chairman Olson stated he would like WDFW to give a presentation to the Board on the monitoring project.

Director Manlow stated that every year, per our by-laws, we need to ask Board members if they have a conflict of interest, or would gain personally, or if there is anything that would prevent them from objectively making a determination on the project list, and to disclose any ex parte knowledge or exposure to projects. If a Board member does have a conflict of interest, he asked that they recuse themselves from voting on the project list.

Board member's disclosure their Conflict of Interest for Agenda Items 3:

- Board member Cothren           None
- Board member Greenlee       None
- Board member Mahar           None
- Board member Mahnke       None   Member is a member of the LCFEG board but sees no conflict.
- Board member Olson           None
- Board member Rivers         None
- Board member Stamper       None
- Board member Swanson       None
- Board member Thomason      None
- Board member Unger          None
- Board member Weber          None
- Board member Wilson         None

Director Manlow stated this item is our single monitoring project for this grant round. This is a proposal from WDFW, #21-1126, Winter Steelhead Escapement Analysis, to develop a model for estimating Steelhead abundance. The methods that are used today consistently underestimate abundance.

Comments by sponsors on their project:

- No comments from sponsors.

Comments by the public on any project:

- No public comment.

Board member Greenlee moved and Board member Weber seconded to adopt the 2021 Lower Columbia Regional Monitoring Project, Winter Steelhead Escapement Analysis Project #21-1126 and approve its submission to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board as part of the Region's overall SRFB project list. No discussion. Motion carried.

Item #4 Approval of the 2021 SRFB Habitat Ranked Project List

Director Manlow presented the item to the Board, and explained that this is our ranked habitat project list for the Lower Columbia. Staff is recommending the Board adopt the TAC Benefits to Fish, Certainty of Success, and Cost scores and supporting assumptions and deliberations. These items are the basis and rationale of the project list. The final list has to be sent in to the SRFB by August 10, 2021.

He provided an overview of the grant round. The grant round was opened in December 2020 and advertised for projects. In February, staff started the pre-proposal meetings with sponsors and then held virtual site visits in March. The Board ended up with 21 original project proposals totaling \$6.4 million in grant requests. The Review Panel noted one project of concern (POC), Uncle Henry's Lake project in the Elochoman. The Review Panel felt there was not enough clarity on technical approach with regard to the project outcome. Mr. Manlow noted that while there is an opportunity to challenge a POC, if you challenge and do not win, you will lose the funding of that project. At the risk of losing funding, staff did not challenge the POC designation on this project. Staff will work with the sponsor to better address the project and concerns in the next grant round.

Director Manlow stated we did end up with two tied projects that straddled the funding line. We were thankful to get a call from SNSRF Board offering the LCFBR additional funds allowing us to fund the two tied projects.

- Board member's disclosure their Conflict of Interest for Agenda Items 4:
- Board member Cothren           None
- Board member Greenlee       None
- Board member Mahar           None
- Board member Mahnke       None   Member is the president of the LCFEG but sees no conflict.
- Board member Olson           None
- Board member Rivers          None
- Board member Stamper       None
- Board member Swanson       None
- Board member Thomason      None
- Board member Unger          None
- Board member Weber          None
- Board member Wilson        Yes, One of the projects below the funding line is on his property.  
Member recused himself.

Questions and comments from the Board:

- This action item has three parts to it, Board member Greenlee stated in the interest of form, the Board should have two motions. One motion for the TAC’s assumptions and deliberations (Part 1) and a separate motion for the ranked list (Part 3). Noting that receiving/using funds from SRFRB (Part 2) was approved in Action Item #2.

Questions and comments from the TAC officers:

- Rudy Salakory, TAC Chair, stated this was a competitive year and appreciates the work that the LCFRB does and appreciates member involvement.

Comments by sponsors on their project:

- No comments from sponsors.

Comments by the public on any project:

- No public comment.

Board member Greenlee moved and Board member Rivers seconded to adopt the TAC’s Benefits to Fish, Certainty of Success, and Cost scores and the supporting assumptions and deliberations. No discussion. Motion carried.

Board member Greenlee moved and Board member Mahnke seconded to adopt the 2021 Lower Columbia Lead Entity Ranked Project List recommended by the TAC and approve its submission to the SRFB. No discussion. Motion carried.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT:** Director Manlow asked Board members to review the report and let him know if they had any questions.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

- Board member Weber complimented Director Manlow on the Director’s Report. The sheer complexity of the activities that the Director engages in every month on a wide range of issues is impressive. Board member Greenlee agreed.
- Chairman Olson stated he appreciates the work that staff does.
- The next Board meeting is scheduled for October 1, 2021. September will be cancelled due to the Labor Day holiday.

The meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

/lc

Approved in open session on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Todd Olson, Chairman