WASHINGTON STATE RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE
Salmon Recovery Funding Board

PROPOSED
Salmon Recovery Funding Board Meeting Agenda

May 25, 2011
Natural Resources Building, Room 172, Olympia, WA 98504

Time: Opening sessions will begin as shown; all other times are approximate.

Order of Presentation:
In general, each agenda item will include a presentation, followed by board discussion and then public comment. The board makes decisions following the public comment portion of the agenda item.

Public Comment:
If you wish to comment at a meeting, please fill out a comment card and provide it to staff. Please be sure to note on the card if you are speaking about a particular agenda topic. The chair will call you to the front at the appropriate time. You also may submit written comments to the Board by mailing them to the RCO, attn: Rebecca Connolly, Board Liaison at PO Box 40917, Olympia, WA 98504 or at rebecca.connolly@rco.wa.gov.

Special Accommodations:
If you need special accommodations to participate in this meeting, please notify us by May 18, 2011 at 360/902-0220 or TDD 360/902-1996.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 2011

OPENING AND WELCOME

9:00 a.m. **Call to Order** *Chair*

- Determination of Quorum
- Technology – Check on electronic notebook
- Introduction of New Members
- Review and Approval of Agenda *(Decision)*
- Approval of March 2011 Meeting Minutes *(Decision)*

MANAGEMENT AND PARTNER REPORTS (Briefings)

9:05 a.m. **1. Management Status Report**

a. Director's Report *Kaleen Cottingham*
b. Financial Report
c. Legislative Update *Steve McLellan*
d. Policy Report
e. Work Plan and Performance Update *(Written report only)*

9:30 a.m. **2. Salmon Recovery Management Reports**

a. Governor's Salmon Recovery Office *Phil Miller*
b. Monitoring *Ken Dzinbal*
c. Grant Management *Brian Abbott*
   - Follow-up report: 2011 Project Conference
   - Presentation of Projects of Note *Salmon Section Staff*

10:15 a.m. **General Public Comment:** *Please limit comments to 3 minutes*

10:45 a.m. **BREAK**
Board members to gather for group photo

11:00 a.m. **3. Reports from Partners**

a. Council of Regions Report — *Steve Martin*
b. Lead Entity Advisory Group Report — *Barbara Rosenkotter*
c. Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups — *Lance Winecka*
d. Board Roundtable: Other Agency Updates — *SRFB Agency Representatives*

Noon **LUNCH – Meals will be provided for board members**

12:30 p.m. **Staff Recognition** — *Board Chair*

Decision: Recognize Staff via Resolution 2011-02

12:35 p.m. **4. Budget Update** — *Steve McLellan*

a. State Operating and Capital Budgets, 2011-13
b. Federal Budget, Fiscal Years 2011 and 2012

BOARD DECISIONS

1:00 p.m. **5. Funding Allocation Decisions**

a. SRFB Framework and Historical Funding: Projects, Monitoring, Capacity — *Megan Duffy*, *Brian Abbott*
b. Scope of Work and Funding Considerations for Regions and Lead Entities — *Phil Miller*, *Lloyd Moody*
c. Funding Scenarios within SRFB Framework and Budget — *Megan Duffy*, *Brian Abbott*

Comments from regions (15 minutes total)
Comments from lead entities (15 minutes total)
Other public comment (10 minutes total)

2:45 p.m. **BREAK**

3:00 p.m. **Item 5, Funding Allocation Decisions, Continued**

Board Discussion

Decision: Set Target 2011 Grant Round Funding Amount
Decision: Approve Funding Level and Term for Lead Entity Contracts
Decision: Approve Funding Level and Term for Regional Organization Contracts

3:45 p.m. **6. Monitoring Contract Approval: Intensively Monitored Watersheds** — *Ken Dzinbal*

4:30 p.m. **ADJOURN**

Salmon Recovery Funding Board Summarized Meeting Agenda and Actions, March 2, 2011

Agenda Items without Formal Action

Item	Follow-up Actions
Management Report	Staff follow-up regarding eligible project types: August Staff follow-up regarding farmland notification policy: May
Salmon Recovery Management Report	No follow up action required.
Reports from Partners	No follow up action required.
State of the Salmon in Watersheds, 2010 Report	Board had general suggestions for the 2012 report. Staff to follow up with board members during scoping discussions for that report.
State and Regional Salmon Recovery Funding Strategy	
Preliminary Discussion Regarding Funding and Scopes of Work for Lead Entities and Regions in 2011-13 Biennium	Need to come back with historical picture, qualified for what has changed; funding from the different sources

Agenda Items with Formal Action

Item	Formal Action	Follow-up Actions
Minutes	APPROVED as presented	None
Recognizing the Service of Steve Tharinger	APPROVED a resolution recognizing the service of Steve Tharinger.	Staff to send the resolution to Mr. Tharinger
Designate New Subcommittee Member(s)	APPROVED a motion appointing Bud Hover to the subcommittee	None

SALMON RECOVERY FUNDING BOARD SUMMARY MINUTES

Date: March 2, 2011 Place: Room 172, Natural Resources Building, Olympia, WA

It is intended that this summary be used with the notebook provided in advance of the meeting. A recording is retained by RCO as the formal record of meeting.

Salmon Recovery Funding Board Members Present:

Bud Hover, Chair	Okanogan County	**Melissa Gildersleeve**	Department of Ecology
David Troutt	DuPont	**Sara LaBorde**	Department of Fish and Wildlife
Harry Barber	Washougal	**Carol Smith**	Conservation Commission
		Mike Barber	Department of Transportation
		Craig Partridge	Department of Natural Resources

Opening and Welcome

Chair Bud Hover called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. and a quorum was determined.

- The Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) approved the agenda as presented. Kaleen reminded the board that Item #6 had been removed.

David Troutt moved to adopt the December minutes as presented in the notebook.
Seconded by: Harry Barber
Motion: APPROVED

Management and Partner Reports

Management Status Report

Director's Report: Kaleen Cottingham noted the legislation to consolidate the natural resource agencies, and said that the deputies were working on transition issues in case it passes. She also noted that the legislation to end the board had passed out of committee without the Salmon Recovery Funding Board. Finally, she noted that they would submit the 2011 grant request to PCSRF on March 2. The request includes one proposal for $30 million (the maximum grant amount), and another for the status quo amount ($27.5 million).

Legislative and Budget Update: Steve McLellan discussed three legislative issues:

- The consolidation bill (5669) in more detail, including its current status, effective date, perceived savings, and scope. Some of the original agencies (e.g., Conservation Commission) have been removed, and the name has been changed. The Senate is looking for more savings from the change than the Governor had proposed; the cut may cause larger program

eliminations. There is a possibility that even if the bill does not pass, the legislature may still want to realize the savings.

- The boards and commissions bill in the House; there is some discussion that the board may still be eliminated.
- The Invasive Species Council bill is moving along well in both houses.

On the budget, the March forecast is expected to be low again, but there is little factual information at this point. If it does go down, it will sharply affect the bonding capacity in the capital budget, which is already lower than in was in the Governor's budget. There appears to be no capacity beyond what is needed for K-12 schools. Most of the legislative staff questions have focused on the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP). The Partnership just provided a required report to the Legislature, which put salmon funding as a top priority. Finally, there is increasing concern about reduced federal funding over the next two years. For PCSRF, the President's budget has $65 million. The House proposed continuing resolution cut it to $50 million; the end result is likely somewhere in that range. With regard to match issues, staff is monitoring the situation and will bring back more in May.

Finally, he highlighted the land acquisition issue that was in the Governor's budget. It does not appear that it would extend beyond state agencies. That is, acquisitions by nonprofits would be allowed. He also noted that there are efforts to reduce the capital budget over time by reducing the debt limit.

Policy Report: Steve noted that Dominga Soliz was working on the farmland notification policy. She and the lead entities will be sending out a survey to find out how the districts already are involved. This will be a briefing in May for a narrower policy decision.

Megan Duffy gave an update on the work regarding expansion of eligible project types. Staff has worked with WDFW to gain a better understanding of hatchery funding. WDFW indicated that there was a total of approximately $62 million for hatchery funding in the 2009-2011 biennium, most of which is directed to operations, with a small amount directed to maintenance. The trend over the past ten years has been reductions in hatchery funding. Hatchery reform funds have come from PCSRF and the Mitchell Act; both of these sources and their funding levels are uncertain in the future. WDFW estimates that they have approximately $250 million in hatchery reform projects. Megan reported that the Evergreen Funding Consultants report identified monitoring as the biggest gap in non-capital funding for salmon recovery efforts. Staff is recommending that the board postpone a decision on whether to direct staff to do more work until August. By then, there will be more certainty around PCSRF and state funding levels and the board will likely have full membership.

Salmon Recovery Management Reports

Governor's Salmon Recovery Office: Phil Miller, Executive Coordinator, reviewed the report in the advance materials (Item 3A); he noted that many of the topics would be covered in more detail during the afternoon. He reviewed the attachment, which summarized the findings of the regions' annual performance reviews. In particular, he noted their significant achievements, obstacles, and upcoming milestones. He noted that the detailed report is available on request.

Member Troutt asked if the regions are successful in pulling in funds that are different from those that the board is familiar with (e.g., foundations) and what the amount is. Phil responded that the answer is

part of the presentation they would get in the afternoon, but the total in recent years has been about $120 million per year in capital and non-capital funding.

Chair Hover asked where Oregon and Idaho are at with salmon recovery, compared to Washington, and how that affects our ability to be successful. Phil responded that the other states are catching up, but that they have different models. He acknowledged that we are interdependent. Hover and Miller also discussed the role of tribes and watershed groups in the process.

Member Smith asked whether the old and new regional recovery plans (Snake and LCFRB) were compared, when the plans were revised. Phil responded that it was part of the process. They have not completed longer-term monitoring work, but did incorporate new information through adaptive management.

Member Partridge asked if he could summarize any information about the changing role of the SRFB. Phil noted that Megan Duffy asked questions about the role of the board during the interviews. Megan noted that several regions articulated a gap in overall statewide salmon recovery policy, and thought that the board might have a role in filling that gap. There are many questions about how the role of the board can evolve along with the roles of the regions. She clarified that the "gap" likely referred to all-H integration and the larger picture of how all salmon recovery efforts fit together around the state. Kaleen noted that move of the GSRO to RCO from the Governor's Office was likely a key factor in the articulation of a gap; the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office no longer drives policy, so who does?

Monitoring Forum: Kaleen noted that Ken will become an employee of the Partnership in July, but that the RCO will keep him as the monitoring advisor for the board. Ken noted that he is still the coordinator of the Forum. The final meeting is March 30. They are working on a commitment to continue monitoring on an appropriate scale into the future. They will meet as the need arises to address specific issues. Another piece they are working on is a letter to capture the Forum's experience and accomplishments over the past few years. They also have a number of ideas that the chair thought should be captured in the event that forum is recreated in the future.

For the board, the ongoing question will be where the board goes for advice on prioritization of monitoring ideas and proposals in the future. This has been a key role of the forum in the past few years. He suggested that this would be a good discussion for the board.

Grant Management: Brian Abbott noted that Manual 18 was now available, and gave the board an update on the project conference, scheduled for April 26 and 27. He noted the purpose of the conference is to provide an opportunity for sponsors to share information and improve the projects. They are planning for 500 people. He discussed the keynote speakers and conference highlights, noting that the information is online. He encouraged board members to attend.

Grant managers Tara Galuska, Kat Moore, and Mike Ramsey highlighted the features and benefits of four projects of interest.

- *Morse Creek Channel Restoration, 08-1843R and 09-1519R:* Tara noted that this project had multiple partners for funding and implementation, including WWRP for the site acquisition. She noted that this was the largest board-funded project she had worked with on the Olympic Peninsula. It created over a half mile of new habitat. Rebecca Benjamin, the project manager, was in the audience and provided additional information in response to board questions.

- *Greenwater ELJ–Trib to White River Restoration, 06-2223R:* Tara noted that five engineered log jams were installed on U.S. Forest Service property. These structures were placed to recreate conditions that existed prior to logging and road building, replacing largely absent instream wood structures. The river is already reclaiming its channel. Lance Winecka noted that 10 more log jams will be installed this year under a separate board grant. The USFS provided staff support and wood from campground blow-downs.
- *Skokomish Estuary Island Restoration, 07-1631R:* This project completed feasibility, design, and restoration of 216-acres on Nalley Island of the Skokomish River Delta by removing dikes, roads, debris, and borrow ditches. Mike noted that this project was funded through the board and through ESRP. This is Phase 2 of a three-phase project; the board also funded the first phase. Mike described the steps involved in the project.
- *Twin Rivers Ranch Acquisition, 07-1841A:* Kat presented information about this acquisition of an intact estuary. The project protected 132 acres in south Puget Sound, including 1 mile of freshwater shoreline on Deer and Cranberry Creeks and 2/3 of a mile of intact estuarine shoreline. The property is now owned by the Capitol Land Trust, which has a management plan and has a dedicated stewardship fund for all properties. Chair Hover asked about the plan for the property; Kat noted that the property is in excellent condition, with little need for restoration.

No General Public Comment was provided

Partner Reports

Council of Regions Report: Steve Martin, Snake River Region, referenced the COR report (Item 4A), and noted that most of the topics are addressed in the afternoon presentations. Chair Hover asked about coordination with other states in the Snake Region, and whether they could work with them successfully. Steve noted that Washington is ahead of the other states, which are still working through some recovery concepts. The regional plan will be an appendix in the ESU recovery plan. Washington and Oregon are fairly well aligned. They cannot achieve delisting for the entire ESU without the efforts of the other states. Alex Conley, Mid-Columbia Region, noted that they have had good success working with Oregon as well.

Lead Entity Advisory Group Report: Barbara Rosenkotter presented the LEAG report, noting that they are ramping up for the 2011 grant round. They have been working with RCO staff to develop the project conference, and will hold an in-person LEAG meeting the day before. They are excited about the interface between the Habitat Work Schedule and PRISM. She also noted that the lead entities had sent letters to the Governor and Legislature about the importance of the board. The benefit of the board to the "Washington Way" outweighs the potential cost savings. In response to questions from Member Troutt, she noted that there are some concerns about duplication of effort in the process (e.g., the board's technical review panel and local review panels), but that it is not about the board in particular. Member Troutt asked her to provide more detail to the board if concerns become more apparent.

Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups (RFEGs): Lance Winecka, Executive Director of the South Puget Sound RFEG, presented on behalf of the 14 RFEGs. He described the role and benefits of the groups, and how they work with lead entities and regions. He noted that they leverage their funds ten-to-one each year, described the various funding sources, and noted that federal funding is not

stable. They are trying to work with WDFW to create long-term funding for the program. Member LaBorde clarified that each organization receives about $40,000 from license fees annually. Member Troutt noted that the RFEGs are great contributors to salmon recovery.

Board Decisions

The board took action on two topics, as follows.

Recognition of Service for Former Board Member Steve Tharinger

The board recognized the service of board member Steve Tharinger, who left the board in January 2011 following his election to the state Legislature. Chair Hover noted highlights of Steve's service and his strong leadership. Other board members and members of the public also recognized his efforts and contributions.

David Troutt moved to adopt Resolution 2011-01 to recognize the service of Steve Tharinger.
Seconded by: **Harry Barber**
Motion: **APPROVED**

Designate New Subcommittee Member(s)

Brian Abbott discussed the roles and responsibilities of the subcommittee and asked the board to select a new member. Kaleen noted that the board can reconsider if it continues and has more members in the future.

David Troutt moved to appoint Bud Hover to serve on the board subcommittee.
Seconded by: **Harry Barber**
Motion: **APPROVED**

Briefings

State of the Salmon in Watersheds, 2010 Report

Phil Miller and Jennifer Johnson of the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office provided copies of the report and discussed its development and highlights. They noted the work of the partner agencies such as DFW, Ecology, and others. Jennifer noted that the report now consolidates several information sources into a single biennial report, contains an executive summary, and emphasizes the regional scale. The report also includes statewide and regional funding trends, an improved structure that aligns information with the integrated monitoring framework and high-level indicators adopted by the Monitoring Forum, and has high-level watershed planning status summaries.

Jennifer noted the high-level findings in the report. She then described the data gaps in salmon, watershed health, and implementation. She also noted ongoing threats to salmon recovery such as climate change, population growth, and funding uncertainty. She concluded with the plans for 2012, their ongoing needs, and plans for distributing the reports. Kaleen Cottingham noted that it had been approved by the Office of Financial Management, and that it could be distributed freely.

Members Troutt and H. Barber noted they remain concerned about graphs that combine wild and hatchery fish. Jennifer noted that they are making progress in counting wild fish versus hatchery fish. Phil noted that it's a timing issue; the data were not available for the published report, but will be included as an insert and will be online.

Member Troutt referenced the water quality chart on page 27 of the report, and asked whether a watershed that has had a TMDL for temperature would be considered poor or fair. Member Gildersleeve responded that the data is not correlated with the 303D list, and is more of a status and trends type of monitoring based on the monitoring stations. He thinks it is helpful to have the water quality data.

Member Troutt also suggested that the size of the graph on page 29 diminishes the importance of the recovery plan implementation. He noted that we need more money and effort to implement the recovery plans, and that while we have made progress, we have challenges. Phil responded that this is not intended to be an informational, not an advocacy document.

Harry suggested that the harvest figures also should include wild fish as a subset. Sara responded that wild fish will be killed with the alternative gear project, as a consequence of keeping hatchery fish out.

Member Partridge suggested that a more meaningful comparison would be to look at acres within floodplains that are lost to development versus those that are restored. He suggested that looking at all acres lost is overly pessimistic, and that it misses the point that restoration actions are targeted at specific types of land. Phil suggested that better use of land use/land cover will be part of the 2012 report. Sara noted that the board provided funding to improve their ability to get at the data, and the project has been successful.

Member Troutt also suggested that the tribes be more involved in future reports, so that the report better tells the story about the state of the salmon. Phil and Jennifer noted that it is a worthwhile effort, but that obtaining consistent and relatively inexpensive access to data is an issue. Troutt suggested that their involvement would be less about providing data and more about interpreting and drawing conclusions.

<u>State and Regional Salmon Recovery Funding Strategy</u>

Phil Miller presented the notebook item 8, which describes how the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office and regional salmon recovery organizations worked with a consultant to estimate salmon recovery plan costs, current funding, and funding gaps. He explained the data collected through the project, the draft findings, and the potential actions that could improve salmon funding. He clarified that the "10 year" timeframe for the estimates addresses the implementation that could be done in 10 years; there are other implementation actions that would still need to be completed. Phil emphasized that the report is focused on habitat, and that the information is limited for areas without recovery plans.

Phil's presentation concluded with lists of potential actions to maintain existing funding (e.g., communicating, pursuing partnerships, and focusing on priority fund sources) and to prepare to look for potential new sources. The latter was divided into short-term and long-term actions. Long term actions include exploring "green infrastructure" approaches, creating a "Washington Ecosystem

Marketplace," creating incentives for local government funding, increasing landowner incentives for conservation, and considering dedicated state revenue, once the economy improves.

Board member discussion and questions included the following key points:

- Can the report put the $5 billion cost into the context of the cost of development over time? Dennis Canty responded that another context would be the other capital costs, such as transportation improvements (e.g., Viaduct replacement).
- Does the 80/20 rule apply to the costs; that is, are we funding the most important projects first, such that if only 20 percent of the funds were available, would we get the greatest possible benefit from it? Is there an inherent loss of benefit over time, as they move through the lists? Harry asked Jeff Breckel to discuss efforts in the Lower Columbia region; Phil responded that the ability to be strategic is increasing and varies by region.
- Member Troutt suggested that we need to continue reminding everyone that natural resources are an important investment, not a luxury. Chair Hover concurred, but noted that the key is reminding everyone what the return on investment would be. Dennis Canty noted that there are studies showing the economic multipliers for habitat restoration are substantial – they are very labor intensive, and good investments.

Public Comment:
Jeff Breckel, LCFRB, suggested that we look at the report as a starting point. The report cannot be the end of developing a strategy, and that they need to start working now on future funding. Strategies need to reflect the local situation and capacity.

<u>Preliminary Discussion Regarding Funding and Scopes of Work for Lead Entities and Regions in 2011-13 Biennium</u>

Phil Miller explained that the GSRO is working with the regional salmon recovery organizations and lead entities to develop a framework for their operating grant agreements in 2011-2013. He explained that this presentation would provide a framework of fiscal and scope of work information, and request board guidance for a formal request in May. Phil provided an extended discussion of the areas of emphasis for the lead entity and regional scopes of work, noting that the bullet points were a framework only. They are working on the specific tasks, and will emphasize integration between the lead entities and regions. Integration will be tailored based on the relationship between the lead entities and regions.

Jeff Breckel, representing the Council of Regions, and Barbara Rosenkotter, representing the Lead Entity Advisory Group, also participated.

- Jeff Breckel noted that all of the regional directors were present because the board is an important partner in the plans. He provided a handout that listed the accomplishments of the regional organizations. He noted that they have been successful in getting monitoring programs in place – it extends beyond projects to the entire recovery plan. They are actively engaged in bringing interested parties (tribes, agencies, etc.) together to move recovery actions forward. Administration also contributes to direct habitat benefits.
- Barbara Rosenkotter described some of the lead entity accomplishments, noting that they have moved from planning to implementation in the last ten years. She noted that the base funding

has remained stagnant, while the responsibilities have increased. The difference has been provided by local jurisdictions and tribes, but that support is declining. Lead entities are reducing staff and hours. She noted that the regions and lead entities are interdependent for recovering salmon. She encouraged the board to continue funding the infrastructure through the economic downturn.

Phil noted that the underlying premise for the proposed fiscal framework is to provide stable funding for the underlying capacity, as long as funding sources can sustain it. They will be working to develop budgets and scopes of work by May 6.

- For regions, the funding formula started with 2009-11 base awards, less voluntary reductions from two regions and a transfer of funds from the Puget Sound region to lead entities. That adjusted base then increased with the addition of special funding needs so that the total amount for stable funding would be $5,537,260.
- For lead entities, the funding formula again started with 2009-11 base awards, with adjustments, for a total adjusted base of $3.127 million. That adjusted base would be increased by $450,000 for Puget Sound implementation tracking and planning and further development of a Puget Sound steelhead recovery plan. The amount for stable funding would be $3,577,000.
- The total amount for the next biennium would be $9,114,260. This is about $329,000 less than the amount for the current biennium. The current biennium included $550,000 for additional plan completion efforts (paid for unspent funds from 2007-09); the costs for the next biennium would be offset with an estimated $150,000 in unspent funds. Due to the effect of the returned funds, they are proposing to spend about $100,000 more in the next biennium than in the current biennium. The $550,000 was not intended to become part of the base.

Kaleen noted that lead entities have received added funds from federal sources in this biennium as state sources have been cut. Staff cannot tell the board how this proposal would affect the balance of capacity, projects, and monitoring until there is a clearer picture of available state and federal funds. This is only one of the "buckets" that will be presented in May.

Member Troutt noted that the board has invested a lot in the capacity, and believes that it is as valuable as the habitat investments. Maintaining capacity is more important than projects.

Member LaBorde suggested that Phil be able to answer the question of what a 10 to 15 percent cut in funding would look like. She greatly values the work of lead entities and regions, but this is a real situation. She noted that the board wants to keep momentum and values capacity; she would suggest that the Puget Sound steelhead plan is not core to that desire and may not be key to those two values of the board. Member Troutt strongly disagreed with her.

Carol Smith noted that fewer projects equates to fewer results for greater administrative costs. That could hurt future funding requests.

Member H. Barber suggested that they need to look at cuts for projects and capacity. Chair Hover noted that it is a balance between future capacity and projects.

Phil suggested that there needs to be a trigger level for funding, below which cuts would be considered. David suggested that we need to revisit what amount is needed as base.

Gildersleeve asked for a comparison of people to project funding over time. Phil thought that projects have been getting greater increases in funding from all sources, at least until the most recent consideration of cuts in capital funding. Brian stated that we could prepare them for May.
The board asked staff to come back with the historical picture, noting what has changed and including funding from the different sources.

Final Comments

Chair Hover reminded the board that the next meeting would be Wednesday and Thursday, May 25 and 26, here in Olympia. Board members had unanimously chosen to move to electronic notebooks, so the RCO would no longer be printing materials, except for presentations.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Approved by:

_____ _____

Bud Hover, Chair Date

Salmon Recovery Funding Board

Public Comment Received

May 25, 2011 Regular Meeting

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

RECEIVED
APR 20 2011
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

April 20, 2011

Donald "Bud" Hover, Chairman
Salmon Recovery Funding Board
WA Recreation and Conservation Office
PO Box 40917
Olympia, Washington 98504-0917

Dear Chairman Hover and Members of the Board,

We are writing to respectfully request the Salmon Recovery Funding Board to abide by the recent, unanimous vote of the Willapa Bay Water Resources Coordinating Council for withdrawal and re-allocation of the funding for the Bear River Estuary Restoration Plan (Project 10-1652).

Through public meetings and numerous contacts with our respective offices, the citizens of Pacific County have voiced their growing alarm regarding the scope and cost associated with this project. According to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the total price tag for removing the levee systems on the Lewis Point, Porter Point and Riekkola units will be upwards of $15 million. In this time of deep budgetary limitations, we are extremely concerned at the burden this project will place upon our taxpayers.

Just as importantly, the possibility of serious environmental consequence from this project on other wildlife has recently come to light. Community members, and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, have voiced strong concern regarding the impact of levee removal on the threatened Dusky Canada Geese due to the resulting permanent loss of upland foraging habitat.

Removal of the levees will also force the elk from their traditional pasturing lands with an expected increase in depredation to local cranberry bogs and private pasture lands. When combined with the fact that the streams in question are naturally non-productive for salmon because of their non-gravel, sediment bottoms, there is not only questionable ability of this project to reach its restoration goals, but also genuine concern of environmental impacts that can never be reversed.

RECEIVED
APR 20 2011
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

Thank you for your attention, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Jaime Herrera Beutler
Member of Congress
Third Congressional District

Brian Hatfield
State Senator,
19th Legislative District

Brian Blake
State Representative
19th Legislative District

Dean Takko
State Representative
19th Legislative District

Washington State Legislature

March 30, 2011

RECEIVED
APR - 5 2011
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

Recreation & Conservation Office
Salmon Recovery Funding Board
1111 Washington Street S.E.
Olympia, WA 98501

Re: SRFB Project 10-1652, Restoring Bear River Estuary
Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group

Dear Board Members:

We are writing today to express our concern about SRFB Project 10-1652 (restoring the Bear River Estuary.) We have learned that this project has escalated into more than its description would indicate.

We ask the Salmon Recovery Funding Board to carefully evaluate this project a second time.

It was brought to our attention that wildlife habitat destruction and off-refuge property damage would occur, and we have concerns about that. Most of the project costs will be for dike removal well above the mean high tide line. It seems this project could do very little to help Bear River salmon. The Lewis, Porter Point, and Riekkola Creeks are sediment, non-productive salmon streams that run into the South Willapa Bay, not into the Bear River.

We support the community effort to withdraw funding of the Bear River Estuary Project. We hope the Salmon Recovery Funding Board will re-allocate the funding for a project that achieves the goals we all want - salmon restoration.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Brian Hatfield
State Senator

Brian Blake
State Representative

Dean Takko
State Representative

19th Legislative District

PACIFIC COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioners

Jon Kaino
District #1

Norman "Bud" Cuffel
District #2

Lisa Ayers
District #3

PACIFIC COUNTY COURTHOUSE
National Historic Site

Commissioners Office/ Meeting Room
1216 W. Robert Bush Drive
P.O. Box 187
South Bend, WA 98586

Willapa Harbor Area – (360) 875-9337
Peninsula Area – (360) 642-9337
Naselle – (360) 484-7337
North Cove Area – (360) 267-8337
FAX – (360) 875-9335
TDD – (360) 875-9400

April 8, 2011

RECEIVED
APR 14 2011
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

Washington State
Recreation and Conservation Office
Salmon Recovery Funding Board
PO Box 40917
Olympia WA 98504-0917

Dear Board Members:

Attached please find a packet containing letters and information from a variety of residents and groups in Pacific County asking you to reconsider your funding of the Bear River Restoration Project located at the south end of Willapa Bay in Pacific County.

The full scope of this project has just recently been brought to the public's attention and the overwhelming majority seems to be clearly opposed to the proposal. The opposition includes a huge cross section of interests including our local Audubon Chapter, Washington Waterfowl Association, cranberry growers, fishermen, oyster growers, our 19th District legislators and even members of the local ranking committee and sponsoring entity. This is a very diverse group with a variety of interests and expertise who all are questioning the value and consequences of the proposed project.

As Lead Entity for WRIA 24, Pacific County also has serious concerns about the project and the way it was presented. We have spoken with members of the Advisory Board who ranked the project locally and apparently they were not made aware of the full scope of the project prior to the ranking process. The Board of County Commissioners approval was based on the recommendation from the Advisory Board and the assumption of full public disclosure and review of the proposed projects. In hindsight, it appears this project proposal did not meet that criterion and our approval of the project was premature.

In addition, the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge, (the landowner) is currently receiving public comment on three management alternatives as part of their Comprehensive Conservation Plan /Environmental Impact Statement (CCP/EIS) scoping and planning process. Since not all of these management alternatives include this already funded portion of the project, the public's trust has been significantly compromised with regard to the legitimacy of the process itself. We believe that the public's confidence in the integrity of the process is paramount to the continued success of the entire Salmon Recovery Funding Program.

Based on the information in this packet and the issues described above, we are asking the Salmon Recovery Funding Board to delay funding this project until the Refuge's CCP/EIS process is completed. We are also asking that the project be remanded back to be reevaluated through the local ranking process, including full disclosure of the entire project as well as enhanced public participation prior to any funds being released.

We would be happy to discuss this further at your upcoming May meeting if you feel it would be of any benefit.

Sincerely,

PACIFIC COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Norman B. Cuffel, Chairman

Jon Kaino, Commissioner

Lisa Ayers, Commissioner

Cc: U.S. Congresswomen Jaime Herrera Buetler
State Senator Brian Hatfield
Representative Brian Blake
Representative Dean Takko
Mike Johnson, Manager-Pacific Conservation District
Charlie Stenvall, Manager-Willapa National Wildlife Refuge
Mark Ashley, Chair-Willapa Bay Water Resources Coordination Council
Willapa Bay Fisheries Enhancement Group

CITY OF LONG BEACH

Post Office Box 310
Long Beach, Washington 98631
Telephone 360-642-4421
FAX 360-642-8841
smiles@longbeachwa.gov

March 30, 2011

RECEIVED
PACIFIC COUNTY
APR - 8 2011
*postmarked 4/6/11 -KB
ADMINISTRATION
COMMISSIONERS

The Recreation and Conservation Office
Salmon Recovery Funding Board
1111 Washington Street SE
Olympia, WA 98501

RE: SRFB Project 10-1652, Restoring the Bear River Estuary
(Sponsor) Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group

Dear Board Members;

Due to the recent public awareness of the referenced project, we have learned that this project has escalated into more than the project description does indicate. We respectfully ask that the Salmon Recovery Funding Board carefully evaluate this project again.

It has become apparent that there are hidden costs in the amounts of 10's of millions of dollars. We think that wildlife habitat destruction and off refuge property damage seems grounds for a reevaluation at this time. The above referenced project describes that most of the project costs will be or are for dike removal. It seems this project could do very little to help Bear River Salmon as the title emphasizes.

The Lewis Point, Porter Point and Riekkola Creeks are sediment bottom, with non productive salmon streams running into the South Willapa Bay, not into Bear River.

We support the community effort to withdraw funding of the Bear River Estuary Project. We are hoping the Salmon Recovery Funding Board will find it prudent to re-allocate the funds. It makes much more sense to use money for a project that could actually help salmon.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these proposed plans.

Sincerely,

Long Beach Mayor and for the City Council

Robert E. Andrew

Mayor Robert Andrew, City of Long Beach, Washington

April 1, 2011

The Recreation and Conservation Office
Salmon Recovery Funding Board
1111 Washington Street SE
Olympia, Washington 98501

Re: SRFB Project 10-1652, Restoring the Bear River Estuary

Dear Board Members,

The members of Honker's Inc. feel that the maintenance of fresh & salt marsh habitat in the South Willapa Bay is of utmost importance to the threatened Dusky Goose and other waterfowl species. We feel that salmon restoration would be much more productive and cost effective if implemented in the Bear River System and other streams. In light of facts presented to us we would ask the Salmon Recovery Funding Board to withdraw the monies primarily for dike removal. Re-allocate those monies where they will do some real good for fish. Please do not destroy the fresh water marsh and short grass pastures of South Willapa Bay.

For your Consideration,

Doug Schnebly, Pres. Honker's Inc.

March 25, 2011

RECEIVED
PACIFIC COUNTY

MAR 28 2011

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

R. Jane Rose
Rose Ranch
6847 U S Hwy 101
South Bend, WA 98586

The Honorable Jaime Herrera Beutler
United States Representative
Third Congressional District
P.O. Box 1614
Ridgefield, WA 98642

Honorable Congresswoman Herrera Beutler,

I am contacting you on behalf of my husband, Robert P. Rose and myself as cattle ranchers in Pacific County and on behalf of my membership on the Willapa Bay Water Resources Coordinating Council. I and my fellow council members voted for the Bear River Estuary Project a year ago. The council is an advisory board to the Pacific County Commissioners who are the Lead Entity for WRIA 24. This project has become the cornerstone, ***IF ultimately funded by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board,*** for Alternate 1, 2 or 3 of an expansion of the Willapa Bay Wildlife Refuge. What was originally a project of some hundreds of thousands of dollars would become a greatly enhanced project of ***scores of millions of dollars*** if Alternate 2 becomes a reality. What is now being touted as the Bear River Estuary Project a year ago has become a whole lot more than the original project submitted for funding. We do not support Alternate 2 because it threatens our cranberry growers' livelihoods; it destroys migratory bird, elk and deer habitat; it threatens private properties to flooding; it takes timber out of production and off the tax rolls and the exorbitant amounts of dollars that would be spent flies in the face of the fact that our state is broke as well as our nation. We can not justify Alternate 2 in any good conscience. Further, we feel the whole Bear River Estuary Project needs to be re-evaluated due to information that has been brought out about the credibility of the project.

We support the community effort to withdraw funding of the Bear River Estuary Project by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board. We have no faith in what it has become.

Sincerely,

R. Jane Rose
Robert P. Rose

R. Jane and Robert P. Rose

Cc: The Honorable Washington State Senator, Brian Hatfield
The Honorable Washington State Representative, Brian Blake
The Honorable Washington State Representative, Dean Takko
Pacific County Commission Chair, Jon Kaino

Long Beach Cranberry Growers' Association
P.O. Box 384
Long Beach, WA 98631

March 29, 2011

The Recreation & Conservation Office
Salmon Recovery Funding Board
1111 Washington Street SE
Olympia, WA 98501

RE: SRFB Project 10-1652, Restoring the Bear River Estuary
sponsored by Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group

Dear Board Members,

The Long Beach Cranberry Growers Association, representing 32 local cranberry farms, is adamantly against removal of the Lewis, Porter Point, and Riekkola dikes. Removal of those dikes, particularly the Riekkola unit dike, will eliminate much needed pasture and habitat for elk and geese. Without the available pasture land, these animals will move onto nearby cranberry bogs causing huge economic losses both in terms of physical damage to sprinklers and irrigation systems, but to the beds themselves, contaminating the second major food crop on the Peninsula.

Project 10-1652 needs to be reviewed thoroughly as to whether it actually helps salmon recovery in Bear River. The Lewis, Porter Point, and Riekkola Creeks run into South Willapa Bay, not into Bear River. Do not remove those dikes!

We recommend that funding for this so-called "salmon recovery project" be withdrawn and given instead to a project that actually helps salmon and doesn't destroy wildlife habitat and farms.

Sincerely,

Long Beach Cranberry Growers' Association
Tucker Glenn, President

Discovery Coast Audubon Society

P. O. Box 724
Long Beach, Washington 98631
www.discoverycoastaudubon.com

March 29, 2011

The Recreation and Conservation Office
Salmon Recovery Funding Board
1111 Washington Street SE
Olympia, Washington 98501

Re: Willapa Bay National Refuge Project

To Whom It May Concern,

We, Discovery Coast Audubon Society of Pacific County would appreciate your taking another look at the repercussions that will happen and the collateral damage it will cause when money is used to: destroy migratory waterfowl habitat; kill the grass pasture in the Riekkola Field; reduce publicly owned goose foraging property for Canada Geese (including threatened Dusky Canada Geese); and, cause the refuge elk herd to search for food on the Long Beach Peninsula and in the Cranberry Bogs. Also, force Pacific County to spend millions of dollars to re-route one of the Tsunami Evacuation routes.

> We quote from *Salmon Recovery Funding Board website*: stating in part *"The board funds projects that protect existing, high quality habitats for salmon and that restore degraded habitat to increase overall habitat health and biological productivity."*

We are not convinced that any existing, high quality salmon habitat is in existence to be protected; or that there is any degraded habitat to increase; or any habitat health and biological productivity are in existence to be protected.

> And quoting further: *"The board believes that projects must be developed using science-based information and local citizen review. Projects must demonstrate, through an evaluation and monitoring process, the capacity to be implemented and sustained effectively to benefit fish."*

We have not received any science-based information confirming such; nor local citizen review approval. Then it would go without saying that the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Project does not demonstrate through an evaluation or any monitoring process, the capacity to be implemented and sustained effectively to benefit fish. It has been reported that there are currently no listed salmon species in Willapa Bay.

From all the research we have conducted, the DIKES are in good shape and performing exactly what they were intentionally installed to do. It is not conceivable to us that spending money on destroying such valuable habitat would be practicable in that most likely it would create more expense to remove the positive possibility of the invasion of invasive reed canary grass. The consensus of the local citizens is that there is a positive likelihood that this weed will come to life.

Also, while we are relaying to you our disapproval of the Refuge Project we are against the building of a new Refuge office and maintenance building in the middle of a wetland. The proposed site is used by migratory birds, resident birds, and all wildlife. Audubon approves of conservation and preservation of habitat for wildlife and birds.

We support the attached (marked as Exhibit A) concerns of local citizens. Thank you for your time and appreciate all assistance you can afford us.

Respectfully submitted.

/s/ Patricia Cruse

Patricia Cruse

Patricia Cruse, President, &
Conservation Committee Chair
360-642-1310

EXHIBIT A

Evaluation Concerns of: Restoring the Bear River Estuary (10-1652) By Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group

1. Most of this project is **not** in the Bear River Estuary as presented for funding. This project is to remove dikes in the South Willapa Bay adjacent to the Lewis, Porter Point & Riekkola Creeks in the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge. These streams run into the south bay **not** into Bear River as stated in the project description. At least two lead agency members, that approved this project, thought they were helping Bear River Salmon. The Bear River Estuary is in the SE corner of the bay next to Hwy 101. The Lewis, Porter Point & Riekkola Creeks are naturally non-productive for salmon use because they have sediment bottoms. Incubator boxes and live releases of fry have been attempted here by USFWS the last 10 years without success.

