

REVISED Salmon Recovery Funding Board Meeting Agenda

August 26, 2014

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 the 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: Wendy Loosle, Board Liaison, at the address above or at wendy.loosle@rco.wa.gov. Please send comments by 3:00 p.m. on Friday, August 22 so they can be distributed to board members.

Public comment will be limited to 3 minutes per person.

Special Accommodations: If you need special accommodations to participate in this meeting, please notify us at 360/725-3943 or TDD 360/902-1996.

Tuesday, August 26

OPENING AND WELCOME

10:00 a.m.	Call to Order	<i>Chair</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Determine QuorumApprove board meeting minutes from June 2014	
New item as of 8/25/2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Designate board sub-committee to advise the Director on a potential substantial Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) cost increase (for action in early September)	<i>Kaleen</i>

DECISIONS

10:05 a.m.	1. Funding for 2015-17 Biennium	<i>Kaleen Cottingham Brian Abbott</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Overview of the State's Fiscal PositionOFM's Budget Reduction Exercise and General Fund ImpactsCapital Budget Requests<ul style="list-style-type: none">SRFB State FundsSRFB Federal FundsOther Salmon Recovery Programs (Amounts determined by others)Operating Budget Requests<ul style="list-style-type: none">Board Funding Requests and Priorities<ul style="list-style-type: none">De-listing MonitoringLead Entity CapacityHabitat Work Schedule	

Public Comment: Please limit comments to three minutes.

11:00 a.m.	2. Communication Plan Follow-Up	<i>Brian Abbott</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Staff Recommendations	

Public Comment: Please limit comments to three minutes.

11:30 a.m. ADJOURN

Next regular meeting: September 17-18, 2014, Winthrop, WA

Salmon Recovery Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR KALEEN COTTINGHAM

Meeting Date: August 2014
Title: Salmon-Related Budget for 2015-2017
Prepared By: Brian Abbott, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office Executive Coordinator

Summary

The Recreation and Conservation Office must submit its 2015-17 biennial budget (operating and capital) to the Office of Financial Management on September 12, 2014. Staff is asking the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) to approve several budget requests in both the capital and operating budgets.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

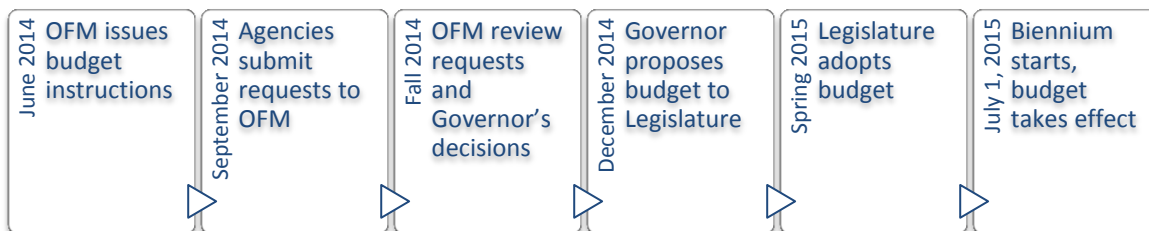
- ☒ Request for Decision
- ☐ Request for Direction
- ☐ Briefing

Background

State Budget Process

Washington State enacts budgets on a two-year cycle, beginning on July 1 of each odd-numbered year. The budget approved for the 2015-17 biennium will be effective from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017.

The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) must submit its 2015-17 biennial budget proposal to the Office of Financial Management (OFM) by September 12. OFM will then analyze the proposal and work with the Governor to develop his budget recommendation. By law, the Governor must propose a biennial budget in December. The following diagram shows the process.



Budget Outlook for 2015-17: Operating Budget

The financial outlook for the next biennium continues to be uncertain. The current estimate – based solely on the need to provide increased funding for basic education to comply with court rulings – is that the operating budget will face a shortfall of close to \$2 billion. Even though it is projected there will be additional revenue collections, there are also greater projected increases in pension costs, debt service, health care, policy, carry forward, and maintenance enhancements. The most recent update to the revenue

forecast was flat; further updates are scheduled in September and November. The November forecast will be used by the Governor as he makes his final budget decisions.

OFM is requiring agencies to submit their general fund budgets with a reduction 15 percent below current levels. This applies to the state operating budget programs not protected by the state constitutional provisions or by federal law (only one-third of the operating budget is not required by the state constitution or federal law). RCO must prioritize the budget reductions and submit budget requests building off of this lower budget base. OFM has directed agencies to "severely limit requests for new or expanded programs or for new policy initiatives."

The general fund reduction could have a significant impact on the Salmon recovery programs which includes the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office, Lead Entities, the Board, and a portion of the administration of the RCO.

Table 1. RCO Current Operating Budget and budget with 15% Reduction

Budget Item	2013-2015 Current Budget	2015-2017 Budget Reduction Exercise 15% reduction	Difference
Lead Entity	\$907,229	\$757,942	\$149,287
Governor's Salmon Recovery Office	\$506,473	\$430,502	\$75,971
RCO Salmon Administration/Board	\$265,298	\$238,706	\$26,592
Total	\$1,679,000	\$1,427,150	\$251,850

Budget Outlook for 2015-17: Capital Budget

The outlook for the upcoming capital budget is directly related to the operating budget. At this point the outlook is uncertain. The projected available bond capacity for the entire 2015-17 capital budget is \$1.9 billion. This is an increase from the last biennium; however the 2015-17 biennium will include new challenges due to the school funding lawsuit. There is the potential for a significant amount of bonds to be appropriated for smaller class sizes and all-day kindergarten. The final decision will likely not be known until the end of the 2015 legislative session.

Requests Overview

In developing recommendations for the operating budget related to salmon activities and programs, RCO has developed the required 15% reduction, as well as three "decision packages" to provide state general funds to support discrete salmon recovery efforts. Those "decision packages" are: 1) Add back the dollars reduced from lead entities in the 15% reduction exercise; 2) Add general fund dollars to return to earlier state-federal funding ratios for lead entity capacity so as to improve our competitiveness for federal funds; 3) Add general fund dollars for an assessment of how to manage the Habitat Work Schedule data system in the event federal funds are reduced or eliminated.

In addition, RCO is recommending several capital budget requests related to salmon, including the funding to continue providing match for the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF).

Operating Budget Requests

Lead Entity Capacity

There are 25 lead entities that perform an essential role in salmon recovery in Washington State. The lead entities are integral to the "Washington Way" of empowering local communities' participation in salmon recovery. The lead entities are responsible for recruiting, reviewing, and prioritizing projects funded by the board. They are responsible for making sure local communities are engaged and supportive of these projects. They are also responsible for developing the three year work plans for future projects consistent with the approved regional recovery plans.

Established in law (RCW 77.85), lead entities consist of:

- A lead entity coordinator (staff person)
- A committee of local, technical experts (technical committee)
- A committee of local citizens representing a variety of interests (citizen committee)
- A lead entity grant administrator (the fiscal agent)

One of the board's objectives is to enhance the current capacity for lead entities. However, since the lead entity program was first created in 1999, the board has not been able to significantly increase funding for the program.

The first RCO recommended "decision package" is to add back the funds for lead entities reduced in the 15% budget exercise. This equates to a request to add \$149,287 of general funds back into RCO's budget.

The second RCO recommended "decision package" is to add \$770,000 of general funds to RCO's budget to rebalance the state-federal funding for lead entities, reaching the historically approved level of a \$1.67 million state match to federal funds.

Lead entities are funded by a combination of state and federal funds awarded by contract approved by the board. Originally, when the lead entities were administered by WDFW, they were supported 48% with state funds and 52% with federal PCSRF funds. Beginning in 2009, state funds were reduced and the board agreed to offset that reduction with federal funds. The proportion of state and federal funds has changed over time, with state funding increasingly a smaller piece of the total as Washington weathered the economic downturn.

Overall funding for lead entity capacity has not kept pace with inflation and several lead entities struggle to maintain effectiveness. In the current biennium (2013-15) the lead entity basic capacity funding is made up of 27% from state general fund and 73% from federal funds.

In 2012, NOAA changed the application requirements and now applicants must separate their request into three priority categories:

1. Projects that address factors limiting the productivity of Pacific salmon listed under the Endangered Species Act or those populations necessary for the exercise of tribal treaty fishing rights or native subsistence fishing.
2. Effectiveness monitoring of habitat restoration actions at a watershed or larger scale for ESA listed salmon, status of monitoring projects that directly contribute to the population viability assessment for ESA-listed salmon, or monitoring necessary for the exercise of tribal-treaty rights or native-subsistence fishing on salmon.

3. Other projects consistent with the Congressional authorization with demonstrated need for PCSRF funding.

Capacity funding falls in the third priority category. Our competitive position with the other five states that compete for these federal funds is at a disadvantage because we use federal funds to support these capacity expenses. The other states load a majority of their PCSRF requests into the first priority. RCO's budget proposal is intended to rebalance state and federal funding in order to regain our competitive edge for these federal funds.

The continued downturn in federal funding and pressures on the state budget could have a significant impact on the future capacity of lead entities. At this critical juncture, RCO is proposing to request state funding on behalf of the lead entities in the amount of approximately \$1.67 million to regain our competitive edge for federal project funds and to continue the lead entities' important work in community-based salmon restoration.

Table 2. Historic Funding Levels Lead Entity Program

Biennium	State Appropriation	Federal Funds	Total	Percent of State Funding
2005-2007	\$1,625,000	\$1,697,000	\$3,322,000	48.92%
2007-2009	\$1,625,000	\$1,787,598	\$3,412,598	47.62%
2009-2011	\$1,213,972	\$2,036,028	\$3,250,000	37.35%
2011-2013	\$1,010,061	\$2,140,939	\$3,151,000	32.11%
2013-2015	\$907,229	\$2,440,772	\$3,348,000	27.09%
2015-2017	\$1,677,000*	\$1,677,000*	\$3,354,000*	50%*

*Proposed for 2015-17 biennium

Habitat Work Schedule

The third RCO recommended "decision package" is to ask for \$55,000 in general funds to assess the Habitat Work schedule looking at its potential benefits, logistics, ease of moving to a non-proprietary software program, and whether to make sure a change in the event that federal funding is eliminated or significantly reduced.

The Habitat Work Schedule (HWS) is a data system administered by RCO. All 25 lead entities and seven salmon recovery regions use HWS to track, sequence, and report their salmon recovery projects. These groups have invested significant time and resources into the data system, as has the state, in order to monitor and report the progress of salmon recovery efforts (e.g., the State of Salmon Report).

HWS is funded exclusively by a grant from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). This funding has been reduced from \$643,000 in 2012 to \$609,130 in 2014. In recent years, USFWS indicated that this funding was not intended as long-term operational funding and that we should expect it will be reduced or eliminated.

A further complication is that the HWS system is a proprietary program owned by a private vendor. RCO uses the USFWS grant to pay for the right to use the software (the licensing agreement), maintenance, training, software improvements or enhancements, user support, and data quality assurance.

During a 2011 review, the state's Chief Information Officer noted several areas where RCO should improve this contractor/vendor arrangement. They questioned the cost of HWS and whether the state was best served by a proprietary system. Others have questioned the platform on which HWS is built and whether it could be better integrated with RCO's PRISM data system for grant management. HWS is not currently a duplication of PRISM, as it tracks more than just RCO-funded projects including data for projects funded by others, conceptual future projects, data about fish and habitat changes related to projects, and progress towards meeting salmon recovery goals.

Given the uncertainty of future federal funds, it is prudent to further strategize how to address the need for this or a similar database for salmon recovery projects. RCO is aimed at being prepared for the potential loss of federal funding for HWS (Table 3). RCO recommends submitting a budget request in the amount of \$55,000 to assess the potential benefits, logistics, ease of moving to a non-proprietary software program, and whether to make such a change in the event that federal funding is eliminated or significantly reduced.

Table 3. Historic Funding Levels for HWS

Biennium	Amount Requested	Governor's Budget	Appropriation	Federally Funded
----- <i>Figures in Millions</i> -----				
2009-11	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1.2 (FFY10-11)
2011-13	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1.2 (FFY12-13)
2013-15	\$1.3	\$0	\$0	\$1.2 (FFY14-15)

Capital Budget Request

Bond Funding Capacity

The capital budget bond capacity is expected to remain similar to the current biennium (\$1.9 billion) because it is based on the stabilized revenue and interest costs. Some additional capacity is available because a 2014 supplemental capital budget was not adopted. However, pressures from K-12 educational needs (class size and all-day kindergarten) and the operating budget deficit may decrease the amount of bonds available for regularly funded programs such as the RCO's Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) and salmon grant programs.

RCO administers four salmon recovery related grant programs: Salmon Recovery Funding Board grant program (SRFB), Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP), Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Program (PSAR), and the Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFFPP). The board has exclusive authority over the SRFB grant program and shares authority over the PSAR Program with the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP). RCO jointly manages the ESRP program with WDFW and PSP and jointly manages FFFPP with DNR and WDFW. This memo will focus on the SRFB grant program. Budget requests for the other grant programs will be set in consultation with the other managing agencies.

Salmon Recovery Funding Board Grant Program

Several factors influence the amount of funding RCO requests for the state portion of the SRFB grant program:

1. The amount needed to match federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funds (PCSRF);

2. Lower PCSRF award in recent years;
3. The number of project applications and their requested funding amounts;
4. Commitment to fund projects within the Intensively Monitored Watershed (IMW), and;
5. The amount of available bond funding.

Federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funds Match

PCSRF provides a significant portion of the funds necessary for salmon recovery in Washington and requires a minimum 33 percent match from the state. The state bond funds appropriated for the SRFB grant program are used for this match and, on occasion, a portion of the bonds appropriated for the PSAR and FFFPP programs.

If the PCSRF awards received during the 2015-17 biennium are the same as the current biennium, we would receive \$42 million in federal funds, which would require a minimum state match of \$13.86 million.

Given the current NOAA guidelines, which have an annual grant maximum of \$25 million, the highest PCSRF award would be \$50 million, which would require a minimum match of \$16.5 million. The historical average biennial federal award to Washington State has been \$51.2 million (Table 4). The PCSRF grant amount is announced annually in August.

Table 4. Historic Funding Levels for Salmon Projects

Biennium	State Request	State Appropriation	Federal Award	State Match Required
<i>----- Figures in Millions -----</i>				
2003-05	\$36.0	\$12.0	\$53.4	\$17.6
2005-07	\$30.0	\$18.0	\$47.9	\$15.8
2007-09	\$42.0	\$18.0	\$46.9	\$15.5
2009-11	\$24.0	\$10.0	\$56.5	\$18.6
2011-13	\$19.8	\$10.0	\$45	\$14.9
2013-15	\$40.0	\$15.0	Estimate: \$45	\$14.9

Requests for Grant Funding

The number and amount of grant requests for salmon recovery projects is a factor in determining the amount of money that should be requested for the next biennium.

In total the salmon grant programs only fund about one-third of the salmon recovery habitat projects needed, according to a study commissioned by regional recovery organizations in March 2011. Also, project design and construction costs have risen significantly over the last decade due to inflation and increases in project complexity and size.

Staff Recommendations

Staff is recommending the Board approve the following budget requests for submittal to the Office of Financial Management and Governor's Office for inclusion in the Governor's budget:

1. **Lead Entity Capacity:** Request to add back \$149,287 of state general funds reduced for lead entities in the 15% reduction exercise and request up to \$770,000 in state general funds in the operating budget to support and continue the role of the lead entities' in recruiting, reviewing and prioritizing community-based salmon restoration projects for submittal to the board for funding. This will return the funding to a 50-50 ratio of state to federal funds.
2. **Habitat Work Schedule:** Request up to \$55,000 in state general funds in the operating budget to assess and strategize the future of the Habitat Work Schedule data system in the event that federal funding is eliminated or significantly reduced.
3. **Salmon Recovery Funding Board Grant Program:** Request up to \$40 million in general obligation bonds in the capital budget for the state portion of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board grant program to protect or restore salmon habitat.
4. **Other Salmon Grant Funds:** Work with the Puget Sound Partnership, the Department of Natural Resources, and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to include their recommended levels of funding in RCO's budget request for the three jointly-managed grant programs: Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Program, the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program, and the Family Forest Fish Passage Programs.

Next Steps

Based on the decision of the board, RCO staff will prepare operating and capital budget requests for submittal OFM in early September.

Salmon Recovery Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR KALEEN COTTINGHAM

Meeting Date: August 26, 2014
Title: Communications Strategy Proposal
Prepared By: Brian Abbott, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office Executive Coordinator

Summary

The communication plan funded by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board was completed in early May. Staff from the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office will provide the SRFB a series of recommendations laying out next steps for implementing a communications strategy.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Request for Decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Direction
<input type="checkbox"/>	Briefing

Background

Pyramid Communications was selected after a competitive procurement process to provide recommendations regarding salmon recovery communications and messaging. They met twice with a workgroup representing various parts of the salmon recovery network including the board, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), regions, lead entities, the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO), and the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO).

The final communication plan was delivered in May. GSRO extended Pyramid's contract and asked them to explore the other communication plan concepts for which the board had expressed interest. At the June board meeting, Pyramid Communications staff Barbara Cairns and John Hoyt summarized the communications strategy, its findings and recommendations, and suggested actions.

Pyramid identified two primary goals: 1) tell a common story visually and make the message immediately apparent and relevant to the general public; 2) Recognize that the funding landscape and cast of champions has changed since 1999, and amplify the voice of salmon recovery by targeting essential decision makers. The plan suggests regional-scale changes to communications including common messaging and an aligned design standard.

The board directed GSRO to prepare funding options for aligned communications, marketing, and outreach for discussion at the August board meeting.

Recommendations and Implementation Strategy

Proposed Recommendations

GSRO convened members of the workgroup and other interested parties to prioritize the plan's recommendations and provide input for a proposal to the board. The proposed priority recommendations are shown in Table 1 and are considered to be the first steps in implementing a comprehensive communications strategy. The board will need to decide whether to fund all the proposed activities now, to phase them over a longer period of time, or to select just a few to implement at this time.

Table 1: Proposed Recommendations

Proposed Recommendation	Desired Outcomes	Proposed Activities
1. Improve Internal Network Communications		
a. Facilitated work group of leaders representing partners (regions, lead entities, RFEs, WDFW, GSRO/RCO et al.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forum to understand issues and perspectives and to build trust• Well-articulated purpose, structure and commitments	Fund a neutral third-party facilitator to convene and manage this group.
b. Annual progress meeting on salmon recovery with WDFW Executive Managers, Regional Recovery Organizations, and NOAA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding of WDFW priorities for salmon recovery, to inform communications with funders• Regional conversation on how habitat recovery investments can work with hatchery and harvest decisions	Fund a neutral third-party facilitator to convene this annual meeting and manage the conversations.
2. Strengthen Capacity of Regions to Lead		
a. Recovery Board briefings on how to use the communications plan and message framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get buy-in and commitment from regional recovery boards and partners to move forward with a locally driven and developed communication strategy that complements a statewide state wide message.	Conduct up to seven briefings for regional recovery boards (including lead entities and other interested parties) to explain utility and importance of communications strategy
b. Region-specific communications plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communications tools and training that are specific to each region's unique needs	Cost-share development of region-specific communications strategy and training

Proposed Recommendation	Desired Outcomes	Proposed Activities
c. Training on how to use the communications plan and message framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants throughout the state empowered as ambassadors for salmon recovery and carry consistent messages 	Fund communications implementation training for staff of regional organizations, lead entities, agencies, and RFEGs
3. Branding and Creating a Visual Framework		
a. Short-term: info-graphic that illustrates the world of salmon recovery in Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive and useful tool for communicating about salmon recovery in Washington 	Fund graphic design of info-graphic
b. Longer-term: clearly recognizable visual identity for salmon recovery in Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated work group recognition of benefits and agreement on branding and visual framework 	Designate as desired outcome of facilitated workgroup
4. Update the Lead Entity Directory		
a. Short term: basic update with additional information on regions, tribes, RFEGs, roles of WDFW, GSRO, SRFB, et al.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive and useful document for communicating about salmon recovery in Washington 	RCO and GSRO staff works with lead entities and other partners to update existing document.
b. Longer term: determine needs and develop tools, case statements, or documents to illustrate how salmon recovery works in Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salmon recovery community has the documents and tools needed for communications 	Designate as desired outcome of facilitated work group

Implementation Proposal

GSRO, members of the work group and other interested parties recommend the timeline and funding shown in Table 2 to implement the proposed recommendations. As noted above, the board will need to decide whether to fund all the proposed activities now, to phase them over a longer period of time, or to select just a few to implement at this time.

Table 2: Implementation of Proposed Recommendations

Proposed Recommendation	Service and Tasks	Timeline	Cost Estimate
1. Improve Internal Network Communications			
a. Facilitated workgroup of leaders	<u>Facilitator/Consultant</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate, organize, develop structure, articulate purpose, secure commitments, provide logistical support 	Through December 2015 (minimum)	\$65,000
b. Annual progress meeting	<u>Facilitator/Consultant</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop agenda, arrange logistics, facilitate annual meeting(s) 	Annually (funding for 2 meetings)	\$15,000
2. Strengthen Capacity of Regions to Lead			
a. Briefings on how to use the communications plan and message framework	<u>Consultant</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct up to seven briefings for regional recovery boards (including lead entities and other interested parties) Explain utility and importance of communications strategy and how a region specific approach would be extremely beneficial 	Through April 2015	\$21,000
b. Region-specific communications plans	<u>Consultant(s) selected by regional organizations</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build out and implement region-specific communications strategy. Must be in partnership with lead entity and other local partners. Regions show commitment via matching funds and 	By December 2015	\$80,000 ¹

¹ Up to \$20,000 per region matching funds; assumes a staggered implementation as some regions may not be ready to proceed right away.

Proposed Recommendation	Service and Tasks	Timeline	Cost Estimate
	implementation schedule.		
c. Region-specific training	<u>Consultant/Trainer</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop region-specific trainings once regional communications strategies completed 	By June 2016	\$50,000
3. Branding and Creating a Visual Framework			
a. Short-term: info-graphic that illustrates the world of salmon recovery in Washington	<u>Consultant/expert graphic artist</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the salmon recovery network diagram that is innovative and useful in both electronic and hard copy formats 	By December 2014	\$8,000
b. Longer-term: clearly recognizable visual identity for salmon recovery in Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be one of the outcomes of the facilitated work group 	TBD	TBD
4. Update the Lead Entity Directory			
a. Short term: basic update with additional information	<u>In-house plus graphic support</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mostly data-gathering, writing, and editing by RCO and GSRO staff with external graphic design support. 	By December 2014	\$5,000 ²
b. Longer term: determine needs and develop tools, case statements, or documents to illustrate how salmon recovery works in Washington	<u>TBD</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be one of the outcomes of the facilitated work group 	TBD	TBD

² Depends on size of print run.

Board Decision Requested

The board is being asked to approve up to \$244,000 in project return funds to carry out the four recommendations outlined in this memo. The board will need to decide whether to fund all the proposed activities now, to phase them over a longer period of time, or to select just a few to implement at this time.

Analysis

The board's primary mission is to provide and develop funding programs for salmon recovery. Several times over the last decade, the board has discussed its role and purpose in salmon recovery. The communication plan provides a broad framework for the board, regional organizations, and lead entities to build on.

Based on the recommendations in the communications plan and in cooperation with the work group, GSRO has developed a proposal with four recommendations for the SRFB to consider funding. Fully implementing these recommendations will create a structure that will help salmon recovery partners speak with one voice, and create an environment of cooperation and innovation to address strategic salmon recovery priorities.

Next Steps

The communication plan is included as Attachment A. Also attached is a salmon recovery message framework and a summary of findings and recommendations prepared by Pyramid Communications (Attachments B and C).

Attachments

- A. Communications Plan
- B. Salmon Recovery Message Framework
- C. Summary of Findings and Recommendations



GOVERNOR'S SALMON RECOVERY OFFICE & COUNCIL OF REGIONS COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN | MAY 2014



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this communications plan is to assist Washington State's seven regional salmon recovery organizations to continue to build support for and coordinate the implementation of locally-written, federally approved, scientifically credible recovery and sustainability plans for at-risk salmon and steelhead (six of them for ESA-listed salmonids).

This communications plan with message framework, findings, and recommendations report should be of additional assistance to other members of Washington State's infrastructure for regionally-led salmon recovery: the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO) and Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO); the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB); and the Lead Entities, now organized as the Washington Salmon Coalition (WSC), who work within regions to coordinate and implement on the ground salmon recovery projects.

The plan was developed by Pyramid Communications and based on workshops, meetings, interviews, research, and our own experience with salmon recovery in the state of Washington. Our work was guided by a communications working group assembled by the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office: Brian Abbott (GSRO); Jeff Breckel (Lower Columbia Salmon Recovery Board); Derek Van Marter (Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board); Alicia Lawver (Puget Sound Partnership); Darcy Batura (WSC); Susan Zemek (RCO); Nancy Biery (SRFB); and Jennifer Quan (WDFW). Additional assistance was provided by Alex Conley (Yakima Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board); Jeanette Dorner (Puget Sound Partnership Salmon Program Manager); Miles Batchelder (Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership); Scott Brewer (Hood Canal Coordinating Council); and Steve Martin (Snake River Recovery Board). Methodology is described in the attached Findings and Recommendations Report.

OVERVIEW

Robust salmon migrating in healthy rivers connect the marine environment and the communities of our coasts to those of our mountains and high deserts. When the decline of multiple species of salmon caused the federal government to list them as threatened and endangered, the citizens of Washington state got to restore salmon and the rivers, forests, shorelines, and other features of the natural world upon which they and we depend.

This collective and local response to federal ESA listings in the late 1990's was unprecedented. Washington State created a new infrastructure of regional salmon recovery organizations to coordinate the efforts of thousands of local professionals and volunteers working in concert with federal, tribal, and state agency scientists and policy makers to create our own regional salmon recovery and sustainability plans.

With the plans completed, the regional organizations have turned their focus to implementation. They review and make recommendations to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board for projects submitted by Lead Entities that will help implement recovery. They have created well-respected processes for public participation. They partner with other organizations to conduct necessary science; they coordinate the efforts of multiple government agencies; and they monitor progress and work with the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office to report biennially to the legislature and public. Funding for the regional organizations is sourced from the federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund. Washington State competes with four other states for this funding. Some regions have begun to diversify their sources of financial support.

The story of this unique approach and new infrastructure was widely reported and well-known in the early years when the ESA listings themselves were received as dramatic news, as was the decision to craft our own recovery plans. But in the fifteen years since, as the regions and local leads have been implementing their plans, reporting on the story has shifted and become more about individual projects or threats, fights among interest groups, or questions about how much is being spent and when we'll be done. There's also a lot of confusion inherent in the salmon recovery story. It's difficult to explain how we can continue to allow harvest on listed species; most people don't realize that there are different species of salmon and within those species, different Ecologically Significant Units that were listed. Very few understand the complications surrounding the use of hatchery fish to supplement fisheries and, in some cases, help rebuild naturally spawning populations. The general public also has limited understanding of the co-manager relationship between the treaty tribes and the state of Washington—another unusual government arrangement.

