



UCSRB MEETING

Conference Call

Thursday, April 26, 2007

10:00 AM – Noon

MEETING MINUTES

Board Members Present:

Bud Hover, Okanogan County, UCSRB Chair
Ron Walter, Chelan County
Bill Towe, Colville Confederated Tribes
Paul Ward, Yakama Nation
Mary Hunt, Douglas County
Julie Morgan, UCSRB Executive Director
Derek Van Marter, UCSRB Associate Director

Others Present: Phil Miller, GSRO; Mike Kaputa, Chelan County; Lee Carlson, Yakama Nation; Chuck Jones, Alliance Consulting Group for Douglas County; Char Beam, Okanogan County; Nick Christoph, Okanogan County; Tom Dresser, Grant County PUD; Casey Baldwin, WDFW and RTT; Rob Walton, NOAA; and Elizabeth Gaar, NOAA.

Action Items

1. **Julie** will draft a letter for the Board for submission to the State of Washington regarding the FCRPS BiOp process. The draft letter will be distributed to the Board for review prior to submission by the May 11 deadline.
2. **Derek** will continue to coordinate the upcoming May 1 Implementation Team meeting.
3. All **Board members** were asked to check the website and review for any changes. **Derek** will monitor.
4. **Ron** had a suggestion for the website, on the home page, at the bottom in the box with the 4 questions. He suggested adding "How can I get involved?" with a link to the Resources page.
5. **Julie** will continue to pursue a server for UCSRB but after investigating whether the PUDs could provide the needed services to the UCSRB office.
6. **Julie** will coordinate the hiring of the administrative assistant position.
7. UCSRB staff will continue to pursue the logistics for the UC Tour in August.
8. **Chuck** will draft a letter of agreement to amend Alliance Consulting Group's contract with the Board to provide services to Douglas County.
9. **Julie** will work with NOAA to ensure that the correct implementation schedules are in the plan and that no new edits are made without consultation with the UCSRB.

Welcome and Introductions (Commissioner Bud Hover, Chair)

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairman Bud Hover

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes – March 22, 2007

Bill Towey moved to approve the meeting minutes from March 22, 2007. Paul Ward seconded the motion and the motion was passed.

2. FCRPS Bi-Op Update (Miller)

Phil began by stating that the BiOp is entering into a key period over the next 2-3 months, and that there are two main points to cover: (a) the timeline; and (b) the regional salmon recovery groups are invited to comment on the products coming out of the process. He would like to communicate the key questions from the Board, particularly on the timeline/table the action agencies (AA) have, based on regional recovery plans where they exist, and the relationship to each population or sub-population. There are summaries of the biological analysis and associated actions in each sector (i.e., all the Hs).

The Policy Work Group (PWG) – comprised of federal, state and tribal organizations – is working on reviewing the actions based on the judge's direction. Phil noted that the Board has a chance to review what is available by May 21 on the analysis and actions, and that any comments should come directly to him. If the regional Boards cannot submit comments to the state before May 21, there will be a formal review, open to public record, through June 11. This represents a second opportunity to review the products. A court conference is scheduled for June 20. He said that there is a lot of material to comment on, and he reviewed some of the highlights.

Highlights

There are two summaries of biological analyses (spring Chinook and steelhead) for the region, and a series of planned actions, by tributary; Julie has the latter. He said it was a pretty complicated summary of actions to review. It is still more difficult to draw conclusions, because there are a few missing ingredients:

1. Revised proposed action for monitoring.
2. Methods papers describing calculations used to calculate individual tributary benefits and the biological analyses.

However, Phil did offer some preliminary conclusions, subject to change based on review of the missing information identified above.

- There appears to be continued investment, at increased levels, in the upper Columbia habitat, which is currently focused on steelhead.
- Actions through 2017 rely heavily on supplementation efforts in the upper Columbia.

Casey Baldwin, WDFW, asked if they used different approaches than those in the recovery plans. Phil noted that he is unsure since the material is not yet available. There are many key questions, which will not be answered until those products are available. Casey followed up by inquiring about using the data and analysis done for the UC Recovery Plan. Phil commented that the information was used, but that he was unsure to what extent the information was used.

The level of responsibility to the action agencies was discussed as well; there are major assumptions on the results. For example, the upper Columbia has gaps of information, specifically related to hatchery supplementation and benefits to steelhead and increasing investment to tributary habitat for both Chinook and steelhead.

