

Puget Sound Steelhead Recovery Team
 March 15, 2016 Meeting Summary

Decisions and Actions from Meeting

Decision
Accepted the January 26 th draft meeting summary as final.
Preliminarily agreed to increase the threshold for recovery beyond the viability criteria.
Preliminarily agreed to use the following criteria for the MPG-level recovery goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life history traits; • Two broad landforms (Puget Sound lowlands and Cascade Mountains); • Population size; • Feasibility (including current status, biological feasibility, and social/economic/political feasibility); and • Alignment with Chinook recovery plan.

Action	Assignment
1. Share the two Seattle Times editorials, filing and NOAA response to the 60-day notice of intent to sue, and the critical habitat FAQs and map.	Elizabeth Babcock, Alan Chapman, & Claire Chase
2. Send Claire Chase other questions about the critical habitat designation for sharing with Steve Stone before the April meeting.	Team members
3. Think about how to offer support for working with each watershed in developing abundance and productivity goals, and think about how to engage policy makers.	Elizabeth Babcock, Jeanette Dorner, and Joe Anderson

Welcome, Announcements, & Old Business – Bob Wheeler, facilitator for the Puget Sound Steelhead Recovery Team (“Team”), welcome participants and led introductions (*see end for a list of participants*). There were no changes to the draft agenda.

Announcements

- Tristan Peter-Contesse shared that he has changed roles at the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP). He is now working with PSP’s Boards, though he will still have some time dedicated to working on the Steelhead Recovery Team.
- Amilee Wilson and Tristan Peter-Contesse have been working on identifying potential solutions for the planning geographies for a few of the trickier steelhead/Chinook boundaries. They have reached out to some of the lead entities, and once they speak to all lead entities in these areas they will also ask the co-managers for their input. They will keep the Team updated on their progress.
- The Team recognized that David Troutt with the Nisqually Indian Tribe wrote a recent editorial in the Seattle Times in response to an editorial by Jamie Glasgow. They also recognized a third editorial, also in response to Glasgow’s original piece, written by Steven Toby from the Lummi Nation.

January Draft Meeting Summary – With one edit, the Team accepted this draft as final for posting to the NOAA website.

NOAA Updates – Elizabeth Babcock shared a few updates from NOAA:

60-day Notice of Intent to Sue

- NOAA has responded to the 60-day notice of intent to sue, and are working on a response to the filing, which they have until mid-April to do.
- Among others, the main complaints in the filing include:
 - The delay of getting to an approved recovery plan (including the assertion that the federal government is more likely to fund projects that are linked to a species with a recovery plan);
 - Continued propagation of hatchery fish; and
 - The need to designate wild steelhead gene banks.
- More will be explained in NOAA's response to the filing, but at this point NOAA has already noted for the record that it takes a long time to get to a strong, final recovery plan. They have also indicated progress in the effort to finalize a recovery plan, including convening the Recovery Team. Elizabeth hopes to have more information for the Team by the April Team meeting.
- Elizabeth noted that a potential consequence for the Team if litigation continues is to receive a court-ordered schedule, but at this point that is unknown.

Critical Habitat Designation – Elizabeth also noted that the final designation for Puget Sound steelhead critical habitat has been released, which was sent before the meeting and is available on NOAA's website. The Team had a number of questions about critical habitat, some of which were answered but all of which will be shared with NOAA's Steve Stone, who will be invited to call into the April Team meeting for more clarification. Questions and initial clarifications included:

- Critical habitat designation only affects federal actions, not actions of other jurisdictions.
- Why was the Elwha habitat included, compared to other areas above dams that could be removed?
- How would HPAs be related?
- Explain the cost-benefit analysis ("balancing process") for clarification.
- How are the fish valued in this analysis? Review highlights of the 4.b.ii report.
- How does the steelhead critical habitat map compare to the Chinook critical habitat map? (How much more critical habitat is added when we look at the Chinook critical habitat map?)
- Why is the lower south fork Nooksack River excluded, especially when they've been seeing degraded habitat with warmer temperatures?
- What does a Section 7 consultation imply for areas that are in or out of the critical habitat?
- How does designating critical habitat maintain the baseline or help get to recovery?

Recovery Goals and Life Cycle Model

February Workshops – Joe Anderson shared the outcome of the workshops held in each Major Population Group (MPG) in early February.

- There seemed to be no dissent with the broad approach shared with how to develop recovery goals, which includes the Team's initial decision to identify recovery goals for abundance and productivity for individual Demographically Independent Populations (DIPs) while keeping the recovery goals for spatial structure and diversity at the MPG level.
- The workshops also went into more technical detail on the life cycle model, and received good questions from the participants. In general, most questions and suggestions were about components of

steelhead biology that the participants wanted to add to the model, which the modelers have since added.

- In general, the participants liked the online interface of the model.

Recovery Goals – Joe reviewed an outline of how to draft recovery goals. Discussion included:

- At the workshops, the modelers asked participants how they would like to be included in developing the recovery goals. There was generally a positive response that people would like to be involved, but a mixed response in terms of how to be involved.
- At this point, the modelers have a good idea of participants in each of the watersheds to work with in developing the DIP-level goals. Ideally, they would work with each of these local biologists individually for each watershed, but they may not have the capacity (time or resources) to do so in a timely manner. PSP and NOAA will think more about how to offer this support.
- The goal is to have recovery goals developed by January 2017, hopefully giving enough time to work with each of the watersheds to develop their abundance and productivity goals.
- The Team considered if it is possible to draft goals for one MPG and then start developing strategies for those goals, before the other MPGs' goals are drafted. This can be a topic of future discussion.
- The Team preliminarily agreed to increase the threshold for recovery beyond the viability criteria.
- The Team also preliminarily agreed to use the draft criteria Joe developed after researching how other Pacific Northwest salmonid recovery plans are constructed. These criteria are:
 - Life history traits;
 - Two broad landforms (Puget Sound lowlands and Cascade Mountains, including Olympic mountains);
 - Population size;
 - Feasibility (including current status, biological feasibility, and social/economic/political feasibility); and
 - Alignment with Chinook recovery plan.
- The Team noted that policy-level decision makers should help the Team by identifying any prioritized order among these five criteria (if any).
- For those DIPs that are not required to be viable for overall MPG viability and success, the Team identified some draft ideas in that those DIPs:
 - Should not be allowed to go extinct;
 - Should be sustained to provide ecological function;
 - Should be considered in protection measures for river reaches and streams; and
 - Should keep production consistent with the Distinct Population Segment (DPS) recovery.
- A Team member noted that population size is important, which should include the trend not just the overall size.
- The Team noted the need for more specificity in spatial structure viability criteria. One idea could be to have at least one population viable from each of the major watersheds within the MPG, however this should not happen at the expense of prioritizing treaty rights over one another.
- The Team also noted the need for as much information as possible for each population.
- The Team considered that climate change impact assessments could also be in the viability criteria.
- A Team member noted that genetic diversity and introgression with hatchery fish should be added to the criteria, perhaps best suited to fit in with the life history traits criterion.

- Joe will incorporate this feedback from the Team into the approach for developing recovery goals. Additionally, the life cycle modeling team will further prepare for the next Team meeting what goals for an individual population would look like. Then the Team will need to engage the co-managers and other policy makers for finalizing recovery goals.

Draft Recovery Plan – The Team went through some planning documents to identify the path forward in developing the recovery plan. They added to the list of audiences for the Plan, and considered the outline for the plan, including