

Pend Oreille Salmonid Recovery Team Citizen Advisory Group Meeting

Draft Meeting Minutes May 25, 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), Sharon Gregg (Landowner/Citizen), Larry Gregg (Landowner/Citizen), John Hankey (PO County Commissioner), Warren LaVille (Landowner), Leonard Davaz (Landowner), Tommy Petrie Jr. (Pend Oreille County Sportsman Club), Ed Hamilton (Citizen/Fisherman), Becca Cory (Community Health Advocate/RN), Norris Boyd (Citizen/Landowner)

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 yet the group anticipated an open discussion style meeting as appropriate.
- A brief overview of the SRFB process and the POSRT was provided for new attendees.
- The 4-20-2011 CAG meeting minutes were reviewed and Becca had a suggestion to make sure the point on replacing fish (give us something to fish for) if they were being removed was emphasized (e.g., brook trout electrofishing removals in LeClerc drainage) and Nick indicated that this was stated and emphasized in the minutes; these minutes were then approved as is. Nick further explained the situation in Whiteman Creek where Todd Andersen (KNRD) has been using electrofishing removals of brook trout to release some of the pressure on existing westslope cutthroat trout. The data is showing a downward trend in the overall density of brook trout and an upward trend in the density of cutthroat. The entire project is working and the cutthroat are increasing in numbers, therefore ultimately replacing the brook trout. This will be in an annual report to BPA this winter sometime. In regard to the permitting for these type of projects, WDFW and the USFWS are in charge and public outreach/comment periods are typically not held but out of the control of the researching agency.
- Tommy has concerns and some confusion as to the removal of northern pike and the continual support of largemouth bass. It is understood that this group and other agencies have invested significant money and time on salmonid recovery. He explained that if pike are to be removed then there may need to be a no limit rule on all non-native species. Nick explained that bass (LM) have been relatively stable in the system for decades and the predation on salmonids is not as much of a concern due to lack of habitat overlap, whereas smallmouth bass are more voracious and similar to northern pike in regard to predation. Tommy mentioned that pike have been in the system for quite a while and the studies have been going on with no decision as to management for close to 7 years. Nick explained that although they may have been in the system in low number for years, the first pike captured (documented) in reservoir surveys or other studies occurred in 2004 and the population expanded rapidly. Tommy commented on his research on burbot and how the Pend Oreille Sportsman Club made a recommendation to the State to adopt a 5 fish limit on Sullivan Lake burbot to protect the species in this system. He explained that he would like to go back and change this since his group protected a species that was not native to Sullivan Lake (but native in the State). Burbot are "persecuting" salmonids in the system which is why Tommy has mixed feelings about the Club's decision. Everyone was reminded that this group should be supporting non-native reduction since we are focused on protecting native salmonids; we have a significant investment to the resource over the last 10 years. Carol asked about the regulations in place for largemouth bass and it was explained that they are protecting larger individuals while allowing harvest for smaller fish. The Tribe's bass hatchery is in place to support harvestable bass for Tribal members primarily in Tribal sloughs. This is to supplement for the loss of harvestable bull trout for the Tribe. Stocking levels are low and as to the success of the supplementation, no information is available at this time. Purging the system of non-native fish is nearly impossible, so the focus should be on the species with the largest competitive and predation risks. Leonard was upset that the non-native largemouth are stocked regularly with no hesitation yet we won't use Kings Lake westslope cutthroat trout to stock creeks since they are not a close enough match to some of the creeks original stocks; it is counterintuitive. Nick explained that this is a much larger issue and will always have controversy. Carol stated that the bass hatchery was in place long before native salmonid recovery was in place. Norris

emphasized that he feels good about what we as a group are doing to protect fish habitat and water quality regardless of the species we focus on.