2. The project completion costs were not fully disclosed to the public. USFWS has estimated the actual cost to be 15 million dollars just for the dike removal. This was disclosed to Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutlers's office upon request. The Nisqually dike project cost 12 million dollars.

3. Ducks Unlimited biologists have told us that when the dikes are removed the vegetation will most likely be replaced with **invasive reed canary grass**.

4. There are currently no listed salmon species in Willapa Bay.

5. From local observations, the project elevation is all above the 9.0ft high tide mark. Rearing activities for salmon here would be extremely limited as most high tides would not flood this area. NOAA Chart 18504 clearly shows the mean high water line is well outside the dikes and the entire project is **above** the mean high water mark (see attached). Rearing activities would be better served from the freshwater wetlands now behind these dikes.

- Pacific County (WRIA 24) Strategic Plan For Salmon Recovery, dated June 29, 2001 states in part: *"Appropriate Restoration Activities:*
  Reikkola Creek: *There is no salmonid habitat restoration recommended in Riekkola Creek at this time. However, it is recommended that qualitative surveys of off-refuge tributaries on the east side of this drainage to determine if they contain potential salmonid habitat (Barndt et. Al. 2000).*
  Lewis Creek: *Salmonid Management in this area should include restoration and conservation discussions with the managers of upstream spawning areas (Barndt et. Al. 2000).*
  Porter Point Creek: *Salmonid management of this stream should include discussions with the managers of upstream lands to encourage sound ecosystem management practices. In addition, the marsh areas downstream provide important additional rearing and overwintering habitat. Therefore, maintaining wetlands in the lower portions of these creeks will benefit fish populations (Barndt et al. 2000)."*

6. With the fish ladders built here ten years ago the fish that do use this area will have mobility for stream access.

7. The collateral damage in the refuge and on the Long Beach Peninsula has **not** been addressed in this project. This will destroy migratory waterfowl habitat in the refuge. This will kill the grass pasture in the Riekkola Field reducing publicly owned goose foraging property for Canada Geese (including threatened Dusky Canada Geese). This will cause the refuge elk herd to search for food forcing them onto the Long Beach Peninsula and the Cranberry Bogs. This will increase goose depredation to surrounding cattle ranches. Pacific County will have to spend approx 2million dollars to re-route the Tsunami Evacuation road.

8. The Freshwater wetlands behind the Lewis/Porter Point dikes will be drained with no dikes. **The freshwater habitat will be lost**. Public hunting will be lost with no access to 5 miles of shoreline. Bird watching from the dikes will also be limited to a 2 million dollar board walk yet to be funded.

9. This plan will also destroy the two fish ladders that were constructed 10 years ago at a cost of $504,000.00. These fish ladders in the Lewis & Porter Point Creeks were also funded with salmon recovery grants. Is there a contract on these structures and does this money need to be re-paid?

10. There is no attempt to mitigate any of these losses, for waterfowl habit, public use, or increased property damage, this plan will create.

11. The dike removal in this area is **not** a recommended project in either of the two recent salmon studies of the Willapa Bay. *The University of Washington Report "Ranking of Estuarine Habitat Restoration Priorities in Willapa Bay"* **does not** mention this area at all as a salmon concern.

- This study does mention: *"The FWCRU Panel questioned whether there is any solid evidence that lack of saltwater wetlands habitat is in fact limiting fish production in Willapa* Bay. *After all, Willapa Bay still has very large tracts of high quality saltwater wetlands. We recognize that there is no scientific research establishing that historic loss of saltwater wetlands acreage has caused the decline in salmon runs in Willapa Bay or that restoration will lead to increases in salmon runs."*

12. This is clearly not a priority project for salmon. This is a waste of money and was misrepresented as a Bear River Restoration project. With over one hundred streams in the Willapa Bay with gravel bottoms that have limited salmon returns, the money allocated to this project should be spent where it has a chance to help salmon stocks. The Salmon Recovery Funding Board should review this project and re-allocate the funds wisely.

Compiled by Local Concerned Citizens

by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are periodically resurvey
not shown on this diagram. Refer to Chapter 1, United States

SOURCE

B3	1940-1969	NOS Surveys	partial bottom
B4	1900-1939	NOS Surveys	partial bottom
B5	Pre-1900	NOS Surveys	partial bottom

SHOALWATER BAY

Pinnacle Rk

Oys

Cable Ferry (see note)

Piles

Chigo Pt

Omeara Pt

Mud

Subm pile

Mud Flats

Subm piles

Round Island

Subm piles

Mud

Beer River

Mud

Marsh

Porter Pt

Marsh

Tarlatt Slough

Slough

Dike

Piles

124°

59'

58'

56'

54'

124°10'

08'

06'

04'

02'

124°

58'

56'

54'

52'

FEET

Published at Washington, D.C.
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE
COAST SURVEY

FATHOMS 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
FEET 6 12 18 24 30 36 42 48 54 60
METERS 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18

NOAA Chart # 18504

March 24, 2011

The Recreation and Conservation Office
Salmon Recovery Funding Board
1111 Washington Street SE
Olympia, Washington 98501

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing you seeking the de-funding of the USFWS's plans to remove dikes at the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge; specifically, the refuges's plan to remove dikes in the South Willapa Bay adjacent to the Lewis, Porter Point, and Riekkola creeks within the refuge.

As you well know, the Refuge system was created from Pittman-Robertson Taxes and Duck Stamp Funds purposely intended for the benefit of migratory waterfowl. The destruction of the dikes and the loss of the freshwater wetlands is a slap in the face to those who have paid the bills for the Refuge system since 1937.

Representatives from the Washington Waterfowl Association (WWA) have met at length with local members of the farming, ranching, and hunting & fishing communities in recent months over the USFWS's plans to remove the aforementioned dikes and the outcome that will follow.

Further, WWA members and officers have met as well with U.S. Representative Jaime Herrera Beutler, State Representative Brian Blake, Pacific County representatives, Willapa National Refuge Manager Charles Stenvall, and a representative of the Discover Coast Audubon Society in a public forum held in Ilwaco March 13th of this year.

Based on our findings, the WWA asks on behalf of waterfowlers throughout Washington that you reconsider and de-fund this project.

Further, we recommend the loss of public land and public recreation become a key prioritization factor in your project funding selection process and that public uplands lost as a result of SRFB funded projects be replaced in at least a 1:1 ratio with budget provided for purchase and preparation of said replacement lands, mitigating lost public and wildlife functions.

Sincerely,

James Cortines
President,
Washington Waterfowl Association
33510 – 143rd Place SE
Auburn, WA 98092
(206) 612-8772 cell

STATE OF WASHINGTON
Department of Fish and Wildlife
Mailing Adress: 600 Capitol Way N • Olympia WA 98501-1091 • (360) 902-2200; TTY (800) 833-6388
Main Office Location: Natural Resources Building • 1111 Washington Street SE • Olympia WA

March 2, 2011

Charlie Stenvall, Project Leader
Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Complex
3888 SR 101
Ilwaco, Washington 98624

Dear Mr. Stenvall:

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) would like to thank you for the opportunity to review the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (CCP/EIS). While there are many positive fish and wildlife benefits associated with all three of the alternatives presented, we support Alternative 3 presented in the document.

We are in full agreement with the long-term goals for habitat acquisition by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in south Willapa Bay. This area is under increasing development pressure, and the areas outlined for expansion of the refuge will provide larger contiguous management blocks that will complement acquisition efforts by WDFW and other conservation organizations.

We concur with most of the management actions proposed for habitat and hunting outlined for the refuge in the CCP/EIS. Restoration of estuarine habitat is an important goal of our agency, and in fact we have led several important restoration efforts in the Willapa Bay area over the past 20 years. However, we also value the habitat diversity and ecological benefits provided by the managed uplands and freshwater wetlands at the refuge. Losses of these habitat types must be considered in designing projects to maintain and enhance biodiversity of this important coastal system. Conservation of these habitats must also consider current state and projected habitat changes in relation to original conditions, factoring in past impacts from development and other modifications to natural systems.

In particular, we remain concerned about the preferred alternative's proposal to eliminate active management of upland goose foraging areas which are used by dusky Canada geese. We reviewed the recent Washington State University study referenced in the CCP/EIS to evaluate

goose use of estuary versus upland areas in this region, and found that the experimental design was not robust enough to support the limited conclusions of the paper. The Pacific Flyway Management Plan for Dusky Canada Geese specifies a management goal of 10,000 to 20,000 birds (see http://pacificflyway.gov/Abstracts.asp#dcg). A three-year running average population below 10,000 calls for Action Level 2 in this plan, which increases management efforts for the population and reduces hunting quotas (although several marking studies have shown that winter survival is not controlling this population). The 2010 dusky population index was 9,530 birds and the three-year running average was estimated at 8,464, triggering the second year of enhanced management efforts in 2010-11 to reverse the recent decline in this population. Maintenance of existing goose use areas on public lands is specified as a Priority 1 in the Dusky Canada Goose Management Plan.

In addition, maintenance and enhancement of winter foraging habitat on public lands is a priority identified in the Pacific Flyway Council's plan for Canada Goose Agricultural Depredation Control in Oregon and Washington (see http://pacificflyway.gov/Abstracts.asp#dep). The refuge currently has the infrastructure in place to maintain habitat at the Reikkola Unit and help reduce goose (and elk) damage concerns on private lands. Maintenance of the pastures will offset some of the recent losses of other habitat to development in south Willapa Bay. In addition to geese, the diversity of habitat provided by a mosaic of uplands, restored freshwater wetlands, and restored estuary will benefit a broad range of species.

Based on our surveys of hunters, interactions with waterfowl hunting organizations, and input from our Waterfowl Advisory Group, we know that quality managed areas with established blinds are a priority for many older and inexperienced hunters. Walk-in access is becoming more limited as upland areas become more developed and leased by hunting clubs. Because of these concerns, we also strongly encourage you to maintain and enhance the existing hunting program at the Reikkola Unit. For the same reasons, the managed freshwater wetlands on the Tarlatt, Lewis, and Porter Point units could be reinstated as valuable resources for area hunters.

The CCP/EIS adequately addresses threats and objectives relating to threatened and endangered species. The proposed predator removal during snowy plover nesting times could increase fledgling success. New acquisitions of developing timber stands could provide long-term habitat for marbled murrelets and further increase biodiversity. Construction of wildlife viewing platforms could increase participation and access for wildlife viewing opportunities.

Based on the comments and concerns outlined above, our preference would be Alternative 3 among the three alternatives presented in the CCP/EIS. This alternative provides the most acceptable mix of enhancements to habitat and recreation over the next 15 years, although we would like to have additional dialogue on modifications to the alternative if a supplemental CCP/EIS is considered. We appreciate this opportunity to review and comment on the document, and look forward to working with you in the future to improve management of the

refuge through the ongoing CCP/EIS review process. If you have any questions about our comments, please contact Don Kraege at (360) 902-2522.

Sincerely,

Nate Pamplin, Assistant Director
Wildlife Program

cc: Michele Culver
Greg Schirato
Don Kraege

Final Report

Ranking of Estuarine Habitat Restoration Priorities in Willapa Bay, WA

Coastal Resources Alliance
January 9, 2007
Project # 04-1641N
Contact: Miranda Wecker
360-484-7128
mwecker@wwest.net

events. The large scale winds that cause upwellings and plankton blooms are correlated with the fair dry weather conditions of summer, whereas the winter winds that lead to rain are accompanied by downwelling events. The influence of the Columbia River plume intrusions into Willapa Bay has also been more fully explained in a recently publish article. (Hickey and Banas 2003). The effect of the Columbia River plume on Willapa Bay is most pronounced during the late spring and early summer when snowmelt flows are still running high in the Columbia and the extreme winter rainfall that feeds Willapa Bay rivers has ended. (Banas et al 2004).

Estuarine Habitat, Stressors, & Restoration Opportunities

After more than a decade of focus on uplands and riparian habitat restoration, policy makers have broadened their attention and now seek to encompass the restoration of estuarine and nearshore habitat. In 1998, the Western Washington Office of the US Fish and Wildlife Service prepared a literature review of the available scientific information on salmon utilization of estuaries. (Aitkin, J. K. 1998). Estuaries provide the habitat for anadromous fish to make the transition between life in salt and freshwater environments. Adult salmon undergo the physiological transition necessary to survive in freshwater and reach the upstream spawning beds. Juvenile salmon make the physiological transition needed to adjust to saltwater. Juveniles also spend time in he estuary foraging and growing. They also need refuge from predators and protection from currents and high flows. The available literature indicates that different salmon species use estuarine habitat in complex and various ways. Chinook are considered the most dependent on estuarine habitat, chum second most dependent and coho least dependent. The USFWS Literature Review generalized what is know about the status of estuarine habitat in the Pacific Northwest. It reported that a large percentage of estuarine habitat has been lost to diking, channelization, and dredging and filling. Washington is estimated to have lost between 45% and 62% of its pre-settlement estuarine habitat. The Literature Review also indicated that few studies have been done to evaluate whether salmon actually use estuarine habitat that has been restored. The studies cited were cautiously encouraging; they showed evidence of extensive use of restored estuarine habitat.

Experts consulted in the course of this project warned that the conclusions drawn from studies of Puget Sound and other ecosystems cannot be transferred without caution to Willapa Bay. We make reference to the work that has been done to look specifically at how salmon use estuarine habitat in Willapa Bay, but that body of literature and the datasets available to support it are far from voluminous and robust. The scientists who have conducted this kind of work report that the challenges are daunting. The size of the bay, its currents, and its variability all make research of this kind difficult and expensive. Because Willapa Bay currently has no listed salmon species, there is little money available to study its stocks. Although we would argue that the state and federal priorities for research are shortsighted, they are understandably driven by Endangered Species Act (ESA) listings.

In the following sections, the report will include an assessment of the condition of Willapa Bay's estuarine habitat based on the literature available that is specific to

Saltwater Wetlands

Loss of saltwater wetlands habitat is considered one of the most common "limiting factors" blamed for the decline of nearshore or estuarine salmon habitat. Wetlands loss occurs when a dike is built isolating areas from the reach of tidal waters. The earliest accounts of the history of diking and filling in Willapa Bay was prepared by Arnold Shotwell in 1977 while working for the Pacific County Planning Department. Shotwell reported that the low dikes were built by early settlers to allow summer pasturing of livestock. Between 1912 and 1920, higher dikes were installed by Diking Districts established to encourage development of year-round agriculture and construction of roads, towns and industry. Dikes were also built to create more freshwater wetlands habitat for migratory birds. The Willapa National Wildlife Refuge maintains one of the largest tracts of diked freshwater wetlands in the area for that purpose. Shotwell estimated that, of the approximately 12,354 acres (5,000 hectares) of estuarine wetlands that existed in Willapa Bay around 1906, only 50% remained as of 1975.

In the 1999 Limiting Factors Analysis prepared for WRIA 24, another evaluation of "wetlands loss" in Willapa Bay was done. (Smith 1999) This assessment used data from the Willapa Alliance (1998) to provide estimates and maps of wetland loss for six sub-estuaries in Willapa Bay. This assessment indicated that only 22% of the original estuarine wetlands in Willapa Bay had been lost. The reasons for the large difference between the Shotwell analysis and the Smith analysis are not clear.

ONRC GIS conducted an analysis of wetlands loss for this project using the best available datasets and GIS technology. According to ONRC's calculations, Willapa Bay originally contained approximately 14,620 acres of saltwater wetlands. Now there are 5,277 acres. This represents a 64% loss of estuarine wetlands. To reach this conclusion, ONRC used a 2003 LiDAR survey of the Bay conducted by NOAA's Coastal Services Center in Charleston South Carolina as the underlying bathymetric data. ONRC developed a methodology for relating this highly accurate bathymetric data with the tidal datum provided by NOAA. ONRC also referred to a baywide series of aerial photography taken of the shoreline in 2005. Dikes are clearly visible in the photographs. ONRC also incorporated the latest datasets from the Department of Transportation on the location of shoreline culverts and tidegates as well as data from the National Wetlands Inventory. After generating maps displaying the location of fully impounded and partially impounded wetlands, ONRC clipped an ownership data layer to show the names of owners of impounded wetlands.

Saltwater Wetlands Restoration Techniques

The expert panel assembled by FWCRU expressed little confidence in any estuarine restoration techniques other than saltwater wetlands restoration through dike breaching or removal. They referred to a growing literature establishing the value of creating additional saltwater wetlands acreage by restoring tidal hydrology. (Beamer et al. 2005). Key ecosystem processes are changed when saltwater influence is restored

including tidal hydrology, cycling of organic matter, and sediment movements. New off channel habitat will be available to fish. Oceanic nutrients will be added. New plant communities will grow and make organic matter and prey items available. Analysis of nearshore restoration work in Puget Sound has led managers to consider a number of factors important in relation to the success of projects to create saltwater wetlands. Factors to consider are where the dike may be removed, how much of the dike may be removed, the size of the new wetland, and where in the estuary the new wetland is located. (Beamer et al. 2005).

The FWCRU Panel questioned whether there is any solid evidence that lack of saltwater wetlands habitat is in fact limiting fish production in Willapa Bay. After all, Willapa Bay still has very large tracts of high quality saltwater wetlands. We recognize that there is no scientific research establishing that historic loss of saltwater wetlands acreage has caused the decline in salmon runs in Willapa Bay or that restoration will lead to increases in salmon runs. However, it may be helpful to consider the results of an assessment of salmon stocks in Willapa Bay conducted by the Willapa Alliance. (Suzumoto 1992). The Suzumoto report assembled a great deal of evidence showing a substantial decline in chum runs. He estimated that present Chum runs were roughly 30% of their historic numbers. Coho and Chinook numbers, in contrast, were maintained at levels consistent with historic numbers through artificial propagation. Chum salmon is one of the species most dependent on estuarine habitat including saltwater wetlands. There is intense and widespread interest in increasing chum runs throughout Willapa Bay. Because of the importance of low elevation habitat to chum, restoration of estuarine habitat will probably serve that interest.

☆ Restoration Recommendations: Saltwater Wetlands Restoration

WRIA 24's Strategic Plan for Salmon Recovery should include recognition of the high level of success associated with dike breaching or removal to restore saltwater wetlands. Of particular importance are restoration opportunities in the two rivers that were ranked the most important in the Strategic Plan: the Naselle and the Willapa Rivers. The ranking criteria recommended by the FWCRU team reaffirms the selection of these two rivers based on the presence of all species of salmon found in the Willapa system. Wetlands restoration opportunities are ranked in accordance with the size of the contiguous area available for restoration and the degree of improvement that is possible. The largest parcels that are currently fully impounded present the potential for greatest addition of new habitat and most substantial improvement over present conditions. Very large parcels that are partially impounded may also provide excellent opportunities. The willingness of the landowners to cooperate with restoration projects has not been assessed, unless noted in the comments.

Naselle River Estuarine Unit Projects

The Naselle River Unit presents a number of opportunities for saltwater wetlands restoration projects. There are 412 acres of fully impounded wetlands, and 306 acres of

partially impounded wetlands. The following table presents the restoration projects starting with the highest ranked.

Naselle River Estuarine Unit: Fully Impounded Parcels

Location	*Size*	*Owners*	*Comments*
North of Smith Creek & west of Parpala Rd.	*124 acres*	*TNC, Gray, Hazen, Ring*	
Southern reach, west shoreline, north of Naselle oxbow	*89 acres*	*Matthew, Skyline Land Corp, WA,*	
Southern reach, west shoreline, Naselle oxbow	*61 acres*	*Strange, Skyline Land Corp, unlisted, Evans*	
North of Smith Creek, east of Parpala Rd	*57 acres*	*Hazen, Preston, Crawford, Trent, Cenci, Bear*	*Residential development on hill top*
South of Smith Creek, west of Parpala Rd	*41 acres*	*Ring Pacific, Cathlamet Timber Co*	
North of Ellsworth Slough, south of Parpala Rd	*18 acres*	*TNC, Mid-Valley Resources Inc*	
Clearwater Creek	*14 acres*	*Wilson, Kess, Carlson*	*Residential development*

Partially Impounded

Location	*Size*	*Owners*	*Comments*
South of Smith Creek & east of Parpala Rd.	*144 acres*	*Nordlum, Erickson, Meyer, Moore*	
Southern reach, east shoreline, Naselle oxbow	*126 acres*	*Meyer, Le Masters, Largin, Herrold, Hunter*	
Stanley Pt	*37 acres*	*US, Herrold, Jordan*	

Willapa River Estuarine Unit Projects

The Willapa River Unit presents a number of opportunities for saltwater wetlands restoration projects. There are 1935 acres of fully impounded wetlands, and 467 acres of partially impounded wetlands. The following table presents the restoration projects starting with the highest ranked.

West Section Willapa River Estuarine United: Fully Impounded Parcels

Location	*Size*	*Owners*	*Comments*
North Shoreline Willapa River West of SR 105 Johnson Slough to Mailboat Slough	*697 acres*	*Camenzind, Bale, Runyon, Port of Willapa, Harmer,Lostal, Haueter, Dunsmoor, WDFW,*	
Rose Ranch Willapa South Shoreline Willapa River N of US 101	*424 acres*	*Rose, WDFW, Keller, Lorentson, Strunk, Raymond Church of Nazerene, Rucker,, Anderson, Bascom, Doten, ,*	
Johnson Slough North Shoreline Willapa River North of Airport Access Rd East of SR 105	*303 acres*	*Bale, Camenzind, Port of Willapa*	*188 acres possible stand alone could also combine with 697 acres*
Far West edge Willapa River North Shoreline	*49 acres*	*Burkhalter*	
West edge Willapa River North Shoreline	*22 acres*	*Burkhalter, Rayonier*	
West edge Willapa River North Shoreline	*15 acres*	*Rayonier*	
South of Potter Slough West of US101	*14 acres*	*WDFW, Weyerhaeuser, Iron Lady*	

East Section Willapa River Estuarine Unit: Fully & Partially Impounded Parcels

Location	*Size*	*Owners*	*Comments*
Upstream South Fork Willapa River	*166 acres*	*Runge, Lignoski, WDFW, Weyco Bannish,Gunther, Jergensen, Hatfield, Lund, Antilla, DNR, Elcher*	
Elk Creek North Shore NE of Raymond	*130 acres*	*Davis, Plakinger, Smith, Pacific Count, Murdoch*	*Partially impounded*

North River Estuarine Unit Projects

The North River Unit presents a number of opportunities for saltwater wetlands restoration projects. There are 1779 acres of fully impounded wetlands, and 26 acres of partially impounded wetlands. The following table presents the restoration projects starting with the highest ranked.

East Section North River Estuarine Unit: Fully Impounded Parcels

Location	*Size*	*Owners*	*Comments*
Cedar River North of SR 105	*574 acres*	*Green Diamond, Tucker, Cascade Land Conserv.*	
North River Flood Plain	*324 acres*	*Weyerhaeuser, WDFW*	*Weyco wants to sell*
Freshwater Creek	*43 acres*	*Green Diamond, WDFW*	
Norris Slough	*41 acres*	*Green Diamond*	

West Section North River Estuarine Unit: Fully Impounded Parcels

Location	*Size*	*Owners*	*Comments*
Kindred & Teal Duck Slough	*492 acres*	*Larson, Tucker, Weyco, Blake,Shoalwater Tribe, Green Diamond*	*Fully impounded, Weyco maintains dike*
North Kindred Slough	*118 acres*	*Green Diamond, Shoalwater Tribe*	*Depends on Kindred Slough*
North Teal Duck Slough	*41 acres*	*Tucker, Green Diamond,*	*Depends on Teal Duck Slough*

Palix River Estuarine Unit Projects

The Palix River Unit presents a number of opportunities for saltwater wetlands restoration projects. There are 911 acres of fully impounded wetlands, but no acres of partially impounded wetlands. The following table presents the restoration projects starting with the highest ranked.

North East Section Palix River Estuarine Unit: Fully Impounded Parcels

Location	*Size*	*Owners*	*Comments*
East of Wilson Point West of US 101	*79 acres*	*Harbor Rock, Bowman, Delundian, Graham, Abrams, Lavalee, Thorsteinsson*	
East of Wilson Point East of US 101	*21 acres*	*Weyerhaeuser, WDFW, Shaudys*	*Depends on West of US 101*
East of Wilson Point East of US 101	*5 acres*	*Weyerhaeuser*	*Depends on West of US 101*
Hansen Creek	*8 acres*	*Halvorsen, Econoforest Int'l, Goodin, Gilllies*	
Fruit Growers	*6 acres*	*Fruit Growers Supply*	

SouthWest Section Palix River Estuarine Unit: Fully Impounded Parcels

Location	*Size*	*Owners*	*Comments*
Rose Ranch Palix *[+ 7 more acres]*	*590 acres*	*Rose, Lake of the Woods, Lagregren, , Stearns, Disney, Fuller* *[Patterson, Erickson Gow, Roach, Anderson, Hartman, Patrick]*	*Rose Ranch not interested at this time*
Niawiakum	*56 acres*	*Weyerhaeuser, Massin, Halpin, Shaudys, Smith*	
South Fork Palix	*55 acres*	*Rose, McCohnay, Ortquist, Rayonier*	

Nemah River Estuarine Unit Projects

The Nemah River Unit presents a limited number of opportunities for saltwater wetlands restoration projects. There are 104 acres of fully impounded wetlands, and 176 acres of partially impounded wetlands. The following table presents the restoration projects starting with the highest ranked.

North East Section Palix River Estuarine Unit: Fully Impounded Parcels

Location	*Size*	*Owners*	*Comments*
Rose Ranch Nemah	*93 acres*	*Rose*	
North Nemah	*173 acres*	*Sailor, Wiss, Ziesmer, Carter,Lugibihl*	*Partially impounded*

Bear River Estuarine Unit Projects

The Bear River Unit presents a limited number of opportunities for saltwater wetlands restoration projects. Although there are 1360 acres of fully impounded wetlands, most are owned by the federal government and managed for migratory bird habitat. Other impounded wetlands are part of residential parcels. There are also 375 acres of partially impounded wetlands, The following table presents the restoration projects starting with the highest ranked.

Bear River Estuarine Unit: Fully & Partially Impounded Parcels

Location	*Size*	*Owners*	*Comments*
South Long Beach Honkers	*167 acres*	*Kaino, Honkers, Sparks,*	
Tarlatt Slough	*116 acres*	*USA,*	

Albers to Giles Slough	*67 acres*	*Envar, Markham, Schoner*	
Northeast of Tarlatt	*45 acres*	*State of WA*	
North of Tarlatt	*45 acres*	*Oman*	
South of Albers	*15 acres*	*Hardisty*	
East of the Bear	*319 acres*	*USA, Pacific West Timber, Bacon,*	

Other Nearshore/Estuarine Limiting Factors

Fish Passage Barriers along the Shoreline

ONRC GIS integrated the most current information available from the Department of Transportation on the status and location of culverts into each estuarine unit GIS system. The locations of the culverts did not always match up with the locations of streams and creeks that they were installed in, suggesting that the baseline hydrology data may also have flaws. In addition, no field survey has been done to assess the status of the culverts as passage barriers to fish. We have been told that the Department of Transportation is in the process of conducting such a survey.

☆ Restoration Recommendation: Shoreline Barrier Survey and Repair

WRIA 24 Strategic Plan should strongly advocate completion of the DOT culvert survey and integration of improved information in the state datasets. Once more accurate information is available, WRIA 24 should evaluate and rank the shoreline culverts that pose passage barriers and integrate that ranking into the Strategic Plan.

Information Gaps

The resulting compilation presented in this section should be seen as an effort to present the information sets available at this time, cite their sources; and acknowledge whatever inadequacies and flaws there might be. It is obvious that much less is known about the role of saltwater habitat in the life cycle of salmon species than is known about their use of freshwater habitat. In Puget Sound, a multi-million dollar effort is underway to build a better understanding of the role of nearshore habitat and assess what can be done to restore it. Far less money is likely to be available to study similar issues in Willapa Bay. We have been told that information generated by research in Puget Sound and elsewhere should not be assumed to be applicable to the Willapa Bay ecosystem. Research and monitoring must be done in this system to understand how salmon use this system. The productivity and quality of Willapa's habitat and the relative health of its salmon stocks should not deter major initiatives. In fact, there has always been a compelling counter argument to the current emphasis on spending the lions share of the

money in seriously degraded ecosystems. Preserving functioning systems is more certain and less costly than trying to restore ecosystems that are no longer functional.

We also recognize that some important official datasets contain errors. They can only be *officially* modified by the agencies responsible for those datasets. Through assessment projects such as this one, local volunteers could go out into the field and verify or repair incorrect data. Locally modified data, even if known to be more accurate, does not carry the authority of official datasets. This is *not* a problem unique to Willapa Bay data. Looking ahead, the data correction process will likely involve local initiative and volunteer efforts to ground truth information and agency cooperation.

In the course of their analysis of estuarine habitat conditions, the FWCRU team developed a list of important data gaps. Other collaborators have added items to this list. The following is a compilation of the information needs identified through development of this project. It is not exhaustive.

The FWCRU team posed the following as the overall key question for nearshore recovery in Willapa Bay: ***What is the distribution of nearshore habitats in Willapa Bay both in time and space and how do salmonids use these habitats?***

Data gaps were then categorized and spelled out in more detail.

Historical and Present Habitat Conditions

- What are the nearshore habitats in Willapa Bay and how are they connected (i.e., arranged on the landscape)?
- What habitats have been lost?
- Are there changes in geomorphology, hydrology and/or bathymetry and are they important to salmonids?

Habitat Use by Salmonids

- What are the life history and habitat requirements in Willapa Bay?
- What is the residence time of salmonids in different nearshore habitats (e.g., tidal flats, estuarine wetlands, eelgrass meadows)?
- What is the overall residence time of salmonids in Willapa Bay?
- What is the food web ecology in different nearshore habitats?
- What if anything limits growth and survival of juvenile salmonids in Willapa Bay? (e.g., food limited or predation limited?).

Other more specific information needs were noted in various sections of the FWCRU report. In relation to *Spartina* eradication, data is needed on how an area is used by salmon after the *Spartina* has been removed. Another key gap concerns the interactions between native and exotic eelgrasses and their comparative value to salmon.

Eelgrass, Oyster Culture, & Salmon

The WRAC Study identified the following key information needs:

- What are the parameters of eelgrass in "healthy" beds?
- How do eelgrass beds respond after ghost shrimp removal?
- How are eelgrass density and growth rate related?
- How do eelgrass distribution and abundance change over time?
- How do eelgrass change through a crop cycle?
- How do eelgrass and oysters compete for space?
- Does eelgrass recovery consistently occur in the Spring?

☆ Restoration Recommendation: Identify Strategic Information Needs

We recommend that the Pacific County Lead entity acknowledge the need to be strategic in addressing data problems. If feasible, a list of the flaws in the information most important to salmon habitat restoration should be developed as part of the strategic plan. In relation to the estuarine habitat ranking process, we recommend efforts to improve the following information: the status of shoreline culverts as barriers to fish passage; actual presence or absence of fish species in creeks and streams through the watershed; and the distribution of native and non-native eelgrass.

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Willapa Tidings

Vol. 10 No. 2 Winter 2010
Newsletter of the Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge

"Have you renewed your 2009 membership with Friends?
Turn the page to find out more..."

Salmon Surveys Conducted on Refuge Streams

By Mariana Bergerson

The upriver salmon migration is one of nature's most exciting events. Pacific salmon are anadromous fish which means that they hatch and live the first part of their lives in fresh water, then migrate to the ocean to spend their adult lives. When they reach sexual maturity, they return to the freshwater stream of their origin to lay their eggs.

The journey upstream can be long and arduous. Only a small percentage of salmon live to reach their natal stream or spawning grounds. Those males that survive the trip are often gaunt, with grotesquely humped backs, hooked jaws, and battle-torn fins. The females are swollen with a pound or more of eggs. Both have large white patches of bruised skin on their backs and sides. Since salmon do not feed once they leave the ocean, some will die on the way because they lack enough stored body fat to make the trip.

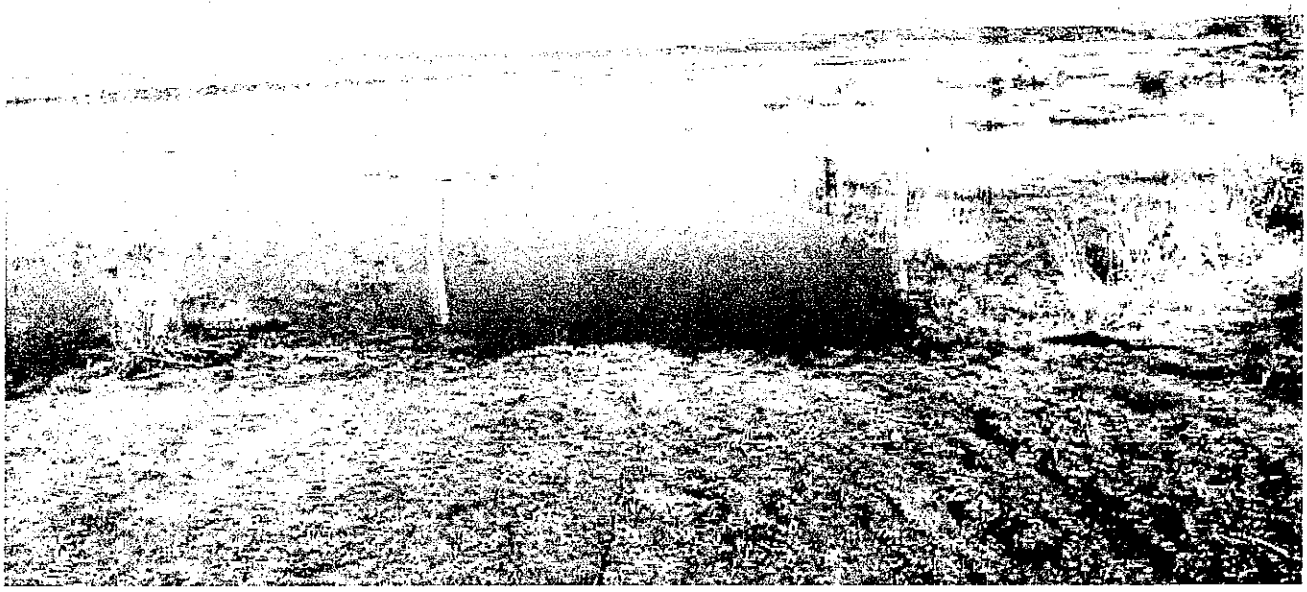
Once the salmon have returned to their natal stream, the female builds her nest, called a redd, by agitating the bottom gravel with her fins and tail, and bending her body into a U shape first one way, then the other. As soon as she has excavated a depression, she settles onto it and deposits her first batch of eggs, or roe. The male then moves alongside and deposits his sperm, called milt, over the roe. The female rakes her tail back and forth to cover the redd with loose gravel. She then excavates her next redd a short distance upstream. The salmon die within a few days of spawning. Their decaying bodies provide crucial nutrients to the stream for the many plants and animals that live there.

Starting in October Marie Fernandez, the biologist at Willapa National Wildlife Refuge, organized surveys for the salmon run in each of the Refuge's fresh water streams. Each staff member adopted a stream and surveyed it each week. The surveys were conducted by carefully walking along the side of the stream looking for both spawning and dead salmon. Marie stated "most of the time you smell the dead salmon before you can see it."

Coho, Chum, and Cutthroat salmon have been reported in refuge streams this year so far. Six Coho have been documented returning to the Lewis Stream to spawn. Marie noted that for the past few years there has been a release of Coho fry in Lewis and/or Porter Point impoundments. Project Leader, Charlie Stenvall also observed Coho in North Creek including one pair on a redd and a Coho in Lost Creek.

Willapa NWR Biologist Marie Fernandez

Lewis Unit Fresh water wetland behind the dike 2/2/11



2/2/11

Porter Point unit Fresh water wetland behind the dike

Wildlife
News
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Thursday, April 18th, 2002

WHO: U.S.F.W.S. Director Steve Williams

WHAT Williams will speak about and tour 300 acres of restored wetlands and 5 restored streams on Willapa National Wildlife Refuge. He also will present recognition awards to partners who made the restoration possible. The restored streams and wetlands contain endangered coho, Chinook and chum salmon as well as steelhead and cutthroat trout. Shorebirds and waterfowl also benefit from these restored wetlands.

WHEN: one p.m., Wednesday, April 24, 2002

WHERE: Willapa National Wildlife Refuge's Lewis Unit Overlook. The refuge is located near Long Beach, Washington (See map on last page).

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY: At two p.m., Director Williams is scheduled to take a shuttle to the refuge's Lewis Fish Ladder where he will mark and release salmon. Afterward he will tour other parts of the refuge with Regional Director Anne Badgley and others and will not be accessible for comment.

PARTNERS TO BE RECOGNIZED: Ducks Unlimited, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, The Nature Conservancy, Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group, U.S.D.A. Natural Resource Conservation Service and Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge.

Other partners include: Washington Department of Ecology, Golder and Associates, Rognlins, Inc., Seminole Construction, NDC Timber, Inc., Columbia Pacific RC & D and Pacific Co. Commissioners.

BACKGROUND: Improving stream passage and restoring habitat for native

salmon and trout in 5 streams on Willapa Countrywide Wildlife Refuge involved biologists and engineers from private and public sectors, as well as contractors who understood the intricacies of environmental restoration. A host of volunteers performed the difficult, non-glamorous work. At the heart of the plan were good science and numerous partnerships. The following is a thumbnail sketch of restoration activities in each stream:

Headquarters Creek - Dams were removed, a road abandoned and 5 culverts, a tidegate and a flashboard riser (water control device) taken out. Large woody debris was placed in the creek to give juvenile fish a place to hide and rest. A fish-rearing channel, or oxbow wetland, also was built. Riparian plants were added to the streambanks and the creek was nutrient-enhanced with salmon carcasses in order to feed emerging fish. Chum were raised using in-stream incubators and cutthroat trout were planted in the creek.

Long Island Cedar Grove Stream - A culvert and dam to fish rearing habitat was removed, the creek was nutrient-enhanced, chum were raised using in-stream incubators. Cutthroat trout will soon be reintroduced.

