



COLUMBIA BASIN FISH AND WILDLIFE AUTHORITY

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Coordinating and promoting effective protection and restoration of fish, wildlife, and their habitat in the Columbia River Basin.

The Authority is comprised of the following tribes and fish and wildlife agencies:

Burns Paiute Tribe

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation

Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation

Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

Kootenai Tribe of Idaho

Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks

National Marine Fisheries Service

Nez Perce Tribe

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of Fort Hall

Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Coordinating Agencies

Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission

Upper Columbia United Tribes

Compact of the Upper Snake River Tribes

DATE: May 20, 2010
TO: Wildlife Advisory Committee (WAC)
FROM: Doug Calvin, Chair
SUBJECT: May 18, 2010 WAC Meeting Final Action Notes

Wildlife Advisory Committee Meeting
May 18, 2010, 1-5 pm
Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority
Portland, Oregon

The support material is posted at: http://www.cbfwa.org/committee_wac.cfm

Final Action Notes

Attendees: Doug Calvin (Chair, CTWSRO); Scott Soultz (Vice-chair, KTOI); Carol Perugini (SPT); Angela Sondenaa (NPT); Tracy Hames (YN); Gregg Servheen (IDFG); Nate Pamplin and Paul Dahmer (WDFW); Kyle Heinrick (BPT); Carl Scheeler (CTUIR); Tom O'Neil (NHI); and Tom Iverson (CBFWA)

By Phone: Aren Eddingsaas (SBT) and Keith Kutichins (UCUT)

Time Allocation:

Objective 1. Committee Participation	100%
Objective 2. Technical Review	0%
Objective 3. Presentation	0%

ITEM 1: Introductions and Approve Agenda

Discussion: Tom I. mentioned that the 2010 Regional HEP Team sampling schedule is included in the items posted for this meeting on the CBFWA website.

ACTIONS: The agenda was approved as written.

ITEM 2: Review and Approve as Final March Draft Action Notes

ACTION: The WAC approved the March 16, 2010 Action Notes as final with no modifications.

ITEM 3: Coordinated Assessments for Listed Anadromous Fish

Discussion: Tom I. provided an overview of the efforts of the Anadromous Fish Managers to develop coordinated basinwide assessments for listed anadromous fish. The anadromous fish managers recently completed a comprehensive monitoring framework in part to address the requirements for reporting for the FCRPS Biological Opinion. The creation of the monitoring framework led to the initiation of the development of the Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Reporting Plan (MERR) called for in the 2009 Fish and Wildlife Program. During the monitoring workshops, the Council wanted to ensure that there would be consistency between the anadromous fish monitoring framework and potential resident fish and wildlife monitoring frameworks developed in the future.

The anadromous managers developed their monitoring framework based on priority data needs to meet ESA evaluations and reporting. The agencies and Tribes also committed to provide this data for regional access. A CBFWA policy directive for 2010 is for CBFWA to support and participate in regional assessments for fish and wildlife. CBFWA staff has been facilitating an effort to develop a data management strategy to support the regional anadromous fish assessment. This

effort will require agreement on making data accessible using consistent methods and protocols. This will allow common access to all data necessary for the Status of the Resource Report and NOAA's annual and five-year evaluations to any interested parties, as well as independent assessments by the co-managers. The current schedule will have the data management strategy complete, with submission of data management proposals to the Council's RME Categorical Review, by September 2010.

Keith asked what the driver is for this effort. Tom I. responded that the CBFWA work plan identified, as a priority, supporting ongoing consistent basinwide assessments. Data management is key to supporting that objective. Also, BPA is offering some funding to help support data management that will support BiOp implementation and evaluation. Finally, the Council categorical review will be reviewing all data management projects and seeking their contribution to providing basinwide data to support regional reporting efforts like their reports to congress and the four governors, the SOTR, and other reports. The convergence of these needs has triggered the significant effort to improve and support anadromous fish data management and assessments.

It is important for the WAC to be aware that there is one basinwide wildlife project that will be reviewed in the RME Categorical Review. The NHI IBIS proposal was put off during the Wildlife Categorical Review in order to be reviewed in the context of all monitoring projects. This project may be important in regards to developing the Wildlife Monitoring Implementation Strategy. Tom O. will be able to provide a presentation of his proposal at the next WAC meeting.

ITEM 4: Review Subbasin Plan Species List and Roll-up

Discussion: Scott provided a background on this subject. In the development of the initial draft of the Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Reporting Plan, Matt reviewed the species and habitat priorities currently in the MERR and found inconsistencies with existing subbasin plans. At the March WAC meeting, Scott asked Tom O. to produce summary tables from the subbasin plans, which provide a list of priority focal species and priority habitat characterizations. The summary tables were sent to the WAC members and they were asked to review those summary tables and provide comments and edits if the lists were not consistent with the agencies and Tribes current priorities and state wide conservation plans.

