

Pend Oreille Salmonid Recovery Team Citizen Advisory Group Meeting

Draft Meeting Minutes

March 15, 2011

Scheduled 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm Kalispel Wellness Center, Usk

Facilitator: Nick Bean, Lead Entity Coordinator, Kalispel Tribe of Indians

Present: Nick Bean (KNRD), Carol Mack (WSU Extension), Charlotte Yergens (Town of Cusick), John Hankey (PO County Commissioner), Bob Eggelston (Landowner), Leonard Davaz (Landowner), Tommy Petrie Jr. (Pend Oreille County Sportsman Club), Ed Hamilton (Citizen/Fisherman)

Meeting: Called to order by the Coordinator Nick Bean at 6:00 pm.

Introductions: Given by each attendee at 6:05 pm.

Announcements:

- The agenda was approved as is but the coordinator indicated that the meeting should be an open discussion.
- A brief overview of the POSRT was given to refresh the group and new members.
- The status of SRFB funding is unknown at this time but we should anticipate approximately \$360,000 for funding in 2011. The Lead Entity operational grant may be reduced but it is unknown at this time.
- There was a concern by a member with the potential merger of RCO and WDFW since the Governor would ultimately appoint the director instead of a committee of citizens appointing the position.
- The group overviewed the proposed meeting schedule and the group was asked for input. No changes were expected. We can have some shorter "open discussion" meetings if the schedule is too cumbersome. Only one joint meeting (CAG and TAG) is scheduled.
- The SRFB project conference is April 26-27 in Grand Mound, WA (near Olympia). Ray Entz from the Kalispel Tribe is presenting on the LeClerc Watershed restoration efforts over the last 10-15 years.
- The CAG was in support of the sponsor presentation day scheduled in the fall. The logistics and date are still fairly open. It is possible that we can have a presentation day and site visit day or a combination.
- The group was updated on the funded projects from last year: Granite LWD project is focused on NEPA and planning for 2011 and implementation in 2012; the MB LeClerc restoration (phase I) project should be completed in 2011 and the sponsor indicated they will submit for funding to implement Phase II in the current round; the Kapelke Diversion Screen project should be implemented in 2011.
- Carol Mack provided an update on the Gregg's Addition project. There is a mid April workshop at this project site which will include some management techniques to shade out reed canary grass and bank stabilization using native plantings. The Tribe is providing the plantings/cuttings and she hopes to have a group of people interested in the project and stabilization techniques show up to help. Timing is dependent on river elevations. For more information contact Carol Mack.

POSRT Strategy Revision/Implementation Schedule/ CAG Involvement Discussion

- The TAG is having a meeting to revise the POSRT Strategy on April 23rd (unless the date changes).
- A goal for this year is to develop a 3 year implementation schedule for projects which would organize the way we submit for SRFB funding. Nick overviewed the structure of the schedule composed to date.
- On the table are the projects we have seen over the past two years that made it through the process but were not funded. In addition, the Mill and CCA culvert design projects are basically complete and the implementation of these six culverts is potentially on the table for 2011 funding eligibility.
- Charlotte discussed the Cusick River Road Stabilization project (2 miles total) being implemented by the Town of Cusick. She provided the background information on the project and asked the group if they would typically support a "main stem river" project such as this. So far the project has a DOE grant for \$250,000 (pending) and PUD is contributing \$100,000. The SRFB funding request would be for the planting of the shoreline and other restoration activities. Nick would check to see if the Community Salmon Fund would have a grant round for 2011 since this is a visible project with public involvement opportunities. To date this group has only funded main stem projects that were assessments not implementation. It was recommended that the project be brought up to the TAG and get it on the list for consideration.

