

## Meeting of the Governor's Salmon Workgroup

11-19-2019 Boise

See sign in sheet for Attendance

Presentations Available on Office of Species Conservation Website on Governor's Salmon Workgroup page

### Introduction – Katherine Himes

- Warm welcome
- *(Gave overview of history and purpose of group)*
- Next meeting will be in January, but date not set yet
  - Information and updates about meetings are available on the Office of Species Conservation website
- *(Showed slide of technical topics that workgroup has and will address)*
  - Not every topic will be covered at every meeting
- This is a single day meeting, no field day for this meeting
- Correction to agenda, 1pm agenda item should read “policy implications” not “recommendations”
- *(Workgroup members introduced themselves)*

### Agenda Subgroup

- Brett Dumas
  - Agenda group's primary purpose is to set agenda for upcoming meetings
  - We have not had a meeting since Twin Falls
  - We will be meeting in December to set agenda for January and March meetings
  - Topics we're looking at for future meetings
    - Predation
    - Ocean conditions
    - Harvest
    - Middle Fork Salmon River presentation from Russ Thurow
    - Potentially an integrated presentation on what the influence is on each run from the different factors that we've looked at
      - How does each factor affect run success so we can assess magnitude of effect of each topic?
  - Things that have happened so far
    - Got clarity from Sam Eaton on purpose and sideboards
    - We have not tackled yet how we are going to set policy recommendations
      - How do policy recommendations get formed, do they need to flow through subgroup or is it more open than that?
      - This is a discussion we will have to have at some point
- Aaron Lieberman
  - We have not officially agreed on everything yet

- One recommendation is on policy goal setting
- How would subgroup bring it to larger group?
- Need to figure out what our goals are and create a plan on how to get there

## Open for Questions

- Justin Hayes
  - Thank you for the update
  - I appreciate the work that the Agenda Subgroup has done
  - I want to address something that is not happening at this meeting
    - Want to address the lack of public comment period from this meeting
    - I have heard from many that it was missed opportunity
    - Was wondering if we could structure meetings in the future to always have public comment period and possibly make it more accessible by having evening sessions to give the opportunity to people who work
    - Public comment is very valuable and would like Agenda group to consider this
- Paul Arrington
  - When you are planning dates in January please get it out soon and keep in mind that the Legislature will be in session so many in this room will be busy
  - I'm also worried that the pace of the Group is going to outpace the setting of goals
  - What do you think is the most productive way for us to get to where we need to be?
- Aaron Lieberman
  - I don't have great answer on how to get passed the timing issue on goals and policy recommendations
  - One of the things we have to do is to come up with objectives, even in broad terms
  - Also, I think the absence of public comment in this meeting was more due to a shortfall in communication among the subgroup and others involved
- Brett Dumas
  - As far as developing our policy recommendations I don't think that we need to be constrained by a structure
  - Seems pretty straight forward what Governor wants from us
  - I have yet to see the value in taking a deep dive into Goals and Objectives
  - I say we learn more about these issues and see where we can agree on some issues
  - I will request from the rest of the group to provide us with things they think are not being addressed
- Scott Hauser
  - I think that we should include a Deep Dive into the CRSO EIS that is going to come out
  - I want to concur with Justin that it is a missed opportunity to have public comment today

- Moving forward I think if we make ourselves available in the evenings and listen to every person who wants to give public comment that it would be very valuable
- At some point we do need to somehow acknowledge all the public comments that come in email
  - Need to acknowledge the time and effort these people have put in to provide comment to us
- Richard Scully
  - For agenda topics
    - Lots of mortality after salmon leave Idaho
    - It's a possibility to have a real solution that downriver issues need to be addressed if we're going to recover Idaho fish
    - It's likely that BO we see next year will have breaching as an option
  - I would like to see at some point at looking at what Simpson talked about and talk about "what ifs"
    - If we take action, how is everyone going to stay whole, economically and otherwise?
- Aaron Lieberman
  - Do you have any recommendations on how we recognize public comments we receive (question to Scott Hauser)?
- Scott Hauser
  - I haven't put a whole lot of thought through that, but I have read through every comment that we've gotten and seen that there is a very common theme
  - Maybe look to Katherine to see if there is a way that we could somehow map the comments
  - I would really like to acknowledge all the people providing comments
  - I'm happy to talk with Katherine, Scott and others to see how we could move forward with that

### **Mission Statement Subgroup**

- David Doeringsfeld
  - Our subgroup is recommending we start with two goals pertaining to Abundance and SARs
  - The hope is that we can develop them in December to have to discuss more in depth with whole Workgroup in January
  - The reason we decided to start with these goals is that all the rest of the goals will be related to these goals
  - Think that once we establish these goals it will make the others easier to set
  - We also propose that an additional goal be related to Blocked Passages
  - Once the Workgroup agrees on goals, the next step will be objectives which would be the policy recommendations
  - We believe that the whole Workgroup should decide whether they want to work on the objectives as a whole or have subgroup hash them out and present them to the larger group for discussion