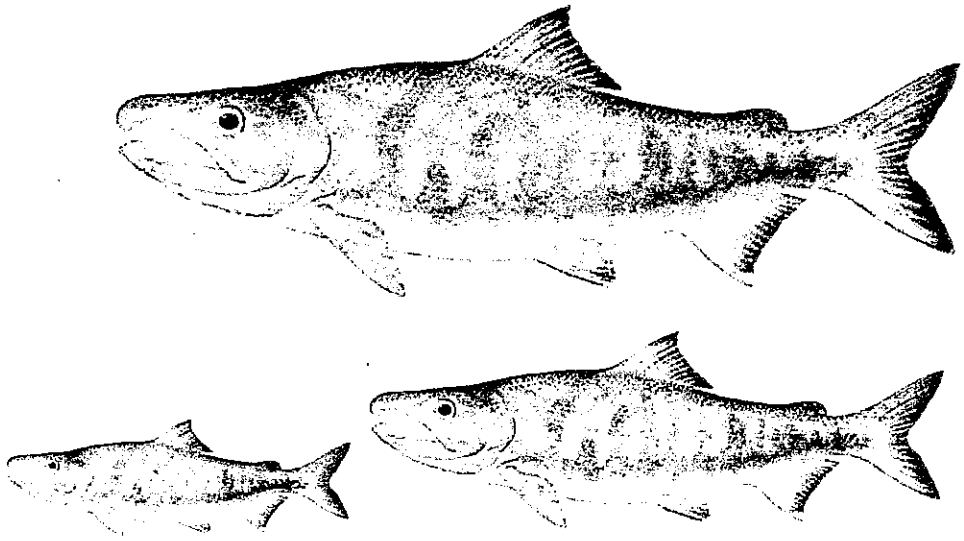
Bear River - Removing a dike restored natural tidal action in Bear River's saltmarsh. Other restoration includes construction of tidal channels, placing large woody debris in the stream.

Lewis and Porter Point Streams - Constructing a fish ladder allows land-locked populations of cutthroat trout access to the estuary and gives salmon access to spawning and rearing habitat. Chum were planted directly into the stream and coho were raised using in-stream incubators.

Chum and coho salmon and cutthroat trout have already been documented using some of the streams. Their presence is expected to continue and their numbers probably will increase. Other restoration results have been dramatic: An increasing number of amphibians use the area, including rare species such as Dunn's and Van Dyke's salamanders; Waterfowl and shorebirds have increased in the Lewis and Porter Point wetlands because of better water management and removal of invasive reed canary grass and *Juncus*. In place of invasive weeds are in excess of 40 species of native wetland plants such as burr reed, smart weed, manna grass, beggar tick, and pondweed. Wildlife response to the restoration has lead to a substantial increase in public visits. Unfortunately, Willapa Bay, also within the refuge, continues to be choked by the invasive aquatic weed, spartina. Efforts to rid the bay of this plant have been underway for several years, but are expected to take many more.

The U.S.F.W.S. is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System which encompasses in excess of 540 National wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 70 Countrywide fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 78 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid plan that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

PACIFIC COUNTY (WRIA 24) STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SALMON RECOVERY



CHUM SALMON (Oncorhynchus keta)

June 29, 2001

Prepared for:
Pacific County
P.O. Box 68
South Bend, WA 98586

Prepared by :
Applied Environmental Services, Inc
1550 Woodridge Dr. SE
Port Orchard, WA 98366

apparent suitability of the riparian vegetation and instream structure for coho and cutthroat this stream does not appear to support reproducing populations of salmonids. However, chum would not have been present in this stream during the sampling period as chum emigrate from the streams very soon after emergence from the gravel in the spring. In 1970 USFWS personnel sampled this stream and captured juvenile coho and cutthroat indicating that this stream may have historically supported reproducing salmonid populations. If so, subsequent land use practices may have extirpated these populations (Barndt et. al. 2000).

Headquarters Creek

As in Long Island Cedar Grove Creek, the limited presence of coho indicates that either limited reproduction is occurring in the stream, or occasional fish are immigrating into the stream. Habitat complexity is reduced in Headquarters Creek below the diversion dam, due in part to the relatively low amount of LWD present. The scarcity of off-channel rearing habitat and overwintering areas may also be limiting, especially for coho. Below the diversion dam, other parameters such as gradient, LWD, pool volume, and riparian cover, appear suitable for coho, cutthroat, and chum. The habitat above the diversion dam, especially the amount of pool habitat, is marginal for cutthroat. Overall, Headquarters Creek appears suitable for cutthroat, chum, coho. Therefore, the absence of cutthroat trout in this stream below the diversion dam is puzzling given the presence of this species in Porter Point Creek, a stream with more limiting habitat. However, after extensive timber harvest, habitat suitability may decrease to the point that cutthroat populations are unable to persist especially in competition with other fish (Barndt et. al. 2000).

Appropriate Restoration Activities

Reikkola Creek

There is no salmonid habitat restoration recommended in Riekkola Creek at this time. However, it is recommended that qualitative surveys of off-refuge tributaries on the east side of this drainage to determine if they contain potential salmonid habitat (Barndt et. al. 2000).

Lewis Creek

Salmonid management in this area should include restoration and conservation discussions with the managers of upstream spawning areas (Barndt et. al. 2000).

Porter Point Creek

Salmonid management of this stream should include discussions with the managers of upstream lands to encourage sound ecosystem management practices. In addition, the marsh areas downstream provide important additional rearing and overwintering habitat. Therefore, maintaining wetlands in the lower portions of these creeks will benefit fish populations (Barndt et. al. 2000).

Long Island Cedar Grove Creek

This stream has high value due to its biological integrity. Salmonid management of this stream should include coordination with the managers of upstream lands to encourage sound ecosystem practices such as selective cutting and riparian buffer strips (Barndt et. al. 2000).

Headquaters Creek

If cutthroat historically were present in this stream, the combination of habitat fragmentation (i.e. diversions, culverts, etc.), habitat disturbances (timber harvest, etc.) likely contributed to their extirpation (Barndt et. al. 2000).

To see all the details that are visible on the screen, use the "Print" link next to the map.

Google maps

PACIFIC COUNTY $505,708

Pacific County Anglers **Grant Award: $103,306**
Removing the Green Creek Weir
Pacific County Anglers will use this grant to restore Green Creek by removing two concrete, fish-blocking weirs and 150 feet of rip-rap along the banks of Green Creek. The anglers group then will replant both sides of Green Creek, place tree root wads and logs in the creek and lay gravel in the streambed to create habitat. Removing the weirs, which are 840 feet from the mouth of Green Creek, will open 5.8 miles of habitat. The anglers group also will install a new fish screen intake for a pond, will plant salmon carcasses in the creek and plant native vegetation along the creek banks. Pacific County Anglers will contribute $20,000 in donations of labor and materials. (10-1916)

Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group **Grant Award: $402,402**
Restoring the Bear River Estuary
The Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group will use this grant to restore more than 450 acres by removing 3 miles of dikes and roads, numerous culverts and two fish ladders, and by realigning two streams to their historic channels in the Bear River estuary in the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge. These actions will improve and reestablish access to spawning and rearing habitat in the Bear River watershed for chum, Chinook and coho salmon and cutthroat trout. The fisheries enhancement group will be partnering with the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to complete this extensive, multi-phased project that ultimately will restore 760 acres of the Bear River estuary in lower Willapa Bay. The fisheries enhancement group will contribute $71,012 in cash donations. (10-1652)

PEND OREILLE COUNTY $402,000

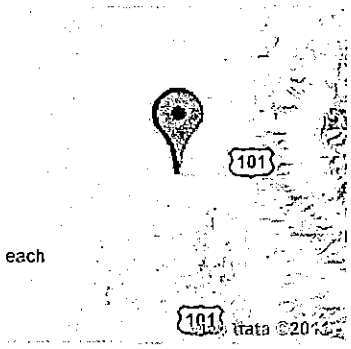
Kalispel Tribe of Indians **Grant Award: $286,577**
Restoring the Middle Branch LeClerc Creek
The Kalispel Tribe of Indians will use this grant to obliterate .45 mile of U.S. Forest Service Road 1935, which is within the floodplain and bank area of the middle branch of the LeClerc Creek, and rebuild it elsewhere. The tribe also will replant the creek banks, restore portions of the stream channel and replace fish passage barriers. When combined with other projects in the watershed, this project will provide access to 6 miles of bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout habitat. Relocation and obliteration of the road will improve continuity and function of the creek bank area and floodplain. The tribe will contribute $64,000 in staff labor and donations of cash and labor. (10-1504)

Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife **Grant Award: $91,740**
Replenishing Logs in Granite Creek
The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife will use this grant to conduct an environmental assessment for a project to place logs and tree root wads in Granite Creek. This assessment will be followed by the installation of up to 350 logs and/or tree root wads in more than 6 miles of the north and south forks of Granite Creek. The trees will be taken from creek

Search

Bear River Estuary

Project Overview



This project will reestablish the natural channels of 3 streams that feed into the Bear River estuary, helping to restore over 800 acres of the estuary on either side of Highway 101 to their historic conditions.

The estuary is used by chum and coho salmon, steelhead, and cutthroat trout. We will remove more than 5 miles of dikes, numerous ditches and culverts, 2 fish ladders, and 1 tide gate to restore access to historical spawning beds in each the 3 streams.

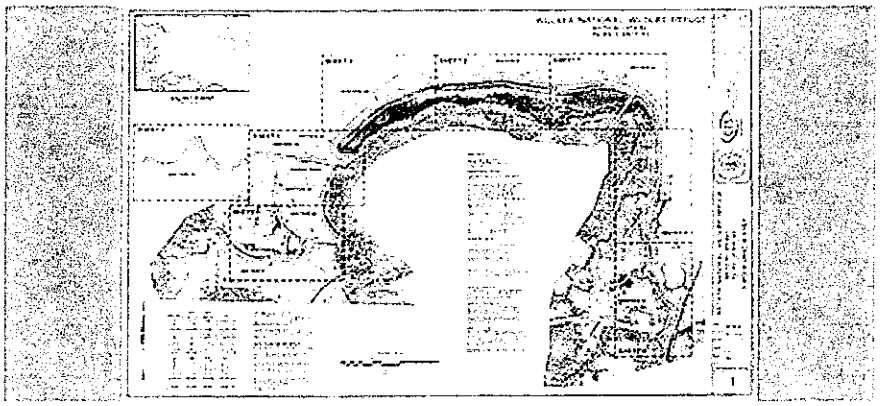
In addition, we will build a public hiking trail from the soon-to-be built Willapa Bay National Wildlife Refuge Visitor's Center at 95th and Sandridge Road in Ilwaco, WA. The trail will proceed along Tarlatt Slough and terminate at a viewing platform in the refuge's Riekkola Unit.

This project is funded by the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington State · Salmon Recovery Funding Board, and Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group. Design consultants are AMEC Earth & Environmental, and CTS Engineers.

Design Development

The project design will include 4 elements:

- Estuary restoration, including removal of the dike, ditches, culverts, and a realignment of 3 streams at the dike estuary interface
- Removal of 2 fish ladders and 1 tide gate
- Trail construction to a new viewing platform
- Monitoring protocol development: baseline and post monitoring



South Willapa Bay Topographic Survey. Click to view document *(PDF, 8.5MB, 9 pages)*

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STATE OF WASHINGTON

RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

April 26, 2011

Congresswoman Herrera Beutler
Third Congressional District
750 Anderson Street, Suite B
Vancouver, WA 98661

Dear Congresswoman Herrera Beutler:

I received your letter of April 20th requesting the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) to withdraw and re-allocate funding for the Bear River Estuary Restoration project in Pacific County. I appreciate your attention to restoration issues and your interest in the Bear River project.

In addition to your letter, the SRFB has received other comments regarding the Bear River project and it is clear that there are differing perspectives within the community. The SRFB has not had the opportunity to discuss your request as a full board and hence this letter represents my perspective as the SRFB chair. The first opportunity for the full board to meet since receiving your request is at its regularly scheduled May 25th meeting, where we expect several members of the public to comment during our public comment time. Your letter will be provided to the board in advance of that meeting, along with other letters we've received.

While I understand that there are citizens both for and against the Bear River Estuary Restoration project, it is important to note that the SRFB has a fully executed contract with the Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group to implement the project. This contract was executed after the standard SRFB review process was followed. Our review process includes a local technical and citizen review of the project, as well as a review by the SRFB's Technical Review Panel. It is our understanding that the project list from the Pacific County lead entity, which prioritized the Bear River Estuary Restoration as its number one project, was submitted according to the statutorily identified lead entity process. As the board, we need to be respectful of the local ranking and review process as salmon recovery in Washington State is driven by a "bottom-up" local approach. If new technical information is available identifying specific concerns about the viability of the project, then the board would address those issues in a very deliberative manner.

Additionally, although the SRFB has approved a contract for $402,402, with a match of $71,000 provided by the project sponsor and private donations, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has not yet selected its final alternative nor have the necessary permits been issued by the Army Corps of Engineers. Some of the concerns you raised may be addressed by these decisions. The scope of the project as approved by the SRFB is to address the levee system on the Lewis Point and Porter Point units of the refuge, with the key objective of re-establishing estuary functions for juvenile salmon in Willapa Bay.

For your information, I've attached the response of the Recreation and Conservation Office Director to Senator Brian Hatfield, Representative Brian Blake and Representative Dean Takko. This was in response to their letter of March 30, 2011.

Thank you again for your interest in this project. I would be happy to discuss this issue further at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Bud Hover, Chair
Washington State Salmon Recovery Board

cc: Senator Brian Hatfield
Representative Brian Blake
Representative Dean Takko
Members of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board

Natural Resources Building
P.O. Box 40917
Olympia, WA 98504-0917

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STATE OF WASHINGTON

RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

April 18, 2011

The Honorable Brian Hatfield
The Honorable Brian Blake
The Honorable Dean Takko
19th Legislative District
Legislative Building
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Dear Senator Hatfield and Representatives Blake and Takko:

I received your letter requesting the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) to re-evaluate funding for the Bear River Estuary Restoration project in Pacific County. I appreciate your commitment to salmon restoration and your interest in the Bear River project.

In addition to your letter, the SRFB has received other correspondence regarding the Bear River project and it is clear that there are differing perspectives within the community. Given the concerns expressed, I have directed my staff to examine the project and any related issues. In light of that examination, we will determine how best to proceed. It is important to note that the SRFB has a fully executed contract with the Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group to implement the Bear River Estuary Restoration project. This contract was signed after years of review and public involvement, including the standard SRFB review process required for every proposed SRFB project. This includes a local technical and citizen's review. Additionally, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has gone through several years of planning and public comment opportunities on their Comprehensive Conservation plan for the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge, which includes the Bear River estuary restoration activities.

I will get in touch with you as soon as we have determined how best to address this issue. In the meantime, if you would like to speak to me directly, please feel free to contact me at 360-902-3003. Thank you again for your interest and commitment to furthering salmon recovery.

Sincerely,

Kaleen Cottingham
Director

cc: Salmon Recovery Funding Board members

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P.O. Box 40917
Olympia, WA 98504-0917

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STATE OF WASHINGTON

RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

April 20, 2011

Commissioner Norman B. Cuffel
Commissioner Jon Kaino
Commissioner Lisa Ayers
1216 W. Robert Bush Drive
P.O. Box 187
South Bend, WA 98586

Dear Commissioners Cuffel, Kaino, and Ayers:

I received your letter and the provided attached comments requesting the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) re-evaluate funding for the Bear River Estuary Restoration project in Pacific County. I appreciate your commitment to salmon restoration and your interest in the Bear River project.

In addition to your letter of April 8 and the attached packet, the SRFB has received other comments regarding the Bear River project and it is clear that there are differing perspectives within your community. Given the concerns articulated, I have directed my staff to examine the project and any related issues. In light of that examination, we will determine how best to proceed. It is important to note that the SRFB has a fully executed contract with the Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group to implement the Bear River Estuary Restoration project. This contract was signed after the standard SRFB review process was followed, including local technical and citizen's review. It is our understanding that the project list from the Pacific County lead entity, which had the Bear River Estuary Restoration prioritized as the number one project, was submitted according to Chapter 77.85.050 RCW.

A regular meeting of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board is scheduled for Wednesday, May 25, 2011. It will be held in Olympia, in Room 172 of the Natural Resources Building. Should you, or any of your constituents, wish to comment directly to the Board there is time on the agenda for general public comment at 10:15 a.m.

I will get in touch with you as soon as we have determined how best to move forward with this issue. In the meantime, if you would like to speak to me directly, please feel free to contact me at 360-902-3003. Thank you again for your interest and commitment to furthering salmon recovery.

Sincerely,

Kaleen Cottingham
Director

cc: Mayor Robert Andrew, City of Long Beach
Mr. Doug Schnebly, President, Honker's Inc.
Mrs. R. Jane and Mr. Robert P. Rose, Rose Ranch
Mr. Tucker Glenn, President, Long Beach Cranberry Growers' Association
Ms. Patricia Cruse, President, Discovery Coast Audubon Society
Mr. James Cortines, President, Washington Waterfowl Association
Mr. Nate Pamplin, Assistant Director, Wildlife Program, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Mr. Mike Johnson, Manager, Pacific Conservation District
Mr. Charlie Stenvail, Manager, Willapa National Wildlife Refuge
Mr. Mark Ashley, Chair, Willapa Bay Water Resources Coordination Council

WILLAPA BAY
WATER RESOURCES
COORDINATING COUNCIL
P.O. Box 6
South Bend, Washington 98586 Courthouse
South Bend 875-9334 Long Beach 642-9334 Naselle 484-7136

RECEIVED
APR 27 2011
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

April 11, 2011

Kaleen Cottingham, Director
Recreation and Conservation Office
P.O. Box 40917
Olympia, Washington 98504-0917

Dear Mrs. Cottingham:

On behalf of the Willapa Bay Water Resources Coordinating Council (WBWRCC) that serves as the Citizen's committee for the Pacific County, WRIA #24 Lead Entity, we would like to express our newly found concerns over construction project (#10-1652 R) Phase #2, Lewis and Porter Points, for the Bear River Estuary Restoration project. The concerns have been identified after the project had gone under contract with the sponsor; the Willapa Bay Fisheries Enhancement Group (WBFEG) and the SRFB. We understand that as a group we ranked the projects #1 within WRIA #24 Lead Entity and realize that the aforementioned project has already gone under contract with the SRFB.

The projects are believed by many duck hunters and local residents to decrease waterfowl habitat and displace waterfowl into other areas that are not able to be hunted. Some quoted a local Duck Club in the Nisqually Refuge that stated they had lost 93% of their waterfowl populations. Many also feel the removal of the dikes will eliminate their hunting access on the refuge. There has also been discussions on the displacement of native Elk herds in the Lewis and porter Units that will be pushed into local cranberry agricultural production areas causing thousands of $$$'s in damage. Many also felt that removing the dikes had little to no benefit to any salmon life cycle. These issues have raised concerns by and with the WBWRCC.

The WBWRCC met last Tuesday April 5, 2011 and decided to revoke their support of project # 10-1652 R based on the newly identified public concerns. The WRIA #24 Technical Group did not have a quorum present at this meeting and made no such decision. Thank you very much for your time, review and consideration of this matter. Thank you again.

SINCERELY,

Mike Johnson, Coordinator
Pacific County, WRIA #24 Lead Entity

RECEIVED
MAY 11 2011
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

May 6, 2011

The Recreation and Conservation Office
Natural Resources Building
PO Box 40917
Olympia, Washington 98504-0917

Re: SRFB Project 10-1652, Restoring the Bear River Estuary
(Sponsor) Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group

Dear Kaleen Cottingham, Director

I am writing you in response to some comments you have made that were published in last weeks Chinook Observer. Many of us in Pacific County are outraged at the conduct of Refuge Manager Charlie Stenvall WNWR and his attempt to destroy the quality of the waterfowl habitat on the refuge.

Your comment stating the public needs to get involved early would seem good advise. In this case there has been only one public meeting. In March 2008 there was a meeting at the Heritage Museum in Ilwaco. This meeting was not well announced. There was a small piece printed in the back corner of the local paper. I missed it. Those that did attend the meeting voiced opposition to the dike removal. After local discussions on the subject all of us had thought the project was a dead issue. Last October we have found that this project had not died but was still an alternative plan at the WNWR. This project had only gone underground from the public. Through closed doors and through small committees including your office. This project was also given a new name to mislead the opposition. Disguised as a salmon recovery project it has fooled our county officials and was approved locally. That is how this project proceeded to your office for funding.

Last October we heard that refuge manager Charlie Stenvall was going to release the final plan for the WNWR. This meeting was at a board of directors meeting for the Friends of the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge. Some of us attended anyway. After the directors had finished their meeting we were asked why we were at this meeting. I asked Mr. Stenvall about the refuge plans and why were they still considering taking out the dikes. Mr. Stenvall told us that this was only one option and that the final plan was not finished. When the plan was released to the public there would be a comment period for the public response. Then the comments would be reviewed and the final plan approved by the USFWS.

The WNWR CCP was released and the official comment period started January 21st, 2011 and was scheduled to end March 7th 2011. After looking, studying and sharing information with concerned local people we have learned much about this plan. This is how we found your project; "Restoring the Bear River Estuary". How is it that we find that the SRFB issued funding contracts for $473,000 a week before the CCP comment

period even began? To the public this seems like more unethical activity we are finding with this project. This project is on refuge property owned by the public. For the SRFB to approve funding for a major change to the refuge on their own authority is unbelievable. This dike removal project alone will destroy 750 acres of enhanced waterfowl habitat that has taken the refuge 73 years to develop. This area is used by as many as 50,000 ducks and 4,000 Canada Geese (including the Threatened Dusky Canada Geese) annually.

Other statements published from your office using terms as; "rigorous process" and "must be laudable and outstanding" describing your project approval process is questionable at best. We in Pacific County have reviewed this project and found it to be of no benefit to Salmon. Do you even read any of the scientific studies for the Willapa Bay? We have, they are available on line if you care to research this for your self. First of all the Lewis, Porter Point and Riekkola Streams are not part of Bear River. These are separate streams that run into the South Willapa Bay. They are of sediment bottom and do not support spawning habitat for Salmon. The dikes and the area above the dikes are all above the mean high water line. NOAA chart 18504 clearly shows this. This means that the rearing benefit to Salmon is also above the mean high water line. Restoration recommendations are clear for these streams published in the "Pacific County (WRIA 24) Strategic Plan For Salmon Recovery, June 29,2001. The restoration recommendations comment on the benefit of the salmonid rearing and over wintering habitat in the freshwater held by the dikes! Our County Commissioners have referred to this study as the "Salmon Bible".

The University of Washington Report; "Ranking of Estuarine Habitat Restoration Priorities in Willapa Bay" does not even mention these streams as Salmon concerns. This report does question if the loss of saltwater habitat in the Willapa Bay has had any responsible effects on declining Salmon stocks or that restoration will increase runs. It also warns against comparing the Salmon habitat in the Willapa Bay to that of Puget Sound because of the shallow nature of the bay.

As to your question "where is the silent majority" We are here! On March 6th Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler hosted a public hearing meeting at the Hilltop School in Ilwaco WA on the refuge plan. Some 200 people showed up to voice their opinion against the dike removal project. Other than "agency" people, all other speakers were against this project. Our elected officials heard us loud and clear! Why do you think they all oppose this project now?

To your question "where are the fishermen" We are here! I have been making a living commercial fishing and running Charter Boats for Salmon for 45 years. I don't know of any local commercial or sport fisherman that is for this dike removal project. I do know that all four of the Ilwaco Charter Fishing Businesses passed out flyers against this refuge project at the Portland Sportsmen's Show this February. Why are we opposed? Clearly this project is not for Salmon. We do not take theories printed by classroom PhDs as reliable unless our experience supports the information. We do believe in Salmon enhancement projects that work. Predator control and incubator boxes for gravel Salmon

Streams would have popular support in this fishing community. The local fishermen all respect and support the waterfowl habitat currently in the WNWR and would like to keep it the way it is now, even if they don't hunt waterfowl. I live here and these are the opinions of fishermen I talk to often.

On the RCO website I see certain requirements to be an eligible project. Public support and project costs seem to be important. The public support is obviously not present. The costs of this project should disqualify this project from being eligible. The fact is that Refuge Manager Charlie Stenvall keeps lying to the public on the cost of the dike removal. On the March 6th meeting at the Hilltop School Mr. Stenvall admitted when questioned directly by Congresswoman Beutler that it could cost 30 million dollars to remove all of the dikes in the WNWR's preferred plan. The estimated dike removal costs reported to Congresswoman Buetlers' Office was 15 million. Now in the newspaper article last week I see Mr. Stenvall's statement defending the SRFB funding. He now claims that he can remove the dikes from the Lewis and Porter Point Units for the funded $473,000. We fear that USFWS will just dip into their Pittman, Robertson piggy bank and never let the public know how much of the public's money they will spend.

Common sense should tell us that the 15 million dollar figure is reasonable. The Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge recently completed a very similar project. The dike removal project at the NNWR cost 12 million dollars to remove 4 miles of dikes as reported to the Olympian Newspaper (October 01, 2009). Unlike the Nisqually Refuge project, The Willapa Refuge project will benefit no Salmon.

Now for the credibility of the sponsor, Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group. Mr. Ron Craig seems to be the active member. I don't know him but I have seen evidence of his conspiracy in this project. We have found where the Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group was awarded a $504,000 grant to construct the two fish ladders in the Lewis and Porter Point Dikes ten years ago. From a USFWS 2002 news release it would seem that all of the restoration work was complete for this area. In other WNWR releases we find that after 10 years of incubator boxes and live releases of Salmon in the Lewis and Porter Point Streams, the WNWR managed to get six Coho Salmon to return to the Lewis Creek in 2010. There was no report of any Salmon returning to the Porter Point Creek.

Now you are paying Mr. Craig again to remove these structures along with the dikes. The public is amazed at how you waste our money. Mr. Craig's project description has been written very deviously. It mentions "either side of Highway 101" and "3 streams that feed into the Bear River estuary". It would appear to help Bear River Salmon. In fact this project is not in Bear River at all! The location description is alluding to the fact that this dike removal is entirely in the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge. These are the same dikes that protect the refuge's 750 acres of enhanced waterfowl food sources from saltwater. Mr. Craig's project description fails to mention that the precious juvenile Salmon rearing area is well above the mean high water line. With the dikes removed the tide will flood here on extreme high tides. It will kill the existing vegetation. It will not be

flooded long enough to provide rearing habitat for Salmon.

For people that just casually read the project description, it would be hard to not view this project favorably. Many of the people who are in favor this project are ignorant to what this project will do to this refuge once the dikes are removed. No food in the refuge, no waterfowl. There is also a list of other related losses and damages this project will create. Our County Commissioners and other County Officials fell for the sales pitch the first time around. When they learned more, they reversed their support for this project. Now it is your turn.

Mr. Stenvall is using the SRFB funding for the foundation of his plan to remove the dikes. No one I know can determine why Mr. Stenvall is so motivated to remove the dikes unless he thinks it will advance his career with the USFWS. We have caught him at many other unethical activities not related to this part of the project. We have recently contacted an attorney in Olympia to help us determine the unethical aspects of this project from the illegal ones.

The Recreation And Conservation Office and the Salmon Recovery Funding Board need to take an honest look at this project in depth. Look past Mr. Craig's sales pitch and get to the facts. I don't know how you can evaluate a project with tunnel vision looking at only Salmon interests. This project will cost 10s of millions of public dollars and do more damage than good. For your office to retain credibility you must make the right decision here. Thank You.

Dan Heasley

Dan Heasley
PO Box 175
Ilwaco, Wa 98624

cc: Bud Hover, Chair, SRFB
Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler

Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group

P.O. Box 46
South Bend, WA 98586
Manager: (360) 875-6402 Fax: (360) 875-5802
Manager E-mail: rcraig@willapabay.org
www.wbrfeg.org 91-1508388

"Recovering Salmon in Willapa Bay since 1982"

RECEIVED
APR 29 2011
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

Salmon Recovery Funding Board
1111 Washington Street SE
Olympia, WA 98504-0917

RE:

a. Bear River Estuary-Restoration project 10-1652R
b. Letters from Pacific County Commissioners, and others

Dear Chairman Hover and Board Members.

I recently received copies of negative comments sent to RCO and SRFB, concerning this project, which is a part of a larger part of the Willapa National Wildlife Refuges, CCP/EIS, which selected as its recommended alternative #2. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services have a very similar and parallel evaluation process which is based upon scientifically peer reviewed comments. I would like to provide you some background information.

Before I get into the weeds with specifics let us look at this **Project Objective**: This project will return the Lewis, Porter, and Riekkola units to their 1950's historic conditions. The major limiting factor in the Bear River sub-watershed today is estuary habitat, which provides a very important biological factor in salmon's life cycle in making their transition from fresh to salt water.

I believe it would be helpful to document the process our organization has followed, as established by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB).
The process envisioned by our Legislators and implemented by SRFB was and is the best process to insure salmon recovery in Washington State, i.e., a willing landowner, local peer, and scientifically reviewed projects that will benefit salmon recovery. As a sponsor I would like to share with you the process we followed which ultimately culminated in submitting and being funded to restore salmon to the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge (WNWR), in Willapa Bay.

Citizens, and elected officials comments can be very valuable and should be encouraged, however those comments should be subjected to the same scientific peer review for credibility as Bear River Estuary entire development process has gone through, and vetted. Our Legislators in 1999 set up the Salmon Recovery Act, to specifically remove the local politics from the equation, knowing that if local politics were involved salmon

recovery would not happen. In Pacific County our County Commissioners, have and still are trying to interfere with the process established by the RCW's. As you know the Citizens Committee authority is limited to an advisory priority ranking of projects, and the Pacific County Commissioners are limited to assigning persons to the Citizens Group and local TAG, neither have any standing in approval of funding, nor our contracts with RCO. But, let me focus on the positive technical process that resulted in this project.
Bear River Estuary Restoration: Time Line/Process

1950's

1) Lewis, Porter, and Riekkola units had 5.2 miles of dikes built which removed 760.2 acres of estuary rearing habitat for salmon.
2) Over the next 60 years salmon populations in the Willapa, Bear River sub-watershed decline.

1999

1) Assessment by WNWR, WBRFEG, WDFW, Golder and Associates of Lewis, Porter, and Riekkola area for salmon access and waterfowl management. This assessment results in a concept to build two fish ladders to access the Lewis and Porter blocked streams. WNWR wanted to manage to benefit water fowl at the same time providing salmon access to these two streams. This resulted in project 00-1117, to develop the design for the two fish ladders; WNWR built the two fish ladders the following year. (1)
2) In parallel WNWR commissioned a physical and biological study to evaluate streams within the WNWR. This study shows the Lewis and Porter unit's streams do have viable salmon habitat that are blocked by tide gates. (2)

Question: Why not just remove the dikes? At this time in Willapa Bay the Spartina was out of control, this would have just spread the spartina into areas protected by the dikes. The water fowl were not able to feed in the spartina (salt marsh); therefore they were using the managed area up-lands (fresh water) of the dikes. The dikes were constructed in the 1950's.

2000

1) Golder and Associates completed the design for two fish ladders (1).
2) US Fish and Wildlife Service's published the WNWR physical and Biological study.(2)

2001

1) WNWR completed the construction of the Lewis and Porter Fish ladders.
2) WRIA 24 Willapa Bay, Fish and Habitat Assessment, funded by SRFB, this projected resulted in a Draft copy: Pacific County (WRIA 24) Strategic Plan for Salmon Recovery. The SRFB funding was limited by 00-1889, to just Nemah and Naselle watershed. However, WBRFEG provided additional funding to develop

this draft plan, by Applied Environmental Services, Inc to include the entire Willapa Bay, using local stream surveys, and the Salmon and Steelhead Habitat Limited Factors Report completed by Conservation Commission for the Willapa. The Pacific County Strategic plan, referenced in data provided to RCO by Pacific County Commissioners does reference some information on Lewis, Porter, and Riekkola, but Mrs. Rose and others on the Citizens group objected to estuary restoration, removing the dikes which was in our "draft", so the Citizens group eliminated the dike removal, and inserted the words that were included in their comments to RCO. However, that was not the recommendations of the Consultant, nor in the Conservation Commissions limiting factors report, which was also rejected by the Citizens Group.(3) & (4)

2003

1) Microinvertebrates Survey. WNWR completed this study as a necessary requirement to purchasing the area known as the Pickering property. This area is the up-lands to the Bear River Estuary and has four salmon streams that provide for salmon spawning and rearing. This area also has some estuary which was blocked by dikes and a dysfunctional tide gate.
2) Removal of several hundred feet of dikes in the estuary east of HY101, funded by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services

During this time period, WBRFEG and WNWR formed a partnership to accomplish all the salmon restoration within the WNWR. It was our plan, encouraged by Applied Environmental Sciences, (now GeoEnginers), to restore this entire Bear River sub-watershed. This was supported by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, Lacey, WA who had made Bear River sub-watershed their "targeted" watershed for Willapa Bay. Studies we and others had done (Willapa Alliance, which I had been manager and a Board member) show that the Bear River would be the most productive area in Willapa Bay for long term sustainable salmon habitat. WBRFEG had Applied Environmental Scientist evaluate all the streams within the WNWR for salmon restoration. Over the years we have completed restoration on all the streams, which provide spawning habitat, but no estuary restoration. It was our conclusion that the limiting factor after the streams restoring was restoring estuary habitat for rearing for their salmon life cycle. But the spartina was still a huge limiting factor for estuary restoration. Many studies have indicated that spartina was limiting the rearing of salmon in their transient to salt water life cycle. Our studies conclude that Chum salmon are at their non-sustainable levels, Coho, Chinook, Cutthroat, and Steelhead are also either at or close to their non-sustainable levels. After we restored the four streams, some limited numbers of salmon have been observed, but only during years of high returns.

3) WBRFEG developed our Salmon Recovery Strategic Plan, and identified Bear River, Sub-watershed as the #1 priority habitat, and Chum salmon as #1 species. (8)

2004

1) Fish, Micoinvertebrates, and Habitat survey, WNWR completed.
2) Habitat Assessment/Barrier report (5)
3) These two reports formed the bases for our stream restorations in the Pickering purchased lands. There were four streams in this area which we restored: North Stream, funded in part by SRFB (6), Chum Stream & Lost Creek funded by US Fish & Wildlife Services, WNWR, WBRFEG, Weyerhaeuser, FishAmerica, Campbell Group, and The Nature Conservancy, and South Stream funded by SRFB, and WBRFEG (7).
   These four streams will provide the much needed spawning element in the Bear River. There are still two blocking tide gates downstream of all these culverts which were to be corrected by others, but not accomplished. But we will be submitting an application this year.

2005-2008

1) 2004 Pacific County Citizens Committee became dysfunctional; our organization withdrew from seeking any SRFB funds. In my observation that Pacific County Citizens group at best has been dysfunctional when it comes to salmon recovery. Appointed by the Commissioners, with citizens not supportive of salmon recovery. They believe it is their job to represent and be representative of all Pacific County citizens, like an elected official. Their operating method has been from a populist view, but just from a very narrow focus on farms and timber. Their Citizens criteria voting rules allow + or-20 points, for very subjective reasons that they use to game the system for their own populist view. (25)
2) In this time period, WNWR, discussed with me there national organizations desire to completely eliminate manmade structures within their refuges nationwide. They asked if I would support the concept of removing the dikes, as requested by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services. After some consultation with RCO, with the added unexpected result of eradication of Spartina in Willapa Bay I reported I would. There were several factors: the dikes and fish ladders were showing some failures due probably to earth quakes, and un-stable soils which were used to construct the dikes, repairing would be far more costly than removing the dikes. The water fowl that I had observed using the fresh water behind the dikes were no longer using this area, but I observer they now used the salt marsh area. I also believe totally removing the dikes and fish ladders would provide the best natural habitat for salmon, all the studies I have read support this conclusion.
3) During this time period WNWR managed the eradication of Spartina, in Willapa Bay.
4) WNWR had many required local public hearings on developing a 15 year plan for their refuge. This was the public process that WNWR was required to have to develop their 15 year plan, which is a Congressional mandate. All aspects of the changes were discussed, in these public meeting WNWR developed the three alternatives. Based upon their inputs, there regional office developed the CCP/EIS with inputs from WNWR. This took over a year, resulting in the CCP/EIS they published in January 2011, for public comment.

5) RCO and Pacific County, Lead Entity asked me again to submit projects for consideration to the SRFB. They reported the previous issues with the Citizens group had been corrected.

2009

1) WNWR had a LiDAR conducted for the Lewis, Porter, and Riekkola units.(9)
2) WBRFEG contracted with CTS Engineers to survey Lewis, Porter, and Rekkola units. There were cross sectional surveys each 50 feet for the 5.2 miles of dikes, in addition to ditches, and estuary features, and historic stream crossings. These data were overlaid onto the LiDAR maps. (10)
3) WBRFEG applied for funding for design development (11)
4) Pacific County Citizens Group ranked the project #1
5) WBRFEG received funding approval, Dec 10, 2009 (12)
6) WBRFEG requests Pacific County Commissioners to be part of our Design Development Team.(26)
7) Sent out RFP to 6 design consultants, and 3 construction contractors for quotes.

2010

1) I selected AMEC Earth and Environmental as the primary design consultant and NDC Timber as the construction contractor, approved contracts for both.
2) Pacific County assigns Mike Desimone as design team member. (27)
3) Formed the Design Development team. (13) CTS Engineering, Olympia Geotechnical testing, and Herrera Environmental provided additional consultation services as required by the design team.
4) Design development process: a) develop a Basis of Design document, b) a preliminary design, c) final design. Each of these design elements were reviewed and approved by the design team. During this process extensive investigations were made looking at all the old photos that were available online and in WNWR files. Meetings were held with the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge by WNWR and our design team members to discuss lesions learned. In addition PWA, our tidal in-flow expert, shared their experiences in dike removal. We determined the actual tidal levels based upon the NOAA datum, and modified by our specific tidal readings at Riekkola and Lewis units. These data allowed us to determine the actual height of the mhhw, or OHW, and the worst case tidal heights, these were converted to elevations. These two data points were coordinated with all immediate landowners by WNWR. We had CTS Engineers survey 67th Pl road and to mark on landowner's property, where the 9ft.OHW and the 17ft worst case water heights would occur.
5) Final design review was held with Design Team July 28, 2010, design was accepted as complete. The entire design drawing set is on PRISM.
6) Prepared Pacific County Habitat form, and SRFB application 10-1652. (14 & 15)
7) July joint TAG visited site.
8) July 28, 2010, WBWRCC Citizens Group voted Bear River Estuary #1 with all at 100pts, perfect score.
9) August 3, 2010, sent a letter to Pacific county containing all data required by their permitting process, although they will not issue any permits, as it is federal lands,

and they have no jurisdiction. I offered to answer any questions if they wished to have a public hearing. They never asked!(16)

10) August 3, 2010, submitted application to Army Corps, EOC, and added U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services at Ron Wilcox request.(17)
11) August 15, 2010-started work on trail, viewing platform, and 67th Pl road design, this was not a part of SRFB funding.
12) Answered Ron Wilcox's letter requesting changes, and additional WNWR data, Oct 4, 2010. (18)
13) Stopped work on 67th Pl, WNWR and Pacific County discussing requirements.
14) November 2010, SRFB, selected Bear River Estuary Restoration as Noteworthy Projects.(19)
15) Completed design on trail and viewing platform.
16) Dec 2010, SRFB funded 10-1652R

2011

1) Contract with SRFB to accomplish Lewis and Porter Points, (20)

2) Jan 18, 2011, met with WNWR discussed and agreed upon an integrated work schedule for Lewis and Porter Points.(21)

3) Jan 21, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service CCP/EIS public review process starts open period to March 4, 2011. This process is very similar to the SRFB review process, in terms of public input. The event in common: evaluation comments based upon actual data or science that is peer reviewed, and vetted. Congress has removed the politics from the process. The Washington Legislators also removed politics from the process. Washington SRFB, have established a local process, which allows comment, but gets vetted by a TAG. Recent letters to SRFB/ RCO is a very good example of Citizens comments without having been peer reviewed and vetted. The key thing to remember about this project: this is a National Wildlife Refuge, for the benefit and enjoyment of all US citizens, and visitors, not just a taxpayers funded play ground for a few Long Beach folks. This is a good example of tunnel vision by local politicians and special interest groups.

