



## Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board

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December 9, 2022  
Board Meeting  
Webinar and In-Person Meeting  
WSDOT, Room 211  
11018 NE 51<sup>st</sup> Circle, Vancouver WA 98682

Draft Minutes  
For Approval: February 3, 2023

Present: Scott Brummer, Dan Cothren, Richard Mahar, Hal Mahnke, Troy McCoy, Gary Medvigy, Todd Olson, Olaf Thomason, Dennis Weber, and Del Wilson.

Absent: Marylynne Kostick, Ann Rivers, Don Swanson, and Jade Unger. Chairman excused the absent members.

Staff: Steve Manlow, Denise Smee, Amelia Johnson, Steve West, and Lorie Clark

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Chairman Olson welcomed Scott Brummer to the Board and asked members to introduce themselves. Board member Brummer has replaced Board member Lee Grose as the newly elected Lewis County Commissioner. Board member Brummer introduced himself and stated he has worked for the Department of Fish and Wildlife for over 20 years as a Habitat Biologist. He added he appreciates the opportunity to be on the Board and get to know everyone better.

Director Manlow welcomed the new Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members who were appointed by their agencies.

- Dee Dee Jones has replaced Angie Haffie for the WA State Department of Transportation.
- Nate Woodard has replaced Devan Rostorfer for the WA State Department of Ecology.
- Chris Mongeon from WA State Department of Natural Resources has stepped down. We are currently working to fill his seat on the TAC.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** No public comments were made.

**PARTNER REPORTS:** Director Manlow stated he was contacted by Kessina Lee of WDFW. She has accepted a position with USFWS. He noted that Ms. Lee was the Board liaison for WDFW and a great resource on the predation issue.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Director Manlow stated he did not prepare a written report for the meeting. He provided the following updates:

- Grant Round: Staff is working to update the grant manual, scoring materials, and calendar. These will be presented at the February 2023 Board meeting. In addition, staff is working with Tacoma Power and their Fisheries Technical Committee (FTC) to update the Cowlitz Restoration and Recovery documents and grant round materials.

- SRFB Meeting: The SRFB met this week. Alex Conley, the Chairman for Council of Regions (COR), provided testimony on some changes the SRFB is looking at for the 2023 grant round.
- Hatchery & Harvest: Director Manlow provided testimony at a recent Fish and Wildlife Commission meeting regarding commercial and recreation fishery stakeholders. He added that he wanted to emphasize to the Commission that we need to keep recovery in the forefront as they figure out how to navigate the Columbia River fisheries next year.
- WDFW's Hatchery Production: Mr. Manlow noted that some hatchery production is related to supporting Southern Resident Killer Whales, and there was an initiative that came out of the Governor's process for killer whale hatchery production recommendations. WDFW is proposing workshops focused on evaluating those programs.
- Conservation Sustainable Fisheries Plan (CSFP): Ms. Johnson is spearheading our effort to wrap up the CSFP report. Staff is working with Fish Science Solutions and WDFW to gauge evaluated hatchery and harvest reform implementation in the Lower Columbia. This report will be published as a joint document.
- Critical Area Ordinance (CAO): Steve West is working with Clark County on their critical areas ordinance update. He is working on a technical letter to provide recommendations specific to recovery needs and priorities for riparian buffers and wetlands.
- Interstate Bridge Replacement: Steve West is continuing to work on the interstate bridge replacement project by helping to identify mitigation opportunities and impacts to fish stocks.
- Columbia Basin Collaborative (CBC): Director Manlow stated he has been participating in different work groups focusing on identifying and addressing recovery bottlenecks in the basin, to ensure the interests of the LCFRB and other regions are being addressed.
- Fish Passage: Steve West is working with the Cowlitz Tribe and Burlington Northern on a potential fish passage barrier near North Bonneville, focusing on chum salmon passage. It is a long-standing chum spawning area and the barrier is at the railroad crossing.
- Lewis River Hydro Project: Staff sits on the Aquatic Coordination Committee (ACC) for the Lewis River. We've been working with the utilities to wade through the different alternatives for fish passage facilities and the reintroduction process into the Yale and Merwin Reservoirs.
- Letter to the Governor and OFM: Mr. Manlow noted that at the last meeting, the Board approved a letter to the Governor and OFM that lays out the recovery priorities we identified. These include increasing capacity for the state Lead Entities and Regional Organizations. Staff will report back to the Board when we know where the Governor's budget and legislature budgets land. Chairman Olson added that once the legislative session begins, it is fast and furious and things happen very quickly and encouraged the Board to reach out if opportunities arise.