- Looking for feedback from full group on how to proceed
- Scott Pugrud
  - Important for us to have a robust discussion around this to ensure we're clear on what the Workgroup is comfortable with before we proceed
- Paul Arrington
  - How do we see this process playing out?
  - My concern is that setting of Goals will be out paced by objective process
  - How will this play out and how will it play into bigger picture?
- Justin Hayes
  - Our subgroup would like to meet several times before next meeting to try to hash out concepts to present to workgroup to try and increase efficiency of discussion
  - We'll have to move quickly because I think that it will take us some time to agree on policy recommendations
- David Doeringsfeld
  - I think there's a role for the subcommittee because the whole group doesn't have the time to spend hours talking about this in meetings
  - Can formulate ideas for workgroup and then get more direction from there
  - Would be hard to flesh out in in a one-day meeting like this
- Paul Arrington
  - One of things that's in my mind is that this a pretty diverse table so we are developing things that aren't for any one group, like the Mission Statement was
  - I think the Goals are going to have to be through same kind of lens
  - How specific are we planning on getting with the Goals because that could affect how difficult it will be to agree on Goals?
- Kira Finkler
  - First, I'll address deadline
  - I hate and love deadlines. Glad that Sam gave us a deadline of December 2020
  - Maybe one thing we could do is present the group with a schedule
  - Having a timeline may give us an idea of how specific our goals will be to fit in our timeline
- Stacey Satterley
  - We could start with picking low hanging fruit or starting with things that we can all agree upon
  - On the one hand we may not all agree on a specific number, but we do agree that we all want more
  - I think it's best to avoid confrontation for now and move forward on the things we can agree upon
    - There are some things we'll disagree about but should start with what we can agree on
  - One thought is that maybe looking at the context of our Idaho recommendations that maybe we don't need to learn as much about things we can't affect. Ocean for example
- Mark Menlove

- I agree with Kira that we need a map/schedule to move forward with this
- Otherwise I don't see a way we can get through this by setting goals and objectives without a timeline in mind
- Fred Wood
  - I keep hearing discussion about January meeting
  - There are many who won't be able to meet because of legislative session
  - Whole administrative law is up for review
  - This session will be unlike any session that I've been a part of
  - I don't see how we are going to accomplish a whole lot between January and April
  - Many people won't be able to attend and do homework between sessions
  - I agree that we should allow for public comment and support an evening session
    - But I would leave it at that
    - Take their comments and attach them as an addendum to notes
  - There is a risk of hardening legislative positions on the issue
  - I think we should allow any public comment written or oral but as far as compiling or commenting on that I think we should not go down that path
- Jim Yost
  - The Mission Statement really came from governor
  - You all want to feel warm and fuzzy then you can wordsmith the Mission Statement and Goals and Objectives all you want
  - If you all feel comfortable enough with what you know then we should probably focus on presenting us with the information you think you need to know to make recommendations
  - If we're not going to do that, then let's just start doing recommendations now
  - There are several things we could put on the list to try to help stocks at different time rates
  - There are only a few things that can be done that will have an effect in 2-3 years
  - If everyone has their minds made up as far as recommendations, then we should probably start getting some recommendations
  - We only have about 6 meetings left
  - The real task is developing recommendations to help increase abundance
- Brian Brooks
  - I'd like to respond to Representative Wood
  - I have same fears that this is a nuanced issue and the campaign trail is not very nuanced
  - Maybe there is a way that this group could insulate itself, so this group is not weaponized
- Representative Fred Wood
  - I would just be careful. I think we do run the risk that if we don't have public comment every meeting that we could be accused of trying to hide something or that we've already made our minds up
  - Already hearing some of that from back home.