Policy questions

1. *Is the recovery plan still voluntary, given the BiOp?* Yes, there is no reason to make the recovery plan mandatory, but the BiOp is mandatory for the action agencies, related to Section 7 of the ESA, and assuming it is accepted by the judge. Bud clarified that the mandate was on the agencies and not private individuals. Phil said that was correct with one possible exception: if an individual signs an agreement with one of the action agencies specific to their property.
2. *How does the jeopardy standard affect the recovery plan?* Phil said these are the action agencies responsibility. The judge is following up with short- and long-term results to avoid jeopardy, and not impeding recovery (i.e., is the power system preventing recovery?). The June 20 conference will determine whether the proposed actions are acceptable to the judge, or if there are unresolved issues before he is satisfied. The timeframe will be finalized within the next year.
3. *Will the BiOp change the recovery plan(s)?* No. Any unilateral changes to the federal recovery plan as a result of the BiOp, and not agreed to by the Board, would not be "reasonably certain to occur," which is the standard to which the Action Agencies are held.

Phil said the agencies will provide information and products to Julie, and the Board can decide who and what to review. He said he would like to see the perspectives of the regions in the products, although he understands the time constraints. He reminded everyone that the material is not open for public distribution until after May 21.

Bill Towey asked about the issue of confidentiality and the release of documents to the Board(s). Phil commented that the state has committed to supplying the information to the Board through a cooperative understanding with each.

Bill said he understood but asked who was ultimately responsible for maintaining the status of confidentiality. Is it up to the State, the Board; who is the gatekeeper? Phil said that he considers himself the gatekeeper as the state representative, and suggested that the Board limit distribution of the information.

Bill commented that the Board is not an extension of the state government, and questioned the fit. Phil replied that the nexus to the Board a partner in the process lies within the contract with the state and coordination of related processes to recovery, specifically the BiOp. The conclusion of the discussion was that indeed the Board becomes the gatekeeper of the information, once it is provided by the state, and that the states preference is that the information not be distributed beyond the Board or its technical staff.

Phil also commented that a very similar discussion occurred at a meeting with the Yakima Basin Board. He also noted that after May 21, the confidentiality concerns would no longer exist. Julie commented that the action agencies did request that the Board participate in late 2006 for this part of the process, and now the action agencies are looking for feedback on how the recovery plan information and analysis was used in the BiOp.

The Board agreed to provide a similar letter that the Yakima Board drafted. Julie will draft a letter for the Board for submission to the State of Washington regarding the FCRPS BiOp process. The draft letter will be distributed to the Board for review prior to submission to the State by the May 11 deadline.

Ron Walter asked if there was anything in the BiOp describing how the action agencies will coordinate with the Boards. Phil replied that they are working on a commitment by the action agencies, but that the agreement is not quite complete. He said he is not seeing resistance to doing just that.

3. Management, Logistics, and Updates

Upcoming Implementation Team Meeting (Van Marter)

Derek reviewed the approval of the team structure adopted in December. He noted that staff has been building a large distribution list for mail and email notifications of meetings and activities of the Implementation Team (IT). This list will likely be much larger than the group of regular participants of the IT. He also noted that he has attended several of the local Watershed Action Teams (WATs) and has received nominations for designated representatives to the IT from each of the five groups. The first meeting is scheduled for May 1 in Chelan at the Chelan County PUD building. Watershed Action Teams, planning units, agencies and interested parties have been notified of the meeting. The current plan is for the group to meet quarterly, although the next meeting is scheduled for June 5.

Bill Towey asked about the status of the Okanogan Restoration Council. Nick Christoph noted that details and issues are being worked on, and that it is moving forward. Mary Hunt asked if Board members should or need to attend the IT meetings. Julie noted that the Board is welcome, but not required. Julie also said that there will be another update at the May Board meeting.

Update on UCSRB Website (Van Marter)

Derek briefly reviewed the status of website development. He said that if the Board has not already done so, they should point their web browser to www.ucsrb.com. He reiterated appreciation to NMFS for funding the development of the website. He asked that everyone take a look at the website and if there are any concerns or additions they would like to see to please let him know. He said the intent is for the website to grow and evolve over time.

Ron had a suggestion for the website, on the home page, at the bottom in the box with the 4 questions. He suggested adding "How can I get involved?" with a link to the Resources page.