## **BUSINESS MEETING**

Item #1            Consent Agenda

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

Item #2            2023 Annual Budget

Ms. Smee presented the item. She noted that this year is a little different than most years and explained that for the first time since 2005, RCO has included an increase in their biennial budget request for Lead Entities and Regional Organizations capacity operating dollars - the Board has been working on the same budget since 2009 without any increase in funding. Director Manlow stated all Lead Entities in the state have been doing 2022 work on 2009 budget funds which does not keep up with the static budget.

Staff is asking the Board to adopt three budgets contingent on funding from the Legislature.

- 2023 Baseline Budget
- 2023 Budget with Additional Lead Entity Funding
- 2023 Budget with Additional Lead Entity and Regional Funding

Ms. Smee walked the Board through the budget detail. She displayed the three budgets side by side to show the increase in funding and where it would/could be used, including new GIS software and a computer for Ms. Johnson to create maps for projects. She noted that currently, any changes or updates to SalmonPort must be done by the consultant that created the platform because staff does not have authorization to update. She noted that another proposed purchase is an OWL system. This is the system that is being used for this meeting, however, it is owned by WSDOT and we can only use it while in the building.

She explained that all three budgets include a 2% Step increase and 3% COLA for all staff. Ms. Smee stated when we look at the COLA, we consider the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the Social Security Administration (SSA). This year the CPI is 7.7% and SSA is 8.7%. In addition, staff does a COLA survey of the five counties our Board represents, with most of them at 3%. She concluded by noting that our funding comes from RCO and already doesn't cover our current operating expenses, but we are hard pressed to request more than 3% for COLA.

Questions and comments from the Board:

- Board member Mahar stated Google Maps are propriety and they could charge for the use of their maps. Ms. Smee agreed and explained that Formos is the consultant that developed the information for SalmonPort and they are the only one that change make any changes. She noted the Board is moving toward use of the Salmon Recovery Portal (SRP) instead.
- Board member Mahar asked if the Board earns interest on the unused funds in the accounts. Ms. Smee stated yes.
- Board member Weber suggested staff should look for another way to invest unused funds to maximize the interest earned. Ms. Smee stated currently, Clark County Treasurer invests on our behalf, but she will see if there are other options available.
- Board member Weber stated concern for approving all three budgets contingent on funding. He suggested approving the baseline budget. When and if additional funding is received, the Board could approve an amendment to the 2023 budget.
- Board member Medvigy stated the budgets presented are a good approach for the different funding scenarios. He shared Board member Weber's concern.

Board member Weber moved and Board member Mahnke seconded to adopt the calendar year 2023 baseline Budget presented on Table 1. If/when additional funding becomes available, staff will present an amended budget to the Board for approval. No discussion. Motion carried.

Item #3 Appointment of a New Finance Committee Member

Director Manlow presented the item. He stated there is a vacancy on the Finance Committee since Rudy Salakory resigned from the Cowlitz Tribe. Chairman Olson stated being on the Finance Committee is not a very heavy lift. Lorie Clark compiles the claims and payroll twice a month for the Finance Committee to review and approve prior to submitting for payment.

Chairman Olson asked if anyone had an interest in filling the position. Board member Medvigny nominated Board member Weber. However, he is already a member of the Finance Committee. No other nominations were made. Chairman Olson stated he would have some discussions with members offline. This item will be moved to the February 2023 meeting.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

- Chairman Olson stated with the departure of Lee Grose from the Board, the Vice Chairman position will need to be filled.
- Director Manlow stated staff is still working with the Cowlitz Tribe to get a replacement for Rudy Salakory to the LCFRB.
- Ms. Smee stated the Salmon Recovery Conference will be held in Vancouver on April 18 & 19, 2023. Please contact staff if you want to attend.
- Ms. Smee stated she would send out calendar invites to the Board for the 2023 meeting dates.
- Board member Wilson stated he was curious as to the number of times the LCFRB website is being accessed and how the information is being used. Who do we serve with the website and for what purpose? He stated he didn't want an answer today, just curious. Director Manlow stated that currently we don't have those statistics, but we can discuss. He added a lot of the information on the website is to help project sponsors and the TAC align with the Recovery Plan.
- Happy Holidays!

Chairman Olson adjourned the meeting at 2:20 p.m.

/lc

Approved in open session on \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Todd Olson, Chairman