In part, this is because there was little perceived need on the part of the regions to keep telling this complex story. We'd been successful: the lawsuits and economic upheaval that we feared ESA listings would prompt did not come to pass. Federal funding for implementation was all but assured by our federal congressional delegation who understood the necessity of regional coordination to ensure funds were effectively spent. The regions left the storytelling to the partner organizations and individuals who undertook the salmon recovery projects and to the representative state agencies to make the case for continued federal and state funding.

Fifteen years in, it's time to retell the story. Thousands of people across our state are working together to restore salmon that we might recover and protect a Pacific Northwest in which we want to continue to live. We want to be able to explain to county, legislative, state, federal, congressional, and tribal decision makers and their constituents what the past 15 years have bought us, and what multiple benefits will continue to accrue to all of us now and into the future from an investment in the restoration of salmon and the unique landscapes and waterways they inhabit.

GOAL

To ensure continued support for scientifically credible, regionally-led, locally implemented salmon recovery in Washington State so that we might enjoy abundant and healthy salmon populations, all the multiple additional benefits of functional ecosystems, and a Pacific Northwest we recognize into the future.

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

The recommended activities in this plan are designed to help regional directors and others in Washington's salmon recovery network work toward the following eight objectives and strategies:

OBJECTIVE #1: COMMUNITY MEMBERS KNOW THE MULTIPLE BENEFITS OF INVESTING IN SALMON RECOVERY.

Strategies:

- Articulate the multiple tangible benefits of investment in salmon recovery, locally
- Stay positive and future-oriented, but be clear about the cost of not acting

OBJECTIVE #2: KEY DECISION MAKERS ADVOCATE FOR AND FUND REGIONALLY LED SALMON RECOVERY.

Strategies:

- Provide clear, consistent, usable updates to elected and agency officials and staff and their influencers, primarily those in the local media
- Invite elected officials to salmon recovery projects to witness multiple benefits
- Help regional stakeholders understand who makes decisions that impact recovery

OBJECTIVE #3: LEAD ENTITY STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS REMAIN ENTHUSIASTIC, COMMITTED, AND RELIABLE.

Strategies:

- Ensure lead entity views are well-incorporated in regional decision-making
- Create opportunities for recognition and celebration
- Provide staff and volunteers clear information and relevant communications tools

OBJECTIVE #4: PRIVATE LANDOWNERS CONTINUE TO EMBRACE AND VOLUNTARILY IMPLEMENT SALMON HABITAT RECOVERY STRATEGIES.

Strategies:

- Provide a platform for landowners who undertake recovery projects to tell their stories
- Foster improved conversation and relationship between landowners and agency staff
- Continue to support NGO partners working with private landowners

OBJECTIVE #5: STATE AGENCY ACTIONS RELATED TO SALMON HEALTH ARE FULLY FUNDED AND MORE CLOSELY INTEGRATED WITH APPROVED REGIONAL RECOVERY PLANS.

Strategies:

- Educate all stakeholders on the need for full funding and implementation of Hatchery Reform principles of All-H integration and program change recommendations
- Continue to encourage better integration at the regional scale of DNR, Ecology, and WDFW activities related to hatchery and harvest management, water quality and quantity, forest health, and other actions impacting salmon recovery.

OBJECTIVE #6: FEDERAL AGENCY OBLIGATIONS TO SALMON RECOVERY ARE BEING IMPLEMENTED AND ARE WELL UNDERSTOOD BY AFFECTED COMMUNITIES.

Strategies:

- Provide forum for federal agency staff to update communities on their plans and responsibilities
- Continue to include participation of federal agency staff in regional collaboration

OBJECTIVE #7: RELATIONSHIPS WITH TRIBES AT REGIONAL SCALE ARE BASED ON MUTUAL TRUST AND SHARED ACCOMPLISHMENT.

Strategies:

- Understand and communicate tribal salmon recovery plans and actions
- Help stakeholders better understand the co-manager relationship
- Work with tribes at regional scale to review recommendations for integrating habitat, hatchery, and harvest decisions for greater recovery benefits

OBJECTIVE #8: PROFESSIONALS TASKED WITH SALMON RECOVERY SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE AND WORK TOWARD COMMONLY UNDERSTOOD OBJECTIVES.

Strategies:

- Coalesce as the network of salmon recovery professionals (RCO, GSRO, Regional Boards, SRFB, Lead Entities) created 15 years ago to identify and pursue shared priorities
- Invest in better mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities and opportunities with WDFW Olympia and regional leaders
- Use the Message Framework: Frame the story of salmon recovery with our shared values, identify the multiple benefits of investments in recovery, and then explain the projects and the financial asks

PRIORITY AUDIENCES

Support from the following audiences is essential to achievement of the key objectives and employment of identified strategies above and the priority actions, that follow.

Tier one audiences are foundational. Once these are updated and on message, they can become effective messengers to influence tier two and tier three audiences.

TIER ONE

- The seven regional salmon recovery organizations (with tribal and county representatives)
- Lead Entities (Washington Salmon Coalition)
- Salmon Recovery Funding Board
- GSRO/RCO
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups
- Governor's natural resources policy staff

TIER TWO

- Washington legislative leaders relevant to salmon recovery
- Washington Congressional Delegation
- WA Department of Ecology; DNR; and other state agencies impacting salmon recovery
- Fishing and other recreational organizations
- Local media

TIER THREE

- Private landowners
- Federal Agencies, primarily NOAA, USFS, USFWS, EPA, and Army COE
- Potential partners
- Civic and community groups, eg: Rotary, faith, veterans, school

KEY MESSENGERS & MESSAGES

Regional Salmon Recovery Boards, GSRO/RCO, Lead Entities, and the SRFB will need to identify within their own organizations whom is primarily responsible for sharing the story of salmon recovery in Washington State.

It is recommended that all messengers use the attached message framework to introduce the specific content or points they want to convey—whether they be intended as informational or persuasive.

By framing local and regional or organizational messages in the same way, we can amplify the impact of our story. We want multiple messengers to be understood as representing a movement of many, not just many messengers with many different stories or requests.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

The following four sets of actions are recommended to implement the strategies and achieve the outcomes identified above. Individual actions may help implement multiple strategies.

1. IMPROVE INTERNAL NETWORK COMMUNICATIONS

The Council of Regions and the Washington Salmon Coalition are important new elements for coordination and support, but the network as a whole needs and wants better synchronization and internal communication before it can best tell its story to others.

- Create a biennial system to identify and communicate shared statewide priorities—perhaps in tandem with the biennial State of the Salmon report—which would then lead to identifying target decision makers and empowering key messengers and influencers to carry requests and expectations forward.
- Improve WDFW and other state agencies' understanding of regionally-led salmon recovery and better synchronize with the WDFW regional offices
 - Meet with WDFW to scope a process for regional scale conversations about how habitat recovery investments can work in tandem with hatchery and harvest decisions to recover at-risk salmonids.
 - Help educate legislative and congressional funders and the public about the need for fully funding WDFW salmon recovery programs, as well as regional salmon recovery organizations.
- Train key messengers (RCO, GSRO, SRFB, WSC) in the use of the Message Framework and how to tailor it to their needs.
 - SRFB, GSRO, RCO, and the regions all need to update their communications to make use of unifying language in the message framework.
- Prepare for May 2015 Salmon Recovery Conference.
 - Present message framework and communications plan and conduct message and communications training for interested participants

2. STRENGTHEN CAPACITY FOR REGIONS TO LEAD

Regional organizations are essential as resources and conveners to the community of professionals and volunteers working on recovery, and increasingly are viewed as trusted sources of information and safe places for conversation about natural resource issues of concern to the broader community.

- Regional directors and everyone associated with the organization need to be able to explain the purpose of salmon recovery and its multiple benefits for their communities.
 - Convene lead entities and RFEs, other partners to synchronize regional priorities.
 - Create regional and local messages using the message framework as the foundation.
 - Convene staff to identify communications expectations for the organization and for individual staff for the coming year, and write them into performance contracts.
- When regional board members—tribal leaders and county commissioners—speak with one voice in Washington D.C. or Olympia, the power of their shared voices is unmatched.
 - Look for areas of agreement on regional recovery boards and create opportunities for them to share that with elected officials and other decision makers.
- Identify the top 20 influencers in your region who need to understand the value of what the regional organizations and their partners are doing. Commit to talk to or spend time with two of them each month.
- Provide forums at appropriate level of formality and scale for tribal leaders or staff to share their salmon recovery project work.
- Convene lead entities and other partners at regional scale to understand status of all-H integration (focus of conference) in each region, and develop questions and recommendations to take to the conference.
- Convene or co-host as advisable forums for discussion of recovery-related issues of particular importance to the community.

3. BUILD RELATIONSHIPS THAT EXTEND YOUR REACH

Salmon recovery is a lifetime commitment and will require all of us to make changes. We need the support of relationships and community with all stakeholders to succeed.

- Participate in local recovery-related events in your communities. Create additional opportunities where possible and strategic.
 - Create a calendar of events that mimics the salmon's life history; organize or join others' celebration of homecoming, spring planting of refugia, hatchery releases and out-migrations, and fishing.
 - Build alliances with local civic, business, veterans, first-responders, or faith-based organizations.
 - Visit a variety of recovery projects—on tribal, private, public lands, at dams and on farms, take partners with you.
 - Create a forum (on-line, via social media platform, earned media or recognition-event) for partners to tell their stories; share those stories with your network.

- Identify with project partners the best way to keep potentially affected citizens informed consistently and proactively as large projects are being designed and before implementation.
 - Use social media, post card mailers, radio talk show interviews, or other means of communicating that will most likely reach potentially affected stakeholders.

4. CREATE AND USE EFFECTIVE MESSAGES AND TOOLS

Creating the necessary tools that effectively reach key audiences is essential. Tools that articulate agreed upon messages in a simple, concise, and visually effective manner will go a long way to engage audiences we have to reach.

- Use attached Message Framework across all mediums (materials, speeches, media, etc.) to introduce consistently the rationale, benefits, and organizational structure of salmon recovery in Washington State.
- Prepare and share necessary informational tools with partners and key messengers for target audiences including:
 - Update diagram that illustrates the relationships between Lead Entities, Regional Recovery Organizations, GSRO and RCO, and the SRFB;
 - Expand Lead Entities Directory to include all members of the network and explain how the network functions;
 - Prepare infographic fact sheets for easy distribution online or in person;
 - Prepare briefing pages on local priorities that can easily be repurposed for use electronically;
 - Prepare simple maps that identify projects within the regions and highlight the migratory routes of at-risk salmon;
 - Post 1-2 minute video clips or links on regional and lead entity, GSRO websites to enable people to see salmon and the excitement they generate up close;
 - Develop on-line regional media packets with up to date, digestible information and contact information for reporters.
- Design, by region, social and earned media strategies tied to key local priorities.
- Consider new logo, font, color palette, design framework to hold and amplify the story and infrastructure of salmon recovery in Washington State.

TIMELINE

Communications efforts designed to achieve specific outcomes from specific events or decisions are most effective. Recognizing that regional recovery organizations have little capacity at present for communications and that most of the responsibility for this will fall to the directors, the following calendar is designed to help distribute the intensity of the effort over the next year.

Each of these milestones is an opportunity to use the message framework and, if developed in time, new visual aids and print and online collateral.

Recommended new communications activities by regions are presented in bolded italics.

2014

- | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| May | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Information for Governor's biennial State of the Salmon Report compiled▪ Compile information on monitoring and capacity needs for GSRO▪ Communications Plan delivered to GSRO and Council of Regions |
| June/July | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>Regional Recovery Directors meet with staff and identify communications planning targets (audiences, messengers, needed training, events, materials) for their regions</i>▪ <i>ID top 20 people you want to relay salmon recovery message to in the coming year; commit to 1-2 conversations per month</i>▪ <i>Visit recovery projects with key audiences</i> |
| August | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Regional boards make recommendations for project funding to SRFB▪ <i>Regional Recovery Boards visit Congressional Delegation in district</i>▪ <i>Review communications strategies for potentially affected citizens</i> |
| September | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>Visit Salmon Homecoming celebrations with key audiences</i>▪ <i>Network meets to determine shared priorities</i>▪ <i>Host regional forums as applicable and immediately impactful (issue- focused, built around release of a new federal agency plan, to highlight the work of a particular partner, or education/update purposed)</i> |
| October | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>Host open house or brown bag forum with tribal partner to share tribe's salmon recovery strategies/key projects with community of partners</i> |
| November | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Draft State of the Salmon Report |
| December | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ SRFB announces funding decisions▪ Governor's budget released▪ <i>Regions highlight local projects and partners—holiday/year end recognition of new funding awards and project milestones of note</i> |

2015

- | | |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| January | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Governor's Biennial State of the Salmon Report (2014) released▪ GSRO & RCO organize state requests for 2015 federal funding▪ State legislative session begins—through April |
| February | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>Convene working groups by region to review integration of habitat with hatchery and harvest decisions, in anticipation of conference in May: how can we best use this conference to tell our story and get what we need to be successful?</i> |
| March | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Western Governors and others support of PCSRF delivered to Congress |
| April | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>Finalize materials, message, presentations for Salmon Recovery Conference</i> |
| May | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>Salmon Recovery Conference</i> hosted by SRF Board through RCO and GSRO with WDFW and Long Live the Kings: All H Integration is a major theme▪ <i>Regional Recovery Boards visit Congressional Reps and agencies in WDC as able</i> |

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

Several of the recommendations in this Communications Plan may require further communications planning and expertise:

- Training the seven regional salmon recovery organizations and RCO, GSRO, SRFB and WSC to use the message framework;
- Assisting the seven regional organizations with building tailored and more detailed outreach and media plans, audience maps, messages, and implementation calendars;
- Assisting the seven regional organizations and/or the SRFB to develop funding strategies that will require more targeted communications strategies and tools;
- Designing a visual framework for the salmon recovery network that would help convey connectivity, unity, organization, professionalism, and instill confidence in partners, funders, critics, and the public;
- Designing and producing collateral materials and on-line content for all members of the network (FAQs; infographic fact sheets; maps; network diagrams; backgrounders; etc.)

