



## Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board

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November 5, 2021  
Board Meeting  
Conference Call/Webinar

Minutes  
Approved: December 3, 2021

**Present:** Dan Cothren, Paul Greenlee, Lee Grose, Richard Mahar, Hal Mahnke, Gary Medvigy, Todd Olson, Ann Rivers, Rudy Salakory, Don Swanson, Olaf Thomason, and Del Wilson

**Absent:** Jade Unger and Dennis Weber, Chairman Olson excused the absent members.

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

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### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- No announcements were made.

### PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- No public comments were made.

### PARTNER REPORTS:

- Kessina Lee, WDFW Update on Sea Lion Predation

Ms. Lee provided an update on the status of sea lion control efforts in the Columbia River. She noted that during the fall season, WDFW removed six Stellar Sea Lions by lethal force - this is the first year they removed Stellar Sea Lions. She explained they are a much larger animal than the California Sea Lions, and noted spring of 2021 was the first full season, and WDFW removed 21 California and 13 Stellar Sea Lions at Bonneville Dam. In addition, ODFW removed 8 California and 1 Steller Sea Lions from Willamette Falls. To date, the fall 2021 season they have removed 17 Steller Sea Lions and no California Sea Lions as they are not present in the fall. She commented there are approximately 20-25 Stellar Sea Lions still present at Bonneville Dam, and that the trapping season will go through the middle of November.

Ms. Lee summarized that under the new authorization received in August 2020, the states (WDFW and ODFW) have removed a total of 21 California and 37 Stellar Sea Lions from Bonneville Dam and Willamette Falls with a total of 55,000 pounds of biomass. She indicated WDFW has authorization to do removals from mainstem tributaries as well, but has not started that process as there is a big learning curve around since new equipment and techniques are required - tributary work should start in the spring of 2022. Ms. Lee stated she would be happy to set up a more substantive presentation to the Board, by the members that are performing the work, if members are interested.

Questions and comments from the Board.

- Board member Swanson asked what WDFW does with the animal carcasses. Ms. Lee stated there is a provision in the agreement that if tribes are interested in the carcasses for ceremonial purposes, they can request them from NMFS. To date, no Tribes have requested the carcasses. WDFW allows necropsy of animals to collect tissue samples for health and body research for future studies. Then their bodies are disposed of under guidelines from the permit.

- Board member Greenlee thanked Ms. Lee and staff performing the work on this issue. He acknowledged that if you are interested in pinnipeds, doing this work could be challenging. Ms. Lee agreed and stated WDFW is mindful of the challenge. As part of their training, staff borrows from training that veterinarians receive regarding euthanasia, and noted that work that takes its toll on people.
- Board member Medvigy stated he had spoken with Congresswoman Herrera Beutler on this issue. He asked if the authorization is enough. He also asked if the pandemic constrained the ability to harvest, and whether it is more beneficial to have a more robust authorization to harvest the remaining 20-25 that are still present at the dam. Ms. Lee stated she will lead a tour with Ms. Herrera Beutler next week and part of that will be to show her where the work is being done and the conditions staff is working in and will be requesting infrastructure improvements. Ms. Lee stated she feels the authorization is enough but the maximum daily limits allowed under the permit are more than staff is physically able to remove on a daily basis. Removals can only be made during the daylight hours so it is getting more difficult to remove animals now that the days are getting shorter.
- Board member Medvigy asked when we would know the impact of the latest removal/harvest. Ms. Lee stated ODFW has done some modeling for the effectiveness under the prior permit, however it hasn't been updated for this season.
- Chairman Olson invited Ms. Lee to the February Board meeting for another presentation to see how the full season and the impact on salmon.
- Board member Swanson asked if the Sea Lions eat the whole fish or just the eggs. Ms. Lee stated for the most part they eat the whole fish.
- Director Manlow stated when we get through the agenda and for the Good of the Order today if it would be appropriate to discuss how predation plays into the all "H" recovery approach.

#### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- Director Manlow stated the report was sent out ahead of the meeting today, and asked the Board to let him know if they have questions.
- Director Manlow wanted to highlight the work that Board member Wilson's has been doing on Landowner Incentives. Board member Wilson presented the information to the Washington Salmon Coalition (WSC) on 10/12 2021 and received a lot of positive feedback from the Lead Entities. The report was well received and triggered future work to identify tools for landowners.
- Chairman Olson stated the next Landowner Incentive sub-group meeting on 11/10/2021 at 11:00 a.m. and would like to ask Board members to join the meeting. Chairman Olson asked Board member Wilson if there was anything that the Board could do to continue the momentum. Board member Wilson stated it would be helpful to share this information with as many people outside of our agency as possible so they are aware of what is going on then get their feedback as well. He added that he wants to get the information out to the legislature.
- Chairman Olson stated that Board Member Wilson's presentation is available upon request.

\*Technical issue, Director Manlow and Ms. Smee are both at the office today and lost internet connection but they reconnected shortly after via phone and GoToMeeting.

## **BUSINESS MEETING**

### Item #1 Consent Agenda

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

### Item #2 Spirit Lake Collaborative Agreement

Director Manlow presented the item to the Board, noting the recommendation is for the Director to sign the draft "Declaration of Cooperation" for the Spirit Lake-Toutle/Cowlitz River System Collaborative on behalf of the Board. This effort originated in 2018 and as a result of a federal agency (Forest Service, USGS, and USACE) request for the for the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM) to take a look at the issues in the Toutle River watershed, including the outlet tunnel and sediment management. He noted the process originated from concerns regarding long-term risks to public safety from flooding and sedimentation, and that staff have been engaged throughout this whole process as we are recognized as one of the partners in this collaborative.

The process is now at the point where interested parties will make a commitment to work together to create a common understanding of the issues and help to find solutions for those issues. Director Manlow stated he feels it is appropriate for the LCFRB to be at the table. He summarized concerns some agencies expressed regarding FACA rules, and noted he expects some modification to the agreement language to address the concern.

No questions or comments from the Board.

Board member Grose moved and Board member Medvigy seconded to authorize the Director to sign the draft "Declaration of Cooperation" for the Spirit Lake-Toutle/Cowlitz River System Collaborative on behalf of the Board. No discussion. Motion carried.

### Item #3 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Recruitment and Recommendations

Director Manlow presented the item to the Board. He stated that the TAC recruitment we sent out in August and September did result in a few additional nominations. Those nominations have been vetted with the TAC members.

Nominees are Kelley Jorgensen and Sarah Kidd.

- Kelley Jorgensen: The Board members may recognize Ms. Jorgenson. She used to work for the Board, had a seat on the TAC previously and sit on the state Review Panel.
- Sarah Kidd: Ms. Kidd works for the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership. She is an ecologist and has done a lot of work with monitoring and very engaged in restoration in the Lower Columbia.

Director Manlow stated that both members were unanimously approved by the TAC.

Director Manlow stated there was one additional nominee, Lindsay Sheehan, however the TAC was not unanimous on her appointment and felt they would get the same skill set that Ms. Kidd would offer. Director

Manlow added that with the addition of the nominees, the Board has a robust TAC has a good skill set going into the grant round.

Questions and comments from the Board:

- Board member Salakory stated the resumes for the nominees speak for themselves. They will be a great addition to the TAC and added this is one of the strongest Technical Advisory Committee's the Board has had in the last 14 years. He added that it is difficult to keep these positions filled because they are volunteer and it's up to the agencies to designate people. He would recommend a constant call for volunteers for the TAC.

Board member Greenlee moved and Board member Wilson seconded to appoint Kelley Jorgensen and Sarah Kidd to the LCFRB's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). No discussion. Motion carried.

#### Item #4 Clark County Investment Program

Director Manlow presented the item to the Board. This is an update to our current investment agreement that was signed in 2015. As you know Clark County is the Board's fiduciary agent and they have asked that we sign an updated agreement because Clark County is working through a banking change and updating all their service agreements.

Questions and comments from the Board:

- Board member Medvigy asked if this is related to the (CCCWRF) Consent Decree, or as far as the interlocal agreement. Whether this addresses the contributions themselves? Ms. Smee stated no, it doesn't have anything to do with the Consent Decree or interlocal agreement, and that it relates to a banking change for Clark County. The County recently changed banks from Bank of America to JP Morgan Chase so they are updating their agreements with all of their districts.

