

## **Governor's Salmon Workgroup**

**3/5/2020**

### **Nampa Fish and Game**

**Presentations are available on the Office of Species Conservation Website on the Governor's Salmon Workgroup Page**

### **Workgroup Members Present**

- Representative Fred Wood
- Eric Crawford – filling in for Kira Finkler
- Scott Hauser
- Brett Dumas
- Aaron Lieberman
- Will Hart
- Stacey Satterlee
- Dave Johnson
- Senator Dan Johnson
- Brian Brooks
- John Simpson
- Jim Yost
- Justin Hayes
- Doug Stowers
- Paul Arrington
- Mark Menlove
- Toby Wyatt

### **Intro – Katherine Himes**

- *Went over the topics that will be covered today*
- CRSO will be the main topic
- Meeting is being recorded so we can webcast and video presentations
- Please sign in in the back and indicate whether you would like to give public comment

### **Introduction to NEPA – Sonja Kokos**

- **Presentations are available on the Office of Species Conservation Website on the Governor's Salmon Workgroup Page**
- Would like to introduce my colleagues that will also be presenting on different aspects of the CRSO EIS
  - Some will be on the phone
- We will be discussing alternatives throughout the day

## **Columbia River System Operations Environmental Impact Statement – Rebecca Weiss**

- **Presentations are available on the Office of Species Conservation Website on the**

### **EIS Modeling/Results Overview – Carolyn Fitzgerald, Daniel Turner, Jason Sweet**

- **Presentations are available on the Office of Species Conservation Website on the Governor’s Salmon Workgroup Page**

### **Question Panel**

- Scott Hauser–
  - On slide on adverse effects to MO3 – Breach on anadromous fish. What would those negative effects be?
- Answer-
  - Will be addressed later
- Justin Hayes – Based on the materials, there are some options that will affect pool levels. How will this affect Columbia treaty negotiations? Will this supersede or bind the hands of the negotiators?
- Answer
  - Carolyn will answer but this analysis does not contain the negotiations. Just what is already in the treaty
  - We’ve look at all the things we would regularly look at and when there is an outcome from the treaty negotiations and if there is anything that will influence what we’ve done here, we’ll take that into account
  - We did specifically operation EIS of US projects
  - When that comes out and we didn’t address it and it has an effect we’d likely have to do an SEIS
  - We’re not thinking of that right now but have considered that that could have an effect
- Justin Hayes - So your changes are so modest that they fit within the current treaty
  - Answer: Yes, we looked at the current treaty and modeled our analysis within those bounds
- Brett Dumas – how does the modeling translate into fish transport time?
  - Answer: Will be covered later
- Dave Johnson –A lot of reservoir changes in MO4, are those to provide spill flows in summer or spring?
  - Answer:
  - No they are not related to spill they are related to flow targets we are trying to achieve in the lower river
  - We’re trying to hit specific targets at certain times using a 2 million acre feet volume of water
- Dave Johnson Was that analyzed in any other alternatives
  - Answer: No, just MO4
- Dave Johnson And that was not essential to high spill?

- Answer: The more water you have in the river , the more you have to pass through the dams for any reason including spill or powerhouse
    - Have some slides later that may address in more detail on different options of spill
- Dave Johnson Are you taking requests for extension on comment period and how is that being dealt with?
  - Answer: We will pull those in and our leadership will consider those. Not aware that we've received it yet
    - It's not really in the agencies hands. It's in the presidential order and CEQ's hands.
- Extensions have happened for smaller plans
- Aaron Lieberman- So September is the mandatory finish date and would limit extending the comment periods?
  - Answer: Yes, so if we miss one it could affect meeting our end date
- Aaron Lieberman deeper drawdowns occur in the winter months?
  - Answer: Differs depending on which alternative we're looking at and depends on which dam we're looking at
- What is the purpose and effect of larger drawdowns? What is the hydrology effect of those kinds of drawdowns?
  - Carolyn Fitzgerald – Let's look at Libby dam slide. So in fall it's deeper draft in 2 alternatives and higher levels in 2 others. So it's not consistent across the board
- Bryan Brooks –It was said that there were 2-3 individuals so who were the final decision makers.
  - Answer: It will be the executives of the 3 agencies
- Doug Stowers – Early on talked about hydro production, Is that based on current usage or profit levels?
  - Carolyn Fitzgerald – What I presented was just the quantity and levels of water in the system. Not really any of the hydro benefit was included in there
    - MO2 had more of a power generation focus to it so there are some deeper drafts in winter months to meet demand, and I was mostly trying to explain the timing of that
    - Jason Sweet– We took the alternatives as provided by the group and applied several different measures to them
  - We didn't constrain any alternatives trying to meet specific outcomes for power generation
- Brett Dumas - For these alternatives should we assume that any flow augmentation is status quo and how does that apply to breaching alternative?
  - Carolyn Fitzgerald - There were no changes in status quo
  - Sonja Kokos – whatever the amount that came in at Brownlee, that was considered status quo for all alternatives
- Justin Hayes – considering the objective slide, I am mostly concerned with objectives for fish. What does improve mean? What's the goal here?