- Every single individual who comes to testify should be free to say whatever they want
- We're supposed to be developing recommendation so what do we need scientifically to make those recommendations?
- Don't want this group to become a lobbying group that is swayed by advocacy rather than science
- I don't want this group to fall into those kinds of traps where this group could be weaponized or monetized by any groups
- Richard Scully
  - Wanted to follow up on Jim's comment
  - As a Power Council member, you probably have a lot of ideas on recovering Salmon, maybe more than others
  - Would it be possible to get ideas forward from group members beforehand, before we start making policy recommendations?
  - Would give us an opportunity to start considering ideas and look at options to help salmon recovery
- Scott Pugrud
  - We will have some opportunity today to talk about that
- Aaron Lieberman
  - Responding to Jim
  - Appreciate you giving us some urgency and reminding us we don't have that many meetings
  - I don't think that there is any incompatibility between coming up with Goals and Objectives and making those recommendations
  - As Richard said, you could probably write out several recommendations
  - If we continue to go down the road of making Goals and objectives and policy recommendations, there is no reason for that process to be rigidly structured
  - I think we can do both
- Merrill Beyeler
  - Want to echo Representative Wood
  - We should pay careful attention
  - Also want to respond to Jim
  - Agree our overall Goal is to make recommendations to Governor
  - I'm wondering when we're going to get to that task of actually developing recommendations?
  - We've looked at several areas and I think there are good recommendations that we can put forth in those arenas
  - I'm wondering how we move forward with developing recommendations in those areas
- Brett Dumas
  - Representative Wood, I think you have the best insight on this
  - Knowing what you know about the legislative schedule do you have a recommendation on what would work best for scheduling a meeting?

- Representative Wood
  - We usually don't work officially on Saturday and Sundays as far as formal meetings, but they're usually full working days on the phone and doing homework
  - If we could have a public meeting on a Friday night and do a meeting on a Saturday, that is the only way I see that you could get a number of us there
  - That's the only thing that comes to my mind,
    - Not trying to say that we shouldn't meet, but think this is the only way we could do this
- Brett Dumas
  - I for one don't have a problem with that schedule but that is something the group will have to address
  - In terms of when we'll get to nuts and bolts of policy recommendations, I would say that we still have some technical areas to get to that would be helpful to us and we have an EIS coming out soon
    - I say soon after that EIS comes out that we focus the rest of our meetings on discussion and policy recommendations
- Chad Colter
  - Discussion this morning has made me concerned about where this thing is going
  - Representative Wood is saying we're strained for time
  - We're on a deadline for December 2020
  - The reason I'm here is about treaty rights and culture and cultural values
  - Treaty rights are not negotiable, we want fish rights
  - We've had many broken promises on fish in the past
  - Used to be 2 million fish and now there's 2000
  - I have a policy I have to follow and it's a free river policy
  - I recognize that we can't go back to pre-treaty times, but I do advocate for a free river
  - I'm not here to play in politics I'm here for fish
  - The fish are on their last legs (or fins) and I'm afraid that if we don't move fast that we're going to miss the window of opportunity to help
  - I agree with Jim that there are a few things in the short term that can be done to help fish
  - I also think the mid and long-term plan has to reflect some major changes similar to what Simpson said
  - I don't think we should be afraid of it or we'll never do it
  - These fish are why we're here
  - These fish have historically supported a lot of people and everything we did was based around this fish
  - The harvests that are coming now are not a meaningful treaty right
    - I'm here to get fish back
  - There are some numbers people have thrown out for recovery goals, but I don't think that they are high enough to really have a meaningful recovery

- I guess as we go down this path folks can consider whether this is something they have the time for. I have the time and I'm concerned that folks have other things to do
  - This is where I'm at and what I'm fighting for
- Toby Wyatt
  - Is there a number of recommendations we're supposed to give?
  - I know we still have a lot of info to hear to help us
  - But when we get to the point of making recommendations can you outline how that process is going to go?
  - Will each member provide those and then we go through them?
  - As far as public comment goes, I was really moved by Twin Falls and Lewiston and don't think we should alienate the public from making comments
- Katherine Himes
  - We have been making list of potential policy recommendations to try and begin that conversation and we will come back to this concept later today
  - We haven't had the discussion yet on how this list plays into how our final recommendations will look like

#### **BPA Financial Picture – Marcus Harris**

- Presentation Available on OSC Website; Salmon Workgroup page

#### **BPA Q&A**

- Chad Colter
  - I'm not a financial guy, I'm a fish guy
  - A lot of your lingo is not computing in my head
  - I think what you are saying is that sales are dropping from outside contracts
    - People are buying power from other places?
- Marcus Harris
  - I'll back up to how much power we decide to sell to preference customers
  - We look at it under 1937 water conditions: worst water year BPA had seen
  - Anything generated over that amount is considered surplus and is sold in the market when we have it
    - The credit is the volume that we sold times the market price
    - Volume has stayed the same but wholesale prices have come down, so the overall revenue has gone down
- Chad Colter:
  - I understand that many of your contracts are coming up in 2028
  - If they can buy power cheaper somewhere else, where does that leave BPA?
- Marcus Harris
  - If everyone went to market, then market price will go up
  - Hard to compare BPA to market because market is a block and doesn't account for capacity.
  - BPA can adjust to go up or down to meet need with hydro system



