

## **SUMMARY MEETING REPORT**

### **Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC) Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force (CBP Task Force) *May 6, 2020***

#### **OVERVIEW**

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The Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC) Columbia Basin Partnership (CBP) Task Force met via webinar on May 6, 2020. Barry Thom, Regional Administrator for the West Coast Region, Michael Tehan, Assistant Regional Administrator for the Interior Columbia Basin, and Heidi Lovett, Policy Analyst and MAFAC Assistant Designated Federal Officer, represented NOAA Fisheries leadership at the meeting.

Attendance included 24 CBP Task Force members (see *Appendix A* for list) representing Columbia River Basin (the basin) tribal and state sovereigns (including the states of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington) and stakeholders throughout the basin.

Over the course of the meeting, CBP Task Force members discussed the following topics with each other and NOAA Fisheries staff:

- Updates around the region
- Updates Regarding CBP Task Force Schedule
- Seek Concurrence on Quantitative Goals
- Progress Updates on CNP Task Force Work Products
- Opportunity for Public Input
- Path Forward Proposed Approach and Next Steps
- Next Steps and Wrap Up

This report summarizes the major meeting discussions, action items, and next steps for the CBP Task Force.

## **1. Welcome, Introductions, Opening Remarks, and Proposed Agenda**

### ***Barry Thom, NOAA Fisheries, and Deb Nudelman, Kearns & West***

Barry Thom, NOAA Fisheries, welcomed meeting participants and thanked them for all of their efforts in moving the Task Force forward. He acknowledged the large amount of other work being done in the sector and the additional challenges posed by COVID-19.

Deb Nudelman, Kearns & West, thanked the group for attending and explained that this meeting was designed to be a short opportunity to check in on the progress of the Phase 2 Report in advance of the full Task Force meeting to be held on June 2 and 3, 2020. Deb explained that the group will be seeking alignment on the Quantitative Goals and updates will be provided on the status of current Phase 2 work products.

## **2. Updates Around the Region**

### ***Deb Nudelman, K&W, and Task Force Members***

Deb Nudelman, K&W, gave Task Force members an opportunity to share any updates that are relevant to the Task Force process. Many members expressed their gratitude to the group for continuing to work while several provided updates from where they sit in the Basin:

Paul Arrington, Idaho Water Users Association, gave an update on the Idaho Governor's Salmon Work Group. He mentioned that the group is transitioning into the policy recommendation development phase of the work. The group has broken into smaller groups on specific topics with the goal of developing policy statements for the whole Work Group can consider.

Mike Edmonson, State of Idaho, thanked the NOAA Project Team for how they have managed the Task Force and noted that the numbers for the Idaho Spring Chinook are concerning and that there is a chance there may not be a season in Idaho at all.

Justin Hayes, Idaho Conservation, noted that they are currently seeing 9% of the average for salmon and that the work being done by the Task Force is more urgent than ever.

Paul Ward, Yakama Nation Fisheries, stated that he is seeing the same issues with Spring Chinook and that Yakama is currently looking at extraordinary measures for next year. He hopes that people recognize these issues, and that fish are part of the Yakama culture and religion and that they are in dire straits.

## **3. Updates Regarding CBP Task Force Schedule**

### ***Barry Thom, NOAA Fisheries, and Deb Nudelman, Kearns & West***

Barry Thom, NOAA Fisheries, gave the group an update on the upcoming CBP Task Force Schedule. Barry noted that due to the current COVID-19 situation, the Task Force likely will not be able to have an in-person meeting in June, so the Project Team is proposing to have a multi-day webinar to review initial draft sections of the report. Some sections will be drafted while others will be in outline format with the goal of working over the summer to complete the report. He also proposed holding a final meeting at the end of September focused on final approval of the report, hopefully in person. Additionally, the Project Team will provide an update to the MAFAC Task Force at the end of June, provide the final report and the recommendations to the Task Force in October, and finally to NOAA leadership.

Deb Nudelman, Kearns & West, noted that the Project Team is currently looking at September 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> for the final Task Force meeting.

#### 4. Seek Concurrence on Quantitative Goals

##### *Barry Thom, NOAA Fisheries*

Barry Thom, NOAA Fisheries, stated that a lot of work has gone into finalizing the Quantitative Goals, which he sees as a key part in having a common path forward. He noted that the stock summary sheets will be an appendix to the main report and language around stock specific goals will be available for the June Task Force meeting.

Barry noted a few areas where modifications had been made to the goals, including adjustments to the Snake River Goals with input from the Upper Snake River Tribes and the Idaho's Governor's Office, with potential input still to come from the State of Oregon. Additionally, adjustments have been made to stock delineations and hatchery numbers. A couple outstanding issues remain, specifically, the Nez Perce Tribe has suggested adding Sockeye goals above Hells Canyon. Barry said the next step is to update individual stocks and that the goal for the meeting is to seek concurrence on the goals moving forward.

Deb noted that the Project Team is looking for concurrence on the Quantitative Goals, meaning they are okay to move forward to finalizing goals for the June meeting.