- It will be up to the CAG to ultimately review and approve the implementation schedule and the top projects submitted annually to the SRFB. The group was asked for input on how to keep the CAG involved in the process since changes to project evaluations may occur.
- It was suggested that using a matrix only approach may limit the suggestions and public input by the CAG. It seems that some of the projects keep coming back year after year and are not funded for some reason. Maybe we can have criteria that eliminate proposals (or elevate them) based on CAG criteria.
- It was also suggested that keeping a specific amount set aside for projects that come up and are ready to go with match. The logistics of this are difficult since this could be taken advantage of or seen as an open call for projects. We need to make sure the CAG are not flooded with multiple projects which will bog down the quality of evaluations of individual project proposals.
- Nick brought forward the idea of parsing out "priorities" for the POSRT Strategy based on either protection or restoration. He indicated that it may be beneficial to focus on areas that need less restoration efforts to accomplish the overall goals of recovering salmonid habitat in a single watershed at a time. This is the idea of being able to "check off" a watershed and move to the next highest priority. This will be proposed to the TAG in April but may not come to fruition if the TAG doesn't approve.
- Curly (Leonard) mentioned that this year will be the first time we have actually seen measurable success (fish) from the restoration efforts we have committed to over the last decade or so. The CCA efforts of restoration and non-native fish removal are culminating with the translocation of westslope cutthroat trout to from Middle Creek to CCA. The group would like to see more measurable success in the way of fish production and availability although this is a habitat program. Nick explained the process of habitat restoration and ultimately non-native eradication and how there is a trend going on to get native salmonids back in the watersheds. The group was concerned about making sure we are not depleting the existing stocks to replenish fishless watersheds. The source population densities and genetics have been evaluated to ensure they can handle removing native fish.
- We discussed bringing new information in to determine the quality of a watershed, especially nearing completing the restoration goals within a subbasin. There is new information (water quality, fish distribution, habitat characteristics) available and it will be up to the TAG to bring this into the Strategy.
- The group asked about the discussions overheard regarding the Skookum hatchery. Nick explained that agencies have and will continue to discuss options for a production or conservation hatchery knowing that it may be necessary to recover bull trout and possibly westslope cutthroat trout. This will be available if and when it becomes public knowledge. The CAG recognized that supplementation may be necessary and would be supported.
- The group discussed the priority watersheds for the PUD FERC relicensing requirements. Nick explained that the PUD is going to restore approximately 164 miles of tributary streams in Box Canyon. The PUD will work on prioritized watershed but the work will likely focus on in stream improvements but will exclude large-scale road and crossing structures. The Seattle City Light FERC relicensing process will focus on a substantial amount of restoration in the Boundary project area which will include the removal of Mill Pond Dam (Sullivan).
- It was mentioned that there has been a mindset change for restoration and agencies are learning from past efforts and adapting appropriately.

Education and Outreach Update:

- The Tribe is currently negotiating a contract with a consultant to develop a website, pamphlets/brochures, fish ID cards, etc. It is critical to get the estimates and contract an outfit ASAP since there is a line item in the Lead Entity operational grant specifically dedicated to education and outreach materials. The Lead Entity contract ends June 30, 2011 so we need to get the work done very soon. If the costs exceed what is available under the current contract, all additional expenses will take place following July 1, 2011 when the next contract is in place.
- The webpage will be housed under the current Kalispel Tribe website. It will be designed to be attractive to the public and will house links, projects information via Habitat Work Schedule, outreach information, POSRT/SRF background and structure and any additional information the CAG or TAG would like to see. Carol Mack is planning on assisting the coordinator in developing and/or strategizing the development of the site.
- The consultant will present the products to the CAG prior to making it public.
- Carol mentioned that a fair booth would be good and the fish identification board Michele Andersen (Tribe) had at the fair last year might be a good think to produce.

Meeting Wrap-up Discussion; Upcoming Meetings/Items:

- Before adjourning Nick mentioned that Sandy Dotts (WDFW) caught a bull trout in Sullivan Creek when finishing the Sullivan Bank Stabilization
- The next CAG meeting is April 20th at the Wellness Center from 6-8pm. Agenda items are open for discussion.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:05 pm