

MEETING SUMMARY

Hatchery Scientific Review Group Phoenix Inn Suites, Olympia, Washington April 16–18, 2001

Agenda: The purpose of this meeting was to continue planning for regional reviews of the Puget Sound and Coastal Washington hatchery system including finalizing a benefit/risk tool, operational guidelines, monitoring and evaluation criteria, a worksheet and a report outline for use in that review; to have introductory meeting with participants from the second and third regions to be reviewed; to review three remaining proposals received for 2001 HSRG research grants; to receive an update on Hatchery Reform Project communications and administrative matters; and to meet with state legislators to provide an update on the project.

In Attendance:

- HSRG members John Barr (vice chair), Lee Blankenship (vice chair), Don Campton, Trevor Evelyn, Connie Mahnken, Lars Mobrand (chair), Lisa Seeb, Bill Smoker and alternate Paul Dorn.
- Facilitation team members Kathy Hopper, Michael Kern, Bj Mirk and Jim Waldo (Barbara Cairns was in attendance on April 18).
- Participants in the upcoming South Sound and Stillaguamish/Snohomish Regional Reviews, and state legislators joined the Scientific Group for specific agenda items (see below).

Discussions/Presentations:

Jim Waldo welcomed Hatchery Scientific Review Group (Scientific Group) members to the meeting and reviewed the agenda. He explained that the bulk of the meeting would be devoted to completing the tools the Scientific Group is preparing for use in the Regional Reviews, along with introductory meetings for the second and third regions to be reviewed.

Lars Mobrand presented a draft worksheet for the Scientific Group to use in providing informal feedback to regional managers and operators at the end of a regional review. This worksheet will be a tool for internally recording and organizing the group's notes, not a finished product for publication or scrutiny. The Scientific Group decided that the informal feedback should be oral, with no written document until the group authors its formal report on the region. The Scientific Group agreed that the regional managers should have the opportunity to act—or make plans to act—on the informal feedback and that these actions and plans should be taken into account in the formal report. Lars also presented a draft outline for the formal report. He will revise the outline based on comments provided at the meeting and forward it to Eastern Straits regional review participants, for their information.

Lars Mobrand presented a revised draft of the Scientific Group's Benefit/Risk Tool. He will revise the tool based on comments received at the meeting and provide it for distribution to the

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pilot regions. A selected group of agency reviewers will also be asked for their comments on the tool.

The Scientific Group held meetings with regional participants for the second and third pilot regions (the South Sound and Snohomish/Stillaguamish regions) on the meeting's first and second days. At these meetings, the group provided the regional participants with an introduction to the Hatchery Reform Project, the Scientific Group and the Regional Review process. The Scientific Group emphasized that the driving force behind this review process is to help the salmonid managers be successful in operating hatcheries to meet the twin goals of helping conserve wild populations and supporting sustainable fisheries. The group also said that the process is designed to work with existing processes and information, such as Endangered Species Act (ESA) compliance, but to also consider benefits, and not just risks, as ESA does. Most of the information the Scientific Group will need participants to assemble will be existing information.

Both regions had plenty of questions about how the reviews would be conducted. Stillaguamish/Snohomish participants recommended that the Scientific Group allow one day to tour each of the region's two river basins, rather than one day for both. South Sound participants asked the Scientific Group to consider the marine environment in their analysis of the region. They also said that it would be important to tour their region's net pens.

The facilitation team will send a follow-up e-mail to the participants. Attached will be a contact list, a preliminary agenda and soft copies of the Scientific Group's Regional Information Instruction Sheet and the Conservation Commission's habitat summaries. The facilitation team and agency representatives will begin working with the regional participants to assemble briefing books for the Scientific Group to review in advance of these regional reviews. The facilitation team will also visit the regions and/or otherwise interact with participants to continue making preparations for these meetings.

The Scientific Group devoted a large portion of the meeting to revising its draft hatchery operational guidelines. John Barr agreed to finish the draft operational guidelines and send them to the Scientific Group for review. After the Scientific Group provides comments, John will revise the draft guidelines again, so that they can be distributed to the pilot regions. A selected group of agency reviewers will also be asked for their comments on the guidelines.

The Scientific Group discussed research grant decisions that had been deferred in March, in order to allow the group to gather more information. Based on the results of an independent review of one grant request, the Scientific Group decided to not fund the request. The group distributed the remaining 2001 research funds by providing funding to two additional studies and supplementing funding to three previously funded projects.

The Scientific Group also spent time discussing the hatchery monitoring and evaluation criteria it is preparing. Connie Mahnken will finish the draft matrix containing these criteria and send it to the Scientific Group for review. After the Scientific Group comments on the draft, Connie will provide the revised draft matrix for distribution to the pilot regions. A selected group of agency reviewers will also be asked for their comments on the matrix.

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Michael Kern provided the Scientific Group with an update on Hatchery Reform Project communications activities. He said that several members of the facilitation team and the Scientific Group have been invited to speak at a hatchery workshop being held at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia on June 6 and 7. In addition, Kathy Hopper and Michael made a presentation on the project to the Mid-Sound Fisheries Enhancement Task Force on April 11. The web site and PowerPoint presentations are also being kept updated.

The agency that provides budget and research grant administration for the Hatchery Reform Project—the State of Washington’s Interagency Commission for Outdoor Recreation (IAC)—made a presentation to the Scientific Group explaining their accounting procedures and systems and how these have been applied to the project. The Scientific Group agreed to take advantage IAC’s PRISM database system to allow for an online application process for the 2002 research grant program proposals.

The Scientific Group met with Washington State Senator Linda Evans Parlette, Washington State Representative Kirk Pearson, and members of the Hatchery Reform Coordinating Committee to provide an update on the Hatchery Reform Project. Jim Waldo presented the group with an overview of the project, the Scientific Group, the research grant program, the Scientific Framework, and the upcoming Regional Review process. Senator Parlette said that people in the Methow Valley are tired of money being spent on process and would be pleased with this project’s emphasis on science and technical assistance. Representative Pearson expressed his support for the project and asked the Scientific Group and Coordinating Committee to keep in mind the question of how he could be of assistance.

The Scientific Group asked the facilitation team to draft a proposed calendar detailing how the group can complete the three pilot regions, revise the review tools and framework, write up recommendations for the pilot regions, monitor funded research, and hold introductory meetings for the next two regions during the remainder of 2001; and then complete the maximum number of regional reviews while still directing a research program in 2002.