4) WNWR asks WBRFEG to not publically comment on the project unless there is a specific deign related question, until the public comment period is over.

5) February-March 5, 2011, received a lot of negative "hate" email from goose hunting folks, and Pacific Audubon Society.

6) February 2011, I contacted Congresswoman Herrera's office, about their planed Public hearing on the CCP/EIS. They were completely unaware that a salmon recovery effort was a part of the CCP/EIS. They initially had no one on their panel that had any knowledge of the salmon recovery element, and said the panel was full. After a week of my asking they very reluctantly added one spot.

7) March 6, 2011 Public meeting in Ilwaco, this was a farce; the panel was loaded with too many persons who had no knowledge of the CCP/EIS, but were just repeating rumors. Public comment period was extended to March 21, 2011.

8) The issue of water fowl using salt marsh was discussed, and appeared to be the largest concern of the emails I received, and those speaking at the March 6, 2011 meeting. I asked persons who were responsible for the Skagit River Estuary restoration project; they reported they had had the same complaints from the hunters. They referred me to Gary Slater, who had produced two studies, which in effect say the shore birds and water fowl prefer salt marshes if given a choice. (22)

9) April 12, 2011, WNWR summary of comments on CCP/EIS. (23)

10) April 18, 2011, WBRFEG comments received. The only direct comments I have received about this project has been through email, and those have been about the goose hunting, and total destruction of all animals in Lewis, Porter, and Riekkola, due to tidal inflow. Some comments at the public meeting, and email saying because I received $300,000 I produced designs which supported a predetermined position as directed by the funding group.

11) Enclosed are samples of comments received in support of the project. (24)

12) April 28, 2011, AMEC Earth and Environmental provide me with the tidal inundations in Riekkola, Porter, and Lewis units to show the actual tide levels adjusted to reflect the corrected NOAA data based upon actual tidal readings in Riekkola, Porter, and Lewis units. Note that the water in channels in Porter and Lewis units are missing because: when the LiDAR was flown in 2099, water was in the Lewis and Porter units, and LiDAR will not read ground profiles when waters is present. (28)

In summary, the above process was followed in good faith by WBRFEG to be in alignment with the permits, policies, directives, applications, local, regional, and state technical review procedures. I wanted from an engineering stand point to investigate all possible issues to develop a design that met all know standards and conditions. WBRFEG has a signed contract with RCO to perform, the above shows our good faith in following the process defined by SRFB/RCO. Therefore we do expect RCO to continue our contract with you in good faith.

Thank You, for your continued support of this very valuable salmon recovery effort in Willapa Bay. I have provided the RCO Project Manager this letter and all the attachments, should you need to review.

Sincerely,

Ronald D. Craig
Vice-President/Manager
April 28, 2011
(28) Supporting documents referred to in the text.
CC: Kat Moore

#24 #24

SHOALWATER BAY INDIAN TRIBE

P.O. Box 130 • Tokeland, Washington 98590
Telephone (360) 267-6766 • FAX (360) 267-6778

RECEIVED
JAN 26 2011
By

January 24, 2011

Charlie Stenvall,
Project Leader
Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Complex
3888 SR 101
Ilwaco, WA 98624-9707

Dear Mr. Stenvall:

Thank you for providing the Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe the opportunity to participate in the Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (CCP/EIS) planning process.

As a result of participation as team members in the development of CCP/EIS process by the Shoalwater Bay Tribe's Vice Chairman and Environmental Programs Director and after reviewing the draft document, the Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe would like to offer its support to the process and the Preferred Alternative 2.

The Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe is pleased that the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has proposed efforts to increase open water, intertidal flats and salt marsh habitats on the Willapa Refuge. As our very near neighbor to the South, activities on the Refuge serve to impact species compositions and populations of numerous plants and animals that are of significant interest to the Tribe also. Restoring estuarine habitats to historic conditions should not only well serve to protect and sustain natural resources on the Willapa Refuge but will certainly serve the North Bay and specifically Shoalwater Bay Tribal resources.

Additionally, the Tribe applauds the work being proposed under the auspices of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (CCP/EIS) to protect the Western Snowy Plover and to re-establish the Oregon Silverspot Butterfly. The Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe is interested in directing Tribal resources toward protection and management of those species as well.

It is obvious that considerable effort has gone into developing a plan that not only develops strategies for protecting and actually increasing the habitat more consistent with native and historic conditions but the Agency has managed to do this while improving and increasing opportunities for public use. For those that wish to hunt waterfowl the numbers of ducks and geese should increase in a relatively short time after implementation activities begin as a function of increasing open water and salt water marsh habitats. Further, the new trail systems, observation deck and visitor facility will provide opportunities for recreational and educational use. Even elk and deer hunters should be pleased that their concerns were seriously considered during the planning process and in fact hunting opportunities expanded.

As a stewardship partner in Willapa Bay the Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe is cognizant of fact that whenever an agency or organization endeavors to develop strategies that affect multiple stakeholders they will be met with many challenges. And there are no perfect plans that provide 100% satisfaction to all those stakeholders. The Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe is always careful to consider the needs of the plants and animals that share the land and water with Tribal people. And by the same token the Tribe has a rich tradition of hunting and fishing the Willapa Bay lands and waters. So, in a sense, the Tribe is both a resource protection agency as well as a user group. It is obvious to the Tribe that in regards to the Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (CCP/EIS) you have managed to balance the resource needs on behalf of the ecosystem, those resources that are vitally important to all the Willapa residents - plant, animal and human while at the same time providing considerable opportunities for all of us to enjoy those resources. The Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe is pleased to lend their support without conditions to Alternative 2, the Preferred Alternative. Thanks again for giving us the opportunity to participate in this worthwhile process.

Sincerely,

Charlene Nelson, Tribal Chair

Mike Shipman, Tribal Vice-Chair

Lynn Clark, Tribal Secretary

Mindy Clemens, Tribal Treasurer

Jennifer Taylor, Tribal Member-at-Large

Gary Burns, Environmental Director

Bay Center Mariculture Co.

PO Box 356, Bay Center, Wa. 98527
Ph. 360-875-6172 Fax 360-875-6172
bcfarms@baycenterfarms.com

May 1, 2011

To the Editor, Chinook Observer,

Re: Discussion of Dike Removal:

When hundreds of acres of the productive intertidal areas of Willapa Bay were diked it fit with what the people of the area needed at that time. It often did not take into account the very important role that these high intertidal areas played in relationship to the entire productivity of the bay. These rich muddy benthic (bottom) areas store within the sediments the minerals and nutrients, provide important links of the food chain such as benthic diatoms, provides habitat for burrowing invertebrates, act as feeding areas for various size animals and overall contributes to the entire biota of the bay. When these diked areas were cut off from the important influx of saline water to mix with the fresh water it stopped them from storing the upland sediments along with organics, minerals and nutrients (such as silicates from the weathering of igneous rocks). Without being captured by the intertidal flats these valuable components to the basis of the food chain would be flushed to the ocean. There would not be the valuable role played by the bay as an important nursery area. That is the productive feature of a shallow bay and the intertidal flats such as we have in Willapa. These areas we refer to as mudflats provide the storage areas and the first chance for many animals and plants to utilize and thus start a recycling of critical materials as they mix from the fresh and saline waters. Willapa Bay lost a sizable percentage of these productive areas when dikes were constructed.

There are many specific examples within the food web of how this works but a generalized sequence might serve to illustrate. The brackish (mix of fresh and sea water) medium over the mud flats provide the media and nutrient mixture for plant production such as bottom algae (especially diatoms) which flourish on the nutrients within the sediments. The various seasons play a role also. The dynamics of the sedimentary areas as they are being being deposited and eroded contain upland minerals and nutrients transported by the fresh water runoff along with wind and currents often during the winter during higher rainfall times. These, normally single celled plants in turn are utilized by many types of zooplankton some of which live in or on the mudflat, while others may swim or travel onto the area as the tide ebbs and flows across the flat and still others await their preferred fare and filter it from the water which washes off the mudflat. Think oysters and clams. The activity of these small animals within the mudflat also help liberate nutrients to the tidal currents. In turn, the inhabitants of the mud flat are prey for some larger predators such as crab and fish (including salmon juveniles to cite a familiar example) and especially our thousands of shore birds. The intertidal brackish area (mudflat) is a rich biological happening due to its unique position with respect to elevation and the mix of saline and fresh water from the upland and the bay. This was lost when a dike was put in or as thought of at the time, was exchanged for a different type of biological production. We supposedly now know better the value of these highly productive benthic areas and their importance to the entire bay. Science has pointed out the intricate and expansive vital role the mudflats play in the health of the bay.

It is also obvious but somewhat understandable that most do not understand this importance. Many productive estuaries have found out the hard way (such as losing a great percent of the productive capacity) when the mudflats have been eliminated by such activities as dikes, filling or both. In addition, the role the mudflats play requires one to think not of what might seem important on the exact acreage separated from the bay behind the dike but what that area did and could again contribute to the fauna and flora and indeed the total productivity of the entire estuary. So as folks give their views on this matter it is hoped that the positive impacts of removing the dike are made a fair part of the consideration. Granted they are not as easily observed but they will prove to be far more numerous and important than keeping part of the bay cut off. I would say there is just as much if not much more interest in watching shorebirds, falcons, ducks and other waterfowl working a brackish water mudflat than having access to a few freshwater protected hunting blinds.

Sincerely,

Richard L. Wilson, Ph.D.
President, Bay Center Mariculture Co.

#24

Audubon WASHINGTON

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March 16, 2011

Charlie Stenvall, Project Leader
National Wildlife Refuge Complex
3888 SR 101
Ilwaco, WA 98624-9707

RE: Comments on Willapa National Refuge Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (CCP/EIS)

Dear Mr. Stenvall:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge's Draft CCP/EIS. Audubon Washington is the field office of the National Audubon Society of National Audubon Society in Washington State and represents the 20,000 statewide members. We are currently building nature tourism in Washington state through our Great Washington State Birding Trail- a self-guided auto tour to the best places to bird watch in Washington state. The National Wildlife Refuge system is a key component of the Trail. Willapa National Refuge is featured on the Trail in the Southwest Loop.

Willapa National Refuge is important as a crucial way station along the Pacific Flyway and for the Lower Columbia River region because of its protection for migrating birds and many kinds of other wildlife.

We support the Refuge's efforts to recover endangered species, including salmon, the Western Snowy Plover, the Marbled Murrelet, the Northern Spotted Owl, and the Oregon Silverspot Butterfly.

We favor plan alternatives 2 or 3, with a preference for alternative 2.

Audubon Washington prefers alternative 2 because it includes:

- the strongest protection for breeding success of the Western Snowy Plover;
- an effort to re-introduce the Oregon Silverspot Butterfly;
- the reclaiming of salt marsh and intertidal habitat for juvenile salmon and many other species;
- and the acquisition of the most acres to expand the refuge's boundaries—protected lands which will be managed to improve habitat for a variety of wildlife, including shore habitat for migratory birds and (eventually) late succession forest habitat for Marbled Murrelet and Northern Spotted Owl (Willapa National Refuge Draft CCP/EIS page 4-80).

We have some specific interests and concerns about the Western Snowy Plover. National Audubon with the local Chapter, Willapa Hills Audubon Society supports work to improve the breeding success of the Western Snowy Plover. From 2006 to 2008 Willapa Hills Audubon Society and Grays Harbor Audubon Society were recipients of National Audubon chapter grants to improve Western Snowy Plover habitat and to monitor breeding success. Volunteers from chapters were organized and monitored the birds' nesting sites with Washington Fish and Wildlife, in conjunction with federal agencies. Despite all efforts, predation meant that no chicks fledged successfully. Alternative 2 is the strongest for future breeding recovery.

We endorse alternative 2's plans to create a new headquarters in a more accessible location off of Highway 103 and with improved educational and wildlife viewing facilities (Willapa Planning Update 4 page 3). We believe that improved public access will bring more support for the Refuge and its mission, and more income to the community through watchable wildlife. The potential is summarized by the following August 17, 2007 press release from Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife: "The strategic importance of wildlife viewing to Washington's economy, and the need to build additional capacity in this arena, has been emphasized recently with the release of the *2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Related Recreation*. Spending on wildlife viewing activities in 2006 in Washington was nearly $1.5 billion, a 51.4% increase since 2001; compared to a 2% increase nationally. These expenditures are far greater than those for fishing and hunting combined. While this is not intended to downplay the importance of fishing and hunting to the state's economy, it does underscore the changes in recreational preferences brought about by an aging baby boom demographic. (Source: US Fish and Wildlife Service and US Bureau of Census.)"

Sincerely,

Christi Norman

Christi Norman,
Birding Trail Program Director

#24

WASHINGTON COAST SUSTAINABLE SALMON PARTNERSHIP

March 3, 2011

Charlie Stenvall, Project Leader
Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Complex
3888 SR 101 Ilwaco, WA 98624-9797

RE: Draft Comprehensive Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Stenvall,

The Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership (WCSSP) is the regional coordinator for Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) salmon restoration projects in the state's watersheds draining directly to the Pacific Ocean, from Cape Flattery in the north to Cape Disappointment in the south. Our partners include cities, counties, ports, and federally recognized tribes. Our Board of Directors is comprised of representatives of the region's four Lead Entities for salmon recovery.

Each year, WCSSP presents the projects selected by the Lead Entities for funding to the SRFB. For the last two years, the Bear River Estuary Restoration Project – first as a conceptual, design-only project and then as the initial phase of construction – has received the highest recognition from the SRFB Technical Review Panel as one of the "projects that, to the greatest extent, have the potential to protect or restore natural watershed processes for a significant amount of high priority habitat in the most cost-effective manner," otherwise known as a "noteworthy" or "wow" project

In the 2010 round, the Bear River Estuary Restoration Project was considered important enough in the coast region that undesignated funds from the other Lead Entities were redirected to Pacific County to help support this exceptional project.

The Bear River Estuary Restoration Project is only one element of the Refuge's CCP/EIS Alternative 2, but this portion received the full and enthusiastic support of our Board of Directors.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on this project and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

J. Miles Batchelder
Executive Director

cc: Mike Johnson, Pacific County Conservation District
Ron Craig, Willapa Bay RFEG

P.O. Box 2392, 114 E. Chance A La Mer NE, Ocean Shores, Washington 98569
360 289 2499 website: wcssp.org milesb@wcssp.org

Sustainable Fisheries Foundation

Building Partnerships for the Future

March 28, 2011 #24

Charlie Stenvall
Project Leader
Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Complex
3888 SR 101
Ilwaco, WA 98624-9707

Dear Mr. Stenvall

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge's (Refuge) Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (CCP/EIS). Our comments pertain primarily to the goals and actions articulated in the CCP/EIS as they relate to the conservation of the estuary's natural resources in general, and specifically to the proposed removal of 5 miles of dikes on Refuge-managed land at the southern end of the Willapa Bay.

Willapa is one of the most pristine estuaries in the continental United States, and is therefore worthy of special attention. The Refuge is legally required to manage its lands to provide for multiple benefits. Of these, the most important are the conservation of plant and wildlife species and habitats in Willapa Bay and surrounding areas, with emphasis on Federal and State threatened and endangered species, species of concern, and their habitats. We fully support these goals, especially those directed at anadromous salmonids, migratory birds, and associated estuarine habitats.

We are also supportive of the other goals articulated in the CCP/EIS, including making available to the public a variety of education and recreation opportunities. Among the many opportunities offered by the Refuge, hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, photography, and environmental education stand out. It is important that people are able to enjoy, appreciate, and learn about our shared natural and cultural resources.

We believe that the preferred alternative (#2) identified in the CCP/EIS offers the best chance of realizing the conservation and public use goals of the Refuge. Due to its unique location on the Washington coast just north of the mouth of the Columbia River, Willapa Bay is particularly important to populations of salmonids and birds that either reside year round in the estuary, or migrate through it while en route to other areas. Many of these species are in decline due to habitat loss and other natural and anthropogenic causes of mortality. If they are to reverse their downward trend and recover some semblance of their former abundance, these species must have access to areas where they can successfully forage, grow, and survive. Providing for natural

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processes and habitats that ensure the perpetuation of the species takes precedence over other Refuge management goals, such as hunting and fishing, whenever these goals are in conflict.

The potential tradeoffs between habitat conservation and public use of Refuge lands for hunting and fishing should be more explicitly identified in the CCP/EIS. In some cases, the goals are mutually reinforcing; for example, the provision of more nursery habitat for juvenile chum, coho, and Chinook salmon habitat would increase the production from area streams, which in turn would make more fish available for harvest. Willapa Bay historically produced large numbers of salmon due to the presence of large, low gradient freshwater tributaries in combination with a pristine, productive estuary. The productivity for which the Bay is known masked a gradual decline that began in the first half of the last century, accelerated in recent decades, and culminated in the past decade in regulations that attempt to reduce harvest to more sustainable levels. Despite these efforts, local populations of salmon have not recovered. For this reason, efforts to restore the freshwater and marine habitats on which these populations depend, and to further reduce the exploitation of these animals, should be encouraged until they have recovered and stabilized at levels where they can withstand the additional mortality. The relationship between habitat, population status, and harvest should be obvious; if not enough salmon escape to local streams to spawn, or if habitat is lacking or of inferior quality, a population cannot sustain itself; in which case, harvest levels will decline even while they continue to inexorably drive populations closer to extinction. The imperative to protect and restore habitat, and to constrain harvest to sustainable levels, is routinely subordinated to the demands of local developers, commercial and recreational fishermen, and others whose livelihoods are dependent on, or are affected by, salmon and their habitat.

It is important that the Refuge not contribute to this imbalance where its management goals are in opposition. There is no optimal mix of actions that simultaneously maximizes benefits across all categories. For example, the restoration of natural tidal processes and approximately 749 acres of open water, intertidal flats, and salt marsh would favor migratory waterfowl and shorebirds that depend upon these types of habitats, and would displace species that are more commonly found in standing freshwater habitats. Historically, the areas behind the dikes supported waterfowl that predominantly used estuary habitat, including wigeon and diving ducks such as scoters.

On the negative side, dike removal would eliminate the primary means by which humans interact with waterfowl and shorebird species, either through hunting, viewing, photographing them up close from the dikes themselves. Access by foot to the freshwater marshes that have formed on the landward side of the dikes will no longer be possible under the preferred alternative. As a

consequence, fewer people will be able to enjoy wildlife in the ways they have grown accustomed to.

Waterfowl will benefit directly from the anticipated increase in estuary habitat and available food, and the reduction in hunting pressure, and fewer direct interactions with people. Migratory waterfowl are more prone to stop and feed in open habitats. When disturbed, their primary response is to fly away. Flying imposes an energetic cost; the more frequent or severe the disturbance the greater the metabolic penalty. Moreover, birds put to flight are often displaced into less optimal habitats where, potentially, food is less abundant and the risk of predation is greater. These effects, in total, will reduce the probability of their survival.

The loss of recreation opportunity will be mitigated by the construction of a new interpretive trail and wildlife observation deck that can be accessed via the proposed Refuge facility located on the Tarlatt Unit. The CCP/EIS also notes that waterfowl hunting opportunities will increase by over 6,000 acres under the preferred alternative. This increase would more than offset the loss of accessibility to hunting areas that the existing dike configuration allows. Hunting would still be possible; however, hunters would need to rely on boats or walking the shoreline rather than traversing the dikes to access prime hunting areas.

The biological and socioeconomic consequences of the preferred alternative need not be an either/or proposition, but a matter of degree. The CCP/EIS demonstrates that dike removal and estuary restoration is technically and economically feasible, and will provide high quality, diverse habitat capable of supporting both a natural biological community and a range of recreation and education opportunities. To increase the chances of success, we recommend that the Refuge take a more aggressive approach to restoring the areas behind the dikes. Proactive measures implemented in conjunction with dike removal would significantly speed up the process of habitat restoration and population recovery. Former drainage channels that have silted in behind the dikes can be enlarged and reconnected; large snags and hummocks can be placed or constructed on exposed mudflats; and existing vegetation can be removed and new vegetation planted to augment the natural process of recovery. Particular attention should be paid to the land-water interface along the shoreline; it is here that many important processes affecting the flow of energy and habitat conditions in the littoral area are mediated. Management should extend well above the high tide waterline; planting trees and overhanging vegetation in areas where it is currently lacking will contribute to the quality of newly restored estuary habitats by providing shade, large and small organic debris, and nutrients.

The project will maintain the availability and improve the quality of aquatic and terrestrial habitat important for migratory birds, including the federally protected Western snowy plover

and peregrine falcon. Under the preferred alternative, we note that freshwater habitat will continue to be provided in nearby Tarlatt Slough. The proximity of estuary and freshwater wetland habitats will provide the habitat structure and diversity required by many migratory waterfowl and shorebird species.

In summary, we support the actions proposed by the Refuge as described in the preferred alternative. We believe that the goals of species protection and recovery should take precedence over those concerned with human enjoyment and use of the Refuge's amenities. As important as these latter goals may be, they should not be subordinated to the primary purpose of the Refuge, which is to protect and conserve the natural resources of one of the Nation's few remaining pristine estuaries. The preferred alternative represents the best option for achieving the desired biological and societal outcomes.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Respectfully,

Cleveland R. Steward III

Cleveland R. Steward III
SFF-US Director

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March 4, 2011

MAR 07 2011

Willapa National Wildlife Refuge
3888 SR 101
Ilwaco, WA 98624-9707

RE Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Draft CCP/EIS

Columbia
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Glenn Lamb

Dear Mr. Stenvall,

We are writing in support of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Draft CCP/EIS Alternative 2. Since early 2008, we have followed the comprehensive public process for this plan and commend you for your outreach and involvement efforts.

For more than 20 years, Columbia Land Trust has been conserving and caring for vital lands, waters, and wildlife of the Columbia River region. Working with private landowners and partners, we have conserved more than 14,000 acres of land along the Columbia River in Oregon and Washington. Our work complements the conservation and restoration efforts taking place in the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge.

Willapa Bay is second largest estuary on the United States Pacific coast. It hosts numerous wildlife and local communities rely on its health for their economic well being. For example, the oyster industry relies on clean water. The salmon fishery depends on strong fish runs. The tourism industry is strengthened by the ocean and bay's beauty and the popularity of wildlife watching. Protecting Willapa Bay through the refuge is important not only for wildlife, but for people too.

The Land Trust supports Alternative 2 for a variety of reasons, including the following:

1) It expands the long term boundary to include more shoreline property on the east side of Willapa Bay. In 2008, the Land Trust completed a conservation planning process for our own work. Local leaders told us clearly that they thought that the conservation of east side of Willapa Bay was a high priority. This area is mostly in large industrial forestry ownership. However, the identified properties could easily be converted into view lots, having negative impacts on wildlife habitat, water quality, and scenic values. Conservation will prevent this, benefitting local communities and wildlife.

2) It restores 749 acres of historic estuarine habitat for birds and salmon. The proposed restoration area was diked and altered decades ago, resulting in a loss of very important and productive salt water wetlands. These wetlands are especially critical for juvenile salmon. By restoring them, the refuge will help sustain our important fish runs. Also, the natural estuarine wetlands provide much better habitat for waterfowl, allowing them to thrive. People will also benefit, whether they enjoy wildlife watching or hunting.

Thank you for taking our comments into consideration. Please call me with any questions at (360)213-1205.

Sincerely,

Glenn Lamb, Executive Director

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#29

The Nature Conservancy

Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

CONSERVING 50 YEARS WASHINGTON

Thursday, March 21, 2011

Charlie Stenvall, Project Leader
Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Complex
3888 SR 101
Ilwaco, WA 98624-9707

Mr. Stenvall,

The Nature Conservancy is pleased to have the opportunity to comment on the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge - Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (CCP/EIS). The Conservancy has maintained its interest and participation in this planning process since its inception in early 2008. The CCP/EIS contains a wealth of information about the history, the environment and the social context that the Refuge has considered in developing the management alternatives and the process that it has undertaken to receive and incorporate public input. We appreciate the plan's thoroughness and would like to express the Conservancy's interests in the plan and our comments regarding its contents.

The Conservancy's mission is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. We accomplish this through acquisition of places that we value and management and/or restoration of this land to achieve locally important conservation outcomes. In Pacific County, the Conservancy owns over 8,000 acres of forestland adjacent to the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge where, over the past decade, we have developed a productive working partnership with the Refuge that has achieved tremendous progress in forest restoration. In this context, it's clear that our relationship with the Refuge is primarily focused on forest conservation and restoration issues; however the Conservancy's interest in the CCP/EIS encompasses all the proposed wildlife and habitat conservation actions as well as those that address the Refuge infrastructure and social benefits.

The Conservancy supports the CCP/EIS's analysis of the biological environment and the identification of focal species and the factors affecting them. The background on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service laws and directives as well as the mission, goals and establishment purposes for the Willapa Refuge is essential in considering the management alternatives proposed within this CCP/EIS. The issues presented for public consideration throughout the planning process appear consistent with these foundational purposes as do the alternatives, goals, objectives and strategies developed through that public process.

The Nature Conservancy • 750 Commercial Street, Suite 212 • Astoria, OR 97103
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We'd note that the Willapa Refuge is unique among conservation land managers in southwest Washington in the fact that the Refuge encompasses key ownerships within a variety of disparate habitats (e.g., coastal dunes, intertidal salt marsh, and late successional forests) that are each key to the recovery of threatened species (e.g., snowy plover and marbled murrelet) or critically important in the ongoing health of migratory populations (e.g., shorebirds and waterfowl, particularly Brant). With such a diversity of important habitats for which to plan management actions the CCP/EIS does a commendable job addressing the particular challenges for each focal species/habitat and presenting the proposed management approach clearly within the goals and alternatives discussion. The Conservancy supports the management alternatives proposed in Alternative 2 for the following reasons.

Forest Restoration

The Conservancy supports continuing the Refuge's active approach to restoring second growth forests toward complex late successional conditions across large portions of the forestland within Refuge ownership and on any additional forestland it may acquire as well as on adjacent conservation ownerships through the Private Lands Program. The Conservancy agrees that the current approach is appropriate to address the issue of protecting and restoring late-successional forests. Procuring future nesting habitat for the federally threatened marbled murrelet is a key driver in this effort, although many other positive outcomes will come from the restoration of healthy forest habitats. Active restoration of forest habitat will take many decades, but research suggests that it can accelerate the development of habitat complexity. During that time, active restoration (in contrast to passive forest development) has the added benefit of generating jobs within the local logging industry on an ongoing basis.

The Nature Conservancy looks forward to continuing our close partnership with the Refuge to manage and restore our forestlands cooperatively. Towards that end, we developed a cooperative forest restoration plan with the Refuge in 2007 that outlines the forest restoration goals of each party, documents the scientific justifications for forest restoration, and lays out the type and timing of forest restoration actions across our contiguous ownerships over the next 15 years. We support inclusion of this plan (Appendix K) in the CCP/EIS for public review and consideration.

Salt Marsh Restoration

The Conservancy supports the proposed removal of dikes in South Willapa Bay to restore tidal salt marsh habitat. We understand that this is a complex, sensitive issue due to differing views regarding waterfowl management approaches, the value of diked lands vs. salt marsh and changes in access to waterfowl hunting. Restoring tidal influence to over 600 acres of diked land will not only have a positive effect for long-term viability of Pacific flyway waterfowl and shorebird species, fish (including salmon) and other associated wildlife. The Conservancy notes that native salt marsh is among the most productive habitat for waterfowl and shorebirds, but vast amounts of this habitat have been lost to diking and draining for agricultural use, mostly cattle grazing in the Willapa Bay area. While waterfowl clearly use diked pasture habitat and impounded wetlands like those currently found in the south bay Refuge units, there is clear evidence that salt marsh and tide flat habitat

provides a greater nutritional benefit to waterfowl during the spring migration when those nutritional gains are critical for improving their chances for reproductive success. Dusky Canada geese are a subspecies of particular management concern in this region and are known to use the diked pastures at the Reikkola Unit. Changes to the quality of nesting habitat in the Copper River delta are the key driver of Dusky geese populations. It is also clear that winter habitat and survival is not a key limiting factor for this population. Salt marsh is the natural overwintering habitat of the Dusky Canada goose and there is no clear evidence that they need diked pastures or use them preferentially over salt marsh.

Dike removal will also result in habitat improvements for rearing juvenile salmon as well as juveniles of other species like Dungeness crabs and certain groundfish. Full removal of these dikes as proposed, will improve the function and productivity of tidal habitat for these important economic stocks. Intertidal mudflat, salt marsh and shoreline habitat are important feeding areas for juvenile Chinook and Coho salmon. Juvenile salmon are known to benefit from direct access to terrestrial invertebrates where tidal habitats are adjacent to upland forest and marsh habitats. Currently, much of the tidal habitat in South Willapa Bay has been disconnected from upland habitats, disrupting important nutrient inputs and other ecological processes. Increasing the amount and connectivity of these habitats in the Bear River estuary will improve this key rearing habitat for juvenile salmon in the south end of the bay.

Taking into account the guidance given to Refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act that "the fundamental mission of our System is wildlife conservation: wildlife and wildlife conservation must come first", management decisions should be made in the interests of wildlife first and subsequently accommodate wildlife dependant uses like hunting where possible. The Conservancy believes that the choice to maximize habitat improvements through dike removal clearly echoes this basic tenant of refuge management and that the Refuge has been forthcoming in adjusting and improving hunting opportunities given these new circumstances. The Refuge has provided an alternative that reduces the amount of dike removal and retains some current hunting opportunities (Alternative 3) for public consideration. However, the Conservancy believes that Alternative 2 will provide more benefits for wildlife and should be selected and implemented.

Land Protection Plan

The Conservancy supports the Refuge proposal to expand its acquisition boundary within all three proposed units as presented in Alternative 2. Although the land that the Refuge proposes to add within its boundary equals less than two percent of the timber land base in Pacific County the expansion of Refuge lands within these areas will provide a cumulatively larger benefit for threatened wildlife including the focal species targeted in the plan. At the same time it will bring social and economic benefits to the county and community.

The purpose for much of the proposed expansion is to provide larger landscape scale connections between existing conservation areas in order to improve the ability to restore forests for the purpose of recovery of two threatened species, the marbled murrelet and the Northern spotted owl. Old

growth forest habitat in the Willapa Bay area has been nearly eliminated through past logging practices contributing to the listing of these species. The Conservancy believes that, over time, acquisition and restoration of these lands by the Refuge will help prevent up-listing of these threatened species to endangered status and ultimately contribute to the recovery of their populations within the Refuge and neighboring conservation ownership. Avoiding endangered status and recovering these species will allow industrial timber land owners to manage their lands with fewer ESA related encumbrances and costs.

The forest restoration thinning that the Refuge is likely to implement on newly acquired lands would provide a steady supply of timber jobs within the community. Thinning operations would be conducted on shorter rotations than industry standard clearcuts and would require a similar crew each time. Therefore, the total volume of jobs on Refuge restoration operations would likely be greater than what industry would employ.

Annual payments that the Refuge makes in lieu of property taxes through the Refuge Revenue Sharing Act are generally higher on a per acre basis than an industrial timber landowner would pay. So while actual tax revenues may decrease, total revenues to the county should increase. However, the Conservancy believes that the Land Protection Plan is incorrect in stating on page A-13 that "...the State and County would not receive tax revenue for timber cut..." Timber removed from the Refuge would incur excise tax through the Cooperative Land Management Agreement with the Conservancy that facilitates our cooperative forest restoration program. Over time, volume removed from restored stands during multiple thinning operations would nearly equal or exceed that taken from the same ground in a clear cut rotation scenario. So, over the period while active forest restoration is still ongoing, the Conservancy believes that cumulative revenues (in lieu of payments plus excise tax) to the county from additional refuge lands are not likely to be reduced significantly and may increase.

Approximately 2100 acres of Conservancy owned lands are included within the new proposed expansion boundary in the East Hills Unit. These particular lands consolidate Refuge management authority over all the watersheds that flow through the current ownership to the bay. The Conservancy is committed to the long-term restoration on the lands it has purchased in the Ellsworth Creek Preserve and believes that Refuge goals and objectives are well aligned with that commitment. Therefore, the Conservancy supports transfer of the identified lands to the Refuge through fee title acquisition or other mutually acceptable method. Some federal grants were used in the acquisition of certain properties in that area, thus those federal investments would apply toward the acquisition.

Due to the increasing trend toward tax restructuring among major timberland owners (e.g., conversion to Real-Estate Investment Trust), there is an increased risk of divestiture of shoreline portions of timberlands for development purposes. The Conservancy supports the Refuge's approach to identify and secure lands it needs to effectively conserve its trust species within functional landscapes, long into the future. Acquisition of the properties in the Nemah/Naselle block will also

have a positive contribution toward maintaining water quality over the long term for the mariculture industry which employs a significant number of local residents.

Snowy Plover Recovery/ Leadbetter Elk

Coastal dunes and beaches have been tremendously altered over the last century to the detriment of a variety of plant and animal species, most notably Western snowy plover, and the Oregon silverspot butterfly. The Conservancy supports Refuge plans in Alternative 2 to maintain and expand the dune restoration program at Leadbetter Point and plans to reintroduce Oregon Silverspot butterflies within the restored habitat. Actions to protect Western snowy plovers, including measured avian and mammalian predator management are also appropriate. The Refuge should implement the permit-only elk hunt at Leadbetter and develop ways to monitor its affect on elk movements.

Wildlife-dependent Recreational Uses

The waterfowl hunting community clearly will be affected by changes proposed in this CCP/EIS. While more acres will be open for hunting, access to those areas may be somewhat more difficult. While benefits to wildlife must remain the primary consideration in implementing the proposed changes, the Refuge should look for ways to accommodate access for hunting and other wildlife dependant uses where compatible. For example, opportunities to facilitate additional landward access through forest road systems may exist.

Conclusion

As the comments above indicate, the Conservancy supports the actions as defined in Alternative 2 of the CCP/EIS. During the life of this plan, this alternative maximizes the opportunities to improve the function of habitats critical to a variety of listed and economically important species. It is well aligned with the best available science regarding these species and natural systems. We appreciate the opportunity to review this important document and provide our viewpoints. The Conservancy will remain engaged and interested throughout this process and we look forward to working closely with the Refuge in the future.

Sincerely,

Tom Kollasch

Tom Kollasch
Willapa Program Director

Cc: Lisa Bellefond, TNC
David Rolph, TNC

Craig Enterprises
Management & Engineering Consulting/Art Studio
117 Ferry Street, P.O. Box 247
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360 875 6402 (v)
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UBI #600 215 075 (1971)
rcraig@willapabay.org, and lcraig@willapabay.org

Salmon Recovery Funding Board
600 Capitol Way North
Olympia, WA

April 26, 2011

Re:

1) CCP/EIS Willapa National Wildlife Refuge (WNWR)
2) Bear River Estuary Restoration 10-1652R
3) Congresswoman Jamie Herrera press release and letter to you.

Dear Chairman Hover and Board Members,

Let me introduce myself, I have a contract with Willapa Bay RFEG, to manage and provide engineering services to the Willapa Bay RFEG (WBRFEG), I'm also the Vice-President of the organization. I'm the contact for project 10-1652R, to avoid any conflict of interest, I'm writing for myself, not representing or representative of WNWR or WBRFEG Board. I lead the development this project working with the WNWR for almost 12 years. I have been accomplishing engineering research and development for a variety of projects for almost 50 years, and salmon restoration for almost 20 years.

The justifications Congresswoman Herrera's letter provided to you to remove the funding in fact are not supported by any scientific studies, peer reviewed and vetted data, in response to WNWR CCP/EIS. There is a great deal of scientific data that shows estuary restoration is very valuable, I'm sure you are very aware of the importance of estuaries to salmon recovery. Your own TAG has rated this project very high after two on-site reviews and data reviews. RCO has a package of the support letters, and scientific reports for you.

Cost Savings: Congresswoman's statement reporting a cost of $15,000,000 for removing the dikes. This number came from the Army of Corps Engineers (ACOE), based upon a worst case generic computer model for levies/dikes throughout the Country. The estimate does not include estuary restoration, just outer dikes, and fish ladders, removal; this would be there cost if they contracted to remove. Knowing this number WNWR and WBRFEG developed a design and an integrated work schedule to be cost effective. Contract 10-1652R with RCO, is for $473,414 for Lewis and Porter units. This will remove the dikes, two fish ladders, roads, ditches, culverts, re-connect estuary channels, and reestablish two streams to historic channels. The remaining Riekkola unit scheduled for 2014, not yet funded, and will be about $230,000, or a total of about $703,000. Our 703,000 is far from the $15,000,000, and the $15,000,000 will not restore the estuary. Congresswoman Herrera is grandstanding using phony numbers to claim "budget reduction" for political gain, at the expense of salmon recovery.