Server for UCSRB Computer System Network (Morgan)

Julie reviewed the highlights from the handout previously emailed to everyone. She explained the current limitations to the POP3 email service the UCSRB has, limits on distribution lists, and problems with the emails being seen as spam by other servers. She presented the status of the budget relative to purchasing a network server, and asked that the board authorize a not-to-exceed amount.

Ron moved to provide up to \$10,000 for the purchase of a server, after investigating the option for the PUDs to provide server space to the UCSRB. Mary seconded the motion and the motion was passed.

Before the vote, Mary asked if the PUDs were contacted to see if they could provide this service. Julie replied that they had not been approached. Ron amended his motion to include contacting the PUDs before purchasing. If not possible, get the server. The motion carried with the amendment.

Progress on Administrative Assistant Hiring (Van Marter)

Derek provided information on the process to evaluate the letters and resumes received, and to interview and hire the administrative assistant. He said interviews were scheduled for Friday, April 26. Julie requested a motion to amend the Okanogan Contract for Planning Services.

Mary moved to amend the existing contract with Okanogan County to move the remaining money for administrative assistance back to the UCSRB, Ron seconded the motion, and the motion was passed.

Logistics for UC Tour in August (Morgan)

Julie gave a brief update on the logistics of the summer tour, noting that a Wednesday - Thursday tour fits better than any other two-day combination in the month of August. The Board suggested that they have a short monthly meeting on one of the tour days. The Board noted that they especially would like to see Senators Murray and Cantwell on the tour.

Funding for Douglas County

Mary Hunt briefed the Board on the status of the budget for Douglas County. She gave three alternatives for the situation: not participating; an amendment to the Douglas County contract with the Board; or draft a letter of agreement with ACG to provide services for Douglas County directly through their current contract. The latter was approved by the Board.

Ron moved to draft a letter of agreement that ACG provide services for Douglas County directly through the existing consultant contract for an amount not-to-exceed \$2,500. Bill seconded the motion, and the motion was passed.

Chuck will draft the letter of agreement.

4. NOAA's Progress on Addressing Plan Comments (Walton/Garr)

Rob Walton began by reviewing handouts of the list of grouped comments and the timeline. He explained that the comments were synthesized by subject area and responses. He emphasized that this is a draft. The responses to the comments will be completed by the May Board meeting.

The official public record will include the final plan with edits. The response to comments will be incorporated by reference in the FRN. The team is working on the responses and will have a draft for discussion at the May 24 Board meeting. NMFS will summarize the responses at that meeting. The June 29 FRN release date is a tight timeline. The FRN will go through headquarters for review.

Bud Hover re-iterated the importance of ensuring the rest of the plan continues to reflect what has been agreed to (no surprises), including the Enloe Dam issue. Mary also noted the concern by DOE on cost/benefit to Enloe Dam. Julie replied that she will make sure the issue is looked into. She also noted that the UC Biological Strategy is being used in the region and in the FCRPS, and to ensure they are all using the correct version of the implementation schedules (it appears to be so).

Elizabeth Gaar said she is aware of the meeting in May to review NOAA's responses and the intent that no further changes would occur. NMFS does not foresee anything else to

amend unless something comes up as NOAA continues develop the responses to the plan comments. Julie asked that any potential edits be provided as soon as possible so that the Board could consider them before the 24th. Elizabeth agreed this was a good strategy.

Rob Walton noted that he really appreciates the effort in this region for how well the process to draft and review the plan has gone, especially compared to regions where no formal organization exists.

Elizabeth asked the Board to review the comment summary, and to send any comments to NFMS quickly. Julie added that the comment summary is currently 18 pages, and to expect a much longer document when it includes the responses. The Board may want to indicate specific areas of review at the May 24 meeting. Elizabeth thought that they would have a draft before the 24, but she will have to check with Lynn on the progress.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Adjourn Meeting

Bud adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

Summary of Motions

Bill Towey moved to approve the meeting minutes from March 22, 2007. Paul Ward seconded the motion and the motion was passed.

Ron moved to provide up to \$10,000 for the purchase of a server, after investigating the option for the PUDs to provide server space to the UCSRB. Mary seconded the motion and the motion was passed.

Mary moved to amend the existing contract with Okanogan County to move the remaining money for administrative assistance back to the UCSRB, Ron seconded the motion, and the motion was passed.

Ron moved to draft a letter of agreement that ACG provide services for Douglas County directly through the existing consultant contract for an amount not-to-exceed, seconded by Bill, approved for the maximum of \$2,500. Bill seconded the motion, and the motion was passed.