- Answer: Basically, the question here is what can we do here to improve what the fish status was in 2016
  - We examined the measures to see if they met those measures
- Justin Hayes – things are pretty bad now, our goal is harvestable and abundant. So what does improve mean? Delisting, one more fish, what?
  - Answer: From our perspective it concerns improving abundance, passage, or anything as long as it's better than it was in 2016. Wanted to see
  - Jason will cover later what specifically the Preferred Alternative will do for fish

### Questions For Presenters

- Justin Hayes -You mentioned some Major and Minor variations in TDG could be good or bad. Could you tell us which ones are which?
  - Answer: I will have slides later that will hopefully address that
- Brain Brooks – On slide 86, is the yellow line modelling or do we actually have temperatures from pre dam era
  - Answer: We have temperatures from pre dam but they are pre Dworshak influence. Generally, its warmer
- Aaron Lieberman – slide 86. Is Black line 2 dimensional? Are you averaging temperatures at different depths to come up with your average temp?
  - Answer: We look at tailwater so it's all mixed
- Aaron Lieberman – Slide 94, why did you opt to use 1934 telemetry as opposed to modeling
  - Answer: 1934 is our best guest of what the channel will go back to naturally
- Aaron Lieberman – Why did the alternative model use 2010?
  - Answer: That was BPA's base condition telemetry so you would need to ask them why they used that
- Aaron Lieberman – We have the tech to determine what the riverbed would look like and the pathimetry could change the outcome significantly right?
  - Answer: That is correct and the river mechanics team tries to figure out what the channel may look like in light of breach
    - Idea is that it would be analogous to 1934 channel
- Eric Crawford – You mentioned Dworshak a lot, so does that maintain consistency with its cooling in this modeling?
  - Yes

### Scott Pugrud

- I'm stepping away from OSC so Mike Edmondson will be taking my place on the Workgroup
- Governor is working to find new administrator of OSC

### Questions For Presenters

- Aaron Lieberman – In all the predictions presented is there a distinction between hatchery and wild stocks?
  - Answer: Most of these models combine them. Some of the specific pieces will break that information down
- Aaron Lieberman – In previous presentations I recollect that there are only several steelhead stocks that benefit from transportation, could you speak to that in relation to your presentation?
  - Answer: Yes, the benefits of transportation can vary between stocks and species and whether it's a wild or hatchery fish
    - There is typically a benefit from transport depending on what time of year you're looking at
    - There have been some changes to the hydro system over the years that have changed the benefits, that data will continue to evolve
- Justin Hayes – Have questions on implications for SARs and the preferred alternative. Looking at the models, it doesn't seem to get us really any closer to where some agencies and entities say we should be. How should I feel about that when we're looking to recovery? How does preferred alternative get us where we want to go?
  - Answer: We're looking to improve and learn, and we'll get a chance to do that with different spill regimes
    - Also have to factor in the Ocean conditions and we're hoping that our efforts can help us ride out the bad ocean into somewhere the fish are returning
- Justin Hayes - How will this get us there if the SAR isn't where we need to be considering all the factors affecting fish?
  - Answers: We're looking to find ways to improve and it will eventually lead on an upward trend which will hopefully lead to increasingly better returns
- Senator Johnson
  - *Pointed out errors in model data*
- Bret Dumas - Could you touch on travel time?
  - Answer: We don't have it on this slide, but you can almost use PITPH as a surrogate for that
    - Generally related to spill levels and without dams in MO3 it's much faster
- Brett Dumas -The CSS model and latent mortality. Is it possible that predation rates are somehow being embedded in latent mortality instead of somewhere else? How is that being captured in the model
  - Answer: Lance Hebdon- part of what happens is that the latent mortality is carrying freshwater experience into the ocean and its effects into survival
    - To my knowledge, neither model tries to break out the mortality by how the fish perished. More how many fish in and how many out is the measure.
  - Jason Sweet– the NOAA model I believe they estimate predation and try to reduce the mortality by their estimation

