

# MEETING SUMMARY

## Hatchery Scientific Review Group Best Western CottonTree Inn, Mount Vernon, Washington April 3-5, 2002

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**Agenda:** The purpose of this meeting was to complete the review of the Skagit River Basin region; and to discuss a number of other Hatchery Reform Project-related issues.

### **In Attendance:**

1. HSRG members John Barr (vice chair), Lee Blankenship (vice chair), Don Campton, Trevor Evelyn, Connie Mahnken and Lars Mobernd (chair).
2. Facilitation team members Barbara Cairns (April 3 and the morning of April 4), Kathleen Hopper, Michael Kern, Bj Mirk, Michael Schmidt and Jim Waldo.
3. Regional participants Kyle Brakensiek and Willy Eldridge of NWIFC; Bob Hayman, Larry Peterson, Mike Pflugler and Scott Schuyler of the Skagit System Cooperative; and Charmane Ashbrook, Pete Castle, Kevin Kurras, Chuck Lavier, Darrell Mills, Steve Moore, Chuck Phillips, Gary Sprague, Steve Stout and Jack Tipping of WDFW joined the Scientific Group on April 5 for an informal review of the region's hatchery programs. Gary Sprague joined the Scientific Group on the afternoon of April 3 for discussion of limnology and other issues relating to programs at Baker and Shannon lakes.

### **Discussions/Presentations:**

On April 3, Jim Waldo welcomed Scientific Group members to the meeting and reviewed the agenda. Michael Kern reviewed the meeting materials. The group spent the day discussing a number of Hatchery Reform Project issues not directly related to the Skagit Regional Review.

The Scientific Group discussed progress made and steps still required to complete the *Scientific Framework and Hatchery Review Program* document. Several chapters have been finalized and are available from the web site. These include the Introduction, the December 2000 version of the Scientific Framework, the Regional Review Process, the Benefit/Risk Tool, and the Operational Guidelines. The group decided that the Scientific Framework should be revised by the fall of 2002 and assigned a task team to bring suggested revisions to the July meeting. Chapters still being finalized include the Research Program, Emerging Issues in Hatchery Reform, and Monitoring and Evaluation. The Scientific Group made a series of assignments to ensure completion of these chapters prior to the next meeting.

Lars Mobernd reported that the co-managers are eager to try out their revised Benefit/Risk Assessment Procedure (BRAP), from which the Scientific Group's Benefit/Risk Tool was derived. The Scientific Group requested a presentation on the latest version of BRAP prior to the Central Puget Sound Regional Review introductory meeting on May 7 in SeaTac.

The Scientific Group and facilitation team held a discussion about preparing for the Central Puget Sound Regional Review, slated for August through October 2002. The Scientific Group

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agreed that this region will require involvement by other participants beside the co-managers. Other hatchery operators, such as the University of Washington and the Seattle Aquarium, will have the opportunity to provide background information and briefings on the tour. Other interested parties, such as King County and the WRIA groups, will receive briefings from the facilitation team and may be asked to provide briefings on specific topics, such as habitat. The Scientific Group agreed that the August meeting should be devoted to tours and briefings. The September and October meetings will be for completing the Benefit/Risk Tool worksheets and hosting the informal review. The facilitation team will finalize logistics for this region and send out an invitation to the introductory meeting as soon as possible.

Barbara Cairns provided a communications update. She reported that the 2002 Hatchery Reform Project Report to Congress—containing a 2001 report, 2002 work plan and 2003 request—was mailed on March 27. She also reported that the state legislature provided WDFW with approximately \$1.25 million for hatchery capital improvements as part of an economic stimulus package and \$500,000 for fish passage, barrier and culvert replacement. Several facilitation team and Scientific Group members reported on recent or upcoming Hatchery Reform Project presentations.

The Scientific Group reviewed the meeting dates through January 2003 and decided to begin the Grays Harbor regional review in February 2003, rather than November 2002. November through January will be devoted to completing the 2002 recommendations report; the 2002 Research Review and 2003 research grants program; revisions to the *Scientific Framework and Hatchery Review Program*; hatchery reform implementation strategy; and briefing key state legislators on the project. Gary Sprague of WDFW joined the Scientific Group at the end of the day for a discussion of limnology and other issues relating to the Skagit region's programs at Baker and Shannon lakes.

The Scientific Group finished the day by discussing a draft Hatchery Reform Recommendations implementation tracker that WDFW had asked the HSRG to review. The group decided to draft a letter from the Scientific Group to WDFW saying that the checklist and approach have merit and providing a series of specific changes to the checklist that the Scientific Group recommends. The letter will be cc:ed to the tribes, with the recommendation that they develop something similar. It will include a series of hatchery reform implementation steps suggested by the Scientific Group. The letter will also ask the managers to put the best regional personnel on regional implementation task teams as a way of implementing hatchery reform recommendations.

On April 4, the Scientific Group completed the Benefit/Risk Tool's Part 3 worksheet: *Is Current Hatchery Program Consistent with Short- and Long-Term Goals?; Recommendations and Alternatives* for all hatchery programs in the Skagit region.

On April 5, the Scientific Group used this information to host an Informal Review with regional participants, at which the Scientific Group provided the participants with preliminary observations and recommendations. The following programs were presented:

- Regional overview, facilities overview, monitoring and evaluation
- Baker River sockeye

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- Baker River chinook
- Baker River coho
- Baker Lake limnology
- Lake Shannon kokanee
- Other coho
- Skagit River coho
- Skagit River chum
- Skagit River hatchery winter steelhead
- Skagit River summer chinook
- Skagit River fall chinook
- Skagit River spring chinook

The regional participants agreed to meet on April 15 to discuss what they heard at the Informal Review and provide feedback to the Scientific Group.

The facilitation team told the Scientific Group it will provide the briefing book for the Nooksack/Samish region electronically as soon as it can after receiving materials from the regional participants. Those materials have been late in arriving.