



## **Columbia Basin Collaborative (CBC) Organizational Workshop**

Wednesday, February 24, 2021, 9:00am – 12:00pm PT/ 10:00am – 1:00pm MT

Zoom Webinar

### **Welcome, Opening Remarks, and Proposed Agenda**

Deb Nudelman, Kearns & West, opened the meeting, and invited Emerson Squiemphen of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs to lead the opening prayer.

State representatives from Idaho's, Montana's, Oregon's, and Washington's Governors' Offices welcomed everyone to the meeting and shared context for the CBC Organizational Workshop. Jeff Allen, Bo Downen, Jim McKenna, and Guy Norman shared how the four states endorsed a regional collaborative effort to achieve the Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force Goals. The representatives spoke to the importance of the workshop as an opportunity to share the proposed structure and purpose of the CBC, as well as to listen and hear input from the public on what a regional forum. Guy Norman shared appreciation for NOAA Fisheries leadership and support of the Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force and invited Barry Thom, NOAA, to speak to the group.

Barry Thom thanked the leadership of the four states for stepping up to convene the next phase of work. He shared his excitement and support for the CBC Process.

Deb reviewed the workshop agenda and the ground rules.

### **Workshop Introductions**

Deb led an interactive polling activity using Menti to understand the audience. The poll surveyed the audience for sector, interest, and geographic representation. Audience members were asked to share their interests in attending the workshop as well as their hopes for what the Columbia Basin Collaborative could accomplish. The ideas were captured in word clouds (Appendix I). The audience was also invited to share their contact information to stay in touch with the CBC.

### **High-level Overview of CBC Purpose and Proposed Approach**

The four state representatives presented an overview of the purpose of the CBC as well as a proposed approach for a regional collaborative approach to achieve the CBP goals.

Jeff Allen began by sharing about the history and context of the CBC. The CBC followed the collaborative work of the CBP Task Force that established qualitative and quantitative goals for recovering salmonid species in the Columbia River Basin. The Governors of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington developed a Four-State Agreement to charge the four states with establishing a collaborative framework to advance the CBP goals. Bo Downen shared the vision of the CBC, the guiding principles, and approach for this regional collaborative framework. Jim

McKenna spoke about how the four states will continue to discuss how congress Simpson's proposal could relate to the CBC. He then shared the proposed regional process for the CBC. He spoke in more detail about the guiding principles. Guy Norman described the proposed membership for the Regional Leadership Group, subject matter work Groups, and regional forum representation. Guy described the next steps for moving the CBC forward.

### **Opportunity for Input and Feedback**

Workshop participants were invited to share input and feedback on the presentation of the CBC. The session began with an invitation for sovereign tribes to speak first, followed by others.

The tribal representatives spoke to the urgency to address fish declines in the Columbia River, and the deep-seated need to restore fish populations. Several people spoke about the opportunity the Congressman Simpson's proposal represents. Participants asked how the CBC process differs from the Northwest Power and Conservation Council and Bonneville Power Administration. The CBC is designed to serve as a coordinating body that could review, support and inspire actions coming from many forums around the region.

Participants asked about how tribal governments were engaged in the formulation of the CBC. Jim McKenna replied that extensive outreach was done to engage the tribes, and the four state representatives are still seeking input from sovereign tribes to establish the CBC structure and process. Another participant requested that the CBC engage more extensively with tribes and emphasized that the rights of some tribes are not protected under a treaty, however the tribal rights need to be respected. Jim responded that the CBC would uphold treaty and tribal rights.

A participant explained that climate change is having negative impacts on salmonids and inquired to the governors' offices to take actions throughout the states to address climate change. A participant shared their perspective that three years is too long of a time frame to make meaningful recovery of salmon species. One participant urged the CBC to consider the impacts of salmon declines on the Southern Resident orcas. One participant asked what the states can do within their own jurisdictions to advance salmon recovery. Guy Norman responded that existing authorities are the primary vehicle and working regionally in a collaborative process can create strong support for proposals.

One participant said they see opportunity within the CBC proposal to meet needs across the basin. They pointed out that even though litigation of other forums has been successful, there is still a decline in salmon. They were disappointed by the lack of diversity within the panel and would have liked to see including tribal representative partners in the presentation. The CBC needs to have enforcement and effectiveness to make meaningful change. They also stated that salmon recovery is an urgent social justice issue for ecology and people.

A participant asked about how to ensure that the CBC will not be such a cumbersome process that it is unable to take swift action needed to save salmon. Jim responded that the four states recognize that time is of the essence. Any major decision such as dam breaching will affect different sectors, and a collaborative approach could lead to collaborative solutions that could work for all different interests. Guy Norman added that the CBC will help maintain the momentum from the CBP and remain nimble to focus on near term opportunities.

Another participant asked how the CBC will determine what information to consider in deliberations within the CBC. Bo Downen replied that the best available scientific information will be considered, and the work groups will discuss to ensure that the best information is being discussed.

Participants stated needs for a broader regional process rather than focusing on the Columbia River Basin. One participant spoke to the challenges of achieving consensus in a large multi-stakeholder and multi-sovereign nation processes. Other participants shared positive experiences from the CBP and expressed interest in continuing to work towards the CBP goals through the CBC. A few participants from the energy sector shared appreciation for the CBC work, and expressed their support for meaningful salmon species recovery. A participant shared the economic impacts of declining stocks on the fishing industry and job loss and urged consideration for cost/benefit analyses.

A participant shared their enthusiasm for the CBC and saw great opportunity for the Simpson's concepts to support the actions proposed by the CBC. Several participants emphasized the priority for removing dams on the Snake River first to promote salmon recovery.

A participant shared that there is a long history of falling short on meeting multiple goals, however they are hopeful that the CBC can address the goals and create a forum to work together in a culture changing way. Another participant echoed the importance of consensus building and the potential to break the cycle of litigation and build durable solutions. One participant shared appreciation for the work of the CBC and stated that people do not hear much about the CBP process because it has not been litigated.

Deb thanked everyone for participating in the Input and Feedback section and shared further opportunities for people to submit written feedback through a survey.

### **Approach Going Forward, Confirm Upcoming Topics, Next Steps, and Summary**

Deb Nudelman shared the next steps from the workshop and invited Jim Mckenna to offer closing remarks. Jim thanked everyone for participating in the Organizational Workshop. He emphasized that the workshop is not the only opportunity to engage. He shared that he heard that robust tribal outreach was needed. Time is of the essence; however, these issues have been around for a long time, and the four states are taking that to heart. Even though the states may disagree on certain issues, all are looking for common ground to find solutions to complex problems.

*The meeting was adjourned at 12:00pm PT.*