CONCLUSION

The advent of salmon recovery and its multiple benefits for our communities and our state may have been imposed upon us by federal ESA listings, but the thousands of citizens who've come together across the state to restore salmon and the natural systems upon which they and we depend are leading an effort to define our own future. This process has been fortunate to have the right leaders for the right tasks at the right times. Today, with the implementation of locally drafted recovery plans underway and requiring sustained support, it is the directors of the regional salmon recovery organizations who must step forward and coordinate a new telling of the salmon recovery story. Supporting them and the other members of the network of salmon recovery professionals and volunteers across Washington state is the aim of this plan.

ATTACHMENTS

- Message Framework
- Findings and Recommendations Summary



GOVERNOR'S SALMON RECOVERY OFFICE & COUNCIL OF REGIONS

MESSAGE FRAMEWORK | APRIL 2014



INTRODUCTION

While the message framework is designed primarily for the regional salmon recovery organizations, all members of the salmon recovery network can use it to introduce their stories or requests, highlight the supporting arguments that best make their case, and fill in with specifics unique to their watersheds or their organizations.

The Framework holds the supporting arguments that best make our case. And it helps ensure that we begin every communication with:

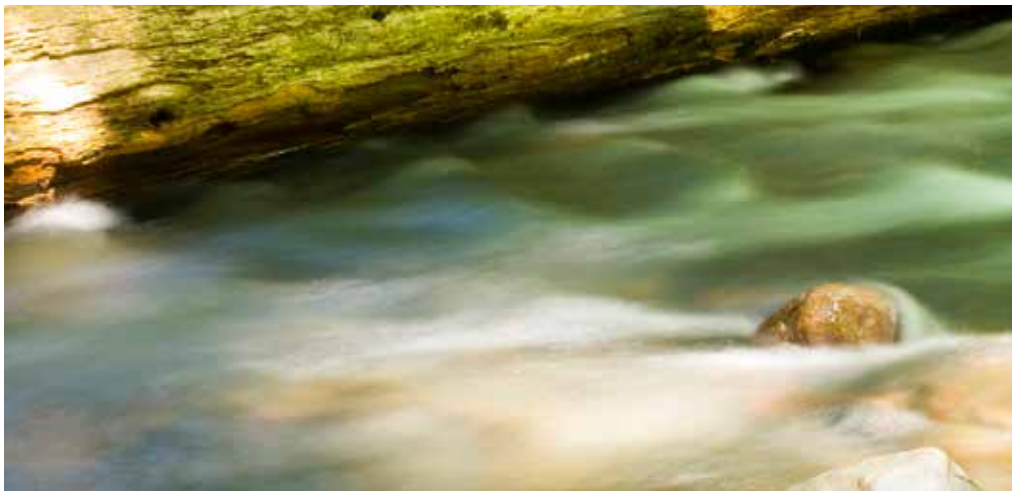
- the values we share
- our identity as Northwesterners
- our fealty to this place and to our communities
- how working together to ensure a future we want to live in connects us
- that this is why we are working to recover salmon

It names the multiple benefits that salmon recovery provides our communities, and it acknowledges that this is a lifetime commitment.



**What the organization values
in the world that motivates
and inspires its work.**

- Clean water and air, a healthy Pacific Northwest we can all enjoy
- Our identity as residents of this unique place
- Our connection to one another
- Our commitment to strong and vibrant communities
- Safe and healthy food (salmon)
- Using our resources sustainably so they persist for the future generations
- The independence that allows us to chart our own future



PRIORITY AUDIENCES

VISION

How the world would be different if the organization achieved its mission.

Our rivers would be cleaner and less likely to flood; our forests would be healthier; we'd have more fish and wildlife, generally, with sustainable harvests of salmon. We could take our grandchildren fishing where we used to fish. Our natural systems would provide protection from the excesses of a changing climate. We could continue to live in a Pacific Northwest we recognize.

MISSION

A one-sentence, overarching description of the organization's purpose, what it does, and how. It's the big-picture summary, not a laundry list of activities.

Washington's regional salmon recovery organizations coordinate the work of thousands of volunteers and professionals implementing recovery and sustainability plans to restore salmon to our landscape.

Priority audiences are those groups or individuals with the authority, responsibility and capacity to make decisions that will directly benefit or hinder progress toward key objectives. Targeting outreach, relationship-building, education, and messaging to these audiences is the most effective use of limited resources. Tier One audiences with time and attention become key messengers.

TIER ONE

- The seven regional salmon recovery organizations (with tribal and county representatives)
- Lead Entities (Washington Salmon Coalition)
- Salmon Recovery Funding Board
- GSRO/RCO
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups
- Governor's natural resources policy staff

TIER TWO

- Washington legislative leaders relevant to salmon recovery
- Washington and Congressional delegation
- WA Department of Ecology; DNR; and other state agencies impacting salmon recovery
- Fishing and other recreational organizations
- Local media

TIER THREE

- Private Landowners
- Federal agencies, primarily NOAA, USFS, USFWS, EPA, and Army COE
- Potential partners
- Civic and community groups, e.g., Rotary, faith, veterans, school

KEY MESSAGES

SALMON BIND US TO THIS REGION AND TO ONE ANOTHER

Salmon are a symbol of resilience, strength, and survival in the dramatic and changing landscape we share.

For millennia, the annual return of salmon has been revered and celebrated by Native American tribes.

By treaty alone, we are honor-bound to restore salmon to abundance and support sustainable fisheries. In turn, we are helping to ensure a future we all want to live in.

Today, thousands of people gather to witness the salmon’s homecoming in rivers across our state.

RESTORING SALMON EASES A STRESSED PACIFIC NORTHWEST

For 100 years, we put salmon at risk: we blocked fish passage with dams, overdrew water from streams and rivers, let runoff carry pollutants into our shorelines, and managed our forests primarily for harvest.

We also managed salmon harvest and hatchery production in ways that kept salmon populations depressed.

The good news is that by correcting the mistakes of our past, we can better prepare ourselves for a whole new set of challenges in our future. Waters and forests, shorelines and riverbanks healthy enough to support salmon also help our communities be more resilient in the face of,

- Fluctuating temperatures
- Shrinking snowpack
- Wetter springs and winters
- Drier summers and falls

- Flood & forest fire risk
- Dead zones in our estuaries (low dissolved oxygen)
- Acidification of our oceans (absorbing excess carbon from the atmosphere)

INVESTMENTS IN SALMON RECOVERY PROVIDE MULTIPLE BENEFITS

Clean and reliably available water is essential for safe drinking, sustaining our farms and gardens, and swimming and boating.

Free flowing rivers provide fish passage and great rafting.

Reconnecting streams to their flood plains lessens flood risks for our communities.

Healthy forests absorb carbon and improve the air; they provide shade, cooler temperatures, and refuge for wildlife. Healthy forests hold water—essential for areas with shrinking snow pack. They provide economic opportunity for rural communities, and recreation for hikers, packers, hunters, and foragers.

Unarmored shorelines filter pollution, support shellfish, shelter salmon, and aid all species challenged by rising sea levels.

Tourism, hospitality, and recreational fishing feed our economy; all are driven by a healthy Pacific Northwest and salmon safe to eat.

WE ARE SHAPING OUR OWN FUTURES: SALMON RECOVERY IS LOCALLY DESIGNED AND LED

Clean and reliably available water is essential for safe drinking, sustaining our farms and gardens, and swimming and boating.

Free flowing rivers provide fish passage and great rafting.

Reconnecting streams to their flood plains lower flood risk for our communities.

Healthy forests absorb carbon and improve the air; they provide shade, cooler temperatures, and refuge for wildlife. Healthy forests hold water—essential for areas with shrinking snow pack. They provide economic opportunity for rural communities, and recreation for hikers, packers, hunters, and foragers.

Unarmored shorelines filter pollution, support shellfish, shelter salmon, and aid all species challenged by rising sea levels.

Tourism, hospitality, and recreational fishing feed our economy; all are driven by a healthy Pacific Northwest and salmon safe to eat.

RESTORING SALMON IS WORKING, BUT THERE IS MUCH MORE TO DO

With the implementation of strong recovery plans, we’ve lessened the threats to our economy and livelihoods that we feared a federal ESA listing would provoke.

Our goal is ambitious: natural systems that can support healthy, sustainably harvestable salmon populations.

We’ve recovered a lot of habitat, and returns have increased, but we’re still only at a fraction of what we had 100 years ago.

Restoring habitat must be met with equal commitment to protect the best of the rest.

Integrating hatchery and harvest reforms with habitat recovery is essential: WDFW funding must be restored.

It took a human lifetime to bring salmon to the brink of extinction; it will take at least that long to bring them back.

This is a lifetime commitment.



WHERE DOES MY ORGANIZATION’S MESSAGING FIT IN?

You can tailor the messaging in this booklet to show how the work of your organization relates to the larger statewide salmon recovery effort and to frame up specific messages unique to your region. To demonstrate unity and the size of the network, try to stay true to the primary (bolded) messages and tailor or add to second- and third-level messages. To help you think about how your work and messages connect to the larger effort, you might ask:

- Which of our shared values most guide the thinking of my organization or audience?
- What does my organization contribute uniquely to the salmon recovery network?
- What specific results will my organization’s work lead to?
- How are we doing that work?
- What can others do to support it?



An elevator statement is a concise and compelling statement about an organization, initiative, or cause, which you would verbally use as a lead in to a conversation. You can revise this elevator statement to feel comfortable in your own words and reflect your organization’s work.

When Washington’s salmon populations were listed as endangered in the late 1990s, we decided to write our own regionally-specific recovery and sustainability plans. Seven regional salmon recovery organizations now coordinate the work of thousands of people working across our state to restore our rivers, streams, forests, and shorelines. What’s good for salmon is good for us all. Investing in this work now helps ensure we’ll maintain what we love about the Pacific Northwest into the future.



EXAMPLE NARRATIVE

Salmon are a symbol of what connects us.

Salmon bind together the unique features of our landscape and our communities: the salmon's migration brings the ocean to our mountains and high deserts.

Salmon inspire us: they persist across a dynamic and sometimes cataclysmic geography of landslides, earthquakes, roaring rivers, skyscraper trees; they cross busy ports and highways, heavily populated cities and suburban backyards, and hundreds of miles of farmland.

We need and want our shorelines, rivers, and forests to be as healthy as salmon need them to be.

Our communities are made stronger and our lives enriched by the multiple returns from our investments in salmon recovery: cleaner air and water, less flooding, stronger river banks, fewer forest fires, more refuge from hotter temperatures, healthier shellfish farms, more fishing, better hiking, continued tourism, and salmon safe to eat.

And so we have come together by the thousands across Washington in an unprecedented network of regional recovery organizations coordinating the efforts of volunteers, private landowners, farmers and fishers, scientists and restaurateurs, working with Native American tribes and state and federal agency staff to protect and restore what's good for all of us.

It's working because we are committed to making decisions that allow our natural world to function for the greatest number of shared benefits.

This is a lifetime commitment. We are changing how we live today so that we will all have the Washington we love in the future.



SALMON CONNECT US: We're working together to restore wild salmon and retain the Pacific Northwest we love.

Salmon are a symbol of the abundance and vitality of the Pacific Northwest. Saving them means we must respect and restore our natural environment to a condition that can support them—and us. Thousands of people across Washington are working together through regional recovery organizations to restore our rivers, streams, forests, and shorelines. We are building the future we want to live in.



GOVERNOR'S SALMON RECOVERY OFFICE & COUNCIL OF REGIONS COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS | MARCH 2014





INTRODUCTION

The Governor’s Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO), on behalf of the Council of Regions, contracted with Pyramid Communications to develop a communications plan to help the seven regional salmon recovery organizations, as well as other salmon recovery professionals and advocates, tell the story of salmon recovery and why it matters, more effectively. This document is a draft summary of key findings and recommendations toward that end, including:

1	Methodology
1	Inquiry
6	Recommendations and key audiences
11	Conclusion
12	Appendix
12	List of interviews
13	List of collateral reviewed

METHODOLOGY

OVERARCHING GOAL

The state wide recovery and sustainability of salmon species and the habitats upon which they and we depend.

METHODOLOGY

The following summary identifies key findings and recommendations to guide development of a message framework and communications plan for the Council of Regions and Governor's Salmon Recovery Office. This summary is based on information provided to Pyramid Communications by salmon recovery leaders and others through the following:

- Communications workshop with the GSRO & Council of Regions communications working group
- 16 interviews with salmon recovery leaders, funders, and volunteers (see appendix)
- Review of websites, videos, recovery plans, reports, fact sheets, and other existing materials that presently tell the story of regional salmon recovery (see appendix)
- In-house Pyramid Communications expertise

INQUIRY

The inquiry phase of this project was framed by three questions:

- 1) We sought to clarify the ends toward which a communications plan should be constructed: What would success look like to the regional salmon recovery organization directors, primarily, but also to their partners in salmon recovery?
- 2) We also wanted to break those goals into more measurable outcomes toward which to target new strategies: How would we know we were making progress?
- 3) We asked what communications strategies and activities were currently in place: Who needs to know what? Which messages resonate across the regions?

