

Puget Sound Recreational Oversight Committee

March 4, 2009

5:00 p.m.

Lakewood Hatchery



Members in Attendance	
Clint Muns, PSA/RFA, Chair Dave Knutzen Dave Croonquist, PSA Kevin Ryan, FFF/CCA Jon Lee, NOAA	Mike Gilchrist, RFA Lloyd Huddleston (visitor) Polly Fischer, PSA Les Johnson
WDFW Staff in Attendance:	
Steve Thiesfeld Jim Jenkins Colleen Desselle	Rich Eltrich Pat Pattillo
Members Absent:	
Bruce Arnold	

Clint Muns convened the meeting approximately 5:30.

- Agenda was approved with slight modification to allow Pat Pattillo's presentation upon his arrival.

December 10 Meeting Minutes Reviewed and Approved.

NOTE: This meeting was audio recorded, so written minutes were cryptic. The audio recording was accidentally deleted before being translated to paper, thus the following notes are cryptic.

New Business

- **State and WDFW Budget Issues (Steve Thiesfeld)** – (handouts provided) 100-160,000 expenditures for last few months. We had a negative balance one month earlier. Second page previously has been used for comparison. There is a freeze on spending, travel, and to provide funding back and have been asked to reduce budget by \$21-25,000. Steve is to confirm amount and to find out when we can expect an answer as to whether the PSRFE gets an exemption. Raised many questions - where did the \$63,000 go? Income based on actual license sales, not projected. Revenues are used for feeding fish, etc. How can the money be taken from a dedicated account? Has a statute been amended? Indirect comes

off the top. Where does this funding go? OFM? WDFW? Check if Lilliwaup should still be listed since they are no longer raising fish. We were hoping the coordinator fund would be a buffer for some of these. It is confusing due to shifts from zeroes to yearlings. Steve asked CMs how many fish they are rearing; expectant production. Will they use for production or keep what we have? Hoodspoint has 120K yearling. Rick's Pond – sub-yearling is 6.9 million Chinook; 697K is not including Minter. Reduce Chinook to 0 due to tribal issues at Minter.

Legalities keep WDFW under constraints as to where and how much reduction in production can be. Can we get Ron to sit in on our meeting – perhaps meet with him sooner than our next meeting?

Much of the cuts are GFS. PSRE is 10%. Proposals are out there to make hatchery cuts – where did the decision process come from? Phil, Ron, Andy, Jim, who? Why hatchery staff was not consulted?

Are all WDFW hatcheries taking hits? What are the actual agency cuts? It is not clear what species are involved. Only one chum facility cut – 10m. Negotiations are still happening. Commercial anglers are concerned. Commercial fisheries are directed at chum. Will this impact other species? Upside is that we are seeing minimal cuts and moving fish from one hatchery to another.

There is a push in legislation for private growers (HB1951). Not sure where the agency is with this. Need to be careful re: land and water values. Private support to sustain hatcheries, but to get for profit involved has potential to be a “Pandora's Box.” Seed – priority for yearling production – put into context on restoration and historical value. When funding available need support research to work toward this key function of the PSRE. Want to reach 3 million in production. How to move down this path? What were production numbers when blackmouth started?

- **Puget Sound Allocation (Pat Pattillo)** – Presented to Senate Natural Resources Committee. First related to how we make the decisions in the North of Falcon (NoF) process. All are Puget Sound (PS) stocks listed under Endangered Species Act (ESA). Didn't open sport fishery. Consistent with the 50% recovery. Tribes were expected to take more. No directed Chinook fishery. Tribes hardly caught any Chinook. Will be different in 2009. Won't be most constraining stocks. Presented to the Committee who did not know a thing about fisheries. Phil is trying to fill in voids of what they did not know, but they didn't know anything. Does not include just PS stocks, but that is what we were striving for – but not for Straits, San Juan Islands, and Canadian, etc. Not all of the catch as fresh water was included at first. Tribes are not overfishing – this was accepted and expected.