- Toby Wyatt – We keep hearing rumors of fish friendly and more efficient turbines. How were they talked about and were they worked into the study?
  - Answer: They were considered at certain dams and has been installed at at least one and testing of those turbines have begun. They team didn't have the results to work with so they worked in estimation for some dams on how effective the turbines would be
- Aaron Lieberman – Why is recreation not included as a value in the social welfare and system costs when it has such a significant effect? Seems like there should be some measure of that impact. Should be able to show some
  - Answer: I understand the concern or confusion of why it would not be included. I do not have a good answer for you in terms of ultimately why but I would refer to the numbers that we have for water based recreation
    - In the long-term we are looking at how the fish respond to determine whether there will be a loss or gain. Some things are so unknown that we really can't put numbers to them
    - They used a 2002 study to try and see the effects we could potentially see. I think the word uncertain really means mixed meaning we don't have sufficient knowledge of the future to know how recreation will be affected
    - If you do have some studies that we could use to improve our certainty I would welcome them. This was a concerning point for us as well. And we tried to focus on the number of recreators as opposed to a monetary event.
- Brian Brooks – The cost to hydro, is that just to dollars lost from generation or is that replacement cost
  - Answer: It's a combination of lost generation and restoring reliability
- Brian Brooks: What do you mean by social welfare benefits for fisheries may occur under breaching if we see increases in SAR?
  - Answer: It's informed by harvest conditions and regulation conditions and it would likely be positive, but we could not quantify what that benefit might be
- Merrill Beyeler – When we look at Idaho and these numbers , Ag and Recreation numbers are pretty close. In looking at these kinds of numbers, that needs to be reflected in here
- Scott Hauser – we were a cooperating agency in this process and I'm having flashback to a previous cooperating agency meeting in which we submitted reported comments to consider studies on breaching and I'm struggling with this economic analysis and whether it meets purpose and need. There is information out there that could have informed this section that we tried to provide
- Brian Brooks – Are you concerned about another judicial rejection due to the metrics contained in the modelling?
  - Answer: We've tried some different things here, and we're going to need some time to see how the system will work
    - I don't know how the court will react but it is different than what we've done in the past
- Brian Brooks– how do you reconcile the different outcomes for the two different models?

- Answer: We basically treat them as bookends and we believe it will fall somewhere in the middle. Our hope is to get more data to have these models converge
- Justin Hayes – a lot of info has come out and one thing I’ve reviewed is from the Fish Passage Center that said under the Preferred alternative will result in above 2% SAR about 1/3 of the time. What is the goal of this report, is it delisting, or hold steady or what is it?
  - Answer: The Northwest Power Council’s numbers are for recovery but an SAR above 1 is increasing stocks, just not as quickly. We’re not where we are right now and we are trying to move in the right direction. We’re still trying to figure out how the timeline looks to get where we want to go
- Justin Hayes - If the federal plan is the status quo for fish and we’re trying to get to healthy and harvestable, how should we feel about your plan?
  - Answer: I think we’re moving in the right direction and we’ll learn from testing the system
- Doug Stowers – Is this preferred action based on public opinion or other aspects?
  - Answer: It’s definitely informed by public opinion and cooperating agency

**Preferred Alternative – Jesse Granet**

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**Next Steps – Sonja Kokos**

- **Presentations are available on the Office of Species Conservation Website on the Governor’s Salmon Workgroup Page**

**Run Forecasting – Chris Sullivan**

- **Presentations are available on the Office of Species Conservation Website on the Governor’s Salmon Workgroup Page**
- **Questions for Presenters**
- Bryan Brooks – seeing how the forecasting can be off, when those are different do those affect downstream fisheries?
  - Answer: Downstream is managed by a buffered run size. Forecast and take 30% off the top. So, if we’re really off it can affect
    - We have a check in point half way so if everything works right then it shouldn’t affect too much
- Toby Wyatt – Didn’t that buffer used to be less?
  - Lance Hebdon- yes it started at 0
- Doug Sotwers – Why are there so many 1 year ocean steelhead returning?
  - Answer: That’s pretty typical for that fish’s life cycle
- Doug stowers – I’ve noticed that the steelhead I’ve seen in the recent years have been significantly smaller. What may have caused that in the last 15 years?

