

**PUGET SOUND RECREATIONAL FISHERY ENHANCEMENT PROJECT  
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING**

SEPTEMBER 3, 2008

Tea Leaf II Restaurant  
Olympia, WA

ATTENDANCE: Clint Muns, Rich Eltrich, Steve Thiesfeld, Greg Bargmann, Jim Jenkins, David Croonquist, Jon Lee, Polly Fischer, Jack Needham, Kevin Ryan, and Colleen Desselle.

ABSENT: Tony Floor, Mike Racine, and Brian Johnson

Introductions

Agenda accepted with amendment to indicate Jack's attendance.

Last meeting's minutes amended and approved and attached. Dave asked to discuss some comments on page 1 if there is time – new business.

**Committee Reports**

Performance Audit – Jack

Jack indicated the audit that the audit will not be discussed until it becomes public. The auditor has established a process, which takes quite a lot of time. Someone who knows nothing about the subject conducts a cold reading for clarity and identifies the jargon for easier understanding. The audit team is scheduled to meet tomorrow (09/04) at 2:00 p.m. Hope to finish by September 30. This is only to discuss the process, not the content. They need to do field work – gather data and find facts. Auditors keep the Governor's office apprized. Impression is the Auditor's office had a problem with contractors. Dave asked if there were possible political issues. All this process should have been done to begin with. The impression is malfeasance in office. Could be that it is not unusual for performance reports to take up to two years. Need to see documents to identify whether there is a serious problem – Dave asked if the Auditor's office has a problem with management – maybe it should be revoked and start all over? We need to verify where funding came from. General Fund had funding for the performance audit. Hold them to it to discuss after public and ask for working papers. No legislative response other than we are ground-truthing it for quality assurance. Is there non-feasance? Jack will let them know the sentiments from us. Clint had expressed frustration several months ago. This is not healthy or productive. If problem is management, they need to state the problem. He asked Greg if there is any new information to pass it on to the committee. There is no time schedule, but process field order on September 30. We expected process to take about six weeks. Indicated that it will done to meet national standards and procedures. Dave read the statement of the Scope of Work (ref.). Management must meet deadlines and guidelines. Greg and/or Jack to send out email after the meeting.

## Budget Report - Greg

Project-by-project. Have approximately \$3.3 million since August 2007; spent less than half the money. It looks good; plan to have \$100,000 surplus. Last time we talked about Soos Creek being negative and now is positive. There are 375,000 fall eggs for Rick's Pond. Lake Washington sockeye is overspent, but we will continue project through June of next year. We can cover it through the surplus.

Bad news is that costs are going up. Fish food is increasing approximately 5-15% every six months. When this will stop, we don't know. Protein sources and fat sources are limited – need is getting greater for: 1) fish protein; 2) animal protein; and 3) vegetable protein. Futures market is too volatile to extend beyond six months. As coho get bigger, a mix can be used so it cost less. Can hatchery carcasses be cleaned, cooked, and used? Not aware that we can do this – may be a conflict of interest. It may not be a quality product as well. Carcasses may have a lot of diseases. Can this be explored?

Coded-Wire Tags have gone up \$30-35 per 1,000 fish.

Fish food – pay as we go? We will not have balloon payments. Anticipate change in contract in January 2009.

Good news is that almost all food is now dry food, so we are not running freezers. Feed today is excellent grade – almost 100% nutrient and digestible. We start with one-half pound feed for one pound fish.

Greg is to get hard numbers.

Greg received a 77-page package from Tom Davis and brought the highlights on our agency requests to the Governor. These proposals are under review. Should be available around Thanksgiving. There are four legislative proposals, none of which have a significant impact on PSRFE. The modification clears:

- Professional guides for sturgeon – housekeeping;
- Vehicle purchases – certain funding annually for replacements;
- Commercial fishery sardine on the coast – 2,000 – put license requirement. Affect salmon fisheries? Low exploitation rate. Makes it more economically viable. Harvest will remain the same. Need to limit how many licenses one can hold to minimize how many fish are caught. Asked Steve to give information on license sales/purchases. Stop transfer of licenses?
- Wildlife damage to help landowners when wildlife damage their property.

## **New Business**

Kevin – coho and cutthroat – more about beach access than anything else. A list of WDFW launches was obtained from Steve Sherlock and Jennifer Mays – hard to figure out where the beaches on the list are located. Jennifer sent him a packet, which was more helpful by using township and range. Passed on to have looked at and present to fly club – visit and access. We may be able to adopt a beach. Want to go to DNR and get quadrangle and see where DNR beaches are. Many have private property signs, but are not private. Polly indicated that we

already have some inventories. David Dicks is trying to get these into one area for easier access, but it is hard to do because of resistance. Go to the Technical Data Committee in the Puget Sound Partnership.

Jon – Lingcod Culture (see notes, not attached) – this is all new and we are still learning. Split up some of the lingcod to review them without food – the cannibalism is happening even if the lingcod are the same size, causing choking. Not all of them cannibalize, but it appears that once they start, they don't stop. This is not consistent with behavior in natural conditions. Are there crucial periods when cannibalism occurs? Will use cameras with infrared to track what happens in 24 hours. Tagging – auto sorter is very expensive; we are looking into a source to provide at a lower cost. Not tagged at this point. Can structure reduce predation? What is habitat preference? Where they move after release? Try to map Itsami tomorrow. There are possible sources of funding. Hoping something comes through soon. Divers were volunteers and would only charge for cost of running the boat. Dive team consists of 2-4 divers at a time. Great deal of concern using volunteer divers on state boats – liabilities. Need physical, training, etc. Still working on this. Don't let funding get in the way, but pursue less expensive methods. Volunteers to purchase gas, provide boats, etc.?