- In market you are just paying for a flat block of power with little to no flexibility
  - The value of BPA's flexibility is hard to value
  - BPA just set rates at 35 dollars and market is around 28 but they are not directly the same
- Richard Scully
  - Volume produced or volume purchased has stayed the same?
- Marcus Harris
  - Production has stayed the same
  - The demand has remained the same or slightly lower, but price has gone down
- Jim Yost
  - The loss of revenue from surplus sales is partly a result of cheap gas and an oversupply of solar during the day
    - With solar and wind, you can get lots of power when they're working but when they're not then there's more market for surplus power
- Justin Hayes
  - I want to understand the green line on Net Secondary Revenue slide
- Marcus Harris
  - It is the percent of total cost that the credit displayed in the graph represents
- Justin Hayes
  - As market prices continue to decline, you will be operating above market and there's still a risk to ratepayers, right?
- Marcus Harris
  - There is a risk but that has been realized and factored into BPA's rates to stay competitive
- Mark Menlove
  - On Fish and wildlife and conservation, can you speak to the difference or overlap of those categories?
- Marcus Harris
  - Fish and Wildlife is a direct expense
  - Conservation is BPA's energy efficiency program
- Richard Scully
  - Is there a possible to breakdown of fish and wildlife costs by pieces of the hydro system? Specifically, to lower 4 Snake River dams?
- Marcus Harris
  - I think that the CRSO EIS should address some of that and I have been in meetings where we've looked at Lower Snake
  - Would be challenging but I think CRSO is attempting to break that down
- Justin Hayes
  - What is the residential exchange program?
- Marcus Harris
  - It is a settlement that BPA reached with investor owned utilities (IOU)s to credit their rates

- Justin Hayes
  - This slide has top 5 customers and not really any in Idaho, how does this program benefit Idahoans?
- John Williams (BPA)
  - Residential exchange program was designed to provide benefits to those in northwest
    - By law Investor owned utilities have to pass on this rate credit to their customers
    - In Idaho over the years they have received significant benefit from this credit
- Justin Hayes
  - As I see BPA try to reduce its cost, I worry that cost will be cut from salmon recovery, I wonder what is being done to reduce cost of residential exchange to share some of the burden
- John Williams
  - The Residential Exchange is statutory
  - There was the Energy Crisis and there was a lawsuit and between 2005 and 2008 we made an agreement
- Will Hart
  - John did a good job explaining
  - Non-diplomatically the rural power companies do not benefit, it's the IOUs
  - But customers in Idaho definitely do gain benefit from the BPA programs and system
- Justin Hayes
  - But what is the role of the Residential Exchange in that benefit?
- Will Hart
  - As John laid out, it is a statutory obligation
- Marcus Harris
  - There is a benefit, especially to Southeast customers
  - Over there the transmission costs are part of the overall preference rate.
  - It's more expensive to serve them over there than to serve customers closer to Columbia system but their rates stay lower
- Brian Brooks
  - On subject of powers cost, does BPA have a full allocation of cost per project in power production?
- Marcus Harris
  - we don't have that data. We have done some analysis, but it has to do with our accounting
  - Our accounting system is not set up to analyze by project
- Brian Brooks
  - I was surprised I couldn't find that so if we requested that could you supply it to us?

- Marcus Harris
  - If you could put that in a written question, I think we can work on producing that information and some of that may be addressed in the CRSO EIS
- Brian Brooks
  - On slide 19 you talked about paying off debts. Is that federal debt, private debt or combined?
- Marcus: Slide 23 has BPA's total debt
  - This is total debt for power and transmission
  - BPA pays an amount every year to federal and non-federal debt
  - In the last 2 years we worked with Energy Northwest to extend some of the non-federal debt to help pay off higher rate federal debt.
  - During those periods, we were likely paying more on federal
  - Our goal is to eventually balance what we're paying on federal and non-federal
- Brian Brooks
  - So, you're borrowing non-federal to pay federal and why are you doing that?
- Marcus Harris
  - it's a debt management tool so we try to manage our debt as responsibly as possible
  - It's a cost question for us as to whether we use federal or non-federal
- Justin Hayes
  - Started presentation by saying BPA sets cost to cover costs
  - I look at liquidity graph and others and it seems that you're spending reserves and taking on debt and trying to not raise rates
    - How can it be that you're covering costs but burning reserves and taking on debt?
- Marcus Harris
  - I would reference slide 23 and show that since 2015 that there is a steady decline in total amount of debt due to repayment in transmission and power that we expect to continue.
  - Decline in reserves is related to amount of decline in credit that we talked about earlier
    - We weren't achieving credit and had to use reserves to fill gap
    - We do have policies in place to replenish reserves if they get too low
- Richard Scully
  - One cost to BPA is maintenance and replacement of turbines. Do you have schedule for replacing turbines in lower snake dams and how much will it cost?
- Marcus Harris
  - Don't have that off top of my head but do know that it has been considered and worked into cost. Can follow up if you want
- Toby Wyatt
  - Last meeting there was much talk of spill. What is cost of spill to BPA?
  - There was talk of increasing spill of 125% so I'm curious of cost to BPA to do that