Task Force members shared the following reflections, comments, and questions on the updated Goals:

- One member asked what the Project Team is looking for during this meeting and what will happen over the next couple of weeks.
  - Barry Thom responded that the purpose of this meeting is to seek concurrence on what the Project Team currently has, knowing that there will be fine tuning over the next few weeks. Final concurrence will occur at the June Task Force meeting.
- Another member noted that there seems to have been increases in the Goals.
  - Ray Beamesderfer, NOAA Fisheries, noted that there had been slight increases in Spring Chinook, Summer Chinook, and Steelhead in the Yakima Basin for consistency with Yakama Nation numbers that had previously been missed.
- One member asked why there had been a reclassification from winter to summer at 15-Mile Creek
  - Ray responded that it was concluded that it was a summer run population instead of winter and that no numbers had been changed.
- A member asked if the hatchery proposals in the Washington Governor's Recommendations for Southern Resident Killer Whales and proposals under the Mitchell Act and the Pacific Salmon Treaty were incorporated into the Quantitative Goals.
  - Ray responded that he would need to double check that. Barry noted in most cases the production levels outlined under the Pacific Salmon Treaty have not been identified down to the program level so it may be difficult to find out. Overall, the idea was to use that to help achieve many of the hatchery production goals that have already been established.
- One member stated they thought the numbers were close and that they would need to have a few more conversations to get comfortable with the Upper Snake numbers.
- Another member stressed the importance of communicating to future readers that there is a right way and wrong way to use the numbers. There will need to be qualifying language in the final report.

Guy Norman, Northwest Power and Conservation Council from Washington, wanted to make sure that the group was aware of the connection between the Quantitative Goals and the Northwest Power and Conservation Council amendment process. He noted that the Council plans on including the Partnership goals in their biological objectives and performance strategies.

Overall there was concurrence on moving the Quantitative Goals forward.

## 5. Progress Updates on CBP Task Force Work Products

### *Katherine Cheney, Patty Dornbusch, Ray Beamesderfer, and Michael Tehan, NOAA Fisheries*

During this portion of the meeting, Project Team members gave updates on the status of individual portions of the final Phase 2 Report.

#### SCEE

Katherine Cheney, NOAA Fisheries, introduced an initial draft of the SCEE Chapter of the Phase 2 Final Report. She thanked members of the Task Force who helped her in drafting, noting Jennifer Anders' assistance in the development of the section overview. The draft document includes the introductory section and a synthesis that extracts opportunities and challenges from each of the sectors. Katherine explained that there will be additional Tribal perspectives added and that there will be a final draft to share in June. She noted that comments are welcomed.

Katherine also gave an update on the Youth Engagement Survey that was produced with the help of Zach Penney. The survey got over 60 responses and the Project Team will be finding a way to summarize those responses into the SCEE section of the report. Additionally, original responses will be included as an appendix.

#### Scenarios

Patty Dornbusch, NOAA Fisheries, gave an update on Scenarios Section of the Phase 2 Report. Patty stated that all the scenarios that were submitted by Task Force members were sent out in a single PDF document. The Project Team met with the Integration Team and an additional small group to discuss how best to present the scenarios in the final report. The Project Team and the Integration Team recommend keeping all the scenarios separate and including them as an appendix while developing a chapter for the Phase 2 Report, a draft outline of which was sent before the meeting. The chapter would include background on how the Task Force defined and developed scenarios, a brief summary of each scenario, and a compilation or synthesis of all the strategies used in the various scenarios. The chapter would then describe common themes among the scenarios as well as unique approaches. Finally, the chapter would detail how the Task Force would like to see the scenarios used going forward and clarifications on intended uses.

Deb Nudelman, Kearns & West, explained that the purpose of the scenarios is not for the Project Team to pick one to pursue as a pathway forward, but rather act as an opportunity for Task Force members to express creative ideas. Hopefully every member can see themselves in at least one scenario.

Barry Thom, NOAA Fisheries, noted that he appreciated the commonalities that occurred across the scenarios, while also mentioning how people were ambitious in their ideas. He stated that both of those pieces will be useful and will help recovery going forward.

Task Force members shared the following reflections, comments, and questions on the SCEE and Scenarios sections of the Phase 2 Report:

- One member noted that when scenarios were first discussed it was in the context of the management evaluation strategy.
- Another member stated that the scenarios reflect the SCEE components and that they were originally somewhat skeptical of what the SCEE would bring to the report. As the process has progressed, they realized that it is not just about better management, it is about a social change in the basin. That is an important idea that has not stood out until the last couple of months.

Overall, there was consensus to move the Scenarios section forward.

### Biological Analysis

Patty Dornbusch, NOAA Fisheries, introduced the next topic of updates, which included the Biological Analysis section of the report. She noted that the Project Team had sent out documentation, including caveats and appropriate uses, as there was a lot of discussion about what the appropriate and inappropriate uses of the slider were. The goal of the documentation is to try and cover the questions and concerns raised over time about uses of the slider and to describe the methods that were used to quantify the impacts and the methodology of the slider itself. Eventually, there will be more documentation for each specific threat category. Additionally, there is a description of how the Task Force used the slider. The Project Team is looking for feedback by mid-May to be able to revise the documentation in time for the June meeting.