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Dikes and Fish ladders structure integrity: (ACOE) have also made a cost estimate to repair the dikes to bring them up to standards. The dikes are experiencing major erosion, and one of the fish ladders has some major structural damage probably from recent earth quakes. The Congresswoman's letter failed to mention this, although she has this information. ACOE repair cost for Lewis, Porter, and Riekkola is $30,000,000. So the comparison should be $30,000,000 to $703,000. But, with repairs the dikes would remain in place blocking 760.2 acres of critical salmon rearing habitat. Doing nothing is not an option, the dikes and fish ladder is failing,

Other Statements: Destruction of goose hunting, elk over running the cranberry bogs, all animals killed, etc, none of these statements are supported by any scientific papers, that have been peer reviewed, and vetted. As a part of our hydraulic dynamic tidal inflow studies we simulated the area covered by incoming tides, for the Ordinary High Water (9ft), and up-to the 100 year worst case conditions of 17 ft. It's just a myth that the all wildlife habitat will be destroyed. The RCO staff has reviewed these inflow data. Scientific studies reports that water fowl and shorebirds given a choice prefer saltwater marshes. Some parts of the Riekkola unit dikes currently have eroded so that tides above 12 ft to 13ft currently overflow into the Riekkola unit, Pacific County reports the highest observed waters (HOW) inside the Riekkola unit dikes is 15.98ft. These tides are very rare, and no damage to the up-lands has occurred in the Riekkola. Removing the Riekkola unit dikes will not change the current high tide conditions. This is just a political myth, and local scare tactics.

Based upon actions taken by Pacific County Lead Entity, stating they would never approve our Riekkola unit application to SRFB, I have withdrawn the application, 11-1367R; I will seek funding from other sources. Additionally, another project I was going to submit this year, 11-1682 Pickering Bridge, on the WNWR property, will also be withdrawn because of my and the landowner feeling we would not get fair treatment from Pacific County Citizens Group, and receive harassment from the Pacific County Commissioners, Legislators, and Congresswoman Jamie Herrera.

Sincerely,

Ronald D. Craig, PE

Letter: Issue overlooked at wildlife refuge

0 tweet

Posted: Tuesday, May 3, 2011 2:44 pm

An overlooked issue in the discussion about Willapa National Wildlife Refuge's proposal to remove the dikes at Porter's Point is the short-term cost of removal versus the long-term cost of ongoing maintenance and repair. Put simply, removal of the existing and very exposed dikes around the point, with replacement by shorter, and more protected dikes inland, will be much cheaper than keeping the existing dike system in place. It's the single most expensive maintenance item the refuge has. A decision to continue to keep this barrier in place has to fall into the "penny wise and pound foolish" category.

Others have ably brought up ecological issues, setting out benefits to the estuary and associated freshwater streams of restoring full tideland function. I will not recapitulate those points here, except to mention that fully functional estuaries have higher productivity than do highly altered ones. This proposal is a positive step in the direction of increased capacity. Even with these few acres returned to tidal influence, the Willapa still has many square miles to go to achieve full function, but every acre counts.

A third issue is subsidence. Subsidence is a fact of life for diked areas. As with levees and dikes elsewhere in the country, the Mississippi Delta in Louisiana, and the Sacramento Delta in California, for example, diked lands subside one-half to 1 inch annually as sediments compact and buried organic materials are consumed by decomposition. With no new sediments flooding over their surfaces, in a decade those surfaces drop by 6 to 12 inches, and in a century, by 60 to 120 inches. Rates vary because the amount and kinds of materials deposited varies with each tide, and in each estuary.

This slow and subtle sinking goes unnoticed by generations, until a critical dike breaks, and floodwaters enter. Diked lands at Porter's Point are no exception to this process. This means that if all the existing dike materials are spread out over the now-diked lands, those materials will not and could not bring those lands up to the present level of nearby undiked marshes. Too much time has passed. When those areas are back within the reach of tidewater, then water-borne sediments will again be deposited on the marshes, and the process of sediment accumulation can resume.

So, is the government going to be pennywise, and think short-term savings, or will it think long- term, pound wise, with larger cost savings, and increased ecological capacity? Jaime Herrera Beutler is talking pennywise and pound foolish. The refuge is proposing being wise for the long term. My vote is to spend money now to save more money long term, and to regain ecologic function and capacity.

Kathleen Sayce

Ecologist

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Gary L Johnson

724 Fowler Street, PO Box 816

Raymond, WA 98577

(360) 942-2141

4/29/2011

Dear Legislators and public officials,

I would like to state that I support the full restoration of the Bear River Estuary as proposed by the Willapa Regional Enhancement Group and others that is backed by scientific data and research. We have a multi-million dollar oyster industry in this bay along with many commercial and recreational fishermen that support a fragile local economy in Pacific County. Water quality and natural resources are critical to these environments, which provide resources for all. This estuary was shaped by man many years ago for his convenience and has been exploited by farming, diking, logging, etc. Most of our estuaries, bays, and salt water marshes have been developed and destroyed over the years in Washington State. How can we say that restoration will not have direct improvements on water quality, wildlife, and future generations of marine life? There has been a great deal of public comment that is not scientifically proven, and extensive study that merits support of this restoration needs to be considered.

I am speaking for myself in this matter, although I belong to multiple conservation organizations that also support these efforts for a better Willapa Bay and wildlife refuge. As a lifetime resident of Washington, I have witnessed much destruction to this beautiful state in which we live. Salmon populations are in decline and, in many cases, extinct. Even the oysters in Willapa Bay are not resident but imports because we wiped out the native stocks. I am urging you to support this restoration project and others in Willapa Bay that will have a significant impact on our future generations. It is in your hands; please remember that our natural resources are for all to enjoy.

Thank you for your time and considerations in this matter. I look forward to a positive response.

Sincerely,

Gary L Johnson

Gary L. Johnson

April 20,2011

Salmon Recovery Funding Board
1111 Washington St. SE
Olympia, Wa. 98501

Re: Bear River Salmon Recovery Funding Pacific County

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with a great deal of amazement that I recently found out that the funding for Salmon enhancement on the Bear River estuary was being considered for defunding. My understanding was that this project completed its entire scope of required activities and received a 100 point approval rating. It also has a signed contract. I also understand that local officials have come out after the fact in opposition of this project. It also amazes me that at a largely attended local meeting one of those local officials could publicly state that he did not read it.

Now this project may be in jeopardy. I firmly believe in due process. But when due process can be derailed after the fact that is inexcusable.

I firmly hope that you will have the courage to stand by the project and meet your contractual commitments.

As an aside I have fished in Washington state for over 30 years and if there is one thing that I truly believe it is that habitat must be restored if we are ever to see a return to a natural fishery. It is all about habitat, habitat,habitat.

Thank you for your consideration;
Sincerely,
Richard H. Makowski

RECEIVED
MAR 10 2011
By

2703 Riverview Dr.
Aberdeen, WA 98520
March 8, 2011

Charlie Stenvall, Project Leader
Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Complex
3888 S. R. 101
Ilwaco, WA 98624-9707

Dear Mr. Stenvall:

I would like to comment on the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge's Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement.

I live in Grays Harbor County, and I am in favor of expanding the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge, if we have the opportunity. We are lucky this unique mix of habitats has been preserved. With more and more development on all coasts, this refuge becomes even more valuable to many species which depend on its resources, as well as to people who can enjoy it now and in the future. We can expect more and more people to visit this refuge, as similar places become scarce due to careless development and thoughtless degradation of natural habitats. It is a national wildlife refuge, belonging to all citizens of the United States. I have visited national wildlife refuges throughout our country, including this one, and I am very grateful and proud that Americans are committed to preserving so many different habitats, where people can study, learn, and enjoy the natural world.

I am in favor of Alternative 2 because it would expand the boundaries, and it makes sense according to the map. If the land cannot be acquired right away, I think it is a good idea to have it in the long-range plan to acquire land as we are able. For those who are concerned that this alternative would remove commercial forestry land from the county tax base, I suggest that other income would come into the county from users of the refuge. Since it is one of the most pristine estuaries in the United States, I think it is reasonable to assume that this asset will be visited by people from all over the world, and they will probably spend money in Pacific County. However, Pacific County would be reimbursed for tax revenue lost by acquiring private property, according to the Refuge Revenue Sharing Act..

I believe restoring historic (pre-1940's) salt-marsh habitats by removing dikes would benefit the refuge. If we do this, we may increase survival of native species, especially fish, which depend on this kind of habitat. Since over half the original Willapa estuarine areas have disappeared, adding these areas would definitely enhance our refuge and the rest of the harbor and thereby help the National Willapa Wildlife Refuge fulfill its mission of wildlife conservation. In addition, including forest land in the refuge will protect species including fish which need shade, as well as provide some protection from erosion caused by clear cutting in the watershed. Although dike removal would change some hunting areas, I understand that Alternative 2 also provides for expanding waterfowl, elk, and deer hunting, only in new areas.

It also makes sense to move the headquarters, simply because of the septic tank in violation of the Clean Water Act. We need to protect water quality, and we also need restroom facilities, as well as potable water, for refuge visitors and staff. I think the interpretive trail, the wildlife observation deck, the adequate parking lot, the bike trail, the meeting rooms, and other improvements would also draw more visitors to the refuge. I think it's wonderful that this alternative includes a new boat launch so more people would have access to the water. In addition, it makes sense to consolidate staff offices and maintenance facilities with the visitor center.

The plan to protect the Western Snowy Plover, Marbled Murrelet, late-successional forest, Pink Sandverbena, and Streaked-Horned Lark and re-introduce the Early-Blue Violet and the Oregon Silverspot Butterfly is a good one for the refuge. The refuge is a perfect place to provide a safe haven for former residents. Let's try.

I prefer Alternative 2, because it expands the refuge estuaries and boundaries. As time goes by, I think we would regret choosing Alternative 1, which makes no changes, or Alternative 3, which does not emphasize restoration on Leadbetter Point and does not expand the estuaries or boundaries as much as Alternative 2. Alternative 2 would make excellent changes which I think would improve our ability to truly provide a refuge for plants, animals, and people.

Very truly,

Rebecca Durr

Rebecca Durr

PAUL S MAJKUT
<majkut@msn.com>
03/06/2011 08:12 PM

To <fw1planningcomments@fws.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject Comprehensive Conservation Plan comments

History: This message has been replied to.

Paul Majkut
4130 NE 18th Avenue
Portland, OR 97211
March 7, 2011

Charlie Stenvall, Project Leader
Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Complex
3888 SR 101
Ilwaco, WA 98624-9707

On April 20, 2008, I submitted comments on the Draft CCP for the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge. In Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Planning Update 1, March 2008, the Fish and Wildlife Service discussed several preliminary goals and issues. I strongly encouraged the Service to pursue Goals 1-5 and 7 as the primary goals of the Refuge since they tend to meet the essential mission of the refuge, restoring fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats. Goals 6 and 8 are secondary goals that should give way to the primary goals of the Refuge. For example, this means that providing short grass fields for geese should give way to restoration of tidal marshes that are more beneficial to marine biota and provide a more complex ecosystem and access to refugia for fish and wildlife. I believe your proposed alternative 2 in the draft CCP/EIS is the most consistent with the comments I submitted previously and this alternative would best serve the essential mission of the refuge.

Therefore, I strongly endorse the restoration of at least 749 acres of intensively managed pastures and diked areas in the South Bay and of at least 250 acres of short grass fields in the Riekkola Unit to tidal marsh. I also strongly endorse the recovery of the snowy plover by significantly expanding the exotic beach grass removal program beyond the proposed 229 acres. I also strongly endorse adding at least 33 acres of early-blue violet habitat for reintroduction of the Oregon silverspot butterfly. Additional habitat should be improved to benefit other native vegetation such as the endangered pink sandverbena, beach morning glory and gray beach pea.

I strongly encourage the Service to expand the refuge boundaries in all of the areas indicated under alternative 2. But I would look for additional opportunities beyond these. The Service acknowledges in the Willapa CCP/EIS that significant sea level rise is expected in Willapa Bay.in future decades, but it does not attempt to project the expected range of changes onto the current Refuge habitat. The Service should engage the UW's Climate Impacts Group now to downscale regional sea level rise to the Bay to anticipate the potential level of inundation of existing and proposed Refuge habitat and the accompanying consequences for the Refuge. There is a wealth of future climate and hydrologic scenarios from which a climate change vulnerability and impacts assessment can be carried out. The results should inform future planned expansions of the Refuge, especially in areas immediately upland of existing and proposed expansions of the Refuge.

The Service acknowledges in the Willapa CCP/EIS that there is increasing pressure for development of bay front and other property in the project study area. While it proposes to expand Refuge

boundaries.into the Nemah River area, which I support strongly, it omits from that expansion the shoreline immediately north of the Naselle River, including shorelines north to Stanley Point. This is necessary to avoid habitat fragmentation and protect against human infringement. The Service should also pursue partnerships with local land owners, authorities and conservation organizations to support these ends.

I would also strongly encourage the Service to consider protection of anadromous fish habitat which has been degraded by poor logging practices and development. Stream restoration for their benefit should be a high priority. The Service should consider expansion of Refuge boundaries up the streams that drain into the project study area.

From: Charlie Stenvall
To: Jackie Ferrier; Deanna Wilson
Subject: Fw: Alternative 2
Date: 02/22/2011 03:12 PM

----- Forwarded by Charlie Stenvall/MOBILE/R1/FWS/DOI on 02/22/2011 03:11 PM -----

FW1PlanningComments
Sent by: Nicole Garner

To Brian C Kraemer <kraemerb@u.washington.edu>
cc
Subject Re: Alternative 2

02/22/2011 03:03 PM

Dear Mr. Kraemer, your comments have been forwarded to the Planning Team for the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge CCP. Thank you for your participation in this process.

Nicole Garner
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Wildlife Refuge System
Planning Branch
Portland, OR

▼ Brian C Kraemer <kraemerb@u.washington.edu>

Brian C Kraemer
<kraemerb@u.washington.edu>

To FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov
cc
Subject Alternative 2

02/18/2011 11:13 PM

Dear Refuge Manager:

I am writing to comment on the planning alternatives for the the Willapa bay NWR. I am a longtime visitor to Willapa NWR and a waterfowl hunter for almost 30 years. I hunt Willapa every season and appreciate your efforts to manage it for the public. I strongly endorse Alternative 2 because it both promises to preserve additional bayfront and expand waterfowl hunting opportunities on the refuge. Both are key for the future of waterfowl hunting in the state of Washington. Protection of the proposed bayfront between the mouth of the nemah and nacelle is particularly important due to the ever encroaching development of vacation properties on the Willapa bayfront. One needs only recall what the west shore of Willapa looked like 20-30 years ago compared to today to realize that at the present rate of development most of the eastern shore will also be developed in the next 20 years. I would love for my children to have the same opportunity to hunt waterfowl on the flats of ! Willapa bay that I did.

Also, I am writing to express concern. I know Washington Waterfowl Association has written in opposition to Alternative

2. I feel this is a poorly considered position based upon questionable restoration efforts by WDFW in the Skagit bay area which has caused considerable heartburn among waterfowlers. Obviously Willapa bay is not Skagit bay. I believe if WWA, which is mainly a Puget sound basin based organization, had actually seen the areas discussed in your plan (as I have and no doubt you have), then I think they would embrace either alternatives 2 or 3. The status quo is not a reasonable proposal given the opportunity for expansion of Willapa NWR.

On an unrelated note, I would like to congratulate you on your successful efforts to eliminate spartina from the bay. The transformation has been dramatic.

I appreciate the hardwork of you and your staff on this matter.
Sincerely,

Brian Kraemer

Amy <acook006@gmail.com>
03/20/2011 11:15 PM
To FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov
cc
Subject Draft CCP/EIS Comments

Amy Cook
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acook006@gmail.com

Charlie Stenvall, Project Leader
Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Complex
3888 SR 101
Ilwaco, WA 98624-9707
Phone: 360/484-3482
Fax: 360/484-3109
E-mail: FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov

I am writing in support of Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative for the Final Comprehensive Conservation Plan/Environmental Impact Statement. In a county where the majority of land use is timber harvest and the majority of land and/or wildlife management is either single species harvest management, single species research, or a single issue focus the refuge provides a rare opportunity to use sound ecosystem based management and decision making for the long term benefit of fish and wildlife habitat.

Pacific County is faced with economic distress, the loss of timber revenue and declining enrollment in schools, in addition to the challenges that all wild spaces face such as climate change, encroaching development and threats posed by invasive species. We are very lucky though to be able to still have some remnants of untouched forests, clean water and substantial tracts of land that are either contiguous or easily restored to a contiguous state. All of these factors make it even more encouraging that the refuge has a chance to improve before irreparable damage is done.

Habitat improvements proposed under Alternative 2 provide the best possible long term benefits to a greater diversity of species. Dike removal, restoration of wetlands, intertidal zones, and salt marsh is imperative to maintaining clean water in Willapa Bay and providing resting and feeding habitat to the millions of shorebirds that migrate through the region annually. As the effects of climate change begin to become more tangible maintaining healthy functioning shoreline habitats will help to mitigate these effects. I know that dike removal has been a controversial issue but as someone who has worked for WDFW at the goose check station for two years and has been a volunteer for the refuge for many more years, I feel that I have enough experience to say that the blinds on the refuge are not frequently used and that providing boat-in access for hunting will be a well used alternative. There have been claims that many Dusky Canada Goose utilize the refuge frequently but according to the Pacific Flyway Management Plan for the Dusky Canada Goose (http://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/OGCTF/docs/Dcg_plan.pdf), Willapa is not a

primary wintering location. 70% of harvested duskys are from Oregon while the remaining 30% are from a combination of British Columbia, Alaska, and Washington. Another issue that has been raised in relation to dike removal has been the impact it may have on elk movement. This is an issue that needs to be investigated further but will require decision making and input at the local and state level.

I am particularly encouraged by the proposal to relocate the refuge headquarters to Sandridge Road. This will provide multiple benefits. Consolidating the refuge outbuildings, currently located on several units, will provide more undisturbed habitat at the respective locations. But even more encouraging is that the refuge will be closer to the schools and community.
Our schools are facing drastic cuts due to state budget cuts and low enrollment. Any opportunity for children to learn outside of the classroom is a welcome addition. Field trips and extracurricular learning activities have had to be cut but local learning opportunities have been utilized more and more. In addition, having the refuge headquarters closer to the community will provide visitors an opportunity to learn about our diverse habitats and wildlife found in these habitats.

Lastly, increasing the acquisition boundary gives the refuge an opportunity to incorporate many lands that are already held in conservation status but by organizations that may not have the resources available to manage the lands to the best possible extent.

As a community member, a biologist and a mother of three children in the Ocean Beach School District I sincerely believe that Alternative 2 is the best choice for the future of the refuge. There has been some controversy over this preferred alternative but I also feel that there has been an over representation of some stakeholders and an under representation of other stakeholders. I hope that regardless of this observation the plan will be looked at with objectivity and an eye for the future.

Thank You,

Amy Cook

jesse barham
<jessebarham@yahoo.com>
03/07/2011 08:44 PM

To FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov
cc
bcc
Subject Willapa NWR CCP

Dear Charlie Stenvall,
I have reviewed the proposed alternatives in your CCP document. Thank you for your work conserving the unique natural values and habitat at Willapa NWR. I support alternative 2.

Restoring natural processes to the maximum amount of currently diked habitat at the Refuge will increase the Bay's and Ecosystem's resilience to potential sea level rise by allowing the natural processes to transport sediment into subsided areas, allowing full nutrient exchange between various marine and terrestrial systems, and provide improved food web connectivity between bay/salt marsh/freshwater wetland/upland interfaces.

I would also urge you to restore rare tidal forested and scrub-shrub wetland habitats in the areas restored to tidal influence, as appropriate based on site conditions. These plant communities and ecosystems have become rare along the coast of Oregon and Washington due to the impacts of diking and other human impacts historically.

I also support the Refuge boundary expansion to include more forested upland habitats. Low land conifer forests in the local landscape (Willapa Hills) are primarily managed for industrial forestry (with the exception of Ellsworth TNC property) and stands with characteristics suitable for species relying on older stands with more diverse tree species, stand structure, and habitats are not well represented in the larger landscape. the Refuge has a unique opportunity provide and protect forests managed for natural values and habitat within one of the most unique landscapes in the lower 48 states.

Sincerely,
Jesse Barham
Olympia, WA

Walt Weber
PO Box 225
Chinook, WA 98614
360-777-8295
wweberg@centurytel.net

Date: March 6, 2011

Subject: Comments on proposed Willapa NWR CCP

I have lived in Chinook for about 11 years. I am a retired fishery biologist (27 years with Oregon Dept. of Fish & Wildlife. Most of my career was in Clatsop County. I have hunted and birdwatched in Willapa NWR (Lewis Unit and Ledbetter Pt.), Nemah Flats, Seal Slough, Palix R. , Bone R. , and Baker Bay.

I fully support Alternative 2 of the proposed Willapa NWR CCP with the inclusion of certain conditions.

* Porter and Lewis Unit Dike Removal. No conditions. Currently these freshwater areas behind the dikes provide significant waterfowl use only for a short while in the early fall when water levels are low and the smartweed crop is ripe and available to the birds. By significant I mean several thousand birds present at any one time. Once the fall rains fill the freshwater lakes and make the smartweed and other aquatic plant foods unavailable to puddle ducks all you see in those lakes are trumpeter swans with their 3 ft. necks and a few diving waterfowl such as coots, buffleheads and scaup. Occasionally there will be a few mallards or greenwing teal present. I have had some excellent hunts in the Lewis Unit in the early fall. Once the lakes are full I only visit to bird watch and walk my dog. As you well know, the Lewis Unit is no longer accessible to the public so it's present day value to the public is limited. These freshwater areas have the potential to provide much greater value to the estuary's ecology and the desirable human uses once they are returned to estuarine tidelands. It is well known that estuarine marshes are extremely productive habitats and a source of nutrients for not only waterfowl but also for all salmonids, clams, oysters, shorebirds, plankton, etc. Even the elk spend considerable time in these marshes. The public needs to be made aware that the transition from a relatively unproductive freshwater marsh to a highly productive estuarine marsh will not be immediate. After the saline estuary waters kill the present vegetation, it will take a number of years before marsh recovers and reaches it's expected high productivity levels.

* Acquisition of Nemah-Naselle and East Hills Units. Currently public access to these areas may be limited by the current industrial timber land owners due to fire danger or logging activities. NWR ownership should provide much improved public access as well as an opportunity to manage some of the timberlands toward old growth conditions. It would also preclude development of waterfront or view residential lots on these parcels. This would be especially relevant for the Nemah-Naselle lands. My support here would be conditioned by the following: Public access be maintained. Maintain waterfowl and big game hunting opportunities. Local governments be paid

monies in lieu of property taxes.

*Car top boating access. Consider car top boat access at the east end of 95th Street into what I believe is Tartlett Slough. This site could provide boating access at all tide levels.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposal. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions.

Sincerely

Walt Weber

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10
1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900
Seattle, WA 98101-3140

OFFICE OF
ECOSYSTEMS, TRIBAL AND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

MAR 0 9 2011
By

March 7, 2011

Charlie Stenvall, Project Leader
Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Complex
3888 SR 101
Illwaco, Washington 98624-9707

Re: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) comments for the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (CCP/DEIS). EPA Project Number: 08-026-FWS

Dear Mr. Stenvall:

This review was conducted in accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. Under our policies and procedures, we evaluate the environmental impact of the proposed action and the adequacy of the impact statement. We have assigned an LO (Lack of Objections) rating to the CCP/DEIS. A copy of the EPA rating system is enclosed.

EPA supports the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 2) because we believe Alternative 2 presents the best approach for protecting human health and the environment. We especially support Alternative 2's additions to estuarine habitat (.2 acre of open water, 11 acres of intertidal flats, and 749 acres of salt marsh) because we agree with the DEIS's conclusion that such additions, combined with other ongoing programs to restore/improve estuarine habitat in the coastal region, would represent significant positive cumulative effects for fish and wildlife. In particular, we agree that Alternative 2's estuarine habitat additions would result in significant positive effects because they would:

- offset historical losses of estuarine habitat in Willapa Bay (estimated as a 64% loss of estuarine wetlands (DEIS, 4-92));
- create additional opportunities for eelgrass to colonize restored intertidal mudflats;
- benefit juvenile salmon and waterbirds such as the Pacific brant;
- likely lead to increased duck and the same or increased goose usage;
- increase habitat for shellfish, and, benthic and other invertebrates; and,
- reduce or eliminate highly invasive reed canarygrass and tussock infestations.

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We appreciate your efforts to protect and restore native ecosystem processes and if you have any questions or concerns please contact Erik Peterson of my staff at, (206) 553-6382 or by electronic mail at peterson.erik@epa.gov .

Sincerely,

Christine B. Reichgott

Christine B. Reichgott, Manager
Environmental Review and Sediment Management Unit

Enclosures:
EPA Rating System for Draft Environmental Impact Statements

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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Rating System for Draft Environmental Impact Statements Definitions and Follow-Up Action*

Environmental Impact of the Action

LO – Lack of Objections

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) review has not identified any potential environmental impacts requiring substantive changes to the proposal. The review may have disclosed opportunities for application of mitigation measures that could be accomplished with no more than minor changes to the proposal.

EC – Environmental Concerns

EPA review has identified environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment. Corrective measures may require changes to the preferred alternative or application of mitigation measures that can reduce these impacts.

EO – Environmental Objections

EPA review has identified significant environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to provide adequate protection for the environment. Corrective measures may require substantial changes to the preferred alternative or consideration of some other project alternative (including the no-action alternative or a new alternative). EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

EU – Environmentally Unsatisfactory

EPA review has identified adverse environmental impacts that are of sufficient magnitude that they are unsatisfactory from the standpoint of public health or welfare or environmental quality. EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts. If the potential unsatisfactory impacts are not corrected at the final EIS stage, this proposal will be recommended for referral to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ).

Adequacy of the Impact Statement

Category 1 – Adequate

EPA believes the draft EIS adequately sets forth the environmental impact(s) of the preferred alternative and those of the alternatives reasonably available to the project or action. No further analysis of data collection is necessary, but the reviewer may suggest the addition of clarifying language or information.

Category 2 – Insufficient Information

The draft EIS does not contain sufficient information for EPA to fully assess environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment, or the EPA reviewer has identified new reasonably available alternatives that are within the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which could reduce the environmental impacts of the action. The identified additional information, data, analyses or discussion should be included in the final EIS.

Category 3 – Inadequate

EPA does not believe that the draft EIS adequately assesses potentially significant environmental impacts of the action, or the EPA reviewer has identified new, reasonably available alternatives that are outside of the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which should be analyzed in order to reduce the potentially significant environmental impacts. EPA believes that the identified additional information, data, analyses, or discussions are of such a magnitude that they should have full public review at a draft stage. EPA does not believe that the draft EIS is adequate for the purposes of the National Environmental Policy Act and or Section 309 review, and thus should be formally revised and made available for public comment in a supplemental or revised draft EIS. On the basis of the potential significant impacts involved, this proposal could be a candidate for referral to the CEQ.

* From EPA Manual 1640 Policy and Procedures for the Review of Federal Actions Impacting the Environment. February, 1987

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#241

Ron Craig

From: Jeff Parsons [jparsons@herrerainc.com]
Sent: Friday, March 04, 2011 12:02 PM
To: 'Ron Craig'
Subject: FW: Fwd:

Ron - Here is that email. Jeff

-----Original Message-----
From: Jeff Parsons [mailto:parsons@ocean.washington.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, February 16, 2011 10:44 AM
To: FW1PlanningComments@fws.gov
Subject:

To whom it may concern,

I would like to express my support for the preferred alternative, particularly with regards to the estuarine restoration components of the proposed program. I understand that there has been some concern raised by shorebird interests, which is not uncommon, particularly those projects that restore tidal inundation to formerly agricultural areas.

The use of shoreline and nearshore habitats by shorebirds strongly encourages marine conservation efforts, particularly those that enhance and/or restore the natural processes that sustain these habitats. It has been well documented that the overall productivity of estuarine environments increases when tidal inundation is restored, which will mean a gain for a majority of species that use the bay - particularly those native species that have adapted to these more natural conditions. The location of the project means that the restoration will have a positive effect on the habitat-forming processes that maintain the shoreline and nearshore habitats used by shorebirds and other estuary-dependent species. While the species use and distribution may change with restoration of tidal circulation, the net gain for shorebirds in general is unequivocal.

Finally, the potential gains to salmonid populations, particularly chum, which are critically endangered, from the preferred alternative cannot be understated. The current exclusion of these populations from nearshore areas has led to dramatic declines in a culturally and economically important fishery. With the restoration of these nearshore and estuarine areas, habitat for these fish is greatly expanded, making recovery of these populations possible. Without restoration of these areas, there is serious risk of losing these populations entirely from future development and other human impacts. I encourage you move forward with the preferred alternative for the betterment of all in the region.

Sincerely,

Jeff Parsons
Affiliate Assistant Professor
School of Oceanography
University of Washington

Key Environmental Solutions

March 14, 2011

USFWS-Willapa Wildlife Refuge
Attn: Congresswoman, Jaime Herrera Beutler

Re: Expert Testimony.

To Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler:

My name is Key McMurry, I am a Professional Stream & Wildlife Biologist with over 23 years of experience in the biological field.

I am the owner of Key Environmental Solutions

I am a board member of the Washington Coastal Sustainable Salmon Partnership. I also sit on their technical and planning committees.

I am a board member of the Willapa Bay Water Resources Coordinating Council.

I am a board member of the Pacific County Marine Resources Committee.

I have been involved in both estuarine and freshwater salmon recovery restoration projects for over 12 years.

1. First please consider what is personal opinion versus scientific fact and expert testimony.
2. Please don't except hearsay. For example if someone says or writes that John Doe does not approve of the project, there should be something in writing from John Doe or John Doe should be here to testify. Otherwise it is just hearsay, people should have the nerve to put their name next to their opinion.
3. Estuarine Wetlands have been the most impacted across the whole United States.
4. Estuarine Wetlands are also one of the most productive natural resources areas in the world. They are considered nurseries for salmon, crab, shrimp, birds, wildlife, etc.
5. There has been a great push from our government to restore estuarine wetlands.
6. The Bear River Estuarine Restoration Project as part of Option #2 in the USFWS Restoration Plan. Has been ranked the #1 rated project in Washington State Salmon Recovery Process for 2 years in a row. I believe it would be one of the best restoration projects in the entire United States.
7. The Bear River Estuarine Restoration was ranked and reviewed by leading technical and restoration experts from around the Northwest.
8. The project has gone through all the correct public process. It was ranked by the WBWRCC and their technical committee (which ranked it number 1, unanimously, it was approved by the Pacific County Commissioners and it was

550 Mill Creek Road · Raymond, Washington 98577 · (360) 942-3184 · Fax (360) 942-0260
key@keyenvironmentalsolutions.com
www.keyenvironmentalsolutions.com

approved by the Salmon Recovery Office. So there has been lots of time of the public to comment.

9. All the Salmon Recovery Projects across the state are done by the landowner volunteering the land. No one has ever been forced or coerced into performing a project.
10. Not only in Willapa Bay (WRIA 24) but the whole coastal area has shown over and over again that we can do bigger and better salmon restoration projects with a tremendous amount of success, we can always do it cheaper than let's say the Puget Sound Area. We can always get more bang for the buck, more salmon recovered for the money.
11. Several examples of this are: Fisher Slough Estuarine Restoration Project in Puget Sound, which restored 60 acres of estuarine wetland at a cost of 9 million dollars. The other project was the Nisqually Delta/Estuarine Restoration project that restored a total of 950 acres of estuarine wetlands at a cost of 20 million dollars.
12. The Bear River Project is restoring 750 acres of estuarine wetlands for $750,000.00 dollars.
13. Overall the USFWS will be restoring approximately 1250 acres of estuarine wetlands, which will be a huge boost for salmon, elk and other wildlife, and to waterfowl.
14. Estuaries are considered to be good habitat for elk, which we have shown at the Willapa River Estuarine Restoration Project outside of South Bend and many other estuarine areas either restored or naturally occurring. The elk using these areas have been shown to have less hoof rot, they get better balance of minerals and nutrients that enhance antler growth.
15. It has also been shown over and over again that estuarine restoration has a huge benefit for waterfowl.
16. It has been said that Ducks Unlimited does not support this project. While working for WDFW, I wrote the permit which allowed Ducks Unlimited to restore estuarine wetland right across the street on Tarlatt Slough.
17. It has been suggested that if the dikes do get removed, that mitigation measures be taken. What was the mitigation when the dikes went up.
18. On the Tsunami Evacuation Route, there are several roads leading up to the Tsunami Evacuation Route that are built below the OHWL and will be submerged before you can even get to the Tsunami Evacuation Route.
19. 65% of Willapa Bay Estuarine Wetlands are still behind dikes.
20. The Willapa River Estuarine Restoration project is 10 years ahead of schedule as for as creating new meander channel and several years ahead for the plants.
21. Estuarine Wetlands are the most valuable type of wetlands.
22. There of course would not be any spawning salmon where the dikes are removed, salmon would use this area for rearing.
23. WDFW makes more money off of Watchable Wildlife then it does for hunting and fishing licenses.
24. Moving the Willapa Wildlife Refuge is the safest thing for traffic. Right now it is in a terrible place, amongst all of the curves. It is kinda of an attractive nuisance for drivers.
25. Option #2 is the only option that fulfills the long term goals.

26. Anybody on their drive down notice all the elk using the estuarine wetlands, at the Mid-Nemah, Greenhead slough, Palix, Bone, and Potters slough? I didn't think elk used estuarine wetlands.
27. Elk do not eat cranberries or their branches.
28. The Willapa River Estuarine Restoration Project was referred to as the "Mosquito Farm". The main reason for this is because of the freshwater ponds that were demanded to be added by the vocal minority. The project is 10 years ahead of schedule in forming dendritic channels and several years ahead as far as saltmarsh vegetation returning.

If you have any questions, or if I may be of further assistance, please feel free to contact me at (360) 942-3184 or on my cell at (360) 562-5763. I look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

Key McMurry

Key McMurry
Owner/Professional Stream and Wildlife Biologist

550 Mill Creek Road · Raymond, Washington 98577 · (360) 942-3184 · Fax (360) 942-0260
key@keyenvironmentalsolutions.com
www.keyenvironmentalsolutions.com

Moore, Kathryn (RCO)

From: Michael J. Spencer [michaeljspenc57@hotmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, April 16, 2011 8:49 AM
To: Moore, Kathryn (RCO)
Subject: FW: Draft CCP/EIS comments

I am forwarding you a letter of support I wrote last month for the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge, Alternative 2.

From: michaeljspenc57@hotmail.com
To: fw1planningcomments@fws.gov
Subject: Draft CCP/EIS comments
Date: Fri, 18 Mar 2011 17:33:43 -0700

Sirs:

I have followed the recent dialogue regarding the concerns of citizens of Pacific County, especially on the Long Beach Peninsula, about the current Willapa National Wildlife Refuge's (Refuge) Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (CCP/EIS, or Plan).

As a means of establishing a reasonable amount of credibility to my views and comments, I will state that I am a retired "scientist" (BS - Chemistry) with 9 years work experience as a limnologist/water quality investigator (mainly in New Zealand) and 24 years as an investigator/assessor of hazardous waste sites and their potential effect upon adjacent ground and surface waters throughout all areas of WA state.

I believe that the ecological importance, and overall financial value to the citizens of Pacific County, of Willapa Bay can never be over-emphasized. This is based on its extraordinarily good water quality which in turn supports a very productive shellfish industry which is one of the county's largest employers. Willapa Bay's scenic beauty adds to its attractiveness as a valued asset, both financially in the terms of tourism, and intrinsically as having remnants of some of the very last really wild places the whole of the United States.

The Refuge is the prime component of what is essential to protect in Willapa Bay in as pristine a state as possible for future generations of Americans, as well as promote for current public use where those uses do not threaten its ecological integrity in terms of providing a natural habitat for juvenile fish migration, refuge for resident and migratory birds, and repository for rapidly disappearing plant, insect and animal species.

I am strongly supportive of the Plan's Alternative 2, in terms of its long-range vision in maintaining and achieving the overarching goals I have mentioned above. I do not necessarily see the final outcome of this process likely to include each and every component of this alternative, but it is a framework to build on for a long-range comprehensive approach to managing the refuge and its activities.

In the course of the followup to the public comments and concerns that seem to me to be the most prevalent, I would hope the Refuge can clarify to the public the following:

- The property tax dilemma the county commissioners are raising, as I know there is Federal money going to the county to make up for any land taken up into a protected status.

- The fact that a certain portion of the land to be added to the Refuge is apparently land that will be donated by a non-profit group and is already off the "tax rolls"

- Make a better effort to educate the general public that transitions from a freshwater to a saline habitat takes time, does not occur overnight, and the so-called "mess" on the way out of South Bend is a "work in progress" and will take a many years to restore back to its orginal ecological status. This will be the same for the south end of the bay when/if the dikes are removed.

- More emphasis that you have good solid science backing you up, rather than simple anecdotal "evidence" (e.g., the 7%

figure used by several regarding the Nisqually Refuge restoration)

- More emphais on the total overall value, both ecological and financial, of what this alternative will add to the Refuge, rather than do nothing (Alternative 1) for the sake of the pleasure of a handful of duck hunters.

Yours respectfully,

Michael J. Spencer
935 Fowler Street
Raymond, WA 98577

(360) 942-3240

Moore, Kathryn (RCO)

Subject: FW: Bear River

-----Original Message-----
From: John Evans [mailto:john@ndctimber.com]
Sent: Monday, April 18, 2011 5:44 AM
To: Moore, Kathryn (RCO)
Subject: Bear River

Dear Kathryn Moore,

I am writing to show my support for the Bear River Estuary project.

Our salmon populations in the area have been declining rapidly in the last number of years and we need to do whatever we can to bring them back. This project has the potential to provide significant refuge and habitat for our local salmon populations while having minimal disturbance in the construction phase. It is the front door to the ocean for our returning salmon, it is not miles and miles up a river where it is hard for a population to get to just to use the new habitat.

This project does not require major alterations, excavations, disturbances to other habitat or disturbances to the local public.
It just requires putting a manmade dike back in a man dug ditch and then letting nature take over.

Dike removal projects in other locations of our state have been very successful. They have given back habitat that was taken away years ago, while still being available to the local populations that are using them.

This project has been evaluated, studied and engineered. It has had a range of different professionals evaluate it. It is probably one of the least cost dike removal projects the State has seen and it would be a shame to loose it when it is ready to go.

I hope that a few people who are bringing their complaints to the table quite late in the process do not derail this project. The project is for the salmon. This project is putting back what man messed up years ago. We have messed up so much habitat, we have over fished and continue to over fish our salmon, with this project we have a chance to provide some refuge for the salmon before they return to the sea.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

John Evans
360-791-3011

Dear Chairman Hover and 05/11/11
the other board members of SRF Board
for the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge

Regarding the CCP-EIS:
In reading, rereading and rereading the extensive article by Cate Gable in the April 27st Chinook Observer, I feel the need to set the record straight on some of the issues addressed in the article.