- Marcus Harris
  - BPA put out declaration that it would cost about \$40 million per year
    - CRSO is analyzing that and it should be available in February DEIS
- Toby Wyatt
  - Is there less money being spent on fish recovery now than in previous years?
- Marcus Harris
  - I think it has either held steady or is slightly less than previous years
- Scott Hauser
  - What does it cost to produce a megawatt of power as compared to what you sell it for and how does it compare to non-nuclear options?
- Marcus Harris
  - Off the top of my head I think it's around \$50/ megawatt hour to produce
  - I think we sell at around \$35
- Scott: Hauser
  - So how is that beneficial for BPA to continue to pursue?
- Marcus Harris
  - It's also based on the flexibility and base load that it provides. So, it's not just looking at dollar amounts it's looking at value of the reliability it provides to customers
- David Doeringsfeld
  - I'd be interested in seeing more info on turbine replacement
  - If they do get replaced, can you say whether that would require rates to go up or would they stay the same?
- Marcus Harris
  - When we do long term planning, we assess the equipment and risks and economics of projects
    - One of the deciding factors is net present value
    - We look at alternatives like delaying 5-10 years to see how it would affect net present value
- Aaron Lieberman
  - I have a question about amount of funding for fish and wildlife program status as compared to past.
  - Seems like operating cost may continue to rise as system ages
- Chad Colter
  - We appreciate the funding BPA has provided for Fish and Wildlife but there seems to be a disconnect in stating there is consistent funding and what we're seeing on the ground
  - There was mention of IOUs and paying them back for a lawsuit
  - Funding 11% of fish and wildlife out of this budget seems to be an inequitable share since all of our Idaho stocks are listed and in decline

- How in BPA's mind, when we're dealing with listed and declining stocks, believe that the equitability between fish and wildlife and power generation is correct?
- Marcus Harris
  - Comes to mission of commercial success and environmental stewardship
    - Commercial success and competitiveness is key to funding fish and wildlife
    - Not saying that the funding to Fish and Wildlife should be capped at the current budget
- Chad Colter
  - There's 60% being paid in OM at Coulee and Treasury payments every year so where is the equitability for Idaho stocks?
- Marcus Harris
  - I think it's a balancing issue to see what is needed and who should bear those costs
- Jim Yost
  - On the residential exchange, in order for permission to build the exchange there was an agreement in congress that everyone in Northwest would benefit from system. Not just utilities and co-ops
  - We spent years in negotiations and courts trying to figure out a plan to implement it
  - But when they were constructed it was agreed it should benefit all in Northwest not just preferential customers or utilities
    - We've settled that and it's done and put behind us
  - On turbine replacement, one thing they look at is that the new turbines generate a little more electricity than the old
    - Like Marcus said, there is a lot into consideration when determining when it's appropriate to replace
  - All of the programs that will likely get recommended will likely get funded by BPA
  - Power Council isn't going to recommend more to the Fish and Wildlife budget above inflation
    - Trying to figure out how to keep BPA financially healthy so they can keep paying for the programs they do pay for
    - If everyone in the Northwest paid instead of just BPA's customers, it would make a difference on the budget
    - In the meantime, BPA needs to be solvent and healthy so it can still contribute the \$300 million per year it has been
    - I think the goal is to provide more efficient programs to help spend money to best recover salmon
- Justin Hayes

- Response to Jim: It's an interesting argument that we need to say we need to support BPA as economically viable company to fund fish programs to fix the issues that they are causing by being a financially competitive company
- Were you saying that you support tax payers paying for portions of Fish and Wildlife funds?
- Marcus Harris
  - I was saying that we will try to keep budget steady and if it goes up it will have to originate from another source likely
- Justin Hayes
  - Would it make more sense with rates going down for you to pull back on power production to stabilize prices?
- Marcus Harris
  - If there was infinite storage, it may be but because we don't have the ability to store all the water or store power, if we don't sell it when it's generated then you lose out on that power.
- Justin Hayes
  - I think that may get to the idea that the most beneficial use for that water may not be power generation but perhaps more valuable for fish passage

### **Discussion for Dates for January Meeting**

- Look into technology options for when people can't be physically present
- Would like hard copies of presentations at seats for us to follow along
- Going to try for January 17<sup>th</sup> night for public comment and 18<sup>th</sup> of January for next meeting
- We'll do a poll for March
- And then we'll select a date for April/May to cover CRSO EIS