### Key Messages

Michael Tehan, NOAA Fisheries, discussed the updated draft Key Messages section of the Phase 2 Report. He noted that the Project Team took all of information from the process to date and tried to condense it into the Key Messages. Michael stated that Key Messages would be a main topic of the June webinar and that the Project Team is asking the Task Force to think about how well these Key Messages capture the intent of the group.

### Next Steps on Phase 2 report

Katherine Cheney, NOAA Fisheries, discussed an outline of the work left to do on the Phase 2 Report and stated that the Project Team will try to bring as much of the report as possible to the June webinar. Some of the sections may be less complete than others, but the purpose is to cover where the group has been, where it is now, where it is going, and how it will get there. Katherine invited anyone who would be willing to serve on a review team and help edit the draft over the summer.

Deb Nudelman, Kearns & West, noted that the Project Team will be building out the rest of the Phase 2 Report over the summer and that the final product will be brought to the September meeting and to MAFAC by the end of the year.

Jennifer Anders, Zach Penney, and Deb Marriot offered to help review the document.

## **6. Opportunity for Public Comment**

### ***Deb Nudelman, K&W***

No members of the public provided comment.

## **7. Draft Path Forward Recommendations**

### ***Jim McKenna, State of Oregon, Jennifer Anders, Northwest Power and Conservation Council, Guy Norman, Northwest Power and Conservation Council***

Jim McKenna, State of Oregon, gave an update on the approach for moving the group forward and the revised Path Forward document. He noted that the State of Oregon believes this will be a document that will be talked about for years as a success. Some of the key modifications include the addition of more federal agencies and their respective roles. The Path Forward team discussed the membership of any efforts moving forward, hoping to allow for flexibility. There has been tremendous progress, and there will be an open discussion for additional members but with a focus on strong relationships and trust.

Another element is the States' discussion on the Path Forward concept. The four states (Oregon, Idaho, Washington, and Montana) have had numerous conversations over the last few weeks on the topic.

Washington has led a collaborative process and Governor Little of Idaho has initiated a process as well. There seems to be agreement on finding a way to move this process forward while reserving any legal action as a last resort.

The four states have discussed these recommendations are interested in continuing this collaboration. The Path Forward team has expressed a sense of urgency for this, and for the collaboration to get more defined and address the gaps that might exist in systems and processes.

Overall, Jim says the State of Oregon is looking at ways to speed up conversations about dam breaching, looking beyond the power system, and considering all aspects of the river system. He notes that if the state were to discuss any dam breaching effort, it must consider impacts and benefits to other interests. The governor recognizes there is a lot of work to be done.

Jennifer Anders, Northwest Power and Conservation Council, thanked Jim and the other state representatives for getting together and putting in the energy considering the current circumstances. She stated that Montana values the input that has come out of this Partnership and would like to see that continue.

Guy Norman, Northwest Power and Conservation Council, stated that Washington is all in, and is trying to work through a framework that can act as an integration into what has been accomplished in the partnership. He noted that the task at hand is to integrate what the partnership has done and what the path forward looks like with state, federal, and tribal processes as well as policy and technical expertise.

Task Force members shared the following reflections, comments, and questions on the Path Forward Recommendations:

- One Task Force member mentioned that the states have been reaching out to the other sovereigns and letting them know what is going on.
- Another member noted that the document would benefit from an outward acknowledgement regarding what is happening on the ground now, tribal plans, funding programs, etc. Thus, acknowledging the need to build upon ongoing efforts.
- A member stated that they appreciate the potential for pulling other federal agencies in, and that it should be done sooner rather than later to build a collective working relationship. Additionally, the roles functions need more clarity to help people understand what this group will do and how it will interact with the collaborative process on the ground.
- One Task Force member mentioned that they were nervous that the group was going to create yet another large body in the Basin that is not clear on how it will make substantive change.

## **8. Next Steps and Wrap Up**

### ***Deb Nudelman, K&W, and Barry Thom, NOAA Fisheries***

Deb thanked the group for their hard work and noted how much had gone into getting the group to where they were now. She expressed her optimism for moving forward the final report, and the partnership as a whole.

Barry thanked Task Force members for their participation and effort, especially under the less than ideal circumstances presented by COVID-19. He noted that he thinks the group has a lot of good content for the final report and that he looks forward to ending Phase 2 with a good product and the opportunity to move forward collaboratively.

The meeting was adjourned around 12:00 pm.

# MAFAC CBP TASK FORCE

*Draft Document*

*For Review and Comment*

<b>Upcoming Meeting Dates</b>	<b>Location</b>
September 22 & 23, 2020	Portland, OR

<b>Meeting Materials</b>
The meeting materials can be found on the NOAA Fisheries CBP Task Force website here: <a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/west-coast/partners/columbia-basin-partnership-task-force">https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/west-coast/partners/columbia-basin-partnership-task-force</a>