First and foremost, the prime issue is not just about some "40 to 50 duck and goose hunters." It's about choosing an extremely expensive project to "possibly" enhance the environment of one specie, salmonids, at the expense of another wildlife group, primarily, migratory waterfowl. Regarding the increased habitat environs for salmonid smolt survival, it's difficult to see how much enhancement will actually be achieved when the freshwater marsh habitat and the short grass habitat, and the dikes establishing them, are all well behind the mean high water line as shown on NOAA chart #18504. I should think it somewhat difficult for the smolts to feed and seek protection in an environment that is dry most of the time. I do believe, however, that there are certain elements of the food chain in the marshes behind the dikes. This is easily addressed by the periodic opening of the flood gates (as has been done before) and flushing these elements into the bay's food chain. I would also point out that in the Banas and Hickey study done in 2003, it was stated that the ocean plays the dominant role year round in supplying nutrients and organisms that underline the productivity of Willapa Bay and that Willapa Bay shows much less influence of riverine inputs that are dependent on summer rainfall and thus very limited in the summer months when plankton are growing.

Now, as for the migratory waterfowl, it has been determined by the WNWR staff, that some tens of thousands (I believe the figure was 50,000) migrating ducks and several thousand migrating geese utilize the habitat protected by the dikes. These include the pintail and scaup ducks which are species of concern, and the dusky Canada goose which, I believe, is listed as the #1 priority of concern of the Fish and Wildlife Service in our area. Habitat that is currently used by all three of these species will be lost if these dikes are removed.
In addition, I have heard nothing about the habitat the dikes themselves provide. There are various raptors, including great horned owls, eagles, marsh hawks, red tail hawks, barn owls, shrikes, and sparrow hawks that take advantage of the mice, voles, shrews and birds that utilize the dikes for respite from high waters, feeding areas, and birthing areas. Has any scientific studies been done to determine what effect dike removal will have on these various creatures?

As one can readily see, there is a complex interwoven habitat issue here that has not been properly addressed. It has been stated in one study that the geese use both habitats, salt marsh and short grass. This is so. It was also implied in the same study that the geese may actually prefer the salt marsh habitat. If that is so, I would encourage anyone to drive from South Bend to the base of Bruceport hill and count the geese in the newly created salt marsh and compare that to the numbers in the shortgrass habitat that is privately owned and still protected by dikes. This obviously should be done during migratory and wintering over seasons. And, I believe the conclusions will be obvious!
Other areas of deep concern to me within the article are the lack of actual costs to be incurred with the removal of the dikes. What is the final cost? Is it $475,000.00 or $15,000,000.00? Where did the cost of $30,000,000.00 for repairing the dikes come from when previous figures

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for maintaining the dikes were under $60,000.00 a year? This certainly looks like the classic bait and switch plan where you use only the figures you choose to TRY to prove an unsupportable premise.

I find it extremely troubling that a large pool of public funding can be administered and dispersed with no direct authority by local, state, or national politicians, "as project approval and funds allocation are carried out under different auspices." Who is to mind the henhouse then – the fox?
Lastly, I take personal offense at the implication that many are Johnny-come-latelies joining into the dispute. I was personally at the 2008 meeting brought about by the WNWR, along with some thirty to forty other attendees. At that time, suggestion of dike removal was brought up by refuge staff. I believe the only people in favor of removal were staff. All other attendees were against it. I'm sure we were all signed in at that meeting, but the next time I heard about the WNWR CCP was in a very small article in the Chinook Observer about the 3CCP plans under consideration with alternative II being the preferred option. Even with driving out to the headquarters, I was at first advised that there were no long term plans in consideration for a CCP! Only after I returned a second time and explained that I had a problem believing there were no plans under consideration and was told by the same person, "Well don't get upset with me; I'm just the messenger," he did go back into the office and return to advise me that there were indeed such plans under consideration and that if I would be willing to wait, they would print me out a copy. So, as you can see, as an interested party of record, I certainly was not a Johnny-come-lately, but was also certainly not apprised of what was occurring. I know of no one who was at that 2008 meeting who was invited to be on the committees promulgating these options or who were even advised that the meetings were taking place or what agencies were involved.

This project has been compared to the Nisqually flats project. The only things they have in common are they are freshwater streams entering salt water estuaries and they harbor some salmonid habitat. The two differences that stand out are:

A. Other than the previously diked areas, the Nisqually had very little esturine salt marsh habitat and emptied into Puget Sound which also had only a fraction of its salt marsh habitat.
   Bear River has two miles of salt marsh habitat on both sides from the 101 bridge on past Green Head slough. Willapa Bay has tens of thousands of acres of salt marsh habitat of which some 8500 acres have just recently been recovered by the spartina eradication program. In addition, there is far more salt marsh habitat outside the dikes in question than the acreage reserved for freshwater marsh habitat within the dikes.
B. The Nisqually is a major river system with a number of tributaries that have salmon spawning habitat that will produce many, many downstream smolts that will need salt marsh esturine protection.

Bear River is a modest sized, but viable salmon spawning stream smaller than some tributaries of the Nisqually with huge amounts of salt marsh habitat to accommodate the needs of the smolts produced.

The conclusion that must be arrived at after all considerations and studies, is that the very expensive removal of the dikes will have only marginal benefit at best for downstream salmonids, but will remove viable and used habitat for tens of thousands [redacted] of migratory water fowl. Therefore, option II should go back for revision or be dropped from consideration and option I should be adopted.

Fred Cook
1201 Ocean Beach Blvd N.
Long Beach WA 98631
360-642-4774

Ross P. Barkhurst
Christine W. Barkhurst
151 N. Nemah Road West
South Bend, WA 98586

Ross P. Barkhurst, South Bend, WA 98586

May 15, 2011

Kaleen Cottingham, Director
The Recreation and Conservation Office,
Natural Resources Building,
PO Box 40917,
Olympia, WA 98504-0917

RECEIVED
MAY 20 2011
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

Re: Willapa National Wildlife Refuge

Kaleen Cottingham:

I am writing to express my concerns for the so-called "Bear River Estuary Restoration Project." There are serious technical and process/legal concerns with it.

I cannot attend your May 25 hearing but I am asking that my concerns be considered in my absence. I will not try to rehash the technical concerns too much as they have been well spelled out by others, including Dan Heasley' concerns whose comments I have read and endorse.

There is little prospect for a measurable increase in salmon in our bay as a result of the above mentioned project. Perhaps that is why we have seen no commitment of quantifiable numbers, either to naturally spawning salmon numbers, or to harvestable numbers. This is a process concern i.e. you should not be allowed to commit funds without quantifiable results. This approach allowed us to get a 500,000 dollar project for fish ladders, level control in these dikes and would surely allow millions more to tear it down. Neither one would have to produce under the approach as I have read it. This alone would make it a poster child for waste and lack of accountability. If the process allows this then the process must be fixed.

The process also apparently allows you to cut contracts to get going while a public comment period is about to be launched, on an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), by yet another government agency the USFWS.

Your public statements, as reported in local media, to the effect that the public is getting involved too late, if inaccurate needs to be corrected. If accurate, they give an impression of omnipotence, if not arrogance, against a backdrop of public outcry in 2008. The 2008 request for public opinion was not well publicized, but people got the word and showed up. Then we were given the opportunity to comment on the USFWS EIS earlier this year and did so in spades. (If your approach did not generate open opportunities it can now be seen to be a shortcoming of the process or its implementation.)

If people had been aware that you cut a contract before the comment period on the EIS, you would have had plenty of public comments. Now that we are aware, *we are letting you know*. Many are disheartened by the runaround so your approach can be said to have spoiled the atmosphere.

The flavor given off is also that *we are not really qualified and ignorant of salmon needs*. We are not!

We are also knowledgeable of impacts on other wildlife, which you apparently are not required to be aware of, or to not consider, or even to mitigate. Federal EIS requirements are broader and your processes appear to violate them in multiple ways.

I have been told by your local Lead Entity Coordinator that I do not understand that there are two separate processes. Of which I certainly do. That is part of the problem. It is much like pre-911 when the FBI processes told them not to inform the CIA when they uncovered terrorist concerns. That contributed to a human disaster just as this will contribute to an environmental disaster. When you rely on luck, your luck will run out.

In summary:

1. you are being asked to stop work; and
2. stop expenditure on this project; and
3. then fix your processes; and
4. then do a cost benefit on all the aspects of this project whether it looks worth doing one or not. (We cannot tell just for the salmon, let alone the rest.)
5. Make the analysis public;
6. Involve the public in the analysis;
7. Apologize early on for putting down the public for its involvement; and
8. The public's knowledge.

You really did not know who you were talking to. You are forgiven in advance. A poorly publicized, unilateral approach to our environment and resources, which by design openly ignores public input on all non- salmonid impacts, is illegal, unconstitutional and can never, be allowed to happen.

Thank you in advance for your consideration on this project.

Respectfully submitted,

Ross P Barkhurst

Ross P. Barkhurst,
South Bend, WA 98586

Salmon Recovery Funding Board
Briefing Memo
Item 1A

Meeting Date: May 2011
Title: Director and Agency Management Report
Prepared By: Kaleen Cottingham, Director

Proposed Action: Briefing

To minimize duplication, some items that might normally be included in the director's report have been deleted here and included in other memos throughout the notebook (such as the policy director's report, legislative update, and the grant manager's report).

Recognized by Our Partners

I recently received the "Partner of the Year" President's Award on behalf of the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) from the Nisqually Land Trust for our work protecting the Nisqually watershed. RCO has provided nearly $15.5 million in grants towards conservation from the delta to the headwaters. The land trust itself has received 21 RCO grants since 1997, for many important projects, such as $6 million for the Ohop acquisition, protections along the Mashel River, and Powell Creek protection and restoration.

GMAP Focuses on Puget Sound

The most recent Puget Sound Government Management Accountability and Performance (GMAP) Forum with the Governor was held April 6. The forum initially focused on the Puget Sound Partnership's measures, with the Governor asking Partnership Director Gerry O'Keefe to work with her staff to identify three to five "tangible" work products for the upcoming year. Attention then turned to the upcoming "downgrade" of shellfish beds in Samish Bay and an assignment for agency directors to work with the area's legislators, officials, and stakeholders to create a plan to address the problems. Other areas of focus included steelhead stocks, water quality at beaches, and storm water.

Federal Funds Outlook

We are pleased that the recently adopted federal budget for the remainder of federal fiscal year 2011 contained $80 million for the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF), which funds about half of our salmon recovery grants. Earlier versions had proposed substantial cuts. The outlook for 2012 is not as clear.

Taking Steps to Streamline Grant Application Process

We have identified two key areas for potential streamlining in our grant application process: The mechanics of our application deadline and methods of project review. Discussion is underway among section managers on how to proceed.

Aquatic Lands Training

Grant staff attended a training session on aquatic land title basics by Steven Ivey, aquatic lands surveyor, from the Department of Natural Resources. The training covered topics such as the definitions unique to aquatic lands and the shifting boundaries associated with waterfront property. Improving grant managers' knowledge about aquatic land boundaries will aid in reviewing grants that involve acquiring waterfront property for all types of projects, including boating, water access, and habitat protection. This training was Part 4 in a series regarding managing acquisition projects. The complete series includes the following introductory level topics: property title insurance, uniform acquisition procedures, relocation, new RCO deed of right procedures, aquatic lands, appraisals and review appraisals, escrow payments, environmental site assessments, and conservation easement.

Staff on the Move

- **Elizabeth Butler,** a grant manager in the Conservation and Grant Services Section, has accepted a position with the Department of Fish and Wildlife.
- **Gen Keesecker,** with the Invasive Species Council, will finish her work in May and move to Costa Rica.
- **Devi Watson**, our human resources manager, has taken a position working for Thurston County Human Resources. She will leave in May.
- **Phil Miller**, director of the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office, has announced that he will retire at the end of June.

Board Updates

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB)

RCFB will meet next on June 22-23 in Olympia. Day one includes budget and legislative updates, grant awards for five programs, the board's work plan for fiscal year 2012, and consideration of new policies on the eligibility of recreational cabins and allowable project uses. The day concludes with a project tour at West Bay Park. The second day begins with a presentation about the new Americans with Disabilities Act rules, followed by a panel discussion of state and local agency approaches to the new rules. Following that, the board will discuss the proposed sustainability policy and consider requests for time extensions, a conversion, and a sponsor change. The day will conclude with briefings on the upcoming conversion related to the State Route 520 construction.

Washington Biodiversity Council

Biodiversity staff continues to transition projects from the council to other willing recipients. The Department of Commerce (Growth Management Services) has taken the Biodiversity Conservation Toolbox for Planners, and plans to add it to its Web site after legislative session. The data viewer utility for the Conservation Opportunity Framework maps, developed by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, is undergoing beta testing through the first week of May. The Washington Natural Heritage Program's work on migrating content from the biodiversity Web site and its consideration of being lead for the future of the biodiversity scorecard are on hold awaiting budget outcomes.

Washington Invasive Species Council

April was a big month for the council, which saw the Legislature extend its existence into the future by passing a bill, which was signed into law on April 22. The bill extends the invasive species council for five more years – until June 30, 2017.

In addition, the Council completed its assessment of 15 species in the Puget Sound basin and posted the work on its Web site.

Staff continues to work on finalizing the state agency field work protocols to reduce accidental introductions of invasive species. Once finalized, the protocols will be delivered the Governor's Natural Resources Cabinet. Council staff also met with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) coordinators to discuss where invasive species could be addressed in the SEPA review process. Staff will work with SEPA coordinators to propose language to be added to SEPA guidance documents. Staff also is developing a Memorandum of Understanding among agencies to facilitate emergency response to high-priority invasive species outbreaks.

Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group

The lands group held a quarterly meeting to plan for the upcoming State Land Acquisition Coordinating Forum and State Land Acquisition Monitoring Report. At the forum, state agencies will present information about projects approved for funding in the 2011-13 biennium and about projects planned for funding in the 2013-15 biennium. The forum will be hosted on August 2. The monitoring report will show whether state agencies acquired what they proposed to acquire by comparing the projects completed by July 2011 with their proposals from the 2007-09 biennium. The report will be published in September 2011.

WASHINGTON STATE RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE
Salmon Recovery Funding Board

Salmon Recovery Funding Board
Briefing Memo
Item 1B

Meeting Date: May 2011

Title: Management Status Report: Financial Report

Prepared By: Mark Jarasitis, Chief Financial Officer

Approved by the Director: Kaleen Cottingham

Proposed Action: Briefing

Summary

The attached financial report reflects Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) activities as of March 31, 2011. The available balance (funds to be committed) is $8.4 million. The board's balances are as follows:

Fund	Balance
Funds Awarded by the Board	
Current state balance	$18,752
Current federal balance – Projects	$4,268,558
Current federal balance – Activities[1]	$3,599,621
Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR)	$0
Puget Sound Critical Stock	$436,500
Other Funds	
Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFFPP) – Awarded by DNR	$89,587
Estuary and Salmon Restoration – Awarded by DFW	$0

Attachments

A. Salmon Recovery Funding Board Budget Summary

[1] Hatchery/Harvest and monitoring activities as defined in PCSRF application, but not yet awarded by RCO

Salmon Recovery Funding Board Budget Summary

For the Period of July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2011, actuals through 03/2011 (fm21); reported 04/14/2011
Percentage of biennium reported: 87.5%

	BUDGET	COMMITTED		TO BE COMMITTED		EXPENDITURES	
	new & reapp. 2009-11	Dollars	% of budget	Dollars	% of budget	Dollars	% of comm
GRANT PROGRAMS							
State Funded 01-03	*$135,410*	*$135,410*	*100%*	*$0*	*0%*	*$2,855*	*2%*
State Funded 03-05	*$1,903,862*	*$1,903,862*	*100%*	*$0*	*0%*	*$952,268*	*50%*
State Funded 05-07	*$4,739,719*	*$4,737,648*	*100%*	*$2,071*	*0%*	*$2,664,947*	*56%*
State Funded 07-09	*$10,309,240*	*$10,292,557*	*100%*	*$16,682*	*0%*	*$6,844,250*	*66%*
State Funded 09-11	*$9,350,000*	*$9,350,000*	*100%*	*$0*	*0%*	*$3,989,765*	*43%*
State Funded Total	26,438,231	26,419,477	100%	$18,752	0%	14,454,085	55%
Federal Funded 2005	$6,670,186	$6,670,186	100%	$0	0%	$6,670,186	100%
Federal Funded 2006	$8,854,650	$8,854,651	100%	$0	0%	$7,475,284	84%
Federal Funded 2007	$14,527,731	$14,527,731	100%	$0	0%	$7,693,513	53%
Federal Funded 2008	$20,216,723	$20,216,723	100%	$0	0%	$6,512,123	32%
Federal Funded 2009	$23,822,419	$23,722,419	100%	$100,000	0.4%	$8,801,976	37%
Federal Funded 2010	$26,675,000	$18,906,821	71%	$7,768,179	29.1%	$391,450	2%
Federal Funded Total	100,766,709	92,898,530	92%	$7,868,179	8%	37,153,082	40%
Lead Entities	6,847,171	6,847,170	100%	$0	0%	3,671,957	54%
Forest & Fish	1,638,485	1,638,485	100%	$0	0%	1,257,465	77%
Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration	55,361,358	55,361,359	100%	$0	0%	28,297,648	51%
Estuary & Salmon Restoration	6,790,000	6,790,000	100%	-	0%	1,922,101	28%
Family Forest Fish Passage Program	7,390,106	7,300,519	99%	89,587	1.2%	3,492,745	48%
Puget Sound Critical Stock	3,863,573	3,427,073	89%	436,500	11%	114,454	3%
Subtotal Grant Programs	**209,095,632**	**200,682,613**	**96%**	**8,413,017**	**4%**	**90,363,537**	**45%**
ADMINISTRATION							
SRFB Admin/Staff	5,084,072	5,084,072	100%	-	0%	3,607,116	71%
Technical Panel	569,049	569,049	100%	0	0%	314,022	55%
Subtotal Administration	**5,653,121**	**5,653,121**	**100%**	**0**	**0%**	**3,921,138**	**69%**
GRANT AND ADMINISTRATION TOTAL	**$214,748,753**	**$206,335,734**	**96%**	**$8,413,017**	**4%**	**$94,284,675**	**46%**

WASHINGTON STATE RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE
Salmon Recovery Funding Board

Salmon Recovery Funding Board
Briefing Memo
Item 1C

Meeting Date: May 2011

Title: Legislative Update

Prepared By: Steve McLellan, Policy Director

Approved by the Director: Kaleen Cottingham

Proposed Action: Briefing

The following are some highlights of the legislative session as of the mailing date of the memorandum. Staff will provide an update at the May meeting of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board).

Special Session

The regular session ended on April 22. The first special session of 2011 began on April 26, with the primary focus being the state budget for 2011-13; see memo #4 for details. It is possible that there will be a second special session if the legislature is unable to reach agreement on the operating or capital budget, or on related issues.

Bills of Interest

Bill to Extend Invasive Species Council

The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) bill to extend the Invasive Species Council was signed by the Governor on April 22. The bill received unanimous support in the House and Senate in a year where many proposals to extend state councils were not successful. As a result, the Council will be extended to June 30, 2017. Consistent with the approval to seek extension, the Council will not receive a general fund appropriation and will be expected to raise its budget from contributions by member organizations and grants.

Boards and Commissions Bills

The Boards and Commission legislation (HB 1371) has passed the House and is awaiting action in the Senate. As expected, the version that cleared the House removed the Salmon Recovery Funding Board from the list of boards being eliminated. We do not expect that situation to change in the Senate.

Natural Resources Consolidation

A broad proposal to consolidate natural resources agencies (SB 5669), originally proposed by the Governor and modified in the Senate, died during the regular session. The bill's Senate sponsors have continued to work on a smaller package of consolidation proposals, mostly aimed at consolidating support or "back office" functions, reducing the number of regional offices, and merging a number of smaller environmental agencies. Expected savings associated with these ideas were included in the Senate operating budget; it is possible that consolidation will be a proviso in the budget rather than a stand-alone policy bill. The savings assumed did not affect RCO or salmon projects. We understand that our continued work to implement a consortium for specific services with the Puget Sound Partnership meets the intent of consolidation proponents.

Discover Pass and Other Fees

Lawmakers approved a "Discover Pass" for access to state parks and other recreation lands. As structured, it would include a $30 annual pass or a $10 day pass. The bill is awaiting the Governor's expected approval. Both the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Department of Natural Resources will receive a portion of the proceeds from the Discover Pass, though the majority of funds will be used for State Parks operations.

DFW also was successful in gaining an extension and increase in hunting and fishing fees to provide core operating support. A proposal to consolidate Hydraulics and Forest Practices permits and restructure fees remains in dispute. The outcome of that discussion could have significant budget impact on the agencies. DFW and the Department of Ecology also were successful in extending a fee that provides funds to address some forms of aquatic invasive species.

Agriculture/Critical Areas

A long-running discussion on the relationship between agricultural activities and Growth Management Act requirements to protect critical areas took another step with the passage of HB 1886. The bill, which came out of work done by the Ruckelshaus Center, would establish a new voluntary stewardship program as an alternative to revising critical area ordinances. Implementation of the new approach is contingent on securing federal funding. The program will be administered by the State Conservation Commission.

Puget Sound Corps

The state Conservation Corps will be consolidated at the Department of Ecology and focused on Puget Sound cleanup efforts. The enhanced DOE program will employ crews of young adults, as well as returning veterans (coordinated by the Veterans Conservation Corps).

Salmon Recovery Funding Board
Briefing Memo
Item 1D

Meeting Date: May 2011
Title: Policy Report
Prepared By: Steve McLellan, Policy Director
Approved by the Director: Kaleen Cottingham

Proposed Action: Briefing

Summary

The Policy Section is working on a number of issues at the request of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board), the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board, the legislature, and the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) staff and director. This memo highlights the status of some key efforts.

SRFB Agricultural Involvement Survey

In April, staff worked with the lead entity coordinator and staff from the State Conservation Commission to develop a survey to get a broader picture of agricultural involvement in salmon recovery projects across the state. The survey asked seven questions about (a) how the agricultural community is involved in the project review process in certain areas, (b) whether the responders believed agricultural community involvement is adequate, and (c) challenges and opportunities for improving agricultural community involvement. Staff is working with the lead entity coordinator and State Conservation Commission staff to evaluate the results and identify next steps. Staff will report back to the board at the August meeting.

Allowable Uses Policy

In March, staff briefed the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB) about a proposed policy regarding allowable uses of grant-funded land and facilities. RCO does not currently have clear guidelines to determine whether a specific use is allowed on a project site.

Common questions about allowable project uses include:

- Should cattle be allowed to graze on lands acquired as riparian habitat?
- Should cell towers be allowed on outdoor recreation or habitat conservation land?
- Should existing structures that provide habitat be allowed to remain on acquired land?

The proposed policy, which applies to all RCO projects including those funded by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board, will help identify whether a use that is not already in policy or the

project agreement is consistent with the purposes of the grant. Setting clear guidelines in policy will help staff and sponsors have clear expectations about how grant funded land and facilities may be used, help the board and staff make consistent decisions about specific uses on projects, and improve agency efficiencies by using a fixed process for determining how to treat specific uses.

The proposed policy will be posted for 30-day public comment on our web site (http://www.rco.wa.gov/about/rule_making.shtml) and will be presented for approval by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB) in June.

Puget Sound Target Setting

The Puget Sound Partnership is setting ecosystem recovery targets to establish a scientifically-based trajectory toward Puget Sound recovery by 2020. The targets are:

- Shellfish beds reopened
- Swimming beaches
- Recreational fishing license sales
- Orca
- Salmon
- Herring
- Birds
- Land use/land cover
- Shoreline alteration
- Estuary restoration
- Eelgrass
- Water availability
- Toxics in fish
- Toxics in sediment
- Marine water quality index
- Freshwater quality index
- Funding for Puget Sound
- Action Agenda engagement
- Land development
- Nearshore restoration
- Stormwater
- Wastewater

Performance targets for these topics will guide revisions to Action Agenda implementation strategies, the priority of near-term actions, recommendations for resource allocations, and the evaluation of the success of Action Agenda implementation. The Partnership intends for agencies to use the targets to identify and design activities, to align their allocation of funding and other resources to these outcomes, and to evaluate the effects of their investments and activities.

In April and May, the Partnership hosted workshops to further refine the proposed targets. The Leadership Council has approved targets for eelgrass and shellfish beds reopened. The Leadership Council is expected to adopt the remaining targets in June 2011, in time to be included in the next Action Agenda revision, which is due in December 2011.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Funding for Puget Sound Recovery

In October 2010, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) solicited a request for proposals (RFP) to implement priority work consistent with the 2020 Action Agenda for the protection and

restoration of Puget Sound. Washington State agencies were selected as lead organizations to coordinate six-year efforts to develop and implement strategies in the four areas of emphasis:

- Marine and nearshore protection and restoration (Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Natural Resources)
- Watershed protection and restoration (Department of Commerce, Department of Ecology)
- Toxics and nutrients prevention, reduction, and control (Department of Ecology)
- Pathogens prevention, reduction, and control (Department of Health, Department of Ecology)

For the first year, EPA allocated $12 million, which was divided equally among the areas of emphasis, along with a state match of $12 million. The total funds over the six-year period could be up to $192 million plus the required state match; however, future funding levels are subject to congressional appropriation.

RCO has been asked to manage grants for some of the capital investments made in the Marine and Nearshore area of emphasis. The grants will be managed through the existing Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP). Marine and nearshore capital investments are expected to be about $674,000 for the first year. We expect that projects will be selected by July 2011.

WASHINGTON STATE RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE
Salmon Recovery Funding Board

Salmon Recovery Funding Board Briefing Memo
Item 1E

Meeting Date: May 2011

Title: RCO Work Plan and Performance Measures Update: Salmon

Prepared By: Rebecca Connolly, Board Liaison and Accountability Manager

Approved by the Director: Kaleen Cottingham

Proposed Action: Briefing

Summary

The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) uses performance measures to help the agency reduce reappropriations and improve the way we do business. Staff combines the measures and the agency work plan updates in the monthly GMAP report.* This memo provides highlights of agency performance related to the projects and activities funded by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board).

Analysis

These measures are among those that help us to check our processes at several points in the grant management cycle. All data are for salmon grants only. The chart includes current fiscal year 2011 data, as of April 30, 2011. Additional detail is shown in the data notes on page two and in the charts in Attachment A.

Measure	Target	YTD FY 2011 Performance	FY 2011 Indicator
Percent of salmon projects closed on time [1]	70%	46%	⬇
Percent of salmon projects closed on time and without a time extension [2]	50%	58%	⬆
% salmon grant projects issued a project agreement within 120 days after the board funding date [3]	75%	97%	⬆
% of salmon grant projects under agreement within 180 days after the board funding date	95%	70% (in progress)	⬆
Cumulative expenditures, salmon target	37%	42%	⬆
Bills paid within 30 days: salmon projects and activities [4]	100%	68%	⬇
Percent of anticipated stream miles made accessible to salmon [5]	100%	99%	⬆

Data Notes:

1. Salmon projects typically have a funding end date in December, so they are due to close in April. A high number of projects with this due date – combined with competing priorities to put new projects under agreement and conduct the project conference – led to many projects not closing on time between January and April.

2. Of those that closed, few needed a time extension beyond the original grant agreement.

3. Staff successfully issued agreements for nearly all projects within 120 days of the board funding date. Work continues on receiving those agreements from the project sponsors and placing the projects under contract.

4. In the past few months, about three-quarters of bills have been paid on time. Some invoices have been held up because of the new billing source documents requirements.

5. Performance on the stream miles made accessible dropped because one project restored 2 fewer miles than anticipated.

Attachments

A. Performance Measure Charts

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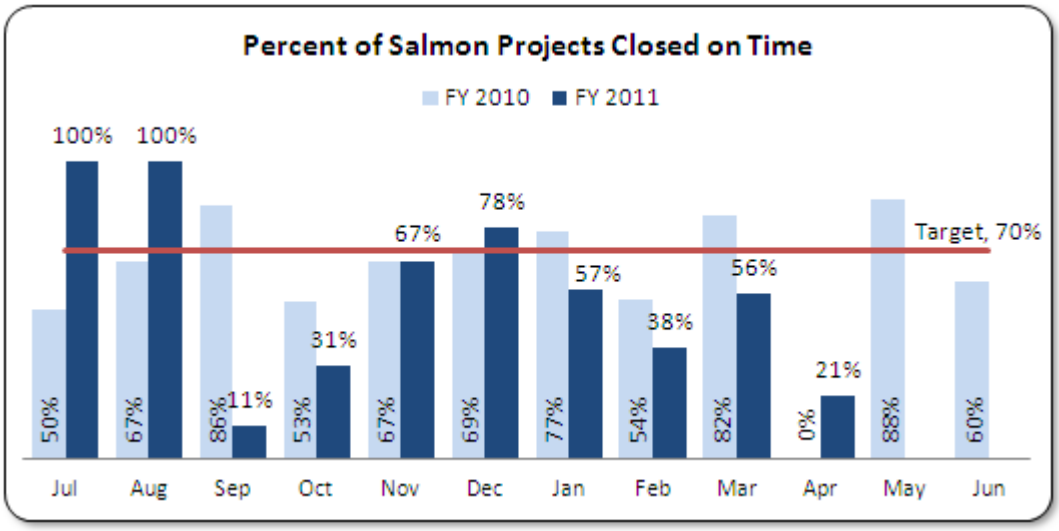
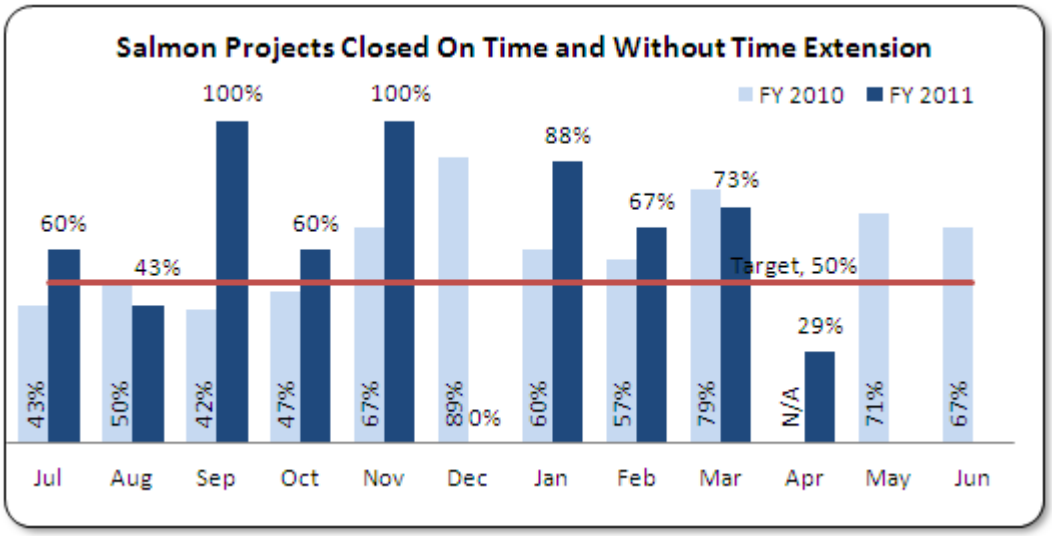
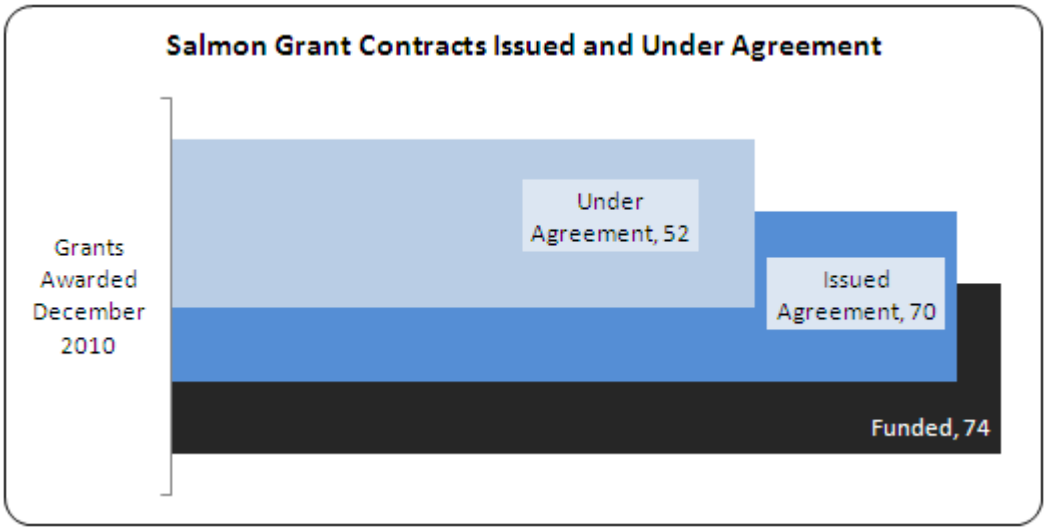
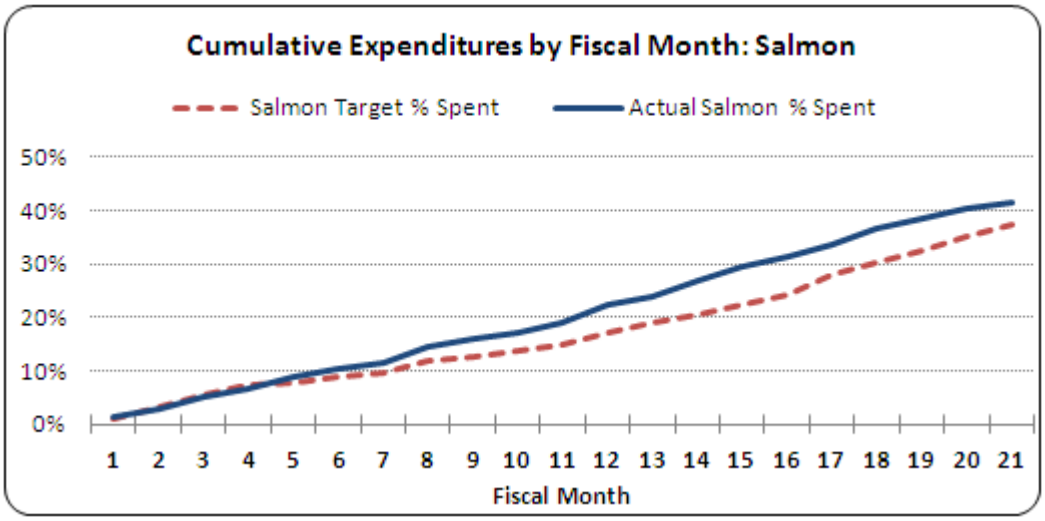
* GMAP stands for Government Management Accountability and Performance, and is the cornerstone of the Governor's accountability initiative.

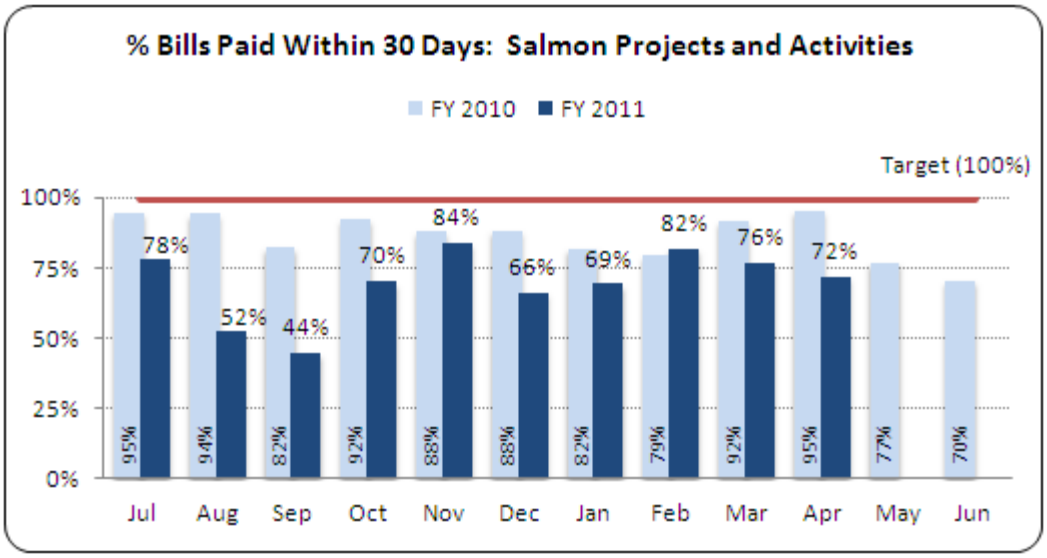
Performance Measure Charts

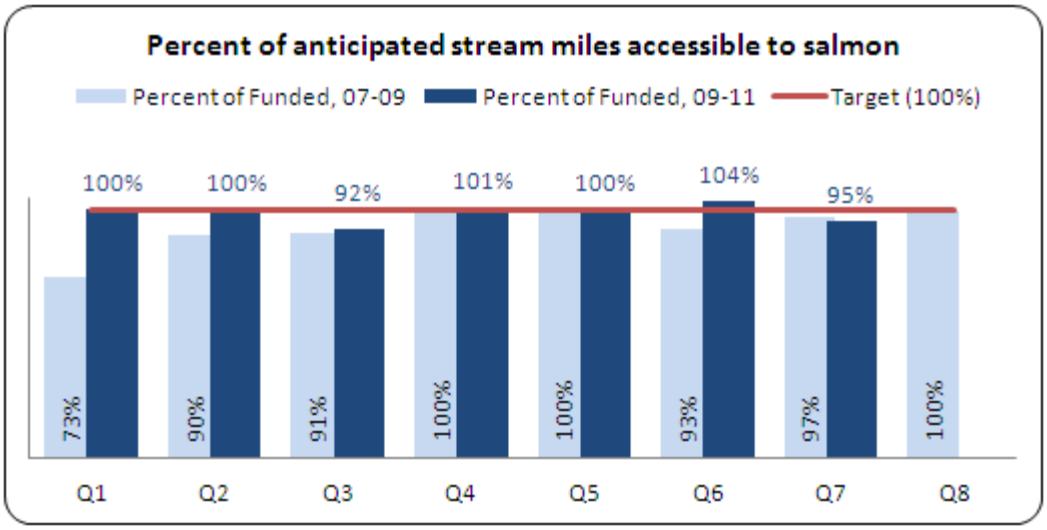







Cumulative Expenditures by Fiscal Month: Salmon
Salmon Target % Spent
Actual Salmon % Spent
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21
Fiscal Month


% Bills Paid Within 30 Days: Salmon Projects and Activities
FY 2010
FY 2011
Target (100%)
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
95% 78%
94% 52%
82% 44%
92% 70%
88% 84%
88% 66%
82% 69%
79% 82%
92% 76%
95% 72%
77%
70%
Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun


Percent of anticipated stream miles accessible to salmon
Percent of Funded, 07-09
Percent of Funded, 09-11
Target (100%)
100% 100% 92% 101% 100% 104% 95%
73% 90% 91% 100% 100% 93% 97% 100%
Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4 Q5 Q6 Q7 Q8

WASHINGTON STATE RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE
Governor's Salmon Recovery Office

Salmon Recovery Funding Board
Briefing Memo
Item 2A

Meeting Date: May 2011

Title: Management Report, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office

Prepared By: Phil Miller, Executive Coordinator

Approved by the Director: Kaleen Cottingham

Proposed Action: Briefing

Highlights of Recent Activities

Personnel Changes

Subject to final state budget decisions for the 2011-13 biennium, the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO) intends to fill the vacant Science Coordinator position early this summer. This position will coordinate fish and habitat monitoring activities related to salmon recovery, including the monitoring funded by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board).