The answers to these questions come primarily from our interviews (see appendix) and a workshop with the communications working group for this project assembled by GSRO, as well as our review of relevant communications collateral.



FINDINGS

Q1: IF THIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN IS SUCCESSFUL, WHAT WILL IT HAVE HELPED ENABLE YOU TO ACCOMPLISH?

- More Washingtonians would have a shared understanding of why regional salmon recovery is a priority
- Elected officials and others would know the importance of regional salmon recovery and continue to fund it
- Volunteers would remain enthusiastic, committed, and reliable
- Private landowners would continue to embrace and implement voluntary salmon habitat recovery, knowing they were delivering multiple benefits for their property and their community
- Professionals tasked with salmon recovery would speak with one voice and work toward commonly understood objectives
- Relationships between regional organizations, lead entities, and American Indian tribes would be positive and mutually supporting

Q2: WHAT WOULD NEED TO HAPPEN FOR THESE RESULTS TO BE REALIZED?

With this question, we identify some more measurable results toward which to target our communications strategies.

- Washingtonians would make the link between salmon recovery and our quality of life
- We would understand the connection between salmon and our identity as Northwesterners, Washingtonians
- Washingtonians would know in which salmon recovery region and watershed they live, and they'd understand the priority recovery actions for their region and watershed
- Washingtonians would believe it's possible to protect, recover, and restore salmon
- Elected decision makers would feel accountable to thousands of people across the state working toward the same goal: recovering healthy salmon populations and watersheds

- Washington State salmon recovery would remain grounded in local and regionally-led efforts by citizens
- County and other local governments would automatically consider salmon impacts when making decisions related to habitat—from growth management and shoreline master plans to permitting individual activities—and know who to call to get a good assessment of impact
- Federal agencies would be fulfilling their obligations to manage federal lands and implement federal laws in ways that help protect and recover wild salmon
- State agencies (primarily Washington’s Departments of Fish and Wildlife, Ecology, and Natural Resources) would want to integrate their activities at the regional scale more closely with regional salmon recovery organizations
- GSRO would have a closer working relationship with tribal governments and staff
- Tribal governments and staff would continue to work closely with regional organizations and lead entities to coordinate and implement priorities for salmon recovery

Q3: WHAT IS THE STATUS OF PRESENT COMMUNICATIONS EFFORTS BY GSRO, RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE, AND REGIONS?

We wanted to examine how successful current communications efforts by GSRO, the seven regional recovery organizations, and the lead entities were toward achieving the key outcomes the practitioners had identified as necessary for success. The findings below are based on interviews about current communications activities and capacity, Pyramid’s review of communications materials, and our twenty-plus years of expertise working on salmon and communications in the Pacific Northwest.

- Most communications about salmon recovery provided by the GSRO and Council of Regions reads as if directed to NOAA for the purpose of demonstrating progress on implementing ESA salmon recovery plans. Messaging tends to:
 - Be technical or written in the language of ESA recovery plans (using phrases like, “limiting factors; riparian areas; ecosystem function” without definition)
 - Generally be limited to a description of the specifics of a particular project (the what, but not the why or the so-what)
 - Emphasize statistics (how many river miles restored) without baselines or context
- The media, and by extension general public, but also most non-professionals involved in salmon recovery find the salmon recovery story complex and confusing. Failure to provide context, connect dots, or frame a narrative lends to this.
 - If 1.6 million Chinook are returning to the Columbia River this year, aren’t we done? Why should it matter that they are hatchery Chinook? We need to tell the story of the necessity of wild stocks as brood for hatchery fish as well as critical to functional ecosystems
 - Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) and GSRO do not generally receive media inquiries about salmon. These are likely going to Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and individual American Indian tribes
 - General public education provided by GSRO is limited to press releases announcing Salmon Recovery Funding Board grants

- The GSRO video is engaging, high energy, and features lots of different faces intent on salmon recovery but is not yet reinforced by messaging or outreach/engagement activities
- The relationship between GSRO, RCO, and the regional recovery organizations/boards is not lent clarity by the current configuration of websites
 - The RCO has done the most to “brand” salmon recovery by incorporating the titles of GSRO and the Salmon Recovery Funding Board in its logo on some documents related to or used by those organizations
 - The GSRO is housed in the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office and has a page on the RCO website. The GSRO page serves as a good one-stop-shop for most relevant state-generated reports and policies related to salmon recovery. It provides additional links to:
 - *Region-specific landing pages and to the regions’ individual websites*
 - *The separate website established for the Governor’s State of the Salmon reports.*
 - A separate website hosts the Governor’s State of the Salmon in Watersheds reports, and it offers similar links and information about each of the regions. Recent standardization of reporting is helpful.
- Communications by regional organizations varies
 - The regional organizations each have their own websites. While the websites vary—some regional recovery boards are 501©3 organizations: one is a state agency; others are government entities or public-private partnerships—all appear to be directed primarily toward recovery project implementers and professional salmon managers or volunteers already familiar with this infrastructure of salmon recovery efforts
 - The seven regional salmon recovery organizations are required by the terms of their funding contracts with RCO to engage in communications and outreach activities, but activities are not defined, and they vary widely from region to region
- Capacity to develop and implement communications strategies is low
 - The SRFB is one of many multiple resource-related entities reliant on RCO for communications support; GSRO as an office within RCO is similarly dependent
 - None of the seven regional salmon recovery organizations has a full-time dedicated communications staff person, nor do the lead entities
- The lead entities have come together across regions to self-identify as “The Washington Salmon Coalition” (WSC) and this year have developed limited materials and messaging to enable them to speak as a group of many with a shared language and shared set of measures of success
 - The lead entities feel “The Washington Way” is one of their strongest messages with legislators
 - Language on lead entity printed materials tends to be statistic-heavy and inside-baseball
 - Participation in broader education efforts in Olympia is limited to a small group, including the WSC chair, primarily, though training and support has been offered to entice others

- Native American Tribes' contributions toward salmon recovery receive little mention on the GSRO or regional organization/board websites
 - As co-managers of the salmon resource, the state of Washington might be expected to reference that partnership through all of its agencies' communications
 - Tribes have membership on all of the regional recovery organization/boards; those relationships do not seem to be well understood by the general public

- There has never been a communications plan designed to integrate messaging across the state, among agencies, regional organizations, and lead entities, to generate a shared vocabulary, or to tie messaging and outreach activities to the pursuit and accomplishment of particular outcomes for salmon recovery
 - Because the messaging is so diverse, a legislator hearing from fifty salmon recovery advocates may be less impressed by the size and relative power of that constituency than overwhelmed by having to choose among fifty different requests for assistance
 - This is a relatively new need—we used to have the Chair of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations carrying this for the state at a time when the Congress was making line-item appropriations. We continue to have the leadership support of our senior U.S. Senator, but support is uncoordinated

- Current messages and communications activities among different professionals are not coordinated, consistent, or reinforcing
 - While most Native American tribes in Washington participate in the regional recovery organizations and boards and several are designated as lead entities, their additional communications activities and messaging may complicate these shared endeavors
 - Sport fishing groups are delivering additional sets of messages—from those who self identify as “wild fish advocates” who argue against hatchery fish of any stripe to those who advocate a significant increase in hatchery production and management of hatchery fish for the purpose of increased recreational fishing and its contributions to the economy
 - There is a need to tell the story of how state and tribal co-management of hatchery and harvest improvements is beginning to be integrated with habitat recovery and how it needs to continue



RECOMMENDATIONS

Pyramid offers these draft recommendations as a starting point for conversation. We based them on our understanding of the targets and outcomes our interviewees identified as critical, as well as on our review of communications activities and products currently in use by GSRO and the regional recovery organizations/boards and lead entities. We have also drawn on our collective experience working on communications and salmon recovery in the Pacific Northwest for two decades.

EMPOWER REGIONAL SALMON RECOVERY ORGANIZATIONS/BOARDS AND LEAD ENTITIES TO LEAD US THROUGH THIS PHASE OF SALMON RECOVERY

- While governors, Native American tribal chairs, ambassadors, congressional appropriators, U.S. senators, and county executives were out front and vocal when the task was to get in front of Endangered Species Act listings and develop our own plans for recovery, fifteen years into implementation it will be regional and local leaders who can best tell our shared story and motivate change
- To build a groundswell, educate a new generation, hold local decision-makers accountable for changes necessary to restore our watersheds to levels of health adequate to restore salmon and provide the benefits we expect, we need to support local and regional leaders to communicate the changes that will be made and implemented at the local, municipal, and county scale. They,
 - Embody the Washington Way
 - Provide our best forum for land use negotiations, involving county officials and private landowners
 - Can engage WDFW and Ecology to help them integrate their activities with local habitat recovery efforts for maximum benefit
 - Enjoy tribal membership and support

WE NEED TO UPDATE LOCAL PARTNERS ON REGIONAL SALMON RECOVERY STATUS

- Each region should consider the best way to convene locals and elected officials at that scale to re-frame the story of salmon recovery, share what's been accomplished to date, and be candid about what needs to be done

MESSAGING NEEDS TO CONNECT THE DOTS BETWEEN SALMON RECOVERY AND MULTIPLE BENEFITS TO OUR COMMUNITIES, OURSELVES

- We hike swim, boat, fish, enjoy the views, rely on the clean air and water that healthy rivers and streams, forests, wetlands, estuaries, and shorelines provide us and which are necessary as well for salmon
- River banks planted for salmon strengthen hillsides, allowing plants and trees to grow alongside streams provides more habitat for birds and insects important to farmers and filters pesticides or street pollutants when it rains. Streams reconnected to flood plains provide flood control; streams cooled by vegetation provide refuge from warm temperatures
- Stable streams increase property values, and the healthy rivers and forests necessary for salmon support robust economic contributions by fish and wildlife-dependent industries (fishing, recreation, tourism, hospitality), particularly benefitting rural communities

MESSAGING NEEDS TO REMIND US OF HOW CENTRAL THE FACT AND IMAGE OF HEALTHY SALMON IN OUR WATERSHEDS IS TO OUR IDENTITY AS NORTHWESTERNERS

- This isn't Kansas. We live in a place marked by big geography, dynamic ecological systems, charismatic animals, big mountains and rivers, ocean and rain forest and high desert. We live in rural areas, farming and fishing communities, and in vibrant urban centers. And salmon swim through all of them
- Most of the Pacific Northwest American Indian tribes are salmon tribes. Honoring, celebrating, and harvesting salmon shapes their religion, culture, and art and in turn shapes that of the entire region. Many of the images, colors, and forms we immediately recognize as "Pacific Northwest" come from salmon-dependent cultures

RECRUIT MESSENGERS WHO ARE NOT SALMON PROFESSIONALS AND HELP THEM TELL THEIR STORIES

- Salmon recovery stories can get stale. Fresh voices from landowners who have seen their property values increase as a result of habitat improvements on their lands; veterans groups who've embraced new fish and wildlife recreational opportunities; faith communities who have embraced salmon habitat as an act of stewardship; rotary members who volunteer for salmon, school kids whose salmon reports can be posted on-line—look for new faces and voices to tell the story

LOOK FOR WAYS TO MAKE SALMON RECOVERY A WAY FOR YOUR COMMUNITY TO CONNECT AND SHARE A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE.

- "Salmon fatigue" may be more of an issue for professional salmon managers who've been at this since the beginning (15 years since first listings) than for the general public. Consider:
 - Hundreds of people fill a theater in downtown Tacoma to watch a salmon film series
 - Issaquah Salmon Days is a premiere tourist attraction—thousands of people shut down a city to visit a hatchery and a bit of restored stream to see and celebrate the return of salmon each fall. Find a way for real-life encounters with salmon for more people

REGIONAL LEADERS NEED TO BE ABLE TO SAY AND PRIORITIZE WHAT HAS YET TO BE ACCOMPLISHED—AS A COUNCIL

- Acknowledge what we've done—created this unique extraordinary infrastructure, created our own recovery plans with scientists and community members, government policy staff and private landowners, tribes, and the dozens of different stakeholder groups who see salmon through one particular lens or another. But we're not done. Make a fair statement about hatchery, harvest, pollution, development, and passage issues. Break it out by region—for Puget Sound and parts of southwest Washington, development is a huge pressure. Not so much in Upper Columbia. There, the issues are...On the coast, we...

