

**FORUM ON MONITORING
SALMON RECOVERY AND WATERSHED HEALTH
SUMMARY MINUTES**

DATE: July 16, 2008

PLACE: Legislative Building (Columbia Room)

TIME: 9:00 a.m.

Olympia, Washington

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bill Wilkerson	Forum Chair
Kaleen Cottingham	Director, Recreation and Conservation Office
Chris Drivdahl	Director, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office
Jim Cowles	Designee, Department of Agriculture
Carol Smith	Designee, Conservation Commission
Josh Baldi	Designee, Department of Ecology
Tim Smith	Designee, Department of Fish and Wildlife
Jim Cahill	Designee, Puget Sound Partnership
Barry Thom	Designee, NOAA Fisheries
Rob Wilson	Designee, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Brad Thompson	Designee, US Fish & Wildlife Service
Bob Metzger	Designee, USFS Olympic National Forest
Jeff Breckel	Executive Director, Lower Columbia Salmon Recovery Board
Julie Morgan	Executive Director, Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board
Alex Conley	Executive Director, Yakima Basin Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board
Terry Wright	Designee, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
Kit Paulsen	Designee, City of Bellevue
Pete Schroeder	Designee, Lead Entity Advisory Group
David Mills	Designee, RFEG's Advisory Board

IT IS INTENDED THAT THIS SUMMARY BE USED WITH THE NOTEBOOK PROVIDED IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING.

A RECORDED TAPE IS RETAINED BY THE RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE AS THE FORMAL RECORD OF MEETING.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Called to order 9:13 a.m.

Chair Wilkerson welcomed everyone to the Forum on Monitoring Salmon Recovery and Watershed Health (the Forum) meeting, and to the state capitol. The Chair introduced Ken Dzinbal as the new Forum Coordinator.

Agenda Item #2: Approval of May Minutes

Chris Drivdahl **MOVED** to pass the minutes. Tom Eaton **SECONDED**. The Forum approved the May 2008 minutes as presented.

Agenda Item #3

Review and Discussion of Forum's Role and Operational Structure

Chair Wilkerson provided an update on discussions that have taken place over the past two months regarding the Forum's purpose, avoiding duplicating efforts, and interacting with key policy forums statewide. The Chair noted that from conversations with key individuals overseeing monitoring efforts, he identified five priorities for the Forum on

Monitoring:

1. *Clarifying the Forum's role with ongoing monitoring efforts.* It was unclear how the Forum fit in with ongoing efforts, especially with state agencies. The Forum must determine what their role will be in the budget process, and reporting to the legislature.
2. *Addressing state agencies' concerns about the budget as it relates to monitoring.* During a tight economic year, state agencies and local governments are experiencing strained budgets and have fewer available funds for monitoring. Chair Wilkerson and Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) Director Kaleen Cottingham received feedback from the Director of the Office of Financial Management (OFM), Victor Moore, who asked the Forum to focus on monitoring priorities, and discouraged proposals for new funding.
3. *Preventing the duplication of monitoring efforts.* Agencies voiced a clear concern regarding duplicated efforts, and expressed a need for clarity about the Forum's role in coordinating monitoring efforts
4. *The need for Forum staff to coordinate monitoring efforts of involved state agencies and recovery organizations.*
5. *Addressing limited staff resources among state agencies, and the need for staff time (e.g. meetings and committees) to be effective and productive.* Organizations do not want staff attending unnecessary meetings. They would like to see meaningful and productive meetings. Chair Wilkerson asked each of the state agency directors to be clear about their representation at the Forum meetings. The Chair hoped that many of the agency representatives would be the same staff involved with the Puget Sound Partnership. Coordinating with the Puget Sound Partnership and consistency among agency representatives, will help the Forum streamline communication when directors are needed to make decisions.