### **US v Oregon – Jonathan Litster**

- Presentation Available on OSC Website; Salmon Workgroup page

### **Avian Predation – Mike Langsley**

- Presentation Available on OSC Website; Salmon Workgroup page

### **Questions on Avian Predation**

- Richards Scully
  - As I understand, the East Sand breeding terns is about 5000 now, is that right?
- Mike Langsley
  - We don't have the 2018 data now
- Richard Scully
  - The goal is between 3-4000, correct?
- Mike Langsley

- Yes
- Richard Scully
  - Are you going to restrict habitat?
- Mike Langsley
  - No, under the NEPA analysis we have now we aren't able to reduce habitat any further than we already have
- Aaron Lieberman
  - Do you know what pre settlement population of terns was?
- Mike Langsley
  - No
- Aaron Lieberman
  - As far as dredge sediment disposal creating these habitats, what is the basis of NEPA not allowing for that artificial habitat removed and is there another mechanism to reduce populations down?
- Mike Langsley
  - The navigation program is what the original reason for EIS
  - For one of the islands, we created the habitat and we're required to maintain some of it
  - The EIS is Fish and Wildlife Service's, not ours
  - Navigation has continuing obligation to keep terns from nesting on other islands
- Richards Scully
  - Do you have 2019 numbers because I heard there were like 8000 cormorants?
- Mike Langsley
  - No, we also don't have that data back yet
- Aaron Liberman
  - Target population is 7000 birds at estuary (Cormorant)
  - Why 7000? Where is that number coming from? Are they informed by overall population dynamics?
- Mike Langsley
  - I don't know but I could get back to you on that
  - 5500 number comes from BiOp to get back to some previous level
- Richards Scully
  - Are you to an endpoint on cormorant work since many moved upriver?
- Mike Langsley
  - We'll continue to manage within the goals and authority we have. Some places we can't go
- Dave Doeringsfeld
  - How do you estimate predation rates for birds?
- Mike Langsley
  - There are 2 ways
  - One is pit tag recovery

- The other is through observation, often they bring fish back to nest
- David Doeringsfeld
  - How many smolts per day for tern?
- Mike Langsley
  - I don't know
- David Doeringsfeld
  - Being from port of Lewiston, in the last 5 years we have seen a drastic increase in birds. They're definitely moving upstream
    - They are looking for food and habitat and they're migrating
    - Don't know where all of them of coming from
- Brett Dumas
  - As to who owns the birds. Seems inefficient to manage them on a project basis when an agency like NOAA could manage them on more programmatic scale. Are those talks happening?
- Mike Langsley
  - No not yet, but I would support that
- Brett Dumas
  - That could be a possible policy recommendation
- Mark Menlove
  - What is a lever that we could include as a recommendation to the governor on this?
  - Could look like recommending who could be in charge of bird management
- Nez Perce Tribe Rep
  - Looks like you're pursuing reduction but there are definitely issues like Dave mentioned of them showing up in other places.
  - There are tribes in estuary looking to effectiveness of hazing and saying its not that great
  - Is this still significant predation mortality issues?
  - Is this the kind of thing where the group could make a recommendation on things like NOAA role and lethal take?
- Mike Langsley
  - There's no real agreement whether we have authority to do lethal take or not
  - As far as problems at the dams, we had a study of birds at John Day and came up with .3% predation rate, so some info indicates not as big problem.
  - Maybe basin wide it's a problem but at the projects I'm not convinced yet
- Aaron Lieberman
  - Is there a way to model a recommendation in line with pinniped interaction taskforce? Is there a similar action we could take for birds?
- Mike Langsley
  - Difference between pinnipeds and birds is that we proposed the project
  - Pinnipeds we didn't propose anything
- Jim Yost



- We've heard several presentations at the Power Council on birds
- There are discussions in the region on getting a coordinated BIOP on management
- Cormorants are different issue because they move, and they are moving into places agencies can't really manage
- Power Council is working to help get that done but a recommendation may be in order in Idaho on avian predation
- Toby Wyatt
  - Who owns the Astoria bridge?
- Mike Langsley
  - Not sure
- Toby Wyatt
  - I fish there for years and they used to have a full-time crew painting from one end to another and now it's a bird shit bridge.
  - Seems like whoever owns it would like those birds removed
- Aaron Lieberman
  - Do you have any sense of what the avian predation would be pre navigation and what the impact on SARs would be?
- Mike Langsley
  - There's really not a good basis for knowing things like what historical cormorant numbers on or guess on how that effect would be on SARS
- Justin Hayes
  - Some slides had identification of PIT tags as counting
  - Sounds like you are making progress and like you're finding less PIT tags in nests. Is that accurate?
- Mike Langsley
  - Yes, there are less birds on the islands we are managing but should consider that some are moving to other places
- Richard Scully
  - Is it difficult to get authority to flatten island so they are inundated as a management tool?
- Mike Langsley
  - Some of that is what we did
- Garret Visser
  - Is there any way to flesh out Idaho smolts from others?
- Mike Langsley
  - If you've got PIT tags that are Idaho specific, then yes