TO ACHIEVE RECOVERY GOALS, WASHINGTON'S SALMON PROFESSIONALS MUST IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS INTERNALLY

- Consider a policy summit similar to what the Washington Environmental Council does once a year, where they pull together across the environmental community and identify what their priorities are. Consider a forum that would include Lead Entities, RFEs, SRF Board, RCO, and GSRO, WDFW
- Coming together around shared objectives and requests for funding will necessitate agreement on priorities and better integrate efforts; it will also provide up-to-date messaging
- The regional recovery organization boards are experiencing turnover—newly elected county commissioners, tribal chairs, etc. New participants bring fresh perspectives and opportunities to refine message

LEAD ENTITIES ARE CRITICAL OUTREACH ENGINES AND NEED SUPPORT

- The lead entities are a potentially significant unified statewide voice. We need lead entities to help regional recovery organizations build relationships across jurisdictions to make tough choices
- Rural areas can feel like they're carrying the burden for urban ones on salmon recovery; less so when they have a lead entity that speaks for them

FEDERAL AND STATE SOURCES OF FUNDING ARE STILL OUR MOST RELIABLE AND GENEROUS SOURCES; WE NEED TO MAINTAIN, STABILIZE, AND INCREASE THEM WHILE DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVES

- We need to better explain the relationship between funding and recovery
 - This is an investment: We're preserving a way of life and building resilience for the future
 - Widespread support across every region of the state and every economic sector
- There's a perception that salmon habitat is well funded, and compared to other species protection, it is; but we are far short of what we need to accomplish what is recommended in our recovery plans
 - Senator Murray leads the fight to secure salmon-related federal funds, but the public doesn't really know about this effort, much less that the money is not guaranteed

- Every region should have the capacity to tell its story to appropriators and other funders, describe its piece of the statewide effort to safeguard our watersheds, preserve ecosystem function, recover endangered species, and build resilience for our communities in the face of a changing climate

DESPITE ENTHUSIASM FOR THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST AND FOR SALMON, THE GENERAL PUBLIC IS INCONSISTENTLY EDUCATED ON THE BASICS OF CONSERVATION BIOLOGY, THE LINK BETWEEN SALMON AND THE HABITAT THAT SUSTAINS THEM AND US

- A consistent, repetitive approach to ecosystem education and conservation biology is needed; partner where possible with local educators
- Most of the messaging right now focuses on listed species—but even the salmonids not on ESA lists are under threat because all of our watersheds are under threat. We need to know what to manage for as much as what to manage against
- Help people understand: We want to restore fully functioning natural systems that will bring back salmon populations on their own
- We want to change behavior, give people ways to live differently on the land, make different choices—understand the connection between taking a bus to work and lessening the diesel runoff into a shoreline where juvenile salmon go to rest and feed
 - Consider a state-wide poll to fully assess the public’s knowledge and perspectives on salmon recovery, watershed health, ecosystem function, climate change resilience
 - Look for opportunities to build identity and ownership at the watershed scale: this is my watershed; where I live, where I get water to drink, water my garden, where I work, where I play
 - A message to the 60% of Washingtonians who have moved here from somewhere else: Washington isn’t trashed yet. You left somewhere else to come here; why?
- To live here you need to engage to preserve the quality of life that drew you here and defines this place
- Salmon recovery is an exercise of citizenship

COLLATERAL MATERIALS SHOULD BE VARIED BUT TARGETED TO SPECIFIC AUDIENCES

- People love seeing fish; video is an effective way to demonstrate before and after, connection, change, excitement; short video clips on line are a good investment and many people can now take them with their phones
- Coordinate messaging between print, web, social media, and video productions to reinforce
- Materials don’t need to be glossy or expensive; let the story and the examples do the work
- More specific recommendations on this topic will be provided in the Communications Plan

A STATEWIDE CAMPAIGN TO EDUCATE THE GENERAL PUBLIC WOULD BE VERY EXPENSIVE TO LAUNCH AND TO MAINTAIN; TARGET MESSAGING TO KEY DECISION MAKERS AND INFLUENCERS



Priority audiences are those groups or individuals with the authority and responsibility and capacity to make decisions that will directly benefit or hinder progress toward key objectives. Targeting outreach, relationship-building, education, and messaging to these audiences is the most effective use of limited resources. Tier One audiences with time and attention become key messengers.

TIER ONE

- The seven regional salmon recovery organizations (with tribal and county representatives)
- Lead Entities (Washington Salmon Coalition)
- Salmon Recovery Funding Board
- GSRO/RCO
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups
- Governor's natural resources policy staff

TIER TWO

- Washington legislative leaders relevant to salmon recovery
- Washington and Congressional delegation
- WA Department of Ecology; DNR; and other state agencies impacting salmon recovery
- Fishing and other recreational organizations
- Local media

TIER THREE

- Private Landowners
- Federal agencies, primarily NOAA, USFS, USFWS, EPA, and Army COE
- Potential partners
- Civic and community groups, eg: Rotary, faith, veterans, school



CONCLUSION

This findings and recommendations report will serve as the basis for development of a communications plan and message framework. This suite of documents is designed to assist, primarily, the seven regional salmon recovery organizations. It should also serve the other members of Washington's salmon recovery network, chiefly, the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office, the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, the Washington Salmon Coalition (Lead Entities), and the Salmon Recovery Funding Board.

This project is guided by a Communications Working Group assembled by the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office,

- Brian Abbott, *Governor's Salmon Recovery Office*
- Jeff Breckel, *Lower Columbia Salmon Recovery Board*
- Derek Van Marter, *Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board*
- Nancy Biery, *Salmon Recovery Funding Board*
- Darcy Batura, *Washington Salmon Coalition*
- Alicia Lawver, *Puget Sound Partnership*
- Susan Zemek, *Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office*
- Jennifer Quan, *Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife*

With assistance from,

- Alex Conley, *Yakima Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board*
- Jeanette Dorner, *Puget Sound Partnership, Salmon Program Manager*
- Miles Batchelder, *Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership*
- Scott Brewer, *Hood Canal Coordinating Council*
- Steve Martin, *Snake River Recovery Board*



APPENDIX

INTERVIEWS

Brian Abbott, Executive Coordinator, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office

Phil Anderson, Director, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Miles Batchelder, Executive Director, Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership

Darcy Batura, Chair, Washington Salmon Coalition

Nancy Biery, member, Salmon Recovery Funding Board

Jeff Breckel, Executive Director, Lower Columbia Salmon Recovery Board

Scott Brewer, Executive Director, Hood Canal Coordinating Council

Alex Conley, Executive Director, Middle Columbia (Yakima Basin) Salmon Recovery Board

Kaleen Cottingham, Director, Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office

Jeanette Dorner, Ecosystem and Salmon Recovery Program Manager, Puget Sound Partnership

Mike Grayum, Executive Director, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission

Steve Martin, Snake River Salmon Recovery Board

Jennifer Quan, Lands Division Manager, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife

Derek Van Marter, Executive Director, Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board

Jacques White, Executive Director, Long Live the Kings

James White, Program Manager, Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board Program

Susan Zemek, Communications Director, Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office

REFERENCE MATERIALS

WEBSITES

- Recreation and Conservation Office (including GSRO and Regional Organization landing pages)
- State of the Salmon Report
- 7 Regional organizations
 - Hood Canal Coordinating Council website <<http://hccc.wa.gov>>
 - Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board website <<http://www.lcfrb.gen.wa.us>>
 - Yakima Basin Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board website <<http://www.ybfwrp.org>>
 - Puget Sound Partnership website <<http://www.psp.wa.gov>>
 - Snake River Salmon Recovery website<<http://snakeriverboard.org/wpi/>>
 - Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board website <<http://www.ucsrp.com>>
 - Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership website <<http://www.wcssp.org>>

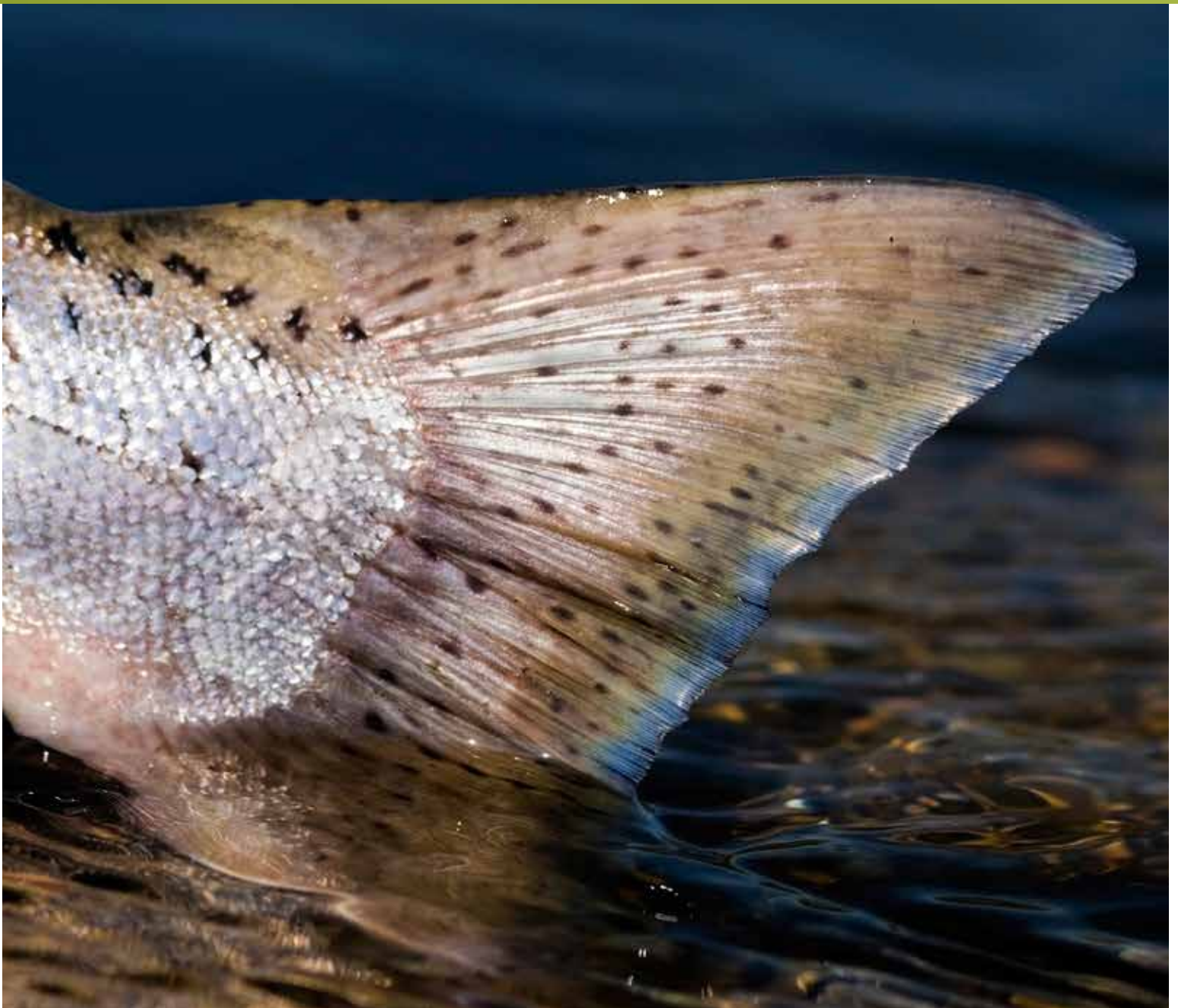
RECOVERY PLANS:

- Lake Ozette (coast region) Sockeye Recovery Plan
- Lower Columbia River Bull Trout, Chinook, Chum, Coho, and Steelhead Recovery Plan
- Middle Columbia River Bull Trout and Steelhead Recovery Plan
- Upper Columbia River Bull Trout, Chinook, and Steelhead Recovery Plan
- Hood Canal Summer Chum Recovery Plan
- Puget Sound Chinook Recovery Plan
- Snake River Steelhead

OTHER MATERIALS:

- State of Salmon in Watersheds 2012 report
- State of Salmon: Restoring a Washington Icon video
- Millie Judge report to NOAA on Implementation of Puget Sound Chinook Recovery Plan
- Funding for Salmon Recovery in Washington State, Dennis Canty report
- The Washington Way 2006 report
- Extinction is Not an Option 1999 report
- Lead Entity Directory
- Various agency, regional and lead entity briefing documents, fact sheets, hand outs

PREPARED BY PYRAMID COMMUNICATIONS



SALMON RECOVERY FUNDING BOARD SUMMARIZED MEETING AGENDA AND ACTIONS

August 26, 2014

Agenda Items without Formal Action

Item	Follow-up Actions
N/A	

Agenda Items with Formal Action

Item	Formal Action	Follow-up Actions
July 2014 Meeting Summary	APPROVED June 4, 2014 Meeting Summary	No follow-up action requested.
1. Funding for 2015-17 Biennium	<p>APPROVED asking for \$149,287 and \$770,000 in state general funds for Lead Entity Capacity in the agency's budget request.</p> <p>APPROVED asking for \$55,000 in state general funds for Habitat Work Schedule in the agency's budget request.</p> <p>APPROVED asking for \$40 million in bond funds for the Salmon Recovery Funding Board Grant Program to be included in the agency's capital budget request.</p> <p>APPROVED directing RCO's director to work with the Puget Sound Partnership, the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, and the Dept. of Natural Resources to include their recommended levels of funding in RCO's budget request for the three jointly-managed grant programs: Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Program, the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program, and the Family Forest Fish Passage Programs.</p>	No follow-up action requested.
2. Communication Plan Follow-up	APPROVED allocating up to \$244,000 in federal project return funds to carry out the recommendations outlined for a salmon recovery communications plan in phased releases, following/subject to regular progress updates to RCO and the Salmon Recovery Funding Board.	No follow-up action requested.

SALMON RECOVERY FUNDING BOARD SUMMARY MINUTES

Date: August 26, 2014

Place: Olympia, WA

Salmon Recovery Funding Board Members Present:

David Troutt, Chair	Olympia	Megan Duffy	Department of Natural Resources
Phil Rockefeller	NWPCC	Carol Smith	Department of Ecology
Nancy Biery	Quilcene		
Bob Bugert	Wenatchee		
Sam Mace	Spokane		

It is intended that this summary be used with the materials provided in advance of the meeting. The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) retains a recording as the formal record of the meeting.