Chair Wilkerson advised the Forum to connect itself to a "policy train", to be effective in advancing any monitoring decisions. The Chair recommended that the Forum align itself with the Puget Sound Partnership. The Chair has not made any decisions yet, but he would like to see the Forum play a significant part in the Partnership's Action Agenda for Puget Sound. The Partnership would help the Forum by adding credibility and political leverage.

Chair Wilkerson met with Dick Wallace of the Northwest Power and Conservation Council, who mentioned that up to 40 percent of the Power Council's budget is dedicated to Monitoring. Dick explained that the Power Council needs statewide support, especially from the Forum, and that it hopes to use the Puget Sound Partnership's potential momentum to move forward.

Tom Eaton pointed out that there is an active federal caucus in the Puget Sound; Barry Thom noted that there is also one in the Columbia. If the Forum can become a vehicle for communication and engagement, there is a role to assist in coordinating the monitoring effort. Chair Wilkerson explained that the Partnership supports the Forum, and wants to work together to answer the following questions:

- How much effectiveness monitoring needs to be done?
- What does status and trends monitoring really mean?
- How can both effectiveness and status and trends monitoring be added to the Action Agenda?

Jim Cahill noted that the Puget Sound Partnership's current Action Agenda includes a section on Monitoring.

Chair Wilkerson stated that he purposefully waited to consult with the Forum before talking to the Legislature about the Forum's new policy driven role. The Chair pointed out that Ken Dzinbal has been meeting with agencies and organizations, and the Forum is counting on Ken to serve as a liaison, relaying information between other organizations and the Forum.

Kaleen Cottingham added that feedback from their conversations with agency directors emphasized that monitoring protocols and "telling the story of monitoring" are important.

Chair Wilkerson said that the biggest question in his mind is effectively representing the Coast, which is represented by neither the Partnership nor the Power Council.

Tim Smith explained the importance of transitioning from a technical body to a policy making body. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Director Jeff Keonings would like to find a way to make the Forum's work more relevant. The WDFW conducts a great deal of monitoring, but the efforts are parts of individual programs. The WDFW came away from the discussion with Kaleen and Chair Wilkerson viewing the Monitoring Forum as a way to get everyone on the same page.

Josh Baldi noted that the Forum and the Partnership are going in the right direction for making the story of salmon recovery more relevant.

Craig Partridge added that the emphasis on performance and accountability means that the monitoring story needs to be more data driven, so the Forum can be a place to synthesize the data and improve the story.

Chair Wilkerson responded that agency directors understand that you can have a great story, but it must be told often to remain in the forefront of peoples' minds. The Chair encouraged the Forum to work on a consistent and clear story, because common language will help during the budget process. Jim Cahill added that during the story telling processes, data needs to support the overall goals. He offered the Partnership's help in developing a model for coordinating data, and providing consistency in relaying information.

Tom Eaton agreed that policy trains are important, however the Forum can play an important role in making sure watershed and ecosystem efforts are on the same path. To provide consistency for the legislature, watershed-based work can play an important coordinating role to ensure that approaches are similar enough for the leg to see the same

message.

Jeff Breckel added that the Northwest Power and Conservation Council's monitoring is very different than local and regional efforts. It is also important to consider regional differences the way the Power Council views the regions of the Columbia basin. Chair Wilkerson acknowledged Jeff's point about regional differences, and hopes that the Regional representatives will relay their individual messages in the presentations to the Forum. The Chair explained that most general fund money is going to Puget Sound, and Columbia Basin monitoring funds come largely from rate payer funds. In the Chair's meetings with the Power Council, they acknowledged many of the same concerns expressed by Jeff, and they want to improve coordination of monitoring efforts. Jeff added that the Columbia Basin story must not be told exclusively by the Power Council. Chair Wilkerson asked Jeff Breckel who should write the story. Jeff answered that the Regional Organizations can take the lead.

Alex explained that the Power Council's monitoring investments are not necessarily all focused on Salmon Recovery. He warned the Forum that there are many environmental monitoring efforts in the Columbia.