### **Overview of Pinniped Predation – Christine Kozfkay and Don Whitney**

- Presentation Available on OSC Website; Salmon Workgroup page

### **Questions**

- Brett Dumas

- How are these actions taking related to the different stages of the permitting process?
- Christine Kozfkay and Don Whitney
  - There are hazers from CRIPFIC and the Corps
  - Try to identify unique animals that are qualified for removal
- Brett Dumas
  - So, you have to catch them once then let them go and meet the rest of the criteria before they can be removed, correct?
- Christine Kozfkay and Don Whitney
  - That's right. It's quite a process before they can be removed
- Brett Dumas
  - How do you think changes in permit will resolve some of the management issues?
- Christine Kozfkay and Don Whitney
  - Firearms are not allowed
  - Can't dart them because they'll initially sink
- Brett Dumas
  - So, you have to trap it, but you only have to trap it once?
- Christine Kozfkay and Don Whitney
  - Yep, still a challenging process
- Merrill Beyeler
  - With new regulations will you actually be able to control number of sea lions at dams?
- Christine Kozfkay and Don Whitney
  - We believe yes
  - It is a learned social behavior and we're hoping it will work backwards in that they will learn that going near the projects will result in capture and they will eventually avoid going there all together
- Richard Scully
  - Don said that the hazing was counterproductive, so could hazing money be transferred to removal?
- Christine Kozfkay and Don Whitney
  - There are some conversations about that happening
- Brett Dumas
  - These seems ripe for a regional contract instead of having your staff go out there and handle it
- Christine Kozfkay and Don Whitney
  - could be an option eventually as long as it meets staff requirements
  - could be an issue since permit is issued to state
  - Also, it's a bit of an outlier for me to go down there myself
- Aaron Lieberman
  - Was IDFG contribution in addition to 25 grand?
- Christine Kozfkay and Don Whitney

- Yes
- Justin Hayes
  - What are the thoughts of people opposed to this?
- Christine Kozfkay and Don Whitney
  - Has been litigation in past in regard to the original 2008 authorization.
  - No trapping in 2011 because of litigation
  - Court ruled in favor of permit and that's why it happened
  - The humane society litigated
- Jim Yost
  - A lot of times you'll hear it's a dam problem and if the dams weren't there then they wouldn't be there
- Christine Kozfkay and Don Whitney
  - It's definitely more complex than that but that's one thing you'll hear
- Justin Hayes
  - Are numbers in historic norms
- Christine Kozfkay and Don Whitney
  - 300,000 CA is approaching habitat capacity, probably highest population has ever been
  - Both populations are doing very well because of the protections
- Richard Scully
  - I heard estimates from past was around 17,000 and now there's 300,000
- Dave Johnson
  - This was a very good presentation, thank you
- Toby Wyatt
  - Do you have any data on harper seals?
- Christine Kozfkay and Don Whitney
  - No, I don't have specific numbers, but they are out there and a problem
- Justin Hayes
  - I appreciated the various facets of operation
  - Is that required in the permit or is it a process that someone just created?
  - It seems complex
  - As someone who supports and wants to see this done humanely would it make more sense to dispose of in trap?
  - Is this something that's imposed on you or imposed on yourself?
- Christine Kozfkay and Don Whitney
  - Many of them are statutory and are in the permit
  - Issues with euthanizing on the trap
    - Controversies in the past make us want to do it more quietly
    - Also, the logistics of moving a large animal after it's dead
    - Definitely open to trying to make it more efficient

## Revisit Policy Topics

- Katherine Himes
  - The goal for rest of meeting is whether anything should be added or removed from list of potential policy recommendation topics
  - Two that I've captured from today are programmatic management of birds and some sort of regional contract for pinniped removal
- Justin Hayes
  - It strikes me that we often talk about 4 H's O and P
  - It may be better to try and make this list fit under those categories and it may make it easier to digest and understand and talk about
  - I feel like there was much more that we talked about under Hydro
- John Simpson
  - As I look at the list, one area I think we should consider is timing
  - In near term and long term, I think that finding out what is in CRSO EIS will inform us quite a bit
  - Concepts have come up that are more localized and could support more immediate actions or recommendations we could make
  - Some issues we'll discuss will be longer term in implementation but there are some shorter-term things we could address
- David Doeringsfeld
  - I would like to learn more on Ocean conditions and how oceans and rivers up and down coast compare to ours in regard to salmon
    - Probably a planning committee thing
- Jim Yost
  - John Simpson is right on timing
  - If you look at predator control and limiting their damage
  - If you want some immediate results you can attack pinniped predation
  - If you want to have results in 2-3 years, attack avian predation cause they're eating smolts
  - Keep in mind that earliest we can probably make a difference is 3-4 years because the adults won't be back until then
  - Just keep the lag time in mind when making the recommendations
  - We're (Power Council) doing something similar and our time frames are 25, 50, and 100 years
- Chad Colter
  - Timing is on the list
  - Looking at the list and all the things on there the one thing I know that the tribes are interested in is a recommendation that covers ridgetop to ridgetop
  - One that talks about protecting the habitat and recognizing where we are now as opposed to pre treaty
    - Recognize the human effect
  - We've been doing a lot of habitat work