### **Old Business**

Status of Chinook – on target for September jumbos; looks good for the numbers of healthy fish, etc. Hoping it goes as smoothly as in last June.

Acoustical Tagging – Approximately 60 yearling Chinook were tagged and released at Hoodport. Battery life is about 90 days. There are two ways to track, one by boat and one by fixed station. When the fish pass a station it is detected. Eighteen have been found, last one detected was around mid-June at Pleasant Harbor. All detections have been on the west shore of the canal. Should have more details at the next meeting. Is there a difference in acoustical tags? Size – 1 year – on two weeks/off two weeks.

Question about acoustical funding – can we access or guide the department? Greg will bring up and make a request. Must conduct Puget Sound and coastal surveys. How to help access for this research? Critical depression of rockfish. Lingcod/rockfish – competing. How much is the fund? If several million, it should not be a problem to ask for a couple \$100,000. NWFFC should be able to provide some funding. Salmon stamp funding? Note: Rockfish fund revenue = \$296,796 and expenditures = \$8,299 so far.

Funding of PSRFE - All funding shall go to enhancement. What is the percent of fee of recreational licenses to our funds? Telephone surveys are completed every spring. Are we getting our fair share of license fee funding? Greg will send a copy of the RCW to committee members. Survey – spend about \$7,500 per year on telephone survey. Would a check box “Do you plan to fish in Puget Sound?” eliminate the need for telephone survey? It would be easy to state you intend to fish in Puget Sound. How about asking when purchasing licenses if they fished Puget Sound?

Orcas Island Chinook - zeroes released in June. Were running small, but looked healthy. The target was 600,000 eggs, and we got 590,000. Adults are coming back this fall. LLTK is holding a ceremony on the 29<sup>th</sup> at the site.

Chambers – what is going on? Just did not make it on the list for capital priority. Soos and Voights made it. Trying to do HSRG recommendations. Did not cover hatchery/wild stock. Pierce County at a staff, but we are not written off. Probably will be 2011-13 biennium. Rockfish Conservation Plan – curtail fishing even more? Why do we have 1-fish retention. Limiting to zero. Reserves, preserves, MPAs – shouldn't we have restriction? It is under consideration.

Why is there no restriction on Chinook catch per year? Salmon is a food fish. If we limit annual Chinook catch, then we conflict with the new no limit on hatchery steelhead. Make a limit on wild fish only. Need to assess impacts. Draft report went out without error checks. Then we will fine-comb out any errors. Goes out to the public. What is a wild fish worth?

Coho tagging – acoustical south Puget Sound – low priority – talked with Squaxin; eager to partner to tag coho in south Puget Sound in spring. Just includes hatchery fish? Net pens? Wild? Come back in winter with cost estimates? Get NOAA to help tag 100. Look at movements – do they leave or linger? Rich asked if we have tagged, but get Minter Creek delayed release? Kevin asked if they are hard to physically tag. Rich stated Skookumchuck raised the south Sound net pen benefit.

Development of Long-Term Strategic Plan – nothing happened since last meeting.

Agency coordinator – the agency wants Greg to work on two other major projects – rockfish plan, strategy on MPAs, and the legislature wants to work on derelict gear – priority of \$100,000 to start on removals of nets and marine debris. Also have two workshops; one on derelict gear in the fall, and one in spring for MPAs. Steve Thiesfeld is our PS Salmon manager and will become the coordinator. Greg's retirement will not come out of PSRFE funds. Allot budget – lingcod – Fish Culture Conference. Recreational manager currently vacant – not sure when will fill.

Long-Term Strategic Plan – need to work on.

#### **Other**

Proposals for recreational changes next year – minor cycle – Saltwater State Park (SWSP) – working with State Parks to remove tire reef and replace with concrete rock reef (photocopy of area shared). New reef area is dark red at –10 to –65 feet. Non-consumptive use. No fishing in red or orange areas. Three hundred and six feet of shoreline closed to fishing. There will be markers and buoys to indicate the areas. Protect divers. Leaves more than 1000 feet. Not sure how many fish. It is on an estuary. This will be controversial. This is a benefit to one user group. Need PSRFE group to find out how this affects users in the area. Should be on web page to public late this week or early next week. Concern people will fish and get divers while fishing. Surveyed for forage fish? Yes. Will not affect. We are striving for more shore access. Losing access. Now this is eliminating more beach access. More than willing to talk with

groups (fly fishers, etc.). Legislature gave appropriations to Parks to finish by end of June (tires in red area and to the north). Not one big structure – little piles – long concrete pillars – put on either side of effluvial current – Greg will check. Tap into networks.

Sontagg report (contract 0407-C-FW-01) – Scope of work B\* - Contract for Performance Audit.

Public process for recreational fishing regulations – four workshops by end of the month.

Next meeting: December 10 – Natural Resources Building, Room 175A&B, per Polly’s request. Must meet outside building to obtain your meal to take in with you.

Committee members for 2009-10 – Director has not made a decision.

Would like to have agency to pick up more members in the PSRFE. Greg stated we are lacking representation in the north – Lake Washington/Seattle area.

Adjourned: 8:04 p.m.