Opening and Welcome

Chair David Troutt called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and a quorum was determined. Board members Susan Cierebiej, Jennifer Quan and Mark Clark were excused. Carol Smith attended as the official designee from Department of Ecology in place of Member Bob Cusimano.

Director Cottingham welcomed Wendy Brown as the new policy director as of August 1, 2014. Ms. Brown will address issues related to policy and serve as the legislative liaison for RCO.

Chair Troutt informed the board of an additional agenda item for the purpose of forming a subcommittee that will advise Director Cottingham regarding a potential substantial Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) cost increase (for action in early September.)

Agenda adoption

Moved by: Bob Bugert

Seconded by: Nancy Biery

Motion: APPROVED

June 4, 2014 Meeting Summary

Moved by: Bob Bugert

Seconded by: Nancy Biery

Motion: APPROVED

Additional Agenda Item: Advisory Subcommittee

The Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) has requested a large cost increase of \$500,000 from unallocated PSAR funds for an Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) project. The project is reported to be approximately one million dollars over budget due to debris removal and soil compaction issues surrounding the levee setback. The deadline for project completion is the end of September 2014 in order to meet the window for fall salmon returns. ACOE confirmed that if funding is not available the project would be delayed for

another year, and the cost will likely increase again. Director Cottingham asked to form a subcommittee to address the funding request. The committee would meet on September 4, 2014 in order to respond to PSP's request by September 5, 2014. Chair Trout stated that given the urgency, the amount requested, and PSP's upfront request for additional guidance that he would volunteer to serve on the subcommittee. He also asked that Member Rockefeller join the subcommittee.

Member Rockefeller moved to form a subcommittee to address the PSP funding request. Member Biery seconded; motion approved.

Decisions

Item 1: Funding for 2015-17 Biennium

Brian Abbott, Executive Coordinator, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO), reviewed the information presented to the board on 2015-17 biennial budget at the June meeting. The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) will submit the 2015-17 biennial budget request to the Office of Financial Management (OFM) September 11, 2014. The Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) must decide on the amount of state funds RCO should include in its operating and capital budget requests related to salmon activities and programs. The budget approved for the 2015-17 biennium will be effective from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017.

For salmon activities and programs within the operating and capital budget, RCO developed requests to fund: 1) lead entity capacity to improve our competitiveness for federal funds; 2) the Habitat Work Schedule data system to address the elimination or reduction of federal funds and; 3) state salmon capital budget request to continue providing match for the PCSRF.

Monitoring to Achieve De-listing of Certain Salmon Populations

NOAA reviews the status of listed salmon every five years and determines whether a species warrants de-listing based on the best scientific and commercial data available. Currently insufficient monitoring data exists to meet the NOAA threshold for de-listing. Due to the tight budget for general funds, the regional organizations decided not to submit a funding request for monitoring activities. The regions will develop a memo regarding monitoring and bring the Council of Region's conclusions back the board. The short-term goal is to identify monitoring for delisting as an eligible project type for next year's grant round.

Lead Entity Capacity

Since the creation of the lead entity program in 1999, the board has not met the objective to enhance the current capacity for lead entities. Lead entities recruit, review, and prioritize projects funded by the board by engaging support from the local communities. Lead entities also develop the three-year work plans for future projects consistent with the approved regional recovery plans. Because an RCW established the lead entities there must be a robust response from the state to support the regional groups.

In 2009, the state reduced funds and the board agreed to offset that reduction with federal funds. In the current biennium (2013-15), the lead entity basic capacity funding consists of 27% from state general fund and 73% from federal funds. Lead entity capacity funding has not kept pace with inflation and several lead entities struggle to maintain effectiveness. The continued downturn in federal funding and pressures on the state budget could have a significant impact on the future capacity of lead entities.

In 2012, NOAA changed the application requirements based on three priority categories:

1. Projects that address factors limiting the productivity of Pacific salmon listed under the Endangered Species Act or populations necessary for tribal treaty fishing rights or native subsistence fishing.

2. Effectiveness monitoring of habitat restoration actions at a watershed or larger scale for ESA listed salmon, status of monitoring projects that directly contribute to the population viability assessment for ESA-listed salmon, or monitoring necessary for the exercise of tribal-treaty rights or native-subsistence fishing on salmon.
3. Projects consistent with Congressional authorization that demonstrate a need for PCSRF funding.

Mr. Abbott asked that the board approve the submittal of an operating budget request for Lead Entity Capacity that would add back the 15% cut as part of the OFM directive. This request will total \$149,287 in state general funds. The staff also asked the board to approve the submittal of a separate request to restore the 50/50 ratio of state to federal funds; this request will be for \$770,000 in state general funds.

Chair Troutt asked if RCO witnessed a strong indication that we do not receive funds from NOAA based on project types. Director Cottingham stated that conversations between NOAA and RCO indicate reduced funding based on project types and that Washington funds have reduced while Oregon and California received increased funds. Mr. Abbott indicated that Oregon and California put their PCSRF money towards priority one projects and not capacity projects. NOAA adopted this prioritization process a few years ago.

Member Bugert asked if we knew the percentage of priority one projects that Oregon and California submit for funding. Mr. Abbott indicated that other states submit roughly 80-90% of priority one projects while we submit about 60%.

Director Cottingham indicated that the two decision packages, if adopted by the governor and the legislature, would include the increase approved by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board last year regarding the base amount for Lead Entity Capacity.

Member Biery moved to approve the proposed lead entity operating budget requests to add back the 15% cut for a total of \$149,287, and to restore the 50/50 ratio of state to federal funds through a request for \$770,000 in state general funds. Member Mace seconded; motion passed.

Member Rockefeller asked for clarification regarding the importance of the 50/50 split. Director Cottingham indicated that 50/50 split represents the historic balance. After the recession, the board made decisions to compensate for the loss of general funds in the operating budget. The restoration of the 50/50 balance will increase the competitive edge of our projects. Member Bugert asked if there was a ceiling, are there calculations that it could be less. Director Cottingham indicated that the request is an amount that could change depending on legislative decisions.

Habitat Work Schedule

Mr. Abbott indicated that to prepare for the potential loss of federal funding RCO/GSRO has proposed a budget request for \$55,000 to assess the potential benefits, logistics, and ease of moving to a non-proprietary software program in the event of the elimination or significant reduction in federal funding. GSRO would hire a private consultant to analyze what that change looks like and how to make it work with the system we have in place. Although HWS will receive federal funds through 2015, we want to prepare for the future.

Member Bugert moved to approve the operating budget request for the Habitat Work Schedule up to \$55,000 in state general funds in order to assess and strategize the future of the HWS data system in the event that federal funding is eliminated or significantly reduced. Member Biery seconded; motion passed.

Bond Funding Capacity

The capital budget bond capacity, based on the stabilized revenue and interest costs, is expected to

remain the same as the current biennium approximately \$2 billion.

Staff recommends the following budget request to OFM:

- **Salmon Recovery Funding Board Grant Program:** Request up to \$40 million in capital budget funding for the state match portion of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board grant program to protect or restore salmon habitat.

Director Cottingham indicated that we have four salmon recovery grant programs currently administered by RCO either jointly or alone. We jointly administer PSAR projects with PSP and they have asked RCO to include \$140 million in our budget request. DNR is expected to request \$1.5 million for the FFFPP, which remains in RCO's budget. We jointly administer the ESRP program with Fish and Wildlife and they have suggested that we include \$20 million in our budget request.

Chair Troutt asked to talk about the state salmon capital funding, asking for the same amount every time does not allow for larger projects. PSP and the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council (PSSRC) changed their approach regarding funding requests, is that a model that we could use statewide? Our current SRFB process does not fully fund big system changing type of projects. Chair Troutt asked if we could develop a system to fund the bigger projects across the state of Washington. Perhaps RCO could develop a process to rank and provide scientific review so statewide projects are ready for implementation when we ask for funds?

Member Bugert asked for clarification, do PSP and the PSSRC strategically ask for an increase when they had projects they knew they could easily accomplish? Chair Troutt indicated that PSP changed their budget approach and asked to fund the base amount and larger system wide projects queued up and ready to implement. Amounts were dwindling and with this approach, the amount provided went from \$15 million to \$70 million. Chair Troutt emphasized that by barely hanging on with minimal requests we do not allow salmon recovery to be successful. Member Smith indicated that the Conservation Commission presents shovel ready projects for funding, but that might put the base funding at risk because the legislature may choose to only fund projects ready for implementation. Director Cottingham indicated that many applicants work hard to get things ready without a guarantee they will receive funding as it can take a year or longer for funding approval. Chair Troutt indicated the benefit of initiating a subcommittee to start the conversation around changing the capital-funding request and have a process ready for the next biennium.

Director Cottingham stated that we will compete with Floodplain by Design funding proposed by The Nature Conservancy and Dept. of Ecology plus a big effort in the Chehalis basin related to flooding and habitat. There will be many issues on the plate for these kinds of restoration projects. Member Rockefeller indicated that we should anticipate the central and eastern Washington flooding and fires request for restoration efforts. We might also compete with those needs and perhaps we should be proactive to support salmon recovery and stabilization.

Chair Troutt asked how RCO presents the \$40 million request to the legislature, and how can we make that a larger request. Mr. Abbott indicated that we typically ask for what really needs funding for PCSRF match. Director Cottingham indicated that RCO might have more success if they created a new program to avoid confusion with the federal match requirement. Legislative conversations regarding funding for various projects and enhancement work shows there is plenty of investment within the state for salmon related projects. We need to be careful and not detract from what we currently receive.

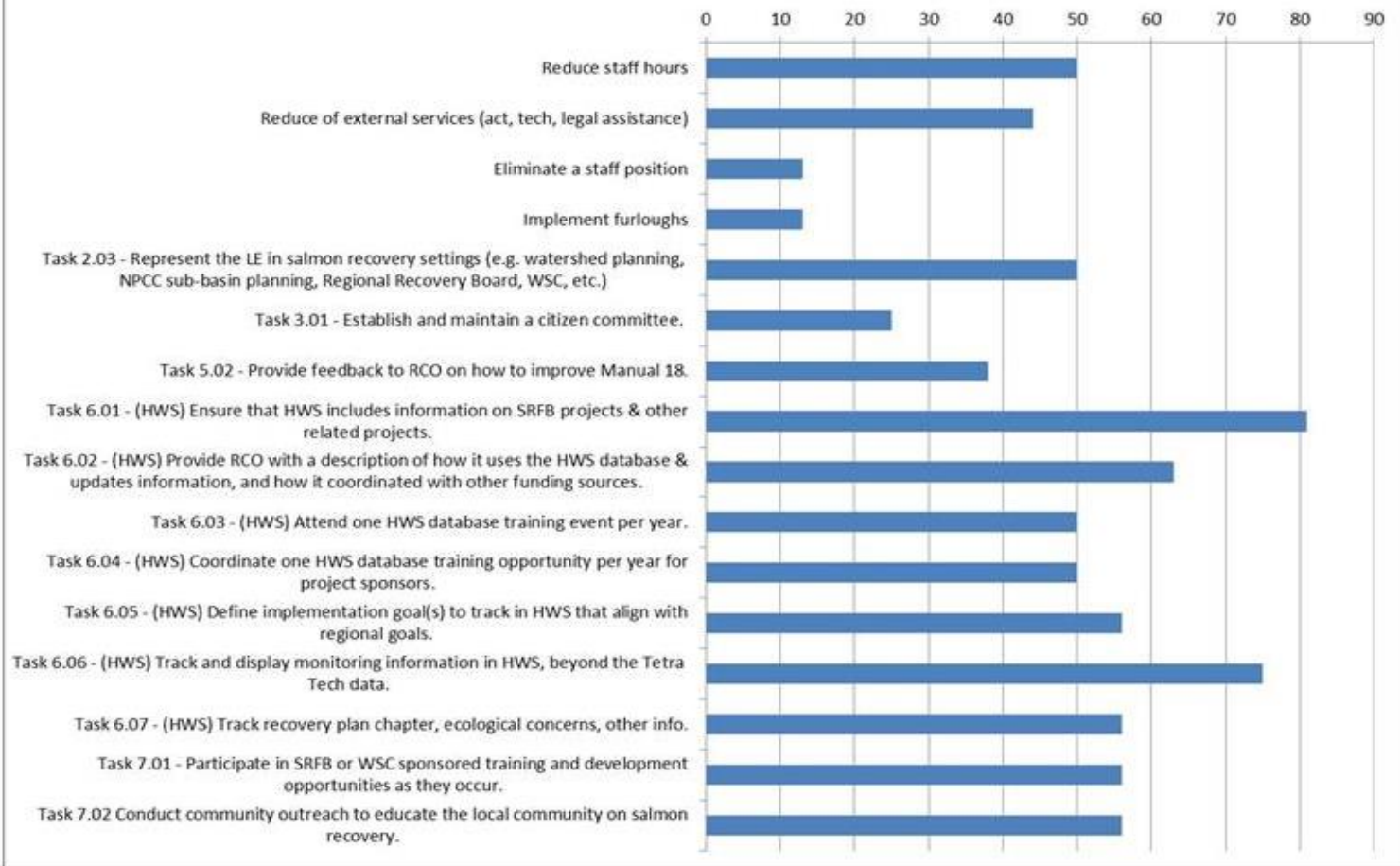
Member Rockefeller moved to approve the capital budget request for the Salmon Recovery Funding Board Grant Program of up to \$40 million in general obligation bonds in the capital budget. Member Mace seconded; motion passed.