Phil Miller, GSRO Executive Coordinator, will retire on June 30, 2011 after 31 years of dedicated service to the state, including 14 years with GSRO. Subject to final state budget decisions, RCO intends to fill the Executive Coordinator position.

Salmon Recovery Information and Reporting Initiatives

As noted at the March board meeting, GSRO is starting to plan and build a new platform for the State of Salmon in Watersheds Report (SOSiW). The platform would be used in 2012 and for future reports. Our goal is to move from a 100-page hard copy report to an online report with a printable executive summary and links to a broader information base, including reports by regional recovery salmon organizations that will feed, inform and be aligned with the state report.

The first steps toward meeting this goal are to:

1. Ask readers and recovery partners for feedback about the 2010 SOSiW;
2. Work with the agencies and organizations that have provided information for past reports; and
3. Begin collaborating with new partners with additional information. This collaborative effort will look at how to use reporting engines that can draw from a broad base of information; how to roll up information at various scales; and where interfaces between

systems could be useful and possible. We will explore the use of websites, video, and other technologies to help us communicate the state of salmon in our watersheds more directly and dynamically.

Other agencies with similar reports are moving in this direction. We are talking with the Puget Sound Partnership about collaborating in the development of their State of the Sound Report. We intend to use some of the same information and to share ideas, graphics, and technology where possible. Two other salmon recovery regional organizations also are beginning to develop regional reports, and we are discussing how these reports will be coordinated with the SOSiW.

With new developments in information sharing, tracking and reporting, such as the PRISM/Habitat Work Schedule interface, the development of WDFW's Salmon Conservation Reporting Engine (SCoRE), and the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board's improved and All-H SalmonPort system, we are developing greater capacity to share information in efficient, dynamic, and flexible ways. We are also coordinating with NOAA Fisheries to further our mutual interest in tracking the implementation of recovery plans.

There is a lot that can be accomplished through these opportunities and partnerships. We are moving forward to scope and develop new ways of communicating salmon recovery and watershed health information. These endeavors also can help drive better coordination of monitoring efforts and alignment of information to inform the adaptive management process for salmon recovery plans and actions.

Regional and Lead Entity Operating Grants and Scopes of Work for 2011-2013

Developing draft scopes of work for regional and lead entity operating grants for 2011-2013 has recently been a major focus of GSRO's work. Highlights from draft scopes of work and the related potential grant requests are presented separately under Item 5B.

WASHINGTON STATE RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE
Salmon Recovery Funding Board

Salmon Recovery Funding Board
Briefing Memo
Item 2B

Meeting Date: May 2011

Title: Monitoring Briefing

Prepared By: Ken Dzinbal, Monitoring Forum Coordinator

Approved by the Director: Kaleen Cottingham

Proposed Action: Briefing

Summary

With the Monitoring Forum's sunset date set for June 30, much of the forum's March meeting was taken up by a discussion about which of its functions should be retained through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and which final actions or communications the forum might want to complete before it sunsets.

The MOU is now being circulated for signature by state agency directors and regional organization executive directors. The federal and local agencies suggested that a state and region MOU would be best. A summary of the accomplishments and recommendations is currently being drafted.

The functions of advising the Salmon Recovery Funding Board on monitoring and managing the monitoring contracts will shift to the GSRO, which will soon begin recruitment to fill the vacancy left by the retirement of Steve Leider. It is hoped that the final budget for the GSRO will include sufficient funds to fill that position. Ken Dzinbal, the Forum's executive coordinator, has been transitioning to the Puget Sound Partnership.

Salmon Recovery Funding Board
Briefing Memo
Item 2C

Meeting Date: May 2011

Title: Management Report: Salmon Recovery Grant Management

Prepared By: Brian Abbott, Section Manager

Approved by the Director: Kaleen Cottingham

Proposed Action: Briefing

Grant Management

The Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) approved funding for 79 projects at the December 10, 2010 meeting. Since then, staff has been developing project agreements with sponsors and routing them electronically to speed up the signature process. Our progress on issuing agreements is shown as a performance measure in item 1E (some projects were amended into previously-funded projects, so only 74 projects are shown in the measure).

2011 Grant Round Underway – The 2011 grant round has started. Applications are due from Lead Entities on August 26th. Site visits with the Review Panel have been scheduled with Lead Entities. Several site visits have already taken place.

Successful Applicant Workshops Held – In an effort to be more efficient in communicating with sponsors, salmon section staff held two workshops via interactive conference call during the week of April 11. RCO staff used this time to review with project sponsor's their responsibilities when managing SRFB grants. Preliminary feedback indicates sponsors really appreciate the opportunity to use conference calls as a tool for getting information as opposed to travelling to the workshop location. Because it was so useful, salmon staff is considering scheduling another session of this workshop.

Salmon Conference A Success

Over 500 people attended the Salmon Recovery Funding Board's third Salmon Habitat Conference: Building Better Projects, on April 26-27, 2011 at the Great Wolf Lodge in Grand Mound. The conference offered an opportunity for those involved in salmon recovery to reflect upon the past decade of recovery work and to consider what worked, what is not working, and ways to improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of projects.

This conference had two full days of learning opportunities from experts in salmon recovery. Keynote speakers included Congressman Norm Dicks, Congressman Doc Hastings, NOAA's Regional Administrator Will Stelle, and Tom Jay, a salmon naturalist. Through project presentations, panels, and technical workshops, participants had a chance to listen to specialists and meet with their peers, hear their stories, and share information on how to build higher quality salmon projects. A variety of exhibitors provided information about salmon recovery work. Networking opportunities were available throughout the conference. An electronic conference evaluation was distributed the week of May 2. Materials available at the conference will be posted on the RCO website at http://www.rco.wa.gov/salmon_conference.shtml

Project Issue - Bear River Estuary Restoration

The Bear River Estuary Project, sponsored by the Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group, was funded by the board in the 2009 and 2010 grant rounds. The grant agreement was signed by the sponsor and the RCO effective January 11, 2011. Concerns about this project have recently been raised. Besides the written information that follows, staff will provide a briefing on the project during the board meeting. Public comment on this project is also expected at the board meeting.

Background: The Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) has awarded two separate grants related to the Bear River Estuary Restoration project, located in the southern reaches of Willapa Bay in Pacific County. The key objective for the project is to re-establish estuary functions for juvenile salmon in Willapa Bay. In 2009, the board approved funding for the design portion of the Estuary restoration. This grant provided funding to the Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group to develop a design for estuary restoration and to apply for the necessary permits to implement the project. A design was developed and in 2010, the board approved a construction grant to complete the estuary restoration based on the design developed with the 2009 grant. The total grant award for the 2010 project is $402,402. A match of $71,000 was provided by the project sponsor and private donations.

Both the design and construction projects went through the standard board process, including a local technical and citizens' review. The project list from the Pacific County Lead Entity, which prioritized the Bear River project as its number one project, was submitted according the lead entity process identified in 77.85.050 RCW. Based on the project submittal by the lead entity and the positive review by the board's Technical Review Panel, the board awarded the grant and fully executed a contract with the Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group to move forward to implement the restoration.

The landowner associated with the Bear River project is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), which is currently considering alternatives for its Comprehensive Conservation Plan for long term management of the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge. The board-funded project is just one part of the larger Willapa National Wildlife Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

USFWS has conducted its public review process, including a public comment period, for three alternatives. USFWS has not yet selected its final alternative, nor have the necessary permits been issued by the Army Corps of Engineers. The USFWS expects to make a final decision by late August or early September, which is also the approximate time permit decisions are expected.

The board has received letters from U.S. Congresswoman Herrera Buetler, State Senator Hatfield, State Representatives Blake and Takko, and the Pacific County Commissioners asking that the board defund or terminate this project. We have received similar letters from several other organizations in the Willapa Bay area including cranberry growers, oyster growers, the Washington Waterfowl Association and a local Audubon Chapter. The key issues described in those letters include: the cost of the project is not as originally identified; habitat for other species will be destroyed; elk will be forced from traditional pasture lands into local cranberry bogs; and fears that the project will not benefit fish.

Others have provided letters of support for the project. The nature of their comments include: estuarine habitat necessary for fish will be restored; the project scored a perfect score during local review; the habitat for other species behind levees is not significant; the process was followed in reviewing the project; many species, including fish, will benefit from a restored estuarine function.

All of the correspondence is included with the meeting materials.

Bud Hover, Chair of the board, responded to Congresswoman Herrera Beutler's letter indicating that the board has already signed a contract to implement the project, but if new technical information becomes available regarding its technical viability, the board would address those issues in a deliberative manner. Kaleen Cottingham, RCO director, responded to letters from legislators and the county commissioners. Copies of all letters are included with the meeting materials.

Grant Administration

The table below shows the progress of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board in funding and completing salmon recovery projects since 1999. Information is current as of May 3, 2011

Funding Cycle	Fiscal Year	Active Projects	Pending Projects (approved but not yet active)	Completed Projects	Total Funded Projects
Governor's Salmon Recovery Office Federal 1999	1999	0	0	94	94
Interagency Review Team (Early Action grant cycle) State 1999	1999	0	0	163	163
SRFB - Early (State) 2000	2000	0	0	90	90
SRFB - Second Round 2000	2001	0	0	147	147
SRFB - Third Round 2001	2002	2	0	130	132
SRFB - Fourth Round 2002	2003	2	0	86	88
SRFB – Fifth Round 2004	2004	5	0	107	112
SRFB – Sixth Round 2005	2006	12	0	93	105
SRFB – Seventh Round 2006	2007	19	0	74	93
SRFB – 2007 Grant Round *(includes PSAR)*	2008	114	0	95	209
SRFB – 2008 Grant Round	2009	89	0	29	118
SRFB – 2009 Grant Round *(includes PSAR)*	2010	196	0	10	206
SRFB – 2010 Grant Round *(Oct and Dec)*	2011	84	23	0	107
*Family Forest Fish Passage Program	To Date	39	0	143	182
** Estuary Salmon Restoration Program	To Date	9	0	0	9
Totals		**571**	**23**	**1261**	**1855**
Percent		30.78%	1.23%	67.98%	100%

Table Notes:

* FFFPP projects landowners that have applied to the program and are waiting to become a high priority for funding. These projects are not included in totals.

** Shows ESRP projects either under contract with the RCO or approved for RCO contracts. Older projects are under contract with the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Staff Presentation of Projects

Salmon section staff will present information about several projects at the May Salmon Recovery Funding Board meeting. Projects that will be highlighted include the following:

Projects #06-2302 and #07-1657: South Fork Skokomish Large Woody Debris (LWD) Enhancement (Phase 1 and 2)

Status:	Active
Sponsor:	Skokomish Tribe
Lead Entity:	Hood Canal Coordinating Council
Grant Source:	SRFB State Funds, Puget Sound Acquisition & Restoration
Description:	The Skokomish Tribe is using these grants to design and install log jams to enhance the density and distribution of natural large woody debris in the upper south fork of the Skokomish River and its tributary confluences. The river drains about 129 square miles. Reaches targeted for wood placement include an area between the canyon and LeBar Creek that was cleared in the 1950s for a dam that never was built and at the mouths of Church, Pine and Cedar tributaries. The Skokomish Tribe will contribute $170,000 from a federal grant and donated materials.

Project #10-1781: Squaxin Island Pier and Bulkhead Removal

Status:	Active
Sponsor:	South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group
Lead Entity:	Mason Conservation District
Grant Source:	SRFB Federal Funds, Puget Sound Acquisition & Restoration
Description:	The South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group will use this grant to remove a creosote pier with 54 pilings and 350 feet of rock bulkhead on Squaxin Island. The pier formerly provided access to a tribal longhouse and cultural center that burned down and was abandoned in the early 1980s. The pier then served as a dry dock where tribal members worked on boats, but was abandoned again in the early 1990s. It currently is a family's fall fishing camp. The salmon group will contribute $88,000 from other grants and donated labor.

Project #07-1747: North Fork Little Hoquiam River Dam Removal

Status: Completed

Sponsor: City of Hoquiam

Lead Entity: Grays Harbor County

Grant Source: Salmon Federal Projects

Description: This project involved removing the North Fork Little Hoquiam River diversion dam owned by the City of Hoquiam. The project allows fish passsage to about 5 miles of mainstem river habitat and restored about 800 feet of the river. The project design involved excavating the dam and restoring the channel grade and alignment back to more natural conditions. The project has improved and increased habitat for coho, winter steelhead and chum salmon by removing a dam that is a top-priority concern for fish passage and a flow diversion, thereby increasing year-round instream flow.

Project #02-1620: Minkler Lake Acquisition

Status: Completed

Sponsor: Skagit Land Trust

Lead Entity: Skagit Watershed Council

Grant Source: Salmon State Projects

Description: Skagit Land Trust purchased about 107 acres in and around Minkler Lake, which is a mile-long remnant located in the Skagit River floodplain. The property is a long, relatively narrow tract, which encompasses most of the lake and wetland system, and the habitat conditions on the site are good. It provides important rearing habitat for juvenile coho salmon and for sea-run cutthroat trout, which access the system from the Skagit River through Childs Creek.

Project #08-1971: Strawberry Plant Restoration Construction 2008

Status: Active

Sponsor: City of Bainbridge Island

Lead Entity: West Sound Watersheds

Grant Source: Salmon Federal Projects

Description: The Strawberry Plant property is one of the most significant opportunities to restore lost habitat in Eagle Harbor and will benefit salmon, other fish, shellfish, birds, and other wildlife. The project included restoration of intertidal habitat, marsh, and marine vegetation and included removing creosote piles, concrete bulkhead and rip rap, debris and fill material, and reducing impervious surfaces in the shoreline area; establishing a natural shoreline and stream mouth; and creating a salt marsh along the shoreline and stream mouth. Public recreational components related to the restoration project included establishing pedestrian public viewing and direct water access points and a non-motorized boating access area.

Washington Council of Salmon Recovery Regions
Report to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board
May 2011

The Council of Regions (COR) met the evening of March 2 following the SRFB meeting. Agenda topics included discussion of:

- A salmon recovery website being developed by WDFW;
- Completing the Funding Strategy[1] report and possible next steps to implement the report's recommendations;
- Developing a Memorandum of Agreement between the State and Regional Organizations to further recovery efforts.
- The next steps in developing budget proposals for consideration by the SRFB in May.

Sara LaBorde briefed COR on a salmon recovery website the Department of Fish and Wildlife is developing. The site will provide an overview of salmon species and recovery efforts on the state and regional levels and specific information on the Department's hatchery, habitat, and harvest efforts in support of salmon recovery. Sara advised the regional organization directors that she would be providing additional information for review and comment as development efforts progressed.

The regional organization directors and Phil Miller (GSRO) discussed how to implement the recommendations of the Funding Strategy. Discussion of near-term actions focused on building support for salmon recovery funding by highlighting recovery efforts and progress and their broader economic, social, and cultural benefits. Discussion of mid-term actions focused on looking for opportunities to further recovery efforts through linkages to other environmental initiatives and mitigation programs. In the longer term, actions could focus on developing dedicated funding sources on both the state and local level.

Efforts to implement the Funding Strategy will vary among the regions given differences in existing funding sources and levels of support. However, the regions generally agreed to look for opportunities for the regions to work together. Phil Miller asked that the regional directors consider how efforts to implement the Funding Strategy could be included in the SRFB operational grants for the next biennium.

The regional directors discussed the concept of using a Memorandum of Agreement to strengthen recovery efforts by promoting greater coordination and cooperation between the regional organizations and state agencies. Such an agreement would have a broader scope than the monitoring Memorandum of Agreement being discussed by the Monitoring Forum. It could be used to define specific roles, responsibilities and mechanisms for identifying and addressing a range of recovery issues of mutual interest to regions and state agencies. The regional directors agreed to further discuss the concept of a Memorandum of Agreement at their next meeting.

The meeting finished with Phil Miller discussing the steps and schedule for developing scopes of work for the regional budget proposals for the upcoming biennium.

[1] Funding for Salmon Recovery in Washington State, March 2011

Lead Entity Advisory Group Report
to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board, May 2011
Prepared and Submitted by LEAG Chair, Barbara Rosenkotter

The Lead Entity Advisory Group (LEAG) met via conference call on May 5th.

Lead Entities throughout the state are in their busy season doing project site visits and reviewing proposals for the 2011 SRFB grant round.

Lead Entities took a break from their grant round duties to attend the Habitat Project Conference April 26-27, 2011 in Grand Mound. Initial feedback indicates that it was another very successful conference with great networking opportunities and many lessons learned.

We also took advantage of getting together for the project conference to use some remaining training funds and added on an afternoon and evening training session for Lead Entities the day before the Habitat Project Conference on April 25th. The primary focus of the training was on Implementation Schedules and how we can learn from work others are doing and also how we can use HWS and other tools to advance and track implementation scheduling.

Lead Entities through various work groups along with RCO/GSRO staff continue to advance the goals set forth at the April 2010 LEAG retreat:

- Telling the Salmon Recovery Story
- Habitat Work Schedule (HWS) Enhancements
  - Implementation Scheduling
  - Tracking Programmatic Actions
  - PRISM to HWS Interface

A new version of HWS will be released May 16th. The new version includes the new PRISM/HWS interface which is an exciting next step in interfacing PRISM with work being tracked in HWS. The new Contracts Module in HWS will allow users to relate one or many grants (contracts) to one or many projects and is the mechanism to interface with PRISM. Description of the new interface has also been included in the updated Manual 18. Additional features of the PRISM/HWS interface will continue to be phased in which will help prevent the duplication of data and eliminating additional data entry steps in both systems. New features released in May also include PRISM View which allows users to view information about a project in either PRISM or HWS and a new Monitoring Module in HWS.

At the May LEAG conference call staff indicated that proposed funding scenarios for allocation for the next biennium will be provided for the upcoming SRF Board meeting. As the Lead Entities have not seen these proposals we were unable to discuss the scenarios to be able to provide input and possibly support for any of the scenarios. Thus LEAG will not be able to provide a consensus opinion on any of the proposed scenarios.

Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group Coalition Monitoring Activities

Leaders in Community Based Salmon Recovery

Salmon Recovery Funding Board
Presentation
May 25, 2011

Scientific monitoring activities currently performed by RFEGs include:

- spawning ground surveys
- habitat assessments
- adult and juvenile fish counts
- macro invertebrate surveys
- nutrient enhancement monitoring
- pre- and post project vegetation monitoring for riparian planting projects
- water quality data collection and analysis
- effectiveness of large woody debris placement and in-stream projects
- nearshore habitat monitoring

Over a 15-year history, project accomplishments add up to:
1,073,669 volunteer hours;
720 fish passage problems fixed;
823 miles of fish habitat opened;
507 additional miles of habitat restored;
893,292 fish carcasses placed back in streams for nutrient enhancement;
$129,703,000 in additional leveraged funding for salmon restoration efforts.

RFEG Research & Monitoring

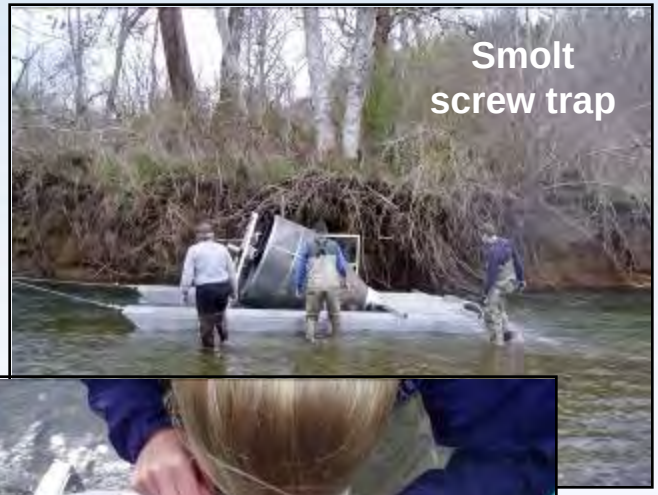
Statewide Efforts:

Stilly-Snohomish Fisheries Enhancement Task Force

Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force

Monitoring juvenile coho, steelhead and cutthroat

RFEG Research & Monitoring



Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group

RFEG Research and Monitoring

Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group

Spawner surveys

Macroinvertebrate monitoring

Physical habitat surveys

RFEG Research and Monitoring

North Olympic Salmon Coalition

Volunteers assisting with beach seining monitoring project

Performance monitoring of engineered-placed wood in the Mashel River, Washington

- Project Construction: 2006-2010
- Nisqually Indian Tribe (NIT): Bureau Indian Affairs (BIA) grant for Monitoring
- NIT and SPSSEG Staff
- Data Collection: 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010
- Timber Fish Wildlife methods (Pleus et al., 1998, 1999)
    - LWD Survey
    - Habitat Survey
- ELJ condition
- Juvenile Salmonid Usage

Nisqually Indian Tribe

WRIA 11: Mashel River Project Locations

Project Objectives

- Strategically locate structures
- Reconnect off-channel habitat
- Increase pool frequency
- Sort and retain spawning gravel
- Reduce bank armoring
- Provide cover and channel complexity
- Work with project partners
- Maintain/reduce risk to critical infrastructure

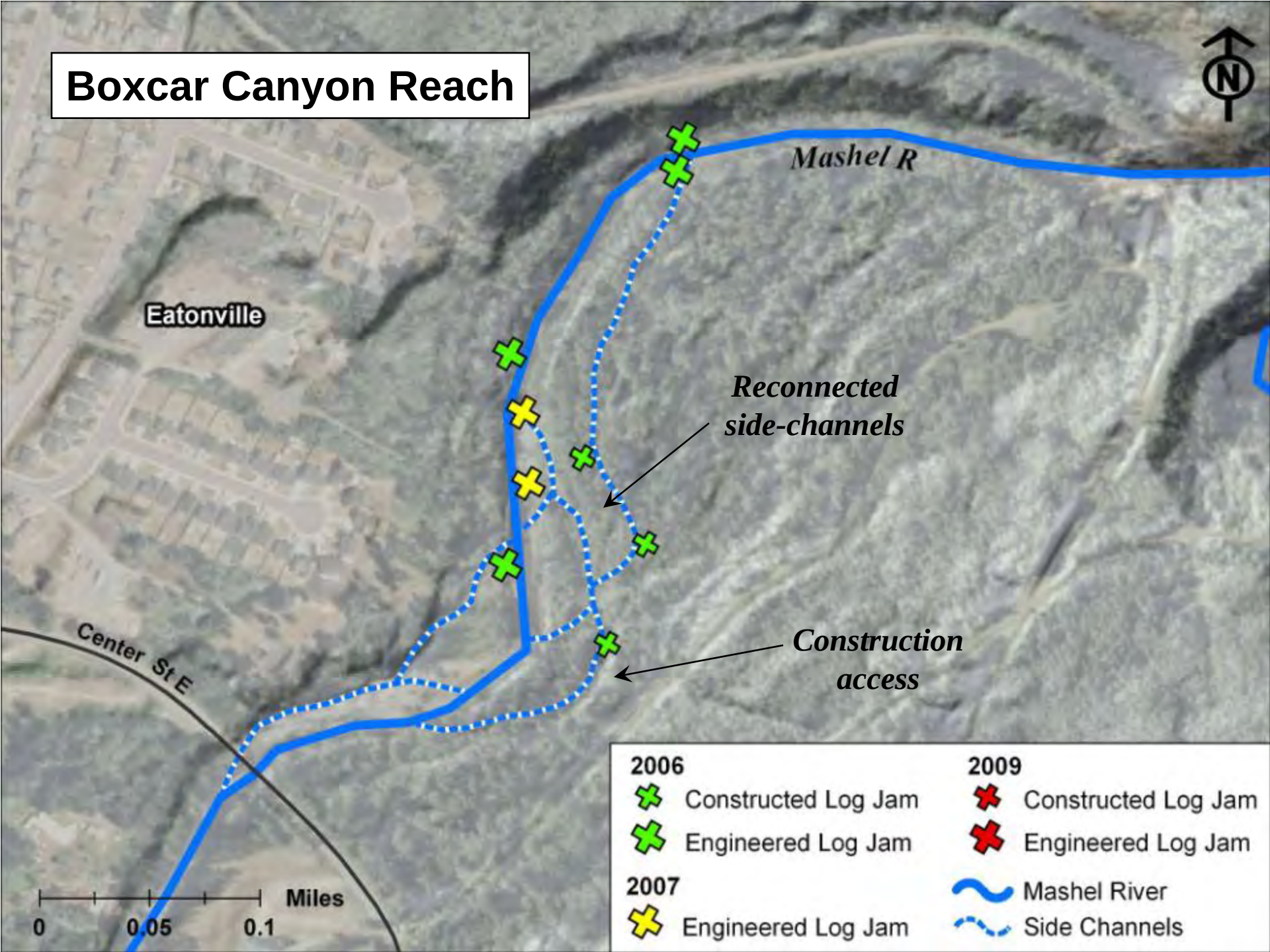
Smallwood Park rock revetment, pre-construction (looking upstream)

Smallwood Park Post-Construction (looking downstream)

Typical Mashel River Control Reach:
Channel is generally devoid of pools and LWD

Typical Mashel River Treatment Reach:
Large increase in scour pools and LWD abundance

Off-Channel Habitat and Floodplain Reconnection:
Several important off-channel sections (like this one) were reactivated


Boxcar Canyon Reach
N
Mashel R
Eatonville
Reconnected side-channels
Construction access
Center St E
Miles
0
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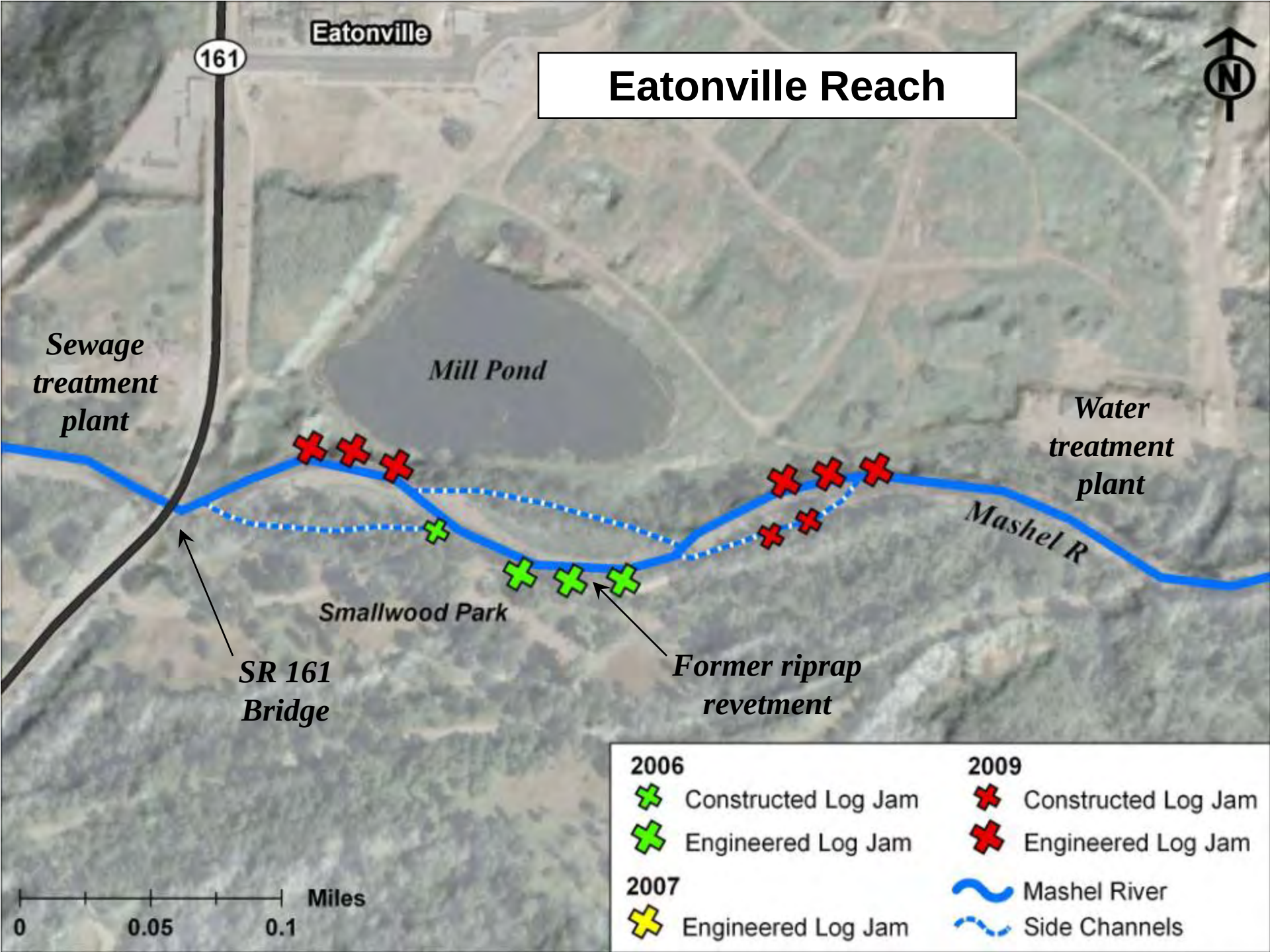
2006
Constructed Log Jam
Engineered Log Jam
2007
Engineered Log Jam
2009
Constructed Log Jam
Engineered Log Jam
Mashel River
Side Channels


Eatonville Reach
Eatonville
161
N
Sewage treatment plant
Mill Pond
Water treatment plant
Mashel R
Smallwood Park
SR 161 Bridge
Former riprap revetment
2006
Constructed Log Jam
Engineered Log Jam
2007
Engineered Log Jam
2009
Constructed Log Jam
Engineered Log Jam
Mashel River
Side Channels
Miles
0
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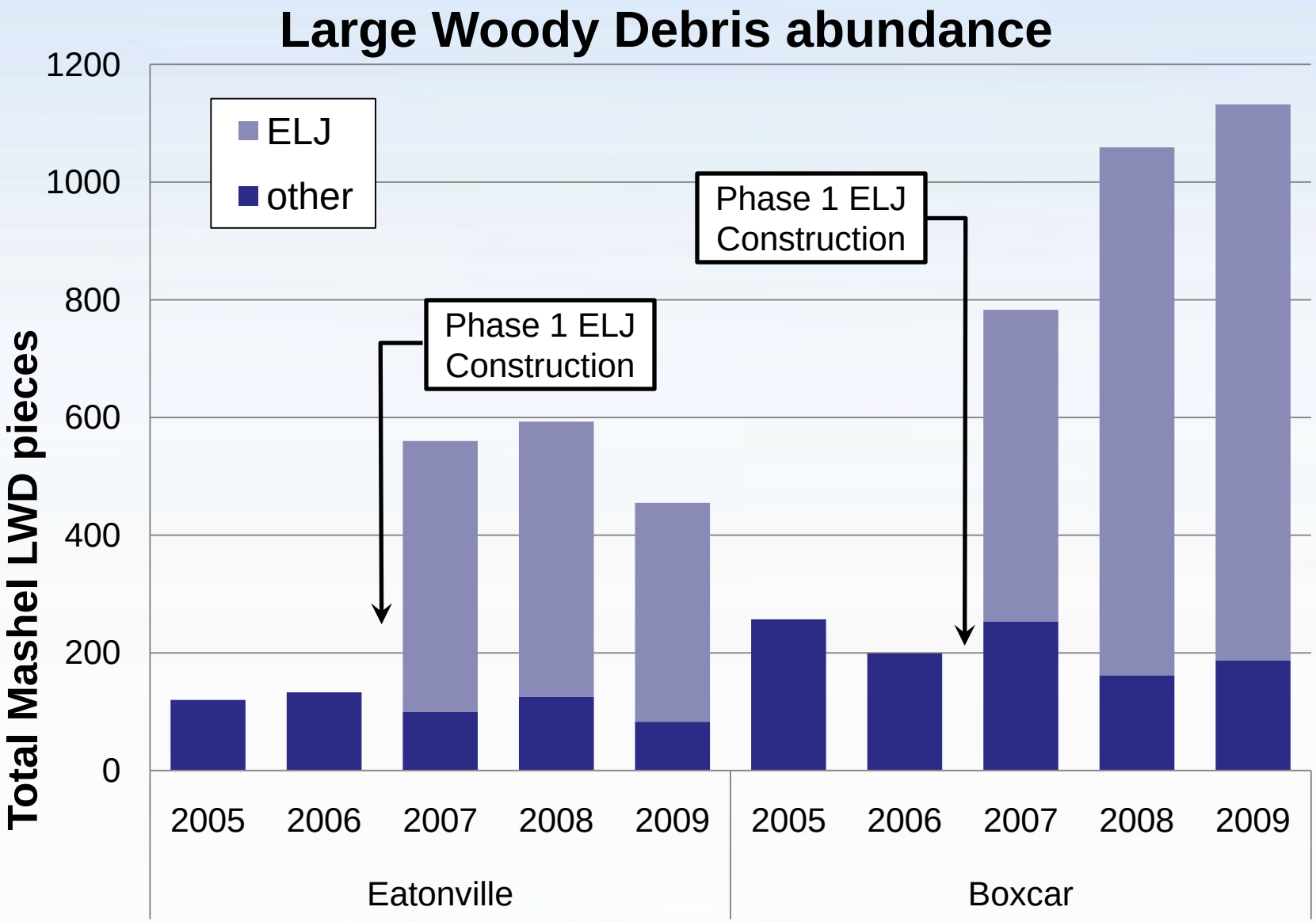
Timber Fish and Wildlife (TFW) Habitat Surveys in Treatment and Control

Snorkel Surveys in Control and Treatment Reaches: Method of Bounded Counts (MBC) protocol

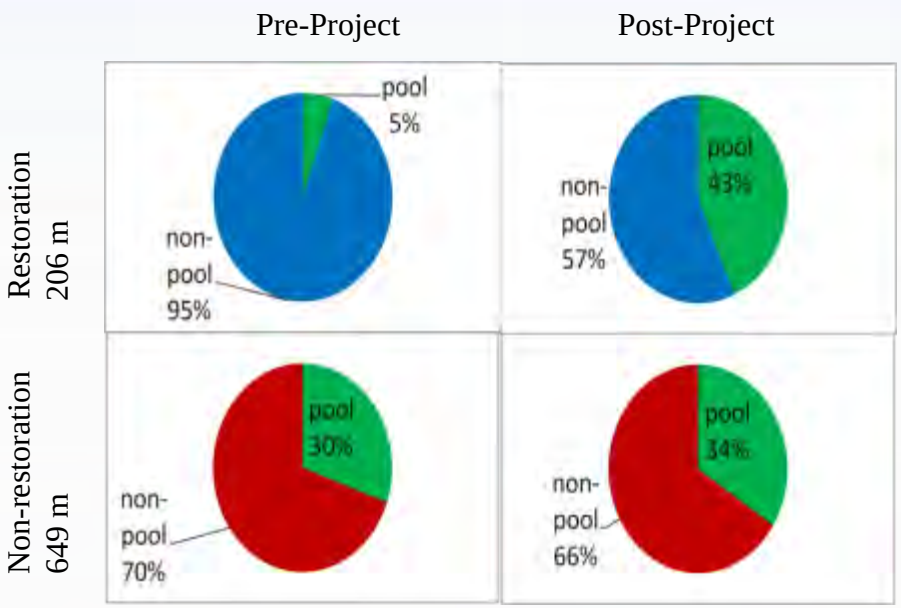


Graphs show LWD abundance pre and post-construction within the two treatment reaches (i.e. Box Car and Eatonville).