- A lot of this stuff sounds like moving back towards a natural river and leads us down the path of supporting a natural river while recognizing it's a river we're all using
- I see a lot of this stuff being accomplished under a natural river policy
- That's what the fish are telling us they need
- Brian Brooks
  - Heard today from BPA that none of the projects they have are going to last much longer without maintenance and investment
  - Some of this seems kind of inevitable and we should try to be guiding what Idaho wants out of that inevitable action
    - I think there's opportunity for us to address that and I don't see it up there
    - Not sure how to word it
- Brett Dumas
  - Those projects don't have a 20-year lifespan, they have parts that need to be replaced
  - The cost of replacing those are minor in comparison to replacing that facility and its assets
  - Don't confuse ongoing maintenance with something else
- Aaron Lieberman
  - I think what Brian is saying is that we can take that What If conversation as it relates to dam removal and maybe that it's its own thing that should be on the list rather than being wrapped up in something else
  - I'd ask that those familiar with issue could help put some recommendations down
- Brett Dumas
  - I think that at any point any of us should take these and turn them into some policy points and share them
- Merrill Beyeler
  - Maybe it's time to organize list like Justin said, think it will help guide our direction
  - I think then there are people with expertise in those areas that could really be helpful in developing some policies under each area
  - Then we can look at the timing issue and start to bring something forward in the form of recommendations
- Kira Finkler
  - The guiding principles, would recommend revising to bring forward meaningful or impactful
  - Does "fish passage improvements" include dam breaching?
  - Under economic studies it's important to show things that IDFG has studied
  - We should think of all of these things not as standalone but as things that we could agree on a package of recommendations
- Richard Scully
  - I Want to go back to purpose of first meeting

- Getting SARs back to 2-6% with average of 4% is important. We've had a lot of people in presentations tell us that recovery may look like that
- We need to make sure we're looking at things that will move us towards meeting those SARs
- Justin Hayes
  - I think some of what Jim has said on short-term are important
  - Kind of seems like these short-term things may be necessary to avoid extinction but not be sufficient to recovery
  - Should keep in mind mid and long-term options to consider even if expensive or difficult
- Will Hart
  - I agree that avoiding extinction is first priority
  - We've talked about the critical situation we're in and ocean conditions are not predicted to improve
  - What we recommend, especially in short term, needs to be realistic in order to avoid extinction
  - We've learned a lot over the last few months and think we could start a list of things we can do to start move forward and avoid extinction
- Aaron Lieberman
  - When talking realistic options, dam breaching maybe isn't in the next year but should still be discussed
  - Still need to be sure that we are discussion the things that are most impactful
  - I've started a document to share with everyone on starting policy statements
  - As far as realistic we can categorize it in timing categories
- Toby Wyatt
  - We've got a lot of bullets up there
  - Maybe if every person took 10 or 20 of those bullets and ranked maybe we could narrow them down to what's most important to the group
- Katherine Himes
  - At this stage I don't think the group is in a stage of narrowing
  - This is a skeleton, and I think we need to finish building the list before we start taking stuff off
  - It's important to understand what each term means before we start taking things off
- Jim Yost
  - I have concerns about getting into too much detail on these recommendations
  - There are people in the room that are not as qualified to get extremely detailed on some of these issues in a specific geographic area
    - Sediment idea
  - Same issue on predators
    - Should probably say something about each and ask that they be restrained or reduced to reduce mortality but not in detail

- We should list the issues and talk about them but there a lot of people in the region that have been working on this for a long time
- Not even all the science and conclusions based on that science is the same
- You don't necessarily have to have an SAR of 2-6% to have recovery for a specific stock
- I realize that the SARs are not the end game.
  - If SARs were so good everyone would have been using them
- Recommendations should be at a high level and not too specific
- David Doeringsfeld
  - I think we should plan on getting together as much as we can over the next meeting
  - One thing I'd like to see Mission Statement subgroup do is tie a timeline to goals or objectives that are presented
  - That will help prioritize some of the objectives that are brought to the group
  - Hoping we'll have more to sink our teeth into at January meeting.

**Meeting Adjourned**