2011 SRFB Project Proposal Review

- The coordinator briefly presented (PowerPoint) and discussed the 6 proposed projects presented at the last 5-11-11 TAG meeting.
- The first project presented was the Pend Oreille Barrier Assessment and Prioritization project (WDFW). Focus is to survey the last "piece of the puzzle" which is the Colville National Forest, then combine and prioritize all of the barriers we have assessed. Road and trail based survey focusing first on priority watersheds. Information would be entered into the State's fish passage database. The details in the presentation were explained to the group. The information would also be incorporated into the NetMap project. Cost estimate is \$100,841 of which \$75,821 is requested from the SRFB the remainder is match. Becca asked if there was outreach to have volunteers for the project. Nick indicated that there are experience and liability issues with volunteers. Concerns regarding this should be brought up at the project ranking meeting. Man hours are not available but most likely estimated in the budget. Training is put on by the State and follows the fish passage barrier training manual. There may be some reevaluation of culverts since there are some existing discrepancies in the USFS-CNF data. Project will be completed within 18 months of funding.
- The next project is on Cedar Creek called the Kulczyk Restoration project. This is a bank stabilization and large wood project on private property in two locations. The project would use roughness trees, log barbs, soil lists and planting. The project would reduce sediment loading and protect the property. There are some issues with the landowner willingness which the sponsor hopes to resolve prior to the rating and ranking moving. Cost estimates are less than \$20,000 at this point but an exact number is unknown. USFWS might be a funding partner.
- The Pend Oreille County 3 projects were presented next. Each of these projects was presented last year and the Indian and EF Smalle projects were submitted as alternates. Other than costs, the projects have not changed much. The first presented was the Smalle Creek Fish Passage Design project. The proposal is to fund the engineered design of a replacement structure for a fish passage (culvert) barrier on Smalle at Westside Calispell Rd. This culvert is a barrier primarily due to velocity and it is undersized as the standards indicate. The project would produce the final designs and cost estimate to implement the project. The SRFB funding request is approximately \$41,356 with no match required. WDFW would assist with the stream design and permitting. The objective is to restore access to 6 miles of bull trout critical habitat, cutthroat habitat and restore stream function. Currently the pumps at Calispell Creek block access to migratory bull trout, however replacement of the pumps with upstream and downstream fish passage measures are scheduled to take place within the next several years.
- The next project presented was the East Fork Smalle Creek Fish Passage Design project. The proposal is to fund the engineered design of a replacement for a fish passage (double culvert) barrier on EF Smalle at Bond Rd. Both culverts are perched and undersized which is not only creating a barrier, but also scouring the stream below and impeding transport of sediment and wood. The project would produce the final designs and cost estimate to implement the project. The SRFB funding request is approximately \$51,356 with no match required. WDFW would assist with the stream design and permitting. The objective is to restore access to 4 miles of bull trout critical habitat, cutthroat habitat and restore stream function. The cost is higher on this project due to wetland issues and road alignment as well as the potential bridge design. Currently the pumps at Calispell Creek block access to migratory bull trout, but as noted previously this will be addressed in the near future. A question arose regarding the order of these projects and which one if we had a choice would get done first. This is ultimately up to the CAG to decide and more information will be available based on evaluations by the SRFB Review Panel and TAG.
- The last of the County projects presented was the Indian Creek Fish Passage Design project. The proposal is to fund the engineered design of a replacement for a fish passage (single culvert) barrier on Indian Creek at LeClerc Rd. South. This culvert is a barrier primarily due to velocity and it is undersized as the standards indicate. The project would produce the final designs for the bridge and new road alignment with cost estimates to implement the project. The SRFB funding request is \$81,071 with no match required. WDFW would assist with the stream design and permitting. The objective is to restore access to 5 miles of bull trout critical habitat, cutthroat habitat, restore stream function and reduce the risk of failure at the site. This is one of the last projects needed to open the system for migratory salmonids. The cost is higher on this project due to wetland issues, right of way/easement issues, road realignment as well as the extensive geotechnical surveys and bridge design. Once the design is in place this may move up the County's workplan but this would be a question for the engineer. The CAG discussed the expense of the future implementation and how funding would be dealt with. It was understood that the SRFB funding for implementation would only be a portion since the costs are likely to exceed what we would have available for several years. Timing would also be an issue. The designs, once completed are fairly timeless in that the cost estimates may change but the design should be stable. A question was posed as to

why the presentation had this as a public safety issue. Nick explained that the corner visibility is poor and undersized culverts are always a risk hazard for failure in a large water year.

- The final project presented was Phase II of the Middle Branch LeClerc Creek Restoration Project (Kalispel/USFS). The first phase was the design and Phase I (funded last year) was the first implementation phase which included the replacement of a barrier with a bridge and road realignment. The County also had a two phase project that also ties in with the overall restoration. Phase II is the removal of 7 culverts at 4 sites, obliterating 2.6 miles of road in the riparian/floodplain area, and construction of 2.3 miles of new road away from the stream. The partnerships on the multiple phases of this project (MB LeClerc) have included USFS, Kalispel Tribe, WDFW, PO County and Stimson. This is bull trout critical habitat and important habitat for westslope cutthroat trout. The total cost for this project, which increased from the initial estimates, is \$467,000 of which the SRFB funding request is for the full \$360,000. The remainder of the total will be covered by \$85,000 from the USFS and \$22,000 by the Kalispel Tribe as match. A question arose as to if the group determined to partially fund the project could the sponsor seek additional funding or scale the project back. Nick was unsure if the sponsor could secure additional funding but did indicate that the project could not be scaled back. He asked the group to remember the question regarding additional funding and ask the sponsor at the ranking meeting. There will not likely be additional projects seen in MB LeClerc for SRFB funding. Phase I should be completed in 2011 and Phase II will be implemented in 2012, beginning the spring of 2012 and completed in the late fall of 2012. Nick was asked if Stimson was a contributing partner and he said that they are contributing the land to build the new access road. Becca mentioned that they will be generating income from the timber harvest and we need to work together as a group since the county is struggling. There was a question as to if this could be phased again and this would need to be answered by the sponsor.
- The group discussed the expected funding and when we should have an idea how much SRFB funding we should receive. Nick said that we should get \$300,000-\$360,000 but not to expect any more than this.

Education and Outreach

- Nick will be meeting with Klündt Hosmer this week (contracted to develop the website) to work on website production and materials.
- Nick would try to get together a fair booth at the PO County Fair. Norris could assist in the booth space and CAG volunteers may be available if needed.
- Time limited this discussion

Implementation Schedule

- We are in need of an implementation schedule for projects over the next several years will help us organize and run more efficiently. At the last TAG meeting Nick requested that anyone interested in proposing projects for SRFB funding in the next several years work on developing a list of projects to bring to the table. The group agreed this is a necessary step.
- We will have a meeting (joint) in November (16th?) to develop this plan so we may use it to guide project development and submission in 2012 and beyond. This is an opportunity for the CAG and TAG to provide input on the project development for WRIA 62.

Meeting Wrap-up Discussion; Upcoming Meetings/Items:

- The next CAG-only meeting is on August 24th at the Wellness Center from 6-8pm.
- The SRFB Review Panel Meeting (joint CAG/TAG) is June 22nd which is an all day event to visit project sites.
- The project rating and ranking meeting will be on July 20th which is a joint CAG/TAG meeting.
- All meetings are open to the public and typically published in the Newport Miner the week prior.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:10 pm