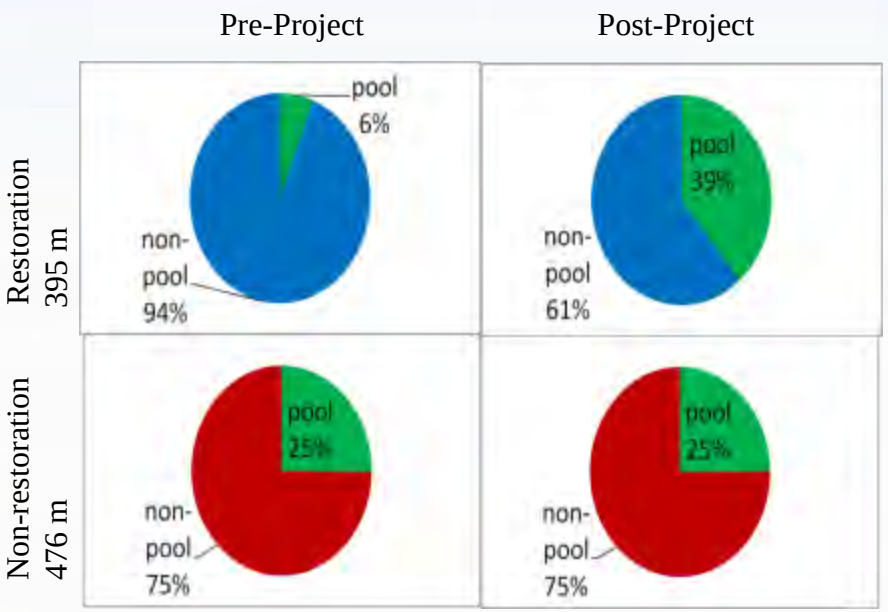
Change in pool habitat

Average % pool habitat of restoration vs. non-restoration reaches

Eatonville Reach

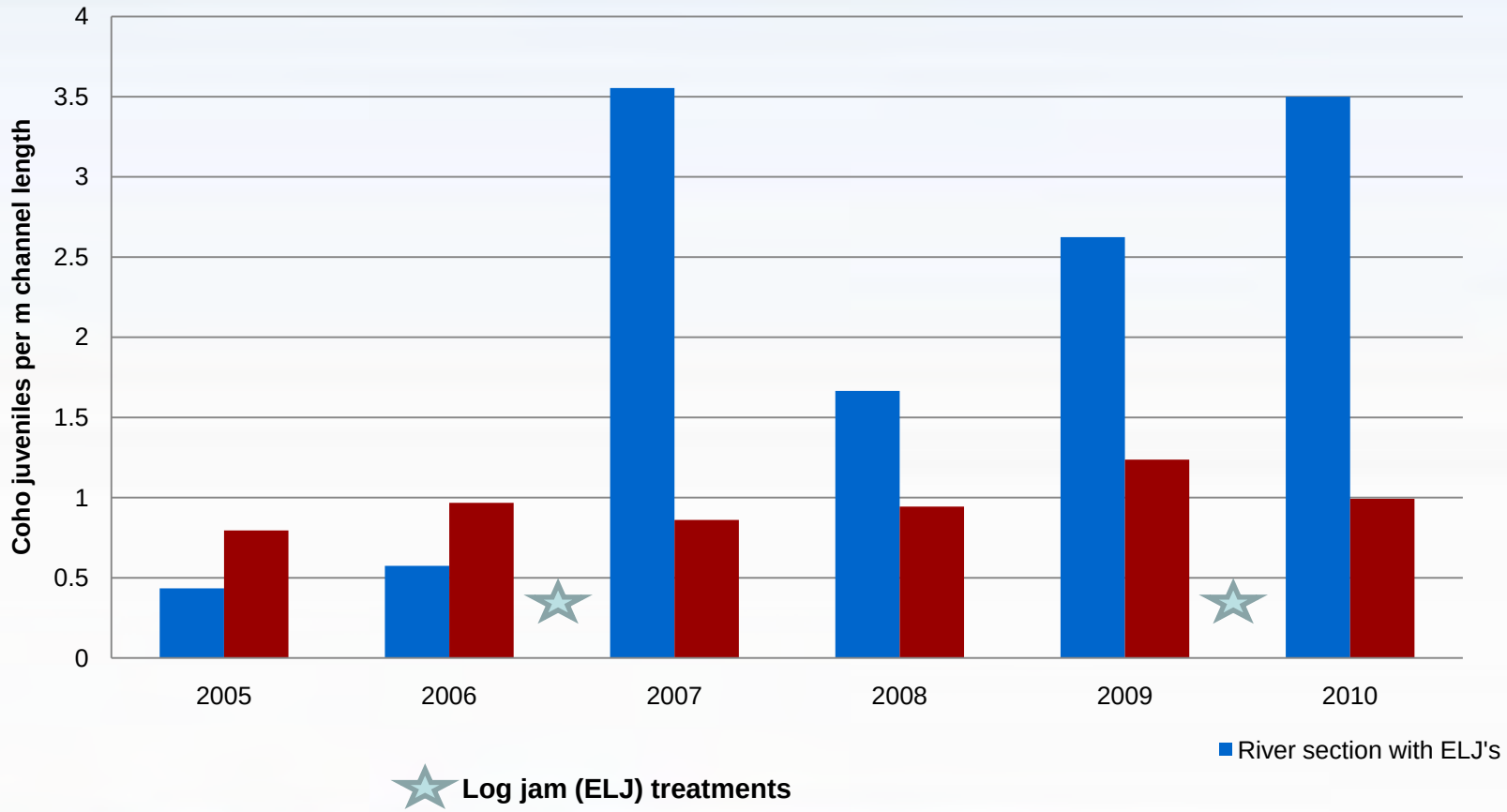


Boxcar Canyon Reach



These pie charts demonstrate the increased “pool” habitat post-project:
(between 38% and 33% increase in pool formation).

Juvenile Summer coho density response to ELJ addition in Mashel River near Eatonville, WA



Mashel River Juveniles in LWD Scour Pool Post Construction

Questions?
SOUTH PUGET SOUND
Salmon
ENHANCEMENT
GROUP
Nisqually Indian Tribe
HERRERA
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS

Project Acknowledgements

- Phase 1 (2006-07)
  - José Carrasquero
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- Phase 2 (2009)
  - Brian Scott
  - Kimberlie Gridley
  - Florian Leischner
  - Nisqually Aquatic Technologies

•Nisqually Indian Tribe
•South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group
•Salmon Recovery Funding Board
•U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
•Bureau of Indian Affairs
•Town of Eatonville
•Nisqually Land Trust
•Washington State Department of Transportation
•Property owners

WASHINGTON STATE RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE
Salmon Recovery Funding Board

Salmon Recovery Funding Board
Briefing Memo
Item 4

Meeting Date: May 2011

Title: Budget Update

Prepared By: Steve McLellan, Policy Director

Approved by the Director: Kaleen Cottingham

Proposed Action: Briefing

Summary

At the time of this writing, the state legislature had not yet adopted either an operating or capital budget for the 2011-13 biennium. There are significant concerns, particularly with the capital budget. Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) staff will provide updated information at the board meeting.

State Operating Budget, 2011-13

Both House and Senate operating budget levels are similar to that proposed by the Governor. Overall, the proposed operating budgets for RCO represent a five percent decrease from the current biennium. Combined with likely reductions in capital budget funding levels, RCO will need to decrease staffing levels. We will not know the precise number of reductions until the final budgets are adopted.

The operating budgets also are likely to assume additional administrative savings for natural resource agencies from consolidation of administrative services and regional offices. Savings for RCO and the Puget Sound Partnership from the ongoing consortium are likely to be sufficient to meet legislative targets.

State Capital Budgets, 2011-13

On the capital budget, the situation remains uncertain.

Grant Program Funding Proposals

Both the House and Senate proposals fund salmon-related programs at the level requested by the Governor.

- State salmon funds: $10 million
- Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR): $15 million
- Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP): $5 million
- Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFFPP): $6 million

Both capital budget proposals restrict land acquisition by state agencies in the PSAR and ESRP programs. The operating budget passed by the Senate also contains additional restrictions on land acquisition by State Parks and the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Other Capital Budget Considerations

Lawmakers also are considering a Constitutional amendment to lower the state debt limit. It appears unlikely that a negotiated deal on the underlying capital budget will be reached until there is a resolution on the proposed constitutional amendment.

In the event that negotiators are unable to reach agreement, a number of possible alternative capital budgets have been developed. The alternatives of greatest concern are those that:

- Spend only cash and do not issue new bonds. All RCO state salmon funds are bond funds;
- Do not re-appropriate previously issued bond funded expenditures; and/or
- Do not adopt any capital budget (unlike the operating budget, there is no legal requirement for a capital budget).

There is a real possibility that one of the first two options may occur. The effect of a capital budget with no new bond funds would be significant for salmon programs, because it would eliminate money needed for federal match. If the final result also has no reappropriation of previously approved bond expenditures there would be a greater effect, and we likely would need to terminate existing projects. Either scenario would lead to significant staff layoffs.

While the likelihood of the third alternative – having no capital budget at all – is slim, there is a chance that that issues will not be resolved until after the start of the new biennium on July 1. Regardless of what the capital budget ultimately looks like, this situation would leave the RCO without spending authority until the budget is passed. We have communicated our concerns with OFM and legislative staff, and understand that they are being taken seriously.

Staff will provide updated information on the status of capital budget negotiations at the board meeting.

Federal Budget, Fiscal Years 2011 and 2012

Federal PCSRF funding will be $80 million for federal fiscal year 2011. At this level, we are optimistic that Washington State will receive a funding level close to last year's level of $27.5 million. After allocations for hatchery reform, RCO administration, and monitoring, there would be approximately $16 million from PCSRF for the board to allocate to projects and local organizational capacity (i.e., lead entities and regions). The actual amount depends on a grant decision from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; we expect that decision in late May or early June.

Federal funding in the second year of the biennium (federal fiscal year 2012) is less certain. RCO staff estimates that it could remain at a status quo level of $80 million, may be reduced to $65 million as included in the President's FY 2012 budget, or may be as low as $50 million. This range is based on potential PCSRF levels discussed at the Congressional level for federal fiscal year 2011. As with the state budget, staff will provide updated information, if available, at the board meeting.

Salmon Recovery Funding Board
Briefing Memo
Item 5A

Meeting Date: May 2011

Title: SRFB Framework and Historical Funding

Prepared By: Brian Abbott, Salmon Section Manager
Megan Duffy, Policy Specialist

Approved by the Director: Kaleen Cottingham

Proposed Action: Briefing

Summary

At its May meeting, the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) will need to determine funding levels for the 2011 project grant round and for regional organizations and lead entities.

At the March meeting, board members discussed these upcoming decisions, and asked that the background materials incorporate historical information about the allocations. This memo provides that perspective.

Notes

Legislative Action

As of the date of the drafting of this memo, the legislature had not adopted the operating or capital budgets for the 2011-2013 biennium. This memo and memo #5C may change if the legislature adopts budgets that are inconsistent with our assumptions.

If the legislature has not adopted budgets by the date of the board meeting, the board can either schedule a special board meeting or delegate decisions to the director with clear allocation direction.

Funds Included in this Analysis

This memo, and the ones that follow, do not include Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) funds for projects or capacity. The board has made decisions about those funds separately in the past, and staff recommends that the board continue to do so.

These memos also do not include the Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFFPP) or Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) funding in the analysis.

Background

The board has typically funded projects that protect and/or restore salmon habitat. The board also funds other components of the recovery effort, including monitoring and the human capacity needed to implement and support recovery. The board's mission statement, as adopted in May 2009, is:

> *The Salmon Recovery Funding Board provides funding for elements necessary to achieve overall salmon recovery, including habitat projects and other activities that result in sustainable and measurable benefits for salmon and other fish species.*

The board, in adopting the mission statement and its strategic plan, recognized the importance of funding three key components of the recovery effort: projects, monitoring, and human capacity. The board allocates the majority of its funding across these three categories, commonly referred to as the "buckets."

Analysis

Relationship to Strategic Plan

The board supports its strategic plan through its funding decisions. The strategic plan identifies the board's funding allocation strategy as:

> *Within the limits of the board's budget and priorities, fund projects, monitoring, and human capital in a way that best advances the salmon recovery effort.*

The key funding actions identified in the plan include:

> *Provide funding for the following:*
>
> - *Projects that produce measurable and sustainable benefits for salmon*
> - *Monitoring to measure project implementation, effectiveness, and the long-term results of all recovery efforts*
> - *Human capital that identifies, supports, and implements recovery actions.*

Determining the Allocation

Over time, the board has tried several approaches to determine the "best" ratio of capacity to project funding. These efforts have included staff analysis, surveys of lead entities and regions, and work done by the Regional Allocation Task Force. Given the structure of salmon recovery in Washington State and funding levels that are uncertain from year-to-year, it is difficult to provide a clear, mathematical answer.

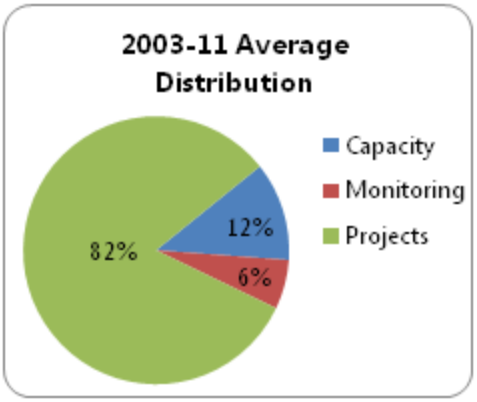
Ultimately, the best allocation is the one that works, as outlined in the strategic plan. For the board's purposes, this would be the allocation that reflects the board's prioritization of projects

and the scope of work for the lead entities and regions, while also providing the required monitoring.

Historical Allocations

It may be helpful for the board to note that in the biennia since 2003, the percent distribution among the three buckets (projects, monitoring and capacity) has remained fairly consistent, with little variation. The average historical distribution is displayed in the chart.

The actual amounts have varied significantly, depending on the funds available.



Next Steps

The board considers its allocations in light of available funding, both from federal and state sources.

- For the 2011-2013 biennium, it is expected that the state legislature will appropriate $10 million in capital funds for salmon recovery projects and $1 million in operating funds for the lead entities[1].
- For 2011, federal funding through the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund is expected to be $80 million. We do not know the level for federal fiscal year 2012.

Memo #5C discusses in more detail the possible approaches to allocating these funds.

[1] At the time of this writing, the legislature had not adopted budgets for the 2011-2013 biennium. See note on page 1.

WASHINGTON STATE RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE
Governor's Salmon Recovery Office

Salmon Recovery Funding Board Briefing Memo
Item 5B

Meeting Date: May 2011

Title: Scope of Work and Funding Considerations for Regions and Lead Entities

Prepared By: Phil Miller, GSRO Executive Coordinator
Lloyd Moody, Lead Entity Program Manager

Approved by the Director: Kaleen Cottingham

Proposed Action: Briefing

Summary

The Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO) has worked with the regional salmon recovery organizations and lead entities to develop scopes of work for operating grant agreements for the 2011-2013 biennium.

This memo highlights the key activities and work products in the draft scope of work for each regional organization, as well as the scope of work template for lead entities. The memo also provides fiscal information to inform the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) decisions about funding allocation for capacity in the 2011-13 biennium.

Staff is asking the board for feedback on the direction the GSRO is heading with these broad scopes of work and fiscal framework. Any major changes in scopes of work or changes in funding allocations would be brought back to the board for direction. Final decisions (and signature) on regional and lead entity agreements will be made by the RCO director.

Highlights from Draft Scopes of Work

Regional Organization Highlights

GSRO and regional salmon recovery organizations have drafted scopes of work for 2011-2013 grant agreements that balance the need for statewide consistency with the need for tailored work plans that fit the circumstances of each regional organization.

Each scope of work uses the standard work categories and subcategories shown below. Within each subcategory, GSRO has worked with the regions to develop specific tasks, deliverable work products, and due dates that fit the characteristics of the region's recovery plan and reflect its progress to date. This tailoring reflects the relationship between the lead entity work and the

activities of the regional organization. For example, tailoring may result in a region passing some of its funding to a lead entity for work on high-priority regional tasks, or to integrate the work of the region and its lead entities. Region-by-region work highlights are shown in Attachment A.

Category	Subcategories
Organizational Development and Maintenance	A. Board Operations B. Standing Committees, Teams and/or Groups C. Fiscal Accounting and Progress Reports
Recovery Plans and Implementation Schedules	A. Recovery Plan Completion, Update, or Revision B. Implementation Schedule Update/Revision C. Address Emerging Issues Affecting Salmon Recovery
Recovery Plan Implementation and Reporting	A. Coordinate and Support Actions by Recovery Partners B. Systematic Tracking of Recovery Project and Program Implementation C. Report Regional Progress in Salmon Recovery D. Provide Information for State of Salmon in Watersheds Reports
Monitoring and Adaptive Management	A. Complete or Revise and Coordinate Recovery Plan Monitoring Strategy B. Synthesize Monitoring Information and Evaluate Progress of Recovery C. Coordinate Adaptive Management Process for Recovery Plan
Communication and Outreach	A. Develop Communication and Outreach Materials B. Organize and Facilitate Communication and Outreach Events
Finance Strategies for Operations and Implementation	A. Maintain, Enhance or Diversify Funding for Regional and Lead Entity Operations B. Develop, Coordinate and Implement Strategies to Finance Recovery Plan Implementation

Priority Activities in Lead Entity Scope of Work

The 2009-2011 base grant awards for lead entities used the following four principal and common priorities. We anticipate maintaining these priorities for the 2011-2013 grant agreements.

- **Strategies.** Revise lead entity strategies as needed to be consistent with applicable recovery plans.

- **Sponsor Outreach.** Conduct outreach to project sponsors and the broader community in developing habitat project proposals.
- **Project Lists.** Develop project lists, including technical and citizen committee review and ranking, consistent with board guidance and schedule.
- **Project Information.** Provide basic project tracking and reporting information in PRISM, and in HWS or an equivalent data management system, consistent with statewide guidance.

A standard template for lead entities' Scope of Work is tailored to fit each lead entity. This is particularly true for Puget Sound lead entities that also use Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) capacity funds and may receive money to support watershed scale capacity from the Puget Sound Partnership's board-funded grant (base level).

Integration of Regional and Lead Entity Work

Four of the regional organizations are combined regional and lead entity organizations, while three regional organizations have separate lead entities within their regional areas. Integration of regional and lead entity work in the contracts is tailored to the organizational relationship.

Regardless of organizational structure, the scope of work aspects related to integration focus on: 1) continued consistency between lead entity strategies and projects and recovery plans, and 2) improved coordination of tracking, reporting, and management of implementation information.

2011-2013 Capacity Funding Framework

Funding for regional organization and lead entity capacity can be considered in relation to the board funds available for habitat projects as described in memo #5c. However, capacity funding also can be viewed in relation to the funding provided from the much broader pool of funding sources available for implementing regional recovery plans.

A recent study conducted with PCSRF funds estimated that annual funding for salmon recovery habitat projects and related non-capital activities averaged about $120 million over the past several years[1], of which about 19 percent is estimated to be available through the board. This estimate is based on information available from the six regional organizations responsible for coordinating recovery plan implementation in their areas. This shows that the role played by the regional and lead entity organizations is broader than just the board's funds and that any capacity investment is important for leveraging and coordinating funding from many sources.

[1] Funding for Salmon Recovery in Washington State, Evergreen Funding Consultants, March 2011

In the event the board decides to reduce capacity funding below 2009-11 levels, GSRO would work with the regions and lead entities to adjust scopes of work accordingly. Distribution of any reduction in funds would be managed as directed by the board (i.e., as referenced under Item 5C).

Base Capacity Grants, 2009-11

The base grant awards for regional and lead entity organizational capacity in 2009-2011 can provide a starting point for considering a stable funding level to support scopes of work for 2011-2013.

The following amounts are assumed as "status quo capacity" in memo #5C, which explains possible approaches to the board's allocation decision.

Regional Base Amount	$5,737,370
Lead Entity Base Amount	$3,126,000
Total 2011-2013 Base Amount	$8,863,370

Proposed Shifts in Funding

Within this base funding, GSRO, working with the regions and lead entities, proposes the following adjustments to the way funds are distributed. There would be no other changes from the approach used in 2009-11.

- Move $200,000 from the Puget Sound Partnership regional grant to the Puget Sound lead entities to support enhanced tracking, data management and reporting of implementation information for use in monitoring, evaluation and adaptive management processes and in communicating implementation results
- Move $20,000 from the Foster Creek Lead Entity to the North Pacific Coast Lead Entity.

Proposed "Adds" to Base Funding

In addition to the base amounts, GSRO is recommending that the board consider two items of enhanced funding that could come from the returned funds we expect to receive from the existing project and capacity contracts. Returned funds from 2009-11 capacity grants are likely to be between $200,000 and $250,000.

- Proposal #1: Allocate up to $250,000 for awards to Puget Sound lead entities for reviewing and developing elements of a Puget Sound Steelhead recovery plan, particularly elements related to watershed-scale strategies and actions.
- Proposal #2: Allocate $20,000 through the Washington Coast regional grant to support local facilitation and outreach for implementation of the Lake Ozette Sockeye Recovery Plan.

Next Steps

Throughout May, the GSRO, the regional organizations, and the lead entities will refine the details of the work products and due dates for each contract.

Staff is asking the board for feedback on the direction the GSRO is heading with these broad scopes of work and fiscal framework. Any major changes in scopes of work or changes in funding allocations would be brought back to the board for direction. Final decisions (and signature) on regional and lead entity agreements will be made by the RCO director.

The next steps in developing the operating grant agreements for regions and lead entities for the 2011-13 biennium are as follows:

- May 25 – Board decision on grant awards (contingent on availability of funds);
- June 30 – Issue grant agreements with final scope of work and budget summaries.

Attachments

A. Region-by-Region Highlights

Region-by-Region Work Highlights

A few major 2011-2013 work activities for each region are highlighted below:

Puget Sound

- Increase operating funds for watersheds
- Complete open standards approach for integrating salmon recovery into broader Partnership performance management system and establish salmon recovery adaptive management approach among the 14 watershed scale chapters, based on a common framework and understanding.
- Use Local Integrating Organizations to address habitat protection and water pollution reduction components of salmon recovery
- Make progress in completing a Puget Sound Steelhead Recovery Plan

Hood Canal

- Continue incorporation of salmon recovery into comprehensive integrated watershed management plan approach
- Development of an effective adaptive management and monitoring program in the context of an integrated watershed management approach
- Review and update viable salmon population goals, h-integration (harvest, hatchery, habitat), and marine near shore science and management
- Develop habitat recovery goals and targets

Washington Coast

- Regional Salmon Plan completion and implementation
- Regional data coordination using NetMap and other tools
- Identification of core watersheds for protection and restoration
- Outreach and education strategy and program

Lower Columbia

- Contributing to completion of final federal bi-state recovery plan for Lower Columbia
- Improve ownership and participation in recovery and watershed plan actions
- Improve tools to communicate progress and achievements

- Continue to explore long-term funding for Recovery Plan implementation
- Continue development of monitoring designs for biological status and trends, habitat status and trends, implementation/compliance, action effectiveness, uncertainty and validation research, and programmatic evaluation, including a data management and communication infrastructure

Snake River

- Contribute to final federal Snake ESU/DPS recovery plan along with Oregon and Idaho
- Finalize cost analysis and implement fund raising strategies
- Define strategies and implement actions to balance federal levee vegetation policy and salmon recovery objectives
- Implement and report results of BPA programmatic approach for Tucannon River habitat
- Implement IMW restoration plan and report outcomes
- Implement Mill Creek fish passage project

Yakima Basin

- Ensure project funding is used to implement priority recovery actions (specific trib passage and floodplain improvement projects)
- Ensure locally-developed Yakima Bull Trout Action Plan is incorporated into USFWS Bull Trout Recovery Plan
- Improve implementation scheduling and project tracking/reporting and link to NOAA, RCO/GSRO, BPA, CBFWA and CRITFC databases and reports
- Identify and fill gaps in habitat and project effectiveness monitoring
- Build a robust outreach program that tells the story of salmon recovery in the Yakima Basin to a broad audience

Upper Columbia

- Follow through on Adaptive Management Process recommendations with plan updates and additional data analysis
- Convene regional All-H discussion to facilitate progress in all-H action
- Demonstrate regional progress toward recovery across all Hs, and evaluate the local economic impact of the effort

WASHINGTON STATE RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE
Salmon Recovery Funding Board

Salmon Recovery Funding Board
Briefing Memo
Item 5C

Meeting Date: May 2011

Title: Funding Scenarios within Board Framework and Budget

Prepared By: Brian Abbott, Salmon Section Manager
Megan Duffy, Policy Specialist

Approved by the Director: Kaleen Cottingham

Proposed Action: Decision

Summary

At its May meeting, the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) board must determine the funding levels for the 2011 project grant round and capacity funding for the biennium. Staff is suggesting that the board consider the two approaches described in this memo.

Board Decisions

The board will be asked to make the following decisions in May. Staff will have a presentation to support the decision making process.

- Set Target 2011 Grant Round Funding Amount
- Approve Funding Level and Term for Lead Entity Contracts
- Approve Funding Level and Term for Regional Organization Contracts

Notes

State Appropriations

At the time of this writing, the legislature has not adopted the operating or capital budgets for the 2011-2013 biennium. The calculations presented in this memo may change if the legislature adopts budgets that are inconsistent with our assumptions.

If the legislature has not adopted budgets by the date of the board meeting, the board can either schedule a special board meeting or delegate decisions to the director with clear allocation direction.

Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) will not determine the actual federal fiscal year 2011 grant award for Washington State until late May or early June. The calculations presented in this memo may change if the award differs from our assumptions.

Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration

The board is not being asked to make decisions about Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) funds for projects or capacity. The board has made decisions about those funds separately in the past, and staff recommends that the board continue to do so.

Background

The Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) funds both projects and activities with the federal and state funds dedicated to salmon recovery in Washington State. Most of these funds are allocated to three "buckets:" monitoring, capacity, and projects. The federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) grant award requires that monitoring expenditures be a minimum of 10 percent of the PCSRF amount awarded to Washington each federal fiscal year.

Funding for capacity and projects, however, are not specifically set as a grant requirement. Rather, project grant round and capacity funding levels are considered in light of Washington's annual PCSRF grant award and the state dollars appropriated by the Washington State Legislature.

- The board sets a target for the project grant round funding level on an annual basis. This determines how much funding will be available for restoration/recovery projects in each regional area.
- Every two years, the board determines the funding levels for the lead entities and regional organizations – the "capacity bucket." Traditionally these organizations have two-year contracts executed at the beginning of the biennium.

Additional background on the allocations and the work done by lead entities and regions is provided in memos 5A and 5B.

Analysis

Available Funds

As of this writing, it appears that the federal PCSRF funding will be $80 million for federal fiscal year 2011. At this level, Washington State hopes to receive its status quo funding level of $27.5 million. After allocations for hatcheries, RCO administration, and monitoring, the board will have approximately $16 million from PCSRF to allocate to projects and capacity. The actual amount depends on a grant decision from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; we expect that decision in late May or early June.

Federal funding in the second year of the biennium (federal fiscal year 2012) is less certain. RCO staff estimates that it could remain at a status quo level of $80 million, may be reduced to $65 million as included in the President's FY 2012 budget, or even be as low as $50 million. This range is based on potential PCSRF levels discussed at the Congressional level for federal fiscal year 2011. All indications are that budget discussions at the federal level will increasingly focus on cuts.

In addition to federal funds, the board may receive $10 million in state capital funds for the biennium; approximately $300,000 of this would be allocated to RCO administration. The state budget also includes about $1 million for lead entity operations[1]. In the past, some of these state funds have been set aside for other uses, such as the technical review panel and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) small grants program. The scenarios below do not reserve funding for the NFWF program, however, because the federal FY 2011 budget did not include an appropriation for this program.

Returned Funds

"Returned funds" refers to money originally allocated to projects and activities that is then returned when projects/activities either close without spending their entire budget or are not completed. These dollars are returned to the overall budget. The board typically uses "returned funds" for cost increases, capacity needs, and to increase the funding available for projects in the upcoming grant round. As a point of comparison, the 2010 grant round used $16 million in new funds and $4.1 million in return funds, for a total grant round of $20.1 million[2].

The board allocates returned funds separately from new funds, so they are not included in this analysis. However, it should be noted that returned funds may be available to fund additional scope of work items for regions and lead entities, and to increase project funding during the grant cycles.

Funding Scenarios

The "best case" scenario is that federal funding would remain at the $80 million level for federal fiscal year 2012. In this circumstance, the funding levels from the 09-11 biennium could simply carry forward.

To assist the board in its funding allocation discussion, staff has generated two additional scenarios for the board's consideration (Table 1). Under each scenario, PCSRF is identified at $80 million for FY 2011. Scenario one assumes that PCSRF will be decreased to $65 million in FY 2012. Scenario two assumes that PCSRF will be decreased to $50 million in FY 2012.

These funding estimates are used in the approaches described later in the memo to indicate how a reduced PCSRF funding level could affect the funds available for projects and capacity over the course of the biennium.

Table 1

	PCSRF 2011			PCSRF 12			State 2011-13		
	Total	Projects & Capacity	Monitoring	***Total***	Projects & Capacity	Monitoring	Capital	Lead Entities	**Total Available Funds**
Scenario 1	***$80***	$16	$2.65	***$65***	$13.6	$2.2	$9.7	$1.0	**$44.7**
Scenario 2	***$80***	$16	$2.65	***$50***	$10.4	$1.7	$9.7	$1.0	**$41.1**

All figures in millions. Amounts shown subtract administration and Technical Review Panel.

[1] The legislature had not adopted budgets for 2011-13 at the time of this writing. See note on page 1.

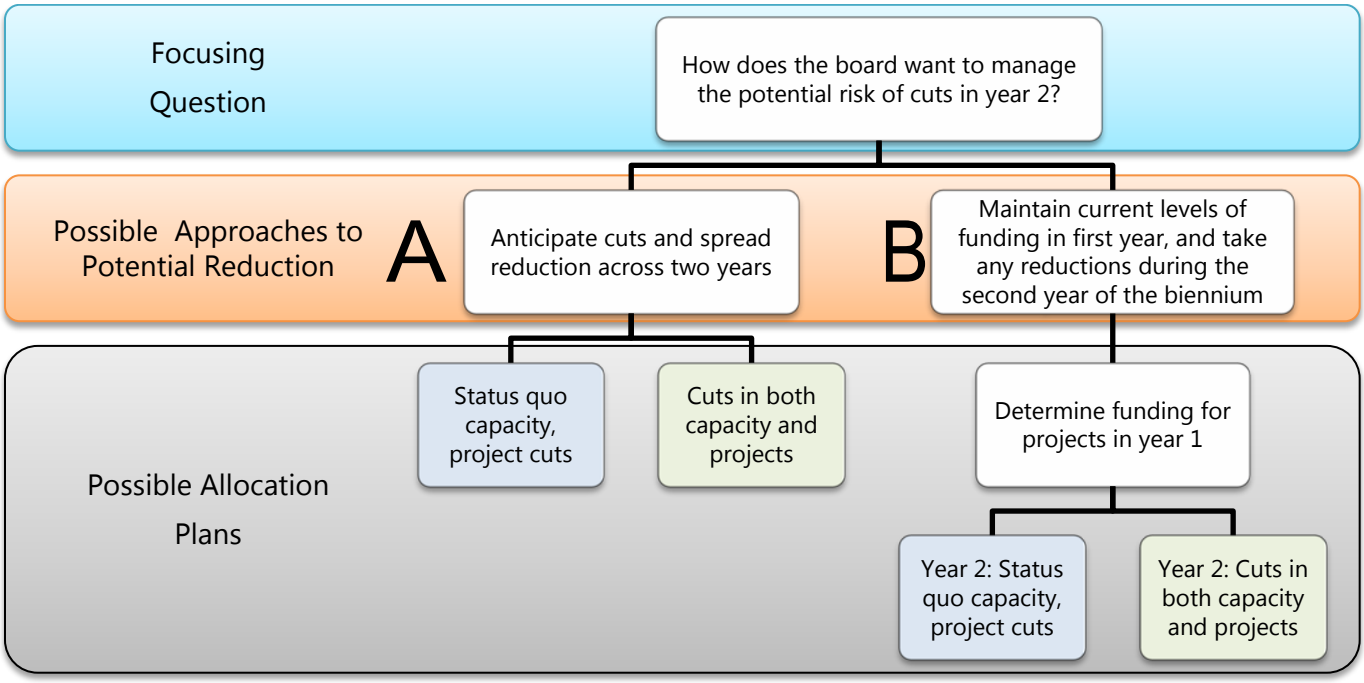
[2] Returned funds are typically in the range of $2-4 million.

Approaches to Reductions and Allocation Plans

At its May meeting, the board will need to consider how it wants to allocate funding for the biennium, while managing the potential risk of reduced federal funding in the second year of the biennium. As shown in the graph, staff recommends that the board consider its funding decisions in two tiers:

- First, how does the board want to approach potential funding reductions? (A), take an estimated reduction across two years, or (B) maintain current levels and apply any potential cuts in year 2?

- Second, based on the selection above, how does the board want to allocate the estimated funds to the project and capacity buckets?



Notes on the Approaches

- The board has three "buckets" – projects, monitoring, and capacity. However, monitoring is set at a minimum of 10% of the federal award, so staff has removed it from consideration in this exercise.
- The comparisons on the following pages are based on base allocations, not actual expenditures.

Approach A: Anticipate cuts and spread reduction across two years.

Advantage: Less impact in year 2, if there are budget reductions

Disadvantages: Budget for year 2 is uncertain, and we may take cuts unnecessarily.

The approach estimates the levels of cut, rather than considering cuts in light of actual numbers for year 2.

The following table shows potential impacts of two funding *scenarios* (PCSRF funding levels at $65 million and at $50 million for year two of the biennium) and two allocation *plans*. The first plan ("status quo capacity") assumes that base funding for capacity is maintained; the second ("09-11 ratio") maintains the current ratio between projects and capacity. This would be base funding for the grant round and capacity for the biennium.

Table 2 ----- Possible Allocation Plans -----

		Status Quo Capacity		09-11 Ratio	
		Funding	% Change from 09-11	Funding	% Change from 09-11
SCENARIO #1: **$80 million PCSRF yr 1** **$65 million PCSRF yr 2**	Monitoring	$4,860,000		$4,860,000	
	Capacity	$8,863,110	0%	$8,557,115	-3%
	Projects	$30,982,681	-4%	$31,288,676	-3%
	Total	**$44,705,791**		**$44,705,791**	
SCENARIO #2: **$80 million PCSRF yr 1** **$50 million PCSRF yr 2**	Monitoring	$4,350,000		$4,350,000	
	Capacity	$8,863,110	0%	$7,886,024	-11%
	Projects	$27,857,775	-14%	$28,834,861	-11%
	Total	**$41,070,885**		**$41,070,885**	

Decision: If the board chooses Approach A (spread reductions over two years), what level of funding – or percent reduction – does the board want to apply for capacity and projects?

Decision: How does the board want to direct the regional organizations and lead entities to implement any such cut?

- Regions only take cut
- Regions and lead entities take the same percent cut
- Each regional area work with lead entities to determine how to distribute a cut by either June 10, 2011 or by submitting a required cost change amendment (i.e., the cut) that is due by September 1, 2011 from any region not submitting their determination by June 10.

Approach B: Maintain current levels of funding in first year, and take reductions in funding during the second year of the biennium.

Advantage: Board would know the exact cuts needed to implement the budget; regions and lead entities could plan on their own for potential reductions

Disadvantage: Concentrates any negative financial impact into one year

The following table shows how this could play out in the same two funding *scenarios* (PCSRF funding levels at $65 million and at $50 million for year two of the biennium) and two allocation *plans*. The board would not decide on its actual approach (i.e., how to allocate any cuts if needed) until May 2012.

- Both plans assume that base funding for capacity is maintained in the first year; one approach continues that status quo funding continuing in year 2, while the other reduces it according to the 09-11 ratio.
- Both plans assume a project grant round of approximately $16.2 million in new funds for 2011; about 45 percent of the state capital funds would be used in the first year of the biennium. Returned funds are NOT assumed in the total amount.

Table 3

			----- Possible Allocation Plans Year 2 -----					
		Year 1 Funding	**Status Quo Capacity**	**% Change from 09-11**		**09-11 Ratio**	**% Change from 09-11**	
				Yr 1	*Yr 2*		*Yr 1*	*Yr 2*
SCENARIO #1: $80 million PCSRF yr 1 $65 million PCSRF yr 2	Monitoring	$2,650,000	$2,210,000			$2,210,000		
	Capacity	$4,431,555	$4,431,555	*0%*	*0%*	$4,127,645	*0%*	*-7%*
	Projects	$16,194,061	$14,788,621	*0%*	*-9%*	$15,092,531	*0%*	*-7%*
	Total	**$23,275,616**	**$21,430,176**			**$21,430,176**		
SCENARIO #2: $80 million PCSRF yr 1 $50 million PCSRF yr 2	Monitoring	$2,650,000	$1,700,000			$1,700,000		
	Capacity	$4,431,555	$4,431,555	*0%*	*0%*	$3,456,553	*0%*	*-22%*
	Projects	$16,194,061	$11,663,714	*0%*	*-28%*	$12,638,716	*0%*	*-22%*
	Total	**$23,275,616**	**$17,795,269**			**$17,795,269**		

Decision: If the board chooses Approach B (focus any reductions in year two), what level of project funding does it want to set for the 2011 cycle? The board typically sets a target funding level, and uses returned funds to minimize the amount of new funds needed to achieve it.

Decision: If the board chooses Approach B, staff will need direction with regard to the appropriate contractual mechanism for funding the regional organizations and lead entities. Options include:

- Two-year contracts with two-year scope of works
- Two-year contracts with two-year scope of works and one year's worth of funding
- One-year contracts with the ability to amend for a second year of funding

Staff recommends that the appropriate contractual mechanism for funding the regional organizations and lead entities is a two-year grant agreement with a two-year scope of work and with a one-year budget, pending a board decision on second year funding by May 2012. Cost change amendments could add second year funds.

Next Steps

Staff will present this information to the board, as well as any updates regarding the state budget, at its May meeting. Staff will ask for decisions about funding levels and contract mechanisms at that time. The region and lead entity contracts need to be in place by July 1, 2011.

WASHINGTON STATE RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE
Salmon Recovery Funding Board

Salmon Recovery Funding Board
Briefing Memo
Item 6

Meeting Date: May 2011

Title: Monitoring Contract Approval: Intensively Monitored Watersheds

Prepared By: Ken Dzinbal, Monitoring Program Executive Coordinator

Approved by the Director: Kaleen Cottingham

Proposed Action: Decision

Summary

Funding for the Intensively Monitored Watersheds (IMW) program will expire in June. This multi-year monitoring program relies on annual funding from the monitoring portion of the annual Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) award.

PCSRF funds are expected to be available later this summer. However, the next opportunity for the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) to consider funding this program would be at its August 31 meeting, well after the current funding expires. To avoid disruption to this long-term monitoring program, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) staff is asking the board to delegate contract signature authority to the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) director, contingent upon receipt of 2011 PCSRF funds.

Staff Recommendation

RCO staff recommends that the board delegate contract signature authority for the Intensively Monitored Watersheds Program to the director, pending receipt of 2011 PCSRF funds.

Proposed Motion Language

Move to authorize the Director to approve up to $1,467,000 for one year of IMW monitoring, through June 2012, pending receipt of 2011 PCSRF funds.

Background

The Intensively Monitored Watersheds program is designed to determine whether restoration efforts result in more salmon. The monitoring plan calls for a 10-year program duration. The program is currently in its seventh year. An independent science review of the program in 2006 found that the program "as currently designed is capable of assessing fish population response at the watershed scale resulting from restoration actions." In 2009, the Washington Forum on Monitoring conducted a programmatic review of the effort and determined that the IMW

program remains a high priority monitoring need, and is consistent with the state's Comprehensive Monitoring Strategy. Preliminary results from the IMW effort were most recently presented to the board in October 2010, and at the April 2011 Salmon Recovery Conference.

The funding for the IMW program is directly linked to the PCSRF funding cycle. Delays in receipt of PCSRF funds over the past several years have disrupted the normal funding cycle for this program. Thus, the current agreement with the Department of Ecology expires in June 2011. That end date optimistically assumed that the 2011 PCSRF grant would be approved in time for renewal before the expiration. At this time, it appears that 2011 PCSRF funds will not be available until later this summer.

Analysis

If the IMW program is not extended, the board will lose much more than one year's worth of data. The interruption will largely void our ability to meet statistical requirements to evaluate trends over an unbroken time series of annual data. Simply put, this would significantly compromise the value of our previously completed field work, and greatly reduce the value of future work.

Given that the funding timeframe remains delayed by 2 to 3 months, staff suggests that the board take the following actions:

- Authorize the director to fund IMW monitoring from July 2011 through June 2012, up to $1,467,000, with 2011 PCSRF funds (this represents no increase in funding for the IMW program over the past several years).

Next Steps

If the board delegates authority to the director, staff will work with the Washington Department of Ecology to complete an interagency agreement amendment.