We are proposing this year to increase mark-selective to include hatchery fish. Will there be allocation issues? We are hoping to increase proportion of catch for non-Indian fisheries. Angler participation is dropping in many areas. Want to maximize amounts of recreational fisheries out there. We are expanding mark-selective to the ocean. ESA constraints are getting tighter all the time. Biggest change will come from hatchery reform – Nisqually, challenges are different in each area. Do not want selective fisheries in many areas. “Harvestable fish versus what was harvested.” We are looking for the balance between allocation and harvest. Do not want tribal commercial fisheries. Nisqually is a great example of success. Hatchery and harvest are not synced up. How to separate the wild/hatchery? When taking them for marking, separate them. There is a weir going in Nisqually this year. Nisqually has no native wild fish. The locally adopted wild fish takes on unique characteristics so they will thrive.

- **Agency Personnel Changes (Steve Thiesfeld)** – Steve presented a copy of the most current (February 2009) organization charts for the Director’s Office and Fish Program Management staff. The committee would like to receive current organization charts as available. Is this possible?
- **Pre-Season Forecasts (Steve Thiesfeld)** - Pink salmon – expect 8-12 million pink salmon this year. Do license sales go up in a pink year?
- March Forecast – \$8.3 billion in red for the state.
- **Chambers Survival (Steve Thiesfeld)** – Contribution to fisheries by jumbos – which fisheries are they contributing to? James Dixon did an analysis he was going to post and discuss – no time- heaviest in summer. Yearlings still produce best in the fall. Have 2002 & 2003, but 03 is incomplete. Still have 2004, 2005, and 2006 to look at.
- **Volunteer Forms (Steve Thiesfeld)** – If you have not yet signed a Volunteer Registration form, you will need to do so before you can expect to receive reimbursements for expenses. If you fill out your Travel Expense Voucher (if necessary) and provide it to Colleen before departing the meeting, it will get processed in a more timely manner. Of course, if there are lodging expenses, the receipt needs to be included.
- **Director Search (Steve Thiesfeld)** – Jeff Koenings resigned his position as the Director for the agency. Philip Anderson is our interim Director. The Commission will be conducting a search for a new agency director.

Old Business

- **Chinook Culture (Rich Eltrich, Jim Jenkins)** – Hood Canal McKernan transferred to Tumwater Falls. One hundred-twenty thousand at Hoodspout released in May. Ed is ready to adipose fin clip for Rick’s Pond. 50/pound released to Skokomish. Issue on

whether there are enough eggs from Sammamish. Tribes help tag. Chambers watershed – 120K into Chambers Lake; increased survival, shifted for cost-savings, coded-wire tagged subyearlings; done mass marking all.

- **Coho Tagging (?)** – additional tagging funding – no money for it this year to get production up. Would be interesting to know which areas are contributing to these stocks.
- **Audit (Steve Thiesfeld)** – Due to budget situation has been reprioritized as other audits are ongoing to help save money for the state. To be reported on when it is felt that it can be revisited.
- **Development of Long-Term Strategic Plan** – tabled.

Committee Reports

- **Lingcod (Jon Lee)** – Question regarding releasing habitats – where should the lingcod be released? Will they stay or disperse? What are the ecological interactions? We are doing comparisons re treatment control. Collecting eggs – release as subyearlings in November and then yearlings. Itsami Wedge off Johnson Point. There will be 24 subyearlings released in November. Release habitat in November – triangle. Near shore are younger fish; need more detail in depth area. Seem to prefer off-shore near a steep drop off. Still waiting for data on stationary hydrophones – pulled today, took data, and then put back. Got about 50% site fidelity, but need more studies. West Seattle Reef – eggs look consistently bad. Looking at whether there is contamination there.
- **Light Tackle (Kevin Ryan)** – real property description. Look at clubs taking an interest to improve angler access to beaches.
- **Water Access (Polly Fischer)** – One-third of 7 million to education and 1.3 to a boat ramp at Marches Point.

Conclusion

Scheduling of the next meeting:

Requested Action Items:

- Development of Long-Term Strategic Plan
- Ron Warren to discuss hatchery closures?
- WDFW organization charts?

Topics for Future Discussion:

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Next Meeting: June 3 5:00 p.m. in Olympia.