- Answer: There are many theories on that but definitely ocean conditions may have an effect on that. If there's less food out in the ocean they won't mature to a larger size

## **Workgroup Updates and Process – Katherine Himes**

- **Paul Arrington – Mission Statement Subgroup Update**
  - We are working on some language
  - We've had several presentations of what our workgroup would do after developing the mission statement. Most of what we talked about didn't seem to resonate with the group and didn't give us any real direction
  - One thing we did have direction on was to develop language that recognizes the CBP goals
  - Been putting together language to recognize that and some of the aspects in it to get to delisting levels and beyond.
  - It has taken some word-smithing. I do not think that everyone agrees on the language we have yet but it is a good statement that recognizes the CBP goals and the efforts there to reach healthy and harvestable
  - We'll need to make sure we're on the same page with the language and send it out to the group and talk about it the next meeting.
- Justin Hayes
  - One of the struggles we've had is talking about blocked areas. I know the state has made some announcements on progress in that area. I wonder if there is an opportunity for this group to be briefed by the state on that.
- Mike Edmondson
  - Thanks for bringing that up. Could probably fit that in after Lewiston.
  - What did occur is a need for the state to solidify and clarify policy due to various factors
  - That has been put on paper and we can brief the group on it
- Brian Brooks
  - I don't see a spot on the agenda to discuss the EIS more because there seems to be some fatal flaws. I don't know if the workgroup is interesting in submitting a request for an extended comment deadline but could be beneficial
- Mike
  - As you can see from the amount of material, the comments are due before this group even meets again and I don't know that we'll be able to do that. I also don't know that that would fit with the charge policy recommendation charge of this group. Due to their schedule, they seem unlikely to grant an extension
- Justin Hayes
  - I think you raise a good point about timelines. While I don't think this group would be sticking to its mission but is it fair to say it's not what we recommend. Our first meeting we said we wanted abundant fish and this doesn't meet that. Could this group say that this isn't what we would recommend because it won't get us to where we want to be?



- Mike Edmondson
  - The presentations today started as a funnel from a broad level to where we're most focused. The CRSO EIS is not solely focused on fish. It may be an error with the process, but it is not the whole document. Right now we're trying to untangle what is really in there
- Justin Hayes
  - Bottom line is that it doesn't get us to where we want to be in any of our lifetimes
- Mike Edmondson
  - That's not what the NEPA process is designed to do
- Aaron Lieberman
  - I think we're saying the same thing. I understand and share the frustration. I think it's not what they're trying to do, and it doesn't fit what we're trying to do.
- Brian Brooks
  - I think that a statement recognizing that the EIS doesn't get us to where we want to get could be beneficial
- Will Hart
  - I do not believe we should make a statement
- Mike Edmondson
  - We are looking at different processes on different timelines
  - The recommendations that this group makes could inform Idaho's position regionally
- Doug Stowers
  - Put yourself in Governor's shoes. He asked the group to come up with a plan to help. We would all like to see 10 percent SARs but is that realistic? We need to look at the tools available with us and come up with realistic solutions and not a pipe dream.
- **Agenda Subgroup Update – Katherine Himes**
  - April meeting in Lewiston. Will be comprehensive on genetic diversity
  - Tour of lower granite will happen
  - Will be time for breakout groups to discuss potential policy recommendations
  - May
    - Marine derived nutrients and possibly NOAA 5 year plan
    - More breakout sessions
  - July
    - Will be in Riggins and
    - Has been idea to look at tributaries and historic runs
  - Irina has moved to new role so Crystal will be doodling
- Paul Arrington
  - I think we need to transition meetings from learning new stuff and move to developing policy recommendations
- Mike Edmondson