The intent for this effort is to build off existing planning efforts to establish priority species or habitat characteristics that can be monitored over time to provide a framework for monitoring and reporting basinwide wildlife assessments. The WAC discussed the possibility of using species and determined that it probably doesn't make sense to use representative species for basinwide evaluations. Therefore, the group should focus on habitat characteristics as a basis for basinwide metrics. Tom O. was asked to provide some existing options for characterizing habitat on a basinwide scale. The WAC did determine that they don't really manage their projects at a habitat type scale; cover type or vegetation layer may be more appropriate.

The WAC's first priority is to develop a classification scheme for habitat that can roll-up from the subbasins to the basinwide scale. The second priority is to review the priority species list and determine if there are focal species that can represent wildlife mitigation at the basinwide scale.

ACTION: The WAC requested that each member confirm the habitat characterizations for their subbasins identified in the tables provided by Tom O. Tom I. will send out a request for WAC members to comment and respond prior to the next WAC meeting. Tom O. was asked to present habitat categorization options for higher level roll-up at the next WAC meeting.

ITEM 5: Wildlife Monitoring Implementation Plan

Discussion: Tom I. was asked to synthesize the comments on the MERR submitted to Council that related to wildlife and incorporate them into a work plan for developing a Wildlife Monitoring Implementation Strategy (WMIS). However, few wildlife related comments were submitted to Council. The UCUT response was most relevant to wildlife. Therefore, Tom I. presented the MERR summary from the March WAC meeting as a potential outline, and starting point, for the WMIS. This summary provides an outline and the existing information related to wildlife directly from the draft MERR.

Carl pointed out that the existing management questions and format for the WMIS from the MERR may not fit for wildlife. The WMIS would need to focus on species that are specifically relevant to in-basin effects and probably also to species where we currently have extensive monitoring programs. There may not be appropriate indicator species available in the basin to meet this standard. It may be more appropriate to focus on environmental function using biodiversity indices. A couple of metrics that could be used as indicators include cover type relative to the conservation status of the species or protected habitat acres as a percentage of total acres within a subbasin, province, or basin.

Scott referred to the original Wildlife Monitoring Strategy developed by the WAC last Fall. Significant work was expended to develop management questions and other aspects of the WMIS that should be included as we move forward. The group agreed that there was significant effort put into that document and they do not want to see that information lost. Tom I. was asked to incorporate the previous draft information into the existing summary. A review committee volunteered to review the initial draft, prior to sending out the full WAC.

The WAC felt that a workshop similar to the one held in Usk last year could be very beneficial to developing the WMIS. With the lack of a Wildlife Crediting Forum meeting in July, there is an opportunity to hold a meeting away from Portland to focus on developing the WMIS.

ACTION: Tom I. will develop an initial draft outline by merging the original Wildlife Monitoring Framework with the MERR proposed outline. The draft will be distributed to Scott, Nate/Paul, Angela, and Ray/Matt for comment before sending out to the entire committee. The WAC will hold a workshop in Pendleton, Oregon in July to flesh out the outline and develop the first draft of the Wildlife Monitoring Implementation Strategy as described in the MERR.

ITEM 6: Wildlife Crediting Forum Update

Discussion: At the March Wildlife Crediting Forum (WCF), two subcommittees were formed to begin addressing unresolved issues: 1) Ledger subcommittee to discuss how HEP is being used to account for mitigation credits, and 2) Fish Habitat Crediting subcommittee to discuss how to develop a process for approving wildlife mitigation credits for fish habitat projects. The WAC discussed the value of recording the conversations in these committees and expressed a desire to see more notes taken during the WCF meetings, so the issues are captured appropriately and the participants can confirm how their issues/comments are recorded.

Carl provided a preview of the Ledger Subcommittee of the Wildlife Crediting Forum (WCF). The subcommittee made good progress in developing a system for categorizing the issues around the ledger, to hopefully begin addressing these issues in a consistent manner. The subcommittee developed recommendations for regional agreements for standard operating procedures for implementing HEP evaluations. The subcommittee also made recommendations for reconciling the crediting ledger and recommends developing a draft ledger for Council review and approval.

ITEM 7: Next WAC Meeting

ACTION: The next WAC Meeting is scheduled for June 22, 2010 from 1:00-5:00pm at the CBFWA Office in Portland, Oregon. Draft agenda and support materials will be distributed prior to the meeting. Proposed draft agenda items include discussion of Subbasin Plan habitat reviews, presentation by Tom O. on habitat classification schemes, work plan for developing the Wildlife Monitoring Implementation Strategy, and a presentation on the NHI proposal being reviewed in the RME Categorical Review.

The next Wildlife Crediting Forum is scheduled for June 23, 2010 from 8:00am to 2:00pm at the Council Office in Portland, Oregon.

There will be a WAC Workshop convened on July 20-22, 2010 in Pendleton, Oregon. The workshop will focus on the development of a draft Wildlife Monitoring Implementation Strategy, consistent with the MERR Plan. The CTUIR will arrange a site visit to a wildlife mitigation site at 1:00pm on Tuesday July 20 followed by a BBQ at Carl Scheeler's Ranch that evening. Wednesday will be a full working day from 8:00am to 5:00pm. Thursday's schedule will begin at 8:30am to 12:00pm providing the wrap-up of the workshop.

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