Jeff Breckel extended thanks for the work of the board regarding monitoring. The Council of Regions (COR) discussed monitoring fish populations based on NOAA criteria for de-listing. When we look at monitoring projects in terms of fish population, restoring habitat and watershed processes, and the ability to address VSP and threats criteria, we start seeing large funding gaps. We discovered that there was no prudent way to incorporate those funding needs in the current fiscal situation. This process highlighted the need to start looking at the monitoring picture for salmon recovery and to find the gaps in various regions to determine if we are making progress towards delisting and should continue receiving funds. The COR felt that the state general fund request from RCO would best serve the Lead Entities and GSRO. The ability to maintain the capacity of GSRO is very important to the regions.

Darcy Batura and Amy Hatch-Winecka, presented a response to the June request for Washington Salmon Coalition to provide feedback on how Lead Entities would respond to a 15% reduction focused on the State General Fund, the WSC created a survey asking each Lead Entity to identify what services or functions would likely be reduced or curtailed, and what, if any, specific tasks would no longer be accomplished if the budget reduction went into effect (Scope of Work tasks 1-7). The survey focused on potential impacts to staff hours or salary and specific tasks in the RCO scope of work. Seventeen Lead Entities, or 68%, responded to the survey.

The following table shows the percent of Lead Entities that would apply a 15% reduction to key tasks. For this summary, we only include the tasks that received >25% response. Complete results can be reviewed at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-WMYH2TZ8/>

Potential Impacts of a 15% Reduction to State General Fund LE Capacity



All of the tasks outlined within this contract are crucially important to implementing salmon recovery at the local level. Lead Entity's perform these and many more tasks to ensure our projects are based in sound science and receive a robust citizen review. There are no obvious places for budget cuts to occur in this program, a program that already runs very lean and effectively. Key areas impacted by a reduction include:

Staff time and external services

- Habitat Work Schedule
- Communication and Outreach
- Professional Development and participation in WSC meetings and other watershed planning efforts

Please note that although singled out, these activities are not expendable. Maintaining the integrity of our project data in HWS remains critical to delisting. These data along with resources for communication and outreach are critical to our ability to tell the Salmon Story in Washington State.

Lead Entities have made massive strides in our communities and with the support of the SRFB, have been able to increase opportunities for projects and programs in our areas. A reduction to this progress will set salmon recovery back even beyond current estimations. These programs exist on such small budgets when compared to other programs, yet their benefits are the very foundation for a functional natural resource economy. New revenue sources, not less, need to be identified to assist in recovery and implementation.

Member Bugert thanked the WSC for their work and the information that they presented on recommendations and perspectives. It is very helpful and important to hear their perspectives.

Member Bugert moved to direct Kaleen Cottingham to work with the Puget Sound partnership, the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, and the Dept. of Natural Resources to include their recommended levels of funding in RCO's budget request for the three jointly-managed grant programs: Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Program, the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program, and the Family Forest Fish Passage Programs. Member Biery seconded; motion passed.

Chair Troutt asked if we are seeking additional funding for the FFFPP. Director Cottingham indicated the request for \$11.5 million would not cover current capacity within the program. There are plenty of projects on the list and this funding would help get some of these projects off the ground. Member Bugert asked about the fish passage board. Mr. Abbott indicated that the last legislative session looked at the statewide fish passage criteria and evaluating passage issues on private and state land. The passage board will establish criteria by the end of the year and determine funding for future projects.

Item 2: Communication Plan Follow-up

Brian Abbott, Executive Coordinator, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO), updated the board on the Communication Plan. Pyramid Communications developed the Communication Plan and identified two primary goals. One is to visually tell a common story and make the message immediately apparent and relevant. The second is to recognize the change in the funding landscape and cast of champions since 1999, and to amplify the voice of salmon recovery by targeting essential decision makers. Mr. Abbott encouraged clarification regarding why we do this work. Is it clean air, sustainability, salmon, preserving the Pacific Northwest? This communication plan gives folks doing the work an opportunity to tell their stories with a relatively small budget.

In cooperation with the work group GSRO developed a proposal with four recommendations for the SRFB to consider funding:

1. Improve internal network communications
2. Strengthen capacity of regions to lead
3. Branding and creating a visual framework
4. Update the Lead Entity directory

Improve internal network communications: specifically the salmon recovery network. This proposal would fund a third party facilitator/consultant to help understand issues and perspectives while pulling together regional, federal, and state groups in order to develop a well-articulated purpose for the forum. One goal is to develop a process for regional scale conversations regarding how habitat recovery investments can work in tandem with hatchery and harvest decisions to recover at risk stocks. The second goal would create awareness between agencies regarding priorities for salmon recovery and a network of support. The resulting structure and commitments from folks participating will be formalized with agreements like Memos of Understanding. This task would have an estimated budget of \$65,000 to accomplish by December 2015.

Member Rockefeller stated that given the tribes interest we should actively seek to include their participation. Mr. Abbott indicated that tribes would be included. Chair Troutt emphasized the importance to include "tribes" in the language surrounding the communication plan.

Member Mace asked what articulated problems occur now that this communication plan recommendation attempts to resolve. Mr. Abbott indicated that the past was plagued by trust issues between different groups who now recognize the need to work together to move salmon recovery

forward. An independent facilitator would bring the groups together and accomplish the tasks without putting additional stress on GSRO and WDFW.

Member Bugert asked where the money would come from. Director Cottingham indicated that the funds requested are unallocated PCSRF funds. Member Bugert asked where this task would fall within the NOAA priorities. Mr. Abbott indicated this task would still fall under priority three funding. Member Bugert asked about the level of commitment from NOAA. Mr. Abbott indicated that this would present a good forum for NOAA.

Strengthen the capacity of regions to understand, outline, and implement the communication plan by establishing commitments and building off the existing framework. GSRO would conduct up to seven briefings for regional organizations to explain the importance of the communication strategy and the benefits of a region specific approach. Regions would provide a letter of interest, matching funds, a schedule, and a commitment to develop a region specific communication plan. The briefings would cost up to \$21,000 to conduct throughout the regions. Each region would receive up to \$20,000 to accomplish communication strategy within their area.

Member Bugert asked where the funds for regions would come from. Mr. Abbott indicated they already have the funds in most cases, but they need to have the commitment and funds. Member Mace asked where the regions currently stand in terms of support. Mr. Abbott indicated that the regions originally brought the communication plan forward and helped form the recommendations so there is broad support, but that regions need to provide match for this process. To understand how to use and implement the regional communication plan, it is vital to develop region specific trainings, which would be \$50,000 for everything. Member Bugert asked if the regions are providing cost for trainings. Mr. Abbott indicated that regions are participating but not contributing funds for this section.

Branding a network and creating a visual framework or an info-graphic that shows the salmon story for the state of Washington. This info-graphic would create a recognizable visual framework that clearly illustrates salmon recovery and how it works within Washington State. The long-term goal is a clearly recognizable visual identity for salmon recovery by bringing the partners together to create a common theme, packaging, and information to share. Member Biery indicated that stakeholders might help fund the branding portion. Second, Member Biery asked if we were to approve some or the entire communication plan, what kind of feedback would the SRFB and others receive regarding progress. Mr. Abbott indicated that SRFB would be active participants in the process, the discussion, and would receive regular updates.

Update LE director with a short-term goal of an annual update and add information on regional organizations, agencies, and tribes. The long-term goal would determine and incorporate other elements of salmon recovery into the directory. Implementing these recommendations will allow salmon recovery partners to speak with one voice, create an environment of cooperation, and encourage innovation to address strategic salmon recovery priorities. GSRO asks the board to approve \$244,000 in project return funds to carry out the four recommendations outlined in this memo.

Jeff Breckel representing the Council of Regions (COR) thanked the SRFB for their support of the communication strategy. How do we build and maintain momentum for salmon recovery within the state? How do we effectively work together to complement each other? This communication plan would allow that opportunity within specific geographic areas and the COR supports the outlined tasks. We found that consistency is vital and tasks one and two represent critical items. The process has energized folks to move the strategy forward. We ask that you allow regions to start this work by funding the communication plan. Chair Troutt, asked how a phased approach to the tasks would affect momentum. Mr. Breckel stated that getting the internal house in order is crucial, but discouraged waiting as it could

lose momentum within regions. Chair Troutt asked how many regions are ready to start working on a communication plan. Mr. Breckel indicated that at least four regions are ready to move ahead on this.

Member Mace asked what the timeframe is for implementing the requested \$244,000. Mr. Abbott indicated that because tasks are interconnected funding the entire package allows completion of tasks in order. Member Bugert asked what the advantage would be of funding the entire amount. Mr. Abbott indicated that having the entire package funded would allow transition between the stages and implementation to occur easily. Member Bugert indicated that a phased approach would allow for evaluation and he reiterated the importance of the tribes in this process. Member Bugert asked Mr. Breckel if he thought the partners were committed to the internal communication plan. Mr. Breckel indicated that a core group is supportive and that there is a building process to accomplish a synthesized approach.

Chair Troutt asked if the communication plan would help facilitate the forward momentum of changing how we ask for funds in the next biennium. Mr. Breckel indicated that the timing would be ideal to start and would synchronize with funding requests for the next biennium. With regards to the returned funds, Mr. Abbot stated that as of August 26, 2014 there remains \$557,000, not counting the money available for cost overruns. Chair Troutt clarified that the cost overruns are set aside and the \$557,000 is available for allocation.

Chair Troutt indicated that based on the conversations and materials presented it appears that the communication plan should move forward to deliver products. This communication plan represents a valuable tool towards recovery and we should apply available funds to the entire package rather than a phased approach and possibly losing momentum. Member Bugert indicated that funding the package in entirety would benefit the overall salmon recovery and emphasized the need for regular updates on the progress and success. He also indicated that based on the conversation the regions have stated the communication plan is a priority over funding monitoring and lead entity capacity. Member Bugert emphasized that progress reports should show the effectiveness of the plan. Member Rockefeller indicated he felt similar and since a logical sequence is inherent in the process, we should take the second alternative and add "phased released following regular progress updates" so we can track and signal to others involved the importance of measurable progress. Member Biery agrees with Member Rockefeller and including metrics across the board will indicate improvement.

Member Rockefeller moved to approve up to \$244,000 in project return funds to carry out the recommendations outlined for a salmon recovery communications plan in phased releases following/subject to regular progress updates to RCO or the Salmon Recovery Funding Board. Member Biery seconded; motion approved.

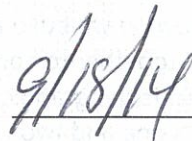
Director Cottingham suggested keeping the subcommittee to continue the work on the communication plan.

Closing

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Minutes approved by:


David Troutt, Chair


Date

WASHINGTON STATE'S REGIONAL SALMON RECOVERY ORGANIZATIONS



August 12, 2014

David Troutt, Chairman
Salmon Recovery Funding Board

Director Kaleen Cottingham
Recreation and Conservation Office



P.O. Box 40917
Olympia WA 98504-0917



Dear Chairman Troutt and Director Cottingham:

The Council of Regions appreciates the willingness of the SRFB and RCO to consider a 2015-17 biennial budget request to fund high priority salmon recovery monitoring needs. However, given the funding outlook for the upcoming biennium and the magnitude of our monitoring needs, the regional organizations question whether a budget request would be viable or effective. Instead of pursuing a monitoring budget request, we believe that priority should be given to the funding needed to sustain the capacity of the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office and Lead Entities.



This is not to say there are no significant monitoring needs. Each region faces important, if not critical, unmet needs. In working with GSRO to prepare a budget package, the regions identified monitoring needs totaling more than \$2.8 million. These are only the highest priority unmet needs, and do not represent what would be required to fully achieve an effective basic monitoring program within each region. The regions' monitoring needs span the full range of actions called for in our recovery plans. These needs extend far beyond the scope of the current SRFB monitoring program.



Effective monitoring programs are essential for making sound, well informed decisions and assessing our progress in returning Washington's salmon and steelhead to healthy, harvestable levels. Each region has or is developing a Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation (RME) program that lays out the key monitoring elements needed to support salmon recovery or enhancement efforts. We are working with federal and state agencies, tribes and local governments to implement those programs. While progress has been made, no region has a monitoring program in place that would satisfy the basic NOAA guidelines for salmon recovery monitoring and support a robust future evaluation of whether or not we can delist an ESU or DPS. Moreover, the progress made varies considerably among regions given differences in available resources.



Clearly, much needs to be done to ensure that monitoring programs can answer basic management questions and support adaptive management. The regions will continue to work with the GSRO, SRFB, and our federal, state, tribal and local partners to address monitoring needs. As an initial step in helping to meet high priority short-term needs, we ask the SRFB, again, to make monitoring projects eligible for funding from the SRFB habitat project funds. We initially proposed this change in our letter of August 9, 2013 and discussed it with the SRFB at its meeting on August 22, 2013.

TO: Chairman Troutt
RE: COR Monitoring Needs
8/12/2014, page 2

To ensure consistency with monitoring priorities identified in salmon recovery and RME plans, we recommend that such projects be sponsored only by a regional organization or in partnership with a regional organization. We know that this recommendation raises the issue of maintaining an appropriate balance between funding for habitat projects and monitoring. While this approach may not be appropriate in all regions, we believe that regional organizations in consultation with their lead entities are in the best position to identify the right funding balance in their regions to address the most important regional monitoring needs.

We look forward to continuing to work with you in the future on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jeff P. Breckel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeff" being more prominent.

Jeff Breckel, Chairman
Executive Director, Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board

Cc: Brian Abbott
Tara Galuska