- so far we've been heavy on information and we'll start to transition into more of a policy development stage. Going forward we should have less new info and more discussion and development
- Justin Hayes
  - The guy from Washington, Guy Norman gave info on ocean and other harvest and he had some outdated information
  - It would be nice to get some updated data on that issue
- **When the workgroup wants more info following meeting – Katherine Himes**
  - It is important to have more questions and to be able to clarify
  - We welcome requests for info but keep in mind that we should act in ways that promotes collaboration in the workgroup
  - Going forward please bring questions to me or OSC Admin or subgroup so we can approach the issue in a constructive way
- Brett Dumas
  - we addressed this in the agenda subgroup and I think we arrived in a good place
- **Refresh on Homework Katherine Himes**
  - Following January meeting I sent out a homework assignment
  - Just reinforcing that the governor expects consensus-based recommendations
  - Review our Topic Slide and focus on the 4 H categories and P and O and prioritize the ideas that you think will have consensus in this group in each category
  - The other activity is to draft a policy recommendation that you think would have the greatest possibility for consensus in the workgroup
- Justin Hayes –
  - I thought we wanted to grapple with the things that may not have consensus
  - I think fear is that the things we agree on may not get us to where we want to go
- Katherine Himes
  - This homework is an individual exercise and in the Lewiston meeting there will be opportunity to address some of that. These exercises are meant to get the group in a consensus mindset
- Stacey Satterlee
  - Have we decided what we mean by consensus
  - Is it 100% or less? Not suggesting majority rule, but would like to know
- Aaron Lieberman
  - Consensus generally means everyone 100% I think
- Katherine Himes
  - For the homework, the intent is to develop something with a high chance to have buy in from everyone
- Stacey Satterlee
  - looking at other groups, there are some that have defined it
  - Was mostly wondering if that conversation had happened
- Paul Arrington

- we grappled with this a bit in the CBP and in that group it did mean 100% but didn't mean that everyone was fully happy with it. It may not be the exact thing you want but can you live with it, is kind of the process.
- Mike Edmondson
  - the other part is that if you are a hard no on something, you come with a suggestion on how to change and not be an obstruction
- Brett Dumas
  - I agree with Paul on the agreement. On the homework, I intend to bring in ideas that I don't think there may be full consensus on that I think we should discuss and think that those conversations should happen,
- Katherine Himes
  - some recommendations may be very detailed and some others may be high level. There isn't a perfect way that this has to look

## **Public Comment**

### **Dave Fisher**

- I'm not Dave, I'm here on Dave's behalf. I've been on the salmon river about 20 years. My biggest concern is escapement. As long as I've been on the river we've seen returns as early as May 5<sup>th</sup> and we don't see any early returns now
- Other issue is the size of the fish and I think that it has something to do with nesting and escapement and I think that is something for you to look at
- I'm not a biologist, just a constant fisherman. But with the declines it is something that's downriver

### **Tom Cory**

- Thank you for what you're doing and opening lines of communication
- You've been given a daunting task.
- All you need to remember is that when these fish have a river again, they will recover on their own and we'll just have to enjoy
- If we don't, then mother nature could fix it after we're gone
- If the Governor doesn't want breach then find a compromise
- Maybe just say you'd like to drain one pond and see an uptick there
- My family just celebrated 100 years in Boise. Grandparents used to spear fish in Boise. Can't do that now
- Most of the salmon are gone compared to what we've had
- I can tell you that the streams are in good shape and the only thing missing is fish
- Tribes recognized the value of fish
- Eventually they will come back one way or another

### **Bert Bowler**

- From Boise. The DEIS acknowledges that removing the 4 lower snake dams would deliver most recovery
- Was not selected as preferred because it was determined too costly and disruptive
- Agencies will not fix this plan.
- People deserve a plan that recovers salmon, supports agriculture, and provides affordable and reliable energy
- Recovering salmon will require northwest policy makers to work with stakeholders and sovereigns to solve this issue
- Agencies can't lead the process, Northwest policies must lead

### **Pat Ford**

- I'm at a bit of a loss
- That economic presentation was so bad that I don't what to say
- How can you not quantify fishery and recreation benefits?
- Reinforces that the federal process is not going to the trick and the political process may be the way to go
- I'm very worried that the comments due on April 13 will truncate the issue