Board member Greenlee moved and Board member Rivers seconded to approve the Board approve the updated agreement with Clark County for Investment Services. No discussion. Motion carried.

#### **GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

Director Manlow presented a figure outlining mortality factors across the "Hs" for Chinook salmon, to highlight the importance of habitat relative to the other factors. He noted that predation has emerged as a concern for salmon recovery in the state, and that some of the upper river populations have been hit harder than the lower Columbia River populations. He then highlighted the comparatively high impact associated with habitat, which warrants additional attention. He asked if the Board would be interested in forming a sub-committee to dive into the habitat needs and gaps regarding recovery, especially as they interface with the programs that Board members work on within their local governments.

Questions and comments from the Board:

- Board member Medvigy stated predation isn't at odds with habitat. We should maximize a (predation removal) program that we know works to get the full benefit from the program. He added that he is curious, with the biomass of the Sea Lions being removed, how much they were eating per day.

- Board member Rivers stated while we all care about fish and recovery, and the economy of both sport and commercial fishing as to what it means for our state, most people in central Puget Sound (the area where most of the legislators live), they don't know what it takes to get to recovery. We need to educate them so that when these issues come up before the legislature, they can make sound decisions and not emotional decisions.
- Board member Greenlee stated most of the Board members are public officials and think about public response in ways that perhaps fish biologist do not. He noted that thinking of the best Bang for the Buck is always a positive with the public - protection of habitat is much cheaper than restoration. He added that regarding public interest on predation, perhaps we could publicize the fish ladder camera at the Bonneville Dam more. He used the example, that if you can't see them (salmon) then you can't care about them.
- Board member Swanson stated there is a project on the river to protect a hard angle with a spawning area. He stated that another example of predation are the boaters with inboard jet motors going fast through the spawning beds.
- Board member Swanson stated on an annual basis, on NPR, there is a representative or senator that has a "Fleecing of America" type list and the PCSRF is on that list every year noting that it isn't worth the money and feels it needs to be stopped. The amount of money it takes to paint the two Woodland bridges is ten times the amount that we spend on salmon recovery in a year.
- Chairman Olson asked Director Manlow to explain what he thought the focus of the sub-committee should be. Director Manlow stated the most difficult task is how to inform the state and local decision makers on salmon recovery. He explained that staff tracks day to day permits for development and buffers, and sometimes comments on them. He added that there is an opportunity, as a Board, to work more with county commissioners and planning directors and share information on salmon recovery needs. The concern is that the habitat gains made in restoration work could be undermined or not realized if we are not protecting the habitat baseline.
- Chairman Olson stated we can establish a sub-committee of elected officials to get started and speak with the county officials on the messaging. Chairman Olson asked that staff set up a time to work with elected officials. He suggested an initial meeting with staff and Board member Medvigy to discuss the messaging before setting meetings with the other county commissioners. Board member Medvigy volunteered to be on the sub-committee.
- Board member Greenlee asked what other predators are there to salmon other than Sea Lions and Cormorants. Director Manlow stated those are the big ones, along with Caspian terns, fish eating ducks, pike minnow, small and large mouth bass, walleye, and northern pike (above Grand Coulee now).

**ADDITIONAL GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

- Board member Grose stated the Lewis County BOCC has appointed him to fill the remainder of Gary Stamper's term (12/31/2022) as commissioner and he will be sworn in on 11/17/2021. He stated, if it is the will of the Board, he would continue with the LCFRB as the Lewis County Commissioner representative but that will leave a vacancy for the Lewis County Citizen Representative. Board member Grose stated he is working with the BOCC to find a replacement for the Citizen position.
- Chairman Olson asked what will be on the December meeting agenda. Staff responded, 2022 annual budget, updated program manual, and opening the SRFB grant round, and Executive Session for performance review.
- Board member Grose asked for names and contact information of current project sponsors.
- Director Manlow stated staff will be hosting a CRR Program public workshop on 11/17/2021 at 1:00 p.m. Ms. Smee stated she will forward the information to all Board members.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

/lc

Approved in open session on 12/03/21.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Todd Olson, Chairman