Bruce Crawford compared regional efforts in Idaho and Oregon and noted that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is interested in helping the Forum to get evolutionarily significant units (ESUs) across state boundaries to follow the same protocol, and coordinate efforts regionally. He explained that performance will play an important role in the Forum's success.

Josh asked if there is a standing invite for Dick Wallace and power council representatives to attend Forum meetings. Kaleen Cottingham responded that Dick Wallace intends to participate in the Forum's meetings whenever he can, and RCO will coordinate next year's meetings with Dick's schedule so he can attend.

Chair Wilkerson noted the Forum's changing role, and noted that he would like to see the Forum move forward as a policy group. The Forum concurred.

Forum Staff Group Report Presentation: Ken Dzinbal, Recreation and Conservation Office

Ken Dzinbal presented an overview of strategic questions that the Forum Staff Group was tasked to answer. Recurring themes among the Forum Staff Group included the aspiration to provide a unified strategic approach to monitoring, prevent duplicative efforts, focus on priorities and employ budget discipline, and to coordinate efforts for consistency and efficiency. Ken discussed five high level monitoring questions, and the presentation concluded with a discussion among the Forum.

Forum Discussion:

Chair Wilkerson asked Ken about Question #1 of the high-level questions: Are salmon populations abundant, productive, and well distributed? The Chair asked about the differences between monitoring efforts ranked "good" as opposed to "fair". Chris Drivdahl

responded that a “fair” ranking does not mean that the monitoring is poor quality; rather it indicates that monitoring is not being done in enough places. Kaleen asked what it would take to do an assessment, similar to the one conducted in 2002, with the current dollars. Bruce Crawford answered that in 2002, for smolts, they evaluated the number of locations being monitored and the quality of the data being produced. The comprehensive monitoring strategy addressed what it would take to be comprehensive, but funding constraints have limited monitoring objectives to just one smolt trap per primary population for each major population group in the state.

Tim stated that it was helpful during the monitoring budget process to have the table of monitoring locations developed as part of the Monitoring Framework, and that the agency was more efficient and effective as a result.

Bob Metzger asked if the slide only represents monitoring by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Salmon Recovery Funding Board. Ken Dzinbal acknowledged that there was other monitoring not included in the slide. Bob suggested that if the Monitoring Forum’s role is supposed to be at the policy level, it would be beneficial to get away from parceling the data. Kit added that the data need to be better coordinated to assist in packaging it to the legislature.

Tom Eaton suggested that Ken Dzinbal separate questions about the health and regulatory questions from salmon productivity and water quality (regulatory) questions. Chris Drivdahl and Tim Smith agreed with Tom’s recommendation.

Regional Organization Perspectives Presentation: Alex Conley, Council of Regions

Alex Conley, of the Council of Regions, presented an overview of the Regional Organizations’ perspectives regarding their role in monitoring and adaptive management for salmon recovery, and funding needs. Alex focused on the Regions’ role in identifying gaps in monitoring programs. Alex provided a brief overview of the regional organizations’ monitoring efforts in the Northeast and Coastal region, the Hood Canal, the Mid-Columbia, and the Snake Recovery regions.

- PUGET SOUND: Scott Redman, Puget Sound Partnership’s Special Projects Manager, contributed to the presentation, providing a brief overview of monitoring efforts in Puget Sound. Scott explained that the Puget Sound Partnership is developing a monitoring program, and working with the Puget Sound Monitoring Consortium to coordinate monitoring across local governments.
- LOWER COLUMBIA: Jeff Breckel, Executive Director of the Lower Columbia Recovery Board, presented information on the Lower Columbia’s program and approach to monitoring. He noted that monitoring is critical to a regional recovery plan, and that regional organizations interact with a wide array and various levels of local government.
- UPPER COLUMBIA: Julie Morgan, Executive Director of the Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board, gave a brief overview of the monitoring efforts in the Upper Columbia recovery region. The Upper Columbia is in the implementation and analysis phase of their monitoring plan. Keely Murdoch, from the Upper Columbia

Regional Technical Team, presented the Upper Columbia's data gap prioritization program.