### **CJ Pierce**

- Let's go on a history walk
- This meeting is similar to a 1990 Fish and game model
- 20 years ago a lot of the information was presented and the same gridlock happened
- Some see this as black and white. Breach dams or increase spill
- How do we get to a natural river
- Spill crest drawdown
- Will increase salmon recovery and limit impact on Columbia river system
- Look beyond own groups goals and look to the benefits of fish
- The federal plans do not have our fish best interest in mind
- Thank you for your time
- Spill crest draw down and predatory
- Fish lose more and more when ideas are not examined

### **Keith Carlson**

- From Lewiston
- One of the former Fish and Game commissioners trying to do something for fish
- Focus has been trying to get public involved and provide information
- We failed. No one stepped up
- Fortunately, others have.
- Some of you have seen the 7-part series in the Lewiston tribune containing information to inform the public on fish

- Trout unlimited has stepped up, developing a brochure on what the fish need and taking a more aggressive tone than the state likely will on dams
- There will likely be a lot more groups that do this
- This was a study from Idaho citizen on transportation
- I'm concerned that today is day 38 of comment period and there is no information given to the public
- We need more than one meeting in Lewiston to inform Idaho public
- Also need an extension to a 90-day comment period
- Whatever the state does officially I would asked that the public be provided with the info on a timely basis
- We can solve the hydro and transportation problem but we can't bring back the fish

### **David Cannamella**

- Was feeling mad until Pat Ford got up
- The latest draft EIS assures 2 things
- The federal government doesn't have the desire or capability to restore fish
- It also assures that we the people will have to take control of our fish destiny
- It's lunacy, we've identified the problem and a solution but have said we don't want to do it because it will be too difficult or expensive
- The money spent so far could have been spent on solving those impacts and gone a long ways
- Never mind all the economy that the fish provide
- And there's the ecosystem
- Take Congressman Simpson's words to heart
- It's time for Idahoans to take control of this issue and not rely on Feds who recognize the solution but won't do it

### **Collin Huges**

- I manage a small outfitting business around middle fork of Salmon
- I think Cambridge is kind of perfect example for looking at this
- I used to drive to Hells Canyon all the time and think about the stories my dad would tell me about the people who lived there before
- I hated the fact that I could only daydream about what my town could have been
- I understand that the Lower 4 are a whole other beast
- To watch a keystone species go extinct over the little benefit that the dams provide
- I can see other towns in Idaho becoming like Cambridge and dying, if we let this continue
- We're on the brink and if you care about Idaho's rural economy we got to consider options
- Got skunked on the Clearwater for the first time this year
- Habitat is there, that's not the problem

## **Hardy**

- Thank you, Governor, for creating workgroup and everyone participating
- I'm not from Idaho, I'm from Alabama and was worried about the optics of testifying
- Growing up my family would travel from AL to ID to float the Salmon and nothing was better
- Much of family were rafting guides. They started me so young that I don't remember my first trip and they introduced me to my passion
- I'll never forget the anticipation as we got closer and closer and as soon as we got there, I ran straight to the river
- I was dumbfounded that a place as beautiful and pristine as that existed like the Frank Church
- The salmon nutrients made it as beautiful as it is
- These salmon need our help right now and need more proactive leadership
- Without the salmon I won't be able to take my children and their children to the same Frank Church and have the same experience in the home that we chose

## **Mike Anderson**

- Born and raised in Idaho and a river guide on the Salmon
- I'd like to share how this has affected my life
- In 2015 I worked on an outfit in Oregon
- My first season there we were catching 80 fish a week
- The last few years we have struggled to put a client on a single fish
- We only put 2 launches in 2019
- That's 10 river guides and a lodge that is then out of work
- Is it an option to remove dams
- We can replace the agricultural water and the power, but we can't replace the fish

## **Josh Edmondson**

- I've been a river and hunting guide for over a decade
- My great great grandpa moved out west in late 1800s on French Creek on Salmon River
- He was logger and miner
- My father and grandfather were loggers
- They all eeked out a hard living because they loved the area and the beauty of it
- One main point that I try to drive home to clients is that we are not taking anything
- Reason people come here is for the beauty
- All these towns that were dying after loss of mining and logging saw new life in tourism
- If we lose that then these towns have no hope
- The problem is the dams. If you let those fish come back, then these towns will thrive.

## **Meeting Adjourned**