

Puget Sound Steelhead Advisory Group (PSSAG) Meeting Notes

October 5, 2017, 1PM – 7PM

Embassy Suites, Lynnwood, Washington, 98036

Drafted by Cole Caldwell and James Scott

Key Messages to Stakeholders Agreed at Meeting Conclusion

- PSSAG is taking an all “H’s” approach as an overarching framework with watershed-specific strategies.
- PSSAG is moving on from the Hood Canal & Strait of Juan de Fuca MPG and initiating work on Central and South Puget Sound issues.
- Steelhead in Central and South Puget Sound are in a dire situation.
- PSSAG is thinking about how the group product will be presented publically.
- Wild steelhead are ESA listed.

Agenda Items discussed at the meeting:

1) Introduction

2) Puget Sound Steelhead Recovery Plan (PSSRP) Status Report (Rob Walton, NOAA Fisheries)

3) Review Draft Hood Canal & Strait of Juan de Fuca Portfolio Provisional Recommendations

4) Central and South Puget Sound Steelhead

- Review iterative approach to developing a portfolio of conservation objectives, sustainable fisheries, and artificial production programs.
- Review population, fishery, and hatchery information.
- What is our proposed delisting scenario?
- What are our aspirational objectives for Central & South PS recreational fisheries?
- Would an artificial production program help achieve conservation or fisher objectives?

5) Looking Ahead

5) External Messages

- What are the 3-5 messages regarding this meeting that we want to provide to other interested stakeholder?

6) Public Comment

7) Thoughts on Meeting

Advisors Attending

Gary Butrim

Derek Day

Curt Kraemer

David Yamashita

Mark Spada

Jamie Glasgow

Curt Wilson

Rob Masonis

Rich Simms

Andrew Marks

Roger Goodan

Public Attending

Conrad Gowell

Nick Chambers

Dean Finnerty
Hal Boynton

Staff Attending

Jim Scott (co-facilitator), Cole Caldwell (co-facilitator)
Jennifer Whitney
Brett Barkdull
Edward Eleazer
Aaron Bosworth
James Losee

Invited Speaker

Rob Walton, NOAA Fisheries

Notes from the meeting per agenda item:

1) Introduction

- Jim discussed the meeting agenda and tasks that the PSSAG would be working on for the meeting.

2) Puget Sound Steelhead Recovery Plan (PSSRP) Status Report (Rob Walton, NOAA Fisheries)

- Rob Walton presented current status updates to the PSSAG.
 - Rob described the Federal Recovery Plan structure and purpose
 - Rob specified that the Plan establishes strategies and actions pertaining to habitat, marine survival, etc.
 - The current recovery plan goal is to have the draft Plan available by 2018.
 - Several factors will be considered under statute for broad-sense recovery criteria.
 - PSSAG members had questions about how the PSSAG work will align with the PSSRP work.
 - The PSSAG will periodically provide check-in updates on status and decisions alignment.
 - There may be some differences in chosen metrics between the PSSAG and PSSRP (e.g., delisting criteria, strategies, action, etc.).
 - PSSAG members asked how will Tribal and non-Tribal interests be managed by NOAA via the Plan?
 - NOAA will handle the consultation process between the state, and Tribal Co-Managers.
 - According to Rob, the driving force for decisions within PSSAG should be, what can PSSAG do to achieve long-term persistence and harvest.
 - Take home messages:
 - The timing is right for all of these processes and group work.
 - These efforts are bringing the steelhead community together to make decisions.
 - Ideas are being crafted to inform decisions.
 - It's important to provide some fishing recreation opportunity.

4) Review Draft Hood Canal & Strait of Juan de Fuca Portfolio Provisional Recommendations

- An error was discovered in the Viability Figure provided by Scott to the Group (i.e., Sequim/Discovery Bay needs to be bumped up from a viability score of 2 to 3.).
- PSSAG members suggest using the term “River Advocates” to describe their role and emphasized the need to describe in layman terms about what is needed in each river.

- PSSAG member would like to have a better understanding of the tribal fisheries in each watershed. This may provide an additional indicator of how much harvest pressure there is and when it occurs (i.e., incidental to Chinook, directed at hatchery steelhead, directed at wild steelhead).
- PSSAG members requested that Jim post State Tribal Annual Steelhead Fishery/Annual Harvest Plan on the PSSAG website.
- Curt Wilson requested information on the coastal rivers.

5) Central and South Puget Sound Steelhead

- PSSAG proposed delisting scenarios (Conservation (C), Stabilizing (S), or Primary (P)) conclusions were:
 - Cedar River Winter Run: C, C, S, C = (3C/1S)
 - North Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish Winter Run: S, S, C, C = (2C/2S)
 - Green River Winter Run: P, P, P, P = (P)
 - Puyallup/Carbon Rivers Winter Run: P, P, P, P = (P)
 - White River Winter Run: P, P, P, P = (P)
 - Nisqually River Winter Run: P, P, P, P = (P)
 - NOTE: This river system has been designated as a wild steelhead gene bank.
 - South Puget Sound Tributaries Winter Run: C, C, C, P/C = (3C/1P/C)
 - East Kitsap Peninsula Tributaries Winter Run: C, C, C, C = (C)
- Aspirational objectives for Central & South PS recreational fisheries and production programs
 - Draft portfolios were proposed and will be summarized for the next meeting.
- Jamie Glasgow reiterated his perspective on near-term aspirational objectives:
 - Proposed fisheries should be assessed using a management strategy evaluation.
 - The Hood Canal conservation hatchery experiment should be completed and results used to inform the use of conservation hatchery programs in the White, Green, and Cedar rivers.
 - Habitat restoration, selective fishing gear, and marine survival research are important components of the completed portfolio.
 - Assumptions for existing hatchery programs (pHOS, PNI, etc.) should be tested.

6) Looking Ahead

- Jim distributed a letter from NOAA Fisheries regarding Skamania-stock segregated hatchery programs on the Stillaguamish and Snohomish rivers. The letter encouraged “the timely development of alternatives to using segregated Skamania broodstock in the Snohomish and Stillaguamish basins.” Jim also distributed a response from WDFW that stated “we intend to initiate discussions with the co-managers with the expectation that the current programs will be replaced. We believe that there are alternatives that will maintain fishing opportunities for summer steelhead while advancing the conservation of Puget Sound steelhead”. Jim asked the PSSAG for their assistance in developing the alternative program.
- Jim will ask someone to come and present results from the Puget Sound Steelhead Marine Survival study to provide information on early marine survival rates and smolt to adult return rates.

7) Key Message to Stakeholders Notes

- PSSAG is taking an all “H’s” approach as an overarching framework with watershed-specific strategies.
- PSSAG is moving on from the Hood Canal & Strait of Juan de Fuca MPG and initiating work on Central and South Puget Sound issues.
- Steelhead in Central and South Puget Sound are in a dire situation.
- PSSAG is thinking about how the group product will be presented publically.
- Wild steelhead are ESA listed.