Alex Conley summarized the regional organizations' presentation by highlighting the following conclusions:

- Each Region's approach to monitoring is unique and matched to local needs
- Regions play a key role identifying and supporting monitoring needs
- Regions generally do not do monitoring themselves
- Regions connect detailed local discussions with high-level state and NW-wide approaches

He concluded by discussing the relationship between the regions with the Forum, namely providing feedback to one another and working collaboratively.

Forum Discussion:

Chair Wilkerson asked the Forum for policy related feedback in response to the regional presentations. Tim Smith reacted to the regional presentations by pointing out three different drivers: fulfilling mitigation obligations, evolutionarily significant units, and protection of salmon on the Washington coast. Tim recommended that the Forum consider the three drivers as the foundation for their monitoring principles.

Bruce posed three policy questions to the regions:

- How much monitoring is enough and at what scale?
- What is most important in monitoring, and how does the Forum prioritize the needs (considering watershed health, ecosystems)?
- How will monitoring be funded?

There is not a clear picture of who is funding monitoring. Terry Wright echoed Bruce's concern about a one size fits all approach to Monitoring. Monitoring prioritization depends on who is asking the question, namely the funding source. Terry Wright added that monitoring is done at a variety of scales. He recommended that the Forum coordinate larger scale monitoring with local efforts. Julie Morgan responded to Bruce's question about how much monitoring is enough. She noted that if the Forum (for example) could inventory current data management tools and identify the best data sharing systems, this would allow the Forum to determine if enough money has been spent on data management tools; or whether it is time to dedicate less money developing tools and more money answering critical monitoring questions.

Jeff Baldi explained that the most important policy focus is the need to better align the monitoring and data objectives for salmon in watersheds to watershed health. He suggested developing monitoring protocols to link data at the local, state, and federal levels to improve watershed assessment continuity.

Pete Schroeder, Lead Entity Advisory Group (LEAG) added that policy recommendations need to involve the public, starting at the lead entity level. LEAG issued a survey to the public to help "sell" monitoring. Providing visual data to show where species are on a path

to being delisted could help promote monitoring efforts to the public and to the legislature.

Jim Cahill and Alex Conley discussed improving communication between state agencies and regional organizations' monitoring needs. Alex noted that reviewing regional data would remedy the issue of overlap among organizations.

Chair Wilkerson was pleased to see the Forum discuss policy recommendations.

Agenda Item #4

Agency Monitoring Budget Requests for the 2009-2011 Biennium

Prior to the agency budget discussion, Terry Wright inquired about the Forum's role in the budget process, considering the statutory mandate. Chair Wilkerson clarified that the Forum's role would be better defined after the presentations, and that the Forum may decide that they are not prepared to take on the role of reviewing budgets, as the statute suggests. Kaleen Cottingham added that the Salmon Recovery Funding Board mentioned at their last meeting, that the Forum could provide helpful feedback on how to allocate money dedicated to monitoring.

Ken Dzinbal presented a brief overview of the monitoring budget, providing context for the agency budget discussion.

Tim Smith and Erik Neatherlin, of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), explained WDFW's proposed monitoring requests:

1. Adaptively managing populations through the fish in/fish out program,
2. Remote sensing status and trends. (Bob Metzger encouraged Tim and Erik to contact Steve Lanigan from the Forest Service to coordinate on remote sensing)
3. Using mark-selective implementation, real time genetic fishery management, and monitoring in the Columbia to transform Fishery Management in an era of climate change.

Chair Wilkerson asked Tim and Erik if they needed recommendations or feedback on the programs that are being submitted. Erik pointed out the adult and juvenile abundance program was cut a few years ago, and it is connected to the fish in/fish out program.

