

MEETING SUMMARY

Hatchery Scientific Review Group Phoenix Inn Suites, Olympia, Washington September 13-14, 2000

Agenda: The purpose of this meeting was to prepare the draft HSRG Scientific Framework for public review; receive a presentation on the Benefit/Risk Assessment Procedure (BRAP); discuss hatchery reform implementation guidelines; review example hatchery and genetic management plans (HGMPs); discuss the next round of HSRG research proposals; and continue learning about the Puget Sound and Coastal Washington Hatchery System.

In Attendance:

- HSRG members John Barr (and alternate Paul Dorn), Lee Blankenship (vice chair), Don Campton, Conrad Mahnken, Lars Moberg (chair), Robert Piper, and Lisa Seeb.
- Facilitation team members Kathy Hopper, Michael Kern, BJ Mirk and Jim Waldo.
- Paul Seidel and Jim Scott of the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) attended specific agenda items to make presentations, at the request of the HSRG (see below).

Discussions/Presentations:

Jim Waldo welcomed Hatchery Scientific Review Group (Scientific Group) members to the meeting and reviewed the agenda.

The Scientific Group began the meeting by reviewing and revising the draft Scientific Framework to prepare it for public review in October. The group directed the facilitation team to incorporate these revisions and send the framework out in late September to an extensive list of public reviewers including agencies, tribes, hatchery managers, external decision makers, interest groups, Congressional members and staffs, state legislators and staffs, and others identified by the facilitation team and Scientific Group members. Review comments will be due October 16. The facilitation team agreed to bring the public review cover memo and Hatchery Reform background sheet to Issaquah Salmon Days in early October and to make the framework available for public review from the Hatchery Reform web site. Public review comments will be considered at the October Scientific Group meeting.

Jim Scott of WDFW made a presentation to the Scientific Group on the Benefit/Risk Assessment Procedure (BRAP). He explained that BRAP began four years ago as part of the co-managers and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Comprehensive Coho and Comprehensive Chinook processes. The initial BRAP had been shelved until the co-managers identified it as a good tool for the 4(d) process they are currently going through for Endangered Species Act (ESA) compliance. BRAP's goals include: 1) a scientific assessment of the risks of artificial production; 2) a policy framework for risk evaluation in the ecological context of each watershed, with integrated assessment and decision making for hatcheries, harvest and habitat; 3) facility-specific jeopardy determinations; and 4) a tool to promote improved practices at WDFW

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and cooperative projects. BRAP considers four broad categories of hazards: genetic, ecological, demographic and facilities. It provides an assessment of risks across an Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU). The plan is to complete the BRAP tool in September and use it to develop a 4(d) plan for Puget Sound chinook salmon by November. In BRAP's next iteration, the co-managers would like to refine the competition and predation sections and include a better assessment of benefits, including catch, escapement and maybe ceremonial and cultural benefits.

In considering its relationship to the BRAP process, the Scientific Group agreed that BRAP should be employed as it now exists to evaluate HGMPs in the "phase one" process of determining jeopardy and developing a Puget Sound chinook 4(d) rule by November 2000. The scientific framework should be compared to the BRAP, resulting in an "enhanced" BRAP 2, to be used to evaluate HGMPs again in the "phase two" context of formulating recovery plans and in the Scientific Group's regional review process. A task team was appointed to compare BRAP to the framework and charged with bringing a proposal to the October meeting.

The Scientific Group reviewed sample HGMPs provided by WDFW, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC) and determined that there are several fundamental problems that limit the usefulness of these documents, especially as baseline information for Scientific Group hatchery reform analysis and planning. These limitations include:

- Because of a lack of specifics, it cannot be established that evaluative measures are being uniformly applied and understood across programs and HGMPs. For example, it is not clear what is meant by volitional release or 1:1 mating in any specific program.
- There is no section on fish health history or fish health management.
- Where the answer is "unknown," the template does not ask how the program is working to, or will work to, fill in this knowledge gap.
- It has largely been managers who have filled out the HGMPs, not the personnel doing the actual work at the hatcheries, who know the true conditions.
- Program goals and objectives are missing.
- HGMPs do not ask what other species a facility rears and releases, to consider cumulative effects.
- "Essay" style questions that tell a story about each program would be more useful than the "multiple choice" questions included in the template.

The Scientific Group determined that it was not necessary at this time to provide NMFS with a formal response to this HGMP review, since the person who requested the review is no longer with the agency. But the group would be happy to make suggestions to improve the next iteration of the HGMP.

The Scientific Group discussed how to turn the scientific framework into a Hatchery Reform Action Plan. The group decided that the best approach might be to review the Puget Sound and Coastal Washington hatchery system in a series of regional workshops during 2001 and to make recommendations on this regional scale. This approach was favored at recent meetings between the Scientific Group chair, the facilitation team and WDFW and NWIFC leaders. The Scientific Group agreed that BRAP could be a useful tool for regional review workshops and that NMFS

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should be asked if they agree that BRAP could be a way to bring hatcheries into the recovery plan.

Taking into account existing water resource inventory areas (WRIA), biological populations, regions of origin, management units, habitat type, ESUs, etc., the Scientific Group tentatively divided the hatchery system into the following nine regions (using WRIA boundaries), for review and concurrence by the co-managers' Hatchery Reform Coordinating Committee at that committee's September meeting:

- *South Sound*—Puyallup River and south
- *Central Sound*—a) Green River and Lake Washington, b) Kitsap Peninsula?
- *Stillaguamish/Snohomish Rivers*
- *Skagit River*—including Whidbey Island
- *Nooksack/Samish Rivers*—including the San Juan Islands
- *The Straits of Juan de Fuca and the north Coast*—Quinault River to Elwha River? Dungeness? Discovery Bay?
- *Hood Canal*
- *Grays Harbor*
- *Willapa Bay*

The Scientific Group determined that two questions need to be addressed for the proposed regional review meetings: 1) What information is needed for an informed discussion of goals and objectives at the regional review workshops?; and 2) What information is needed to create hatchery reform operational guidelines? Scientific Group members were appointed to work with agency managers and scientists to answer these questions.

The Scientific Group decided to host a symposium on HSRG-funded research February 12-14, 2001 at the NMFS Science Center in Seattle. The group will devote its March 2001 meeting to selecting research to fund in 2001.

Paul Seidel of WDFW joined the Scientific Group for the second day of the meeting to complete his overview of the WDFW Puget Sound and Coastal Washington hatchery system. Paul went through a revised version of the document he prepared highlighting the history, current programs, conditions and needs at each WDFW hatchery, organized by complex. He also provided several maps and charts and answered questions from Scientific Group members.

The Scientific Group agreed that education on salmon and watershed stewardship is another important goal of hatcheries and that it would be useful to try to identify the best hatchery in each region to serve as the educational "hub" of that region, much as the Issaquah Hatchery does today. Research and education should be included as hatchery goals or benefits in BRAP.

The Scientific Group agreed to hold its next meeting October 24–26, 2000 in Silverdale, Washington.