The conversation with the Department of Fish and Wildlife led the to Forum to discuss how individual agencies might chose to provide letters of support for agencies proposing monitoring adds. Chair Wilkerson noted that he is concerned that the Forum will not be able to thoroughly review each agency's budget, but the Forum could provide policy recommendations to assist agencies in the budget process.

Jim Cahill pointed out the statute requires the Forum to review budgets and examine requests at a higher level and provide feedback and recommendations. Bruce Crawford suggested that the policy recommendations need to show a connection between the effectiveness of the monitoring taking place and the overall recovery plan. Chair Wilkerson advised agencies to provide priorities and highlights within their budget to the Forum

instead of the entire budget.

Carol Smith commented that the Forum should note whether or not budgets are connected to the Comprehensive Monitoring Strategy (CMS). Carol recommended that the Forum review the CMS, and update it to make it more useful in the next budget round. Josh Baldi agrees that the CMS needs to be updated, but the editing process is a large task for the Forum to undertake.

Chair Wilkerson asked the Forum if they would like to make a recommendation to the agencies or to the policy group that the Forum may be working with the Puget Sound Partnership.

Jim Cahill recommended that the Forum postpone the remaining agency discussions, and charter a workgroup to come up with criteria and rank and evaluate the agencies' budget requests, and discuss it at the next meeting. Chair Wilkerson was interested in Jim's suggestion, and noted that he is waiting for the policy groups to advise the Forum's direction. The Chair also explained that agencies need to emphasize areas of their budgets where there is a concern about receiving funding. Terry added that a possible role for the Forum is to provide a service for policy groups; proposing that the Forum could assist in screening projects and programs, and give the policy groups recommendations.

Chair Wilkerson explained that Ken Dzinbal is ready to work with the Puget Sound Partnership and other regional entities to identify their needs from the Forum. If the Forum wants to take this route, working with Scott Redman, or Alex Conley and Julie Morgan, the Forum's staff direction is much clearer. Alex Conley agreed with the idea of developing a proposed process for working with regional organizations, and would like to see a timeline and structure that coincides with the regional processes.

Chair Wilkerson asked the Forum if it would be beneficial to have Ken form a small workgroup between now and September to determine how the Monitoring Forum can serve as a screen during the budget process, and discuss it at the September 3rd meeting. The group could also assess how regional organizations can become allies with the Forum in the budget process.

Julie Morgan asked how the regional organizations will benefit from prioritizing data gaps. Ken responded that asking about tier 1 data gaps could become criteria for the Forum's process. Jim Cahill explained to Julie that Upper Columbia is ahead of many of the other regional organizations, and to work with the state and federal agencies to find funding for the data gaps. Chair Wilkerson noted that Upper Columbia could serve as a model for identifying and prioritizing data gaps in their respective region. Kaleen asserted that state agencies should be included in the work groups and contribute to the group. Chair Wilkerson agreed.

Kaleen asked for likely volunteers for the Forum workgroup. Josh Baldi, Julie Morgan, Tim Smith, Terry Wright, Jeff Breckel, Jim Cahill, Jim Cowles, Craig Partridge, Alex Conley, and Carol Smith volunteered.

Chair Wilkerson noted that the Forum would like to join the Puget Sound Partnership's policy forum and create a strategy that works collaboratively with the regional organizations. The Chair noted that the Forum is worried about putting data systems together. Kaleen added that the Forum can utilize Salmon and Watershed Information Management Technical Advisory Committee (SWIMTAC) to assist in the process.

Chair Wilkerson and Kaleen Cottingham announced that the next meeting will take place in the Natural Resources Building on September 3, 2008.

ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 3:52 p.m.

Bill Wilkerson, Chair

Next Meeting: September 3rd, 2008
 Room 175 A & B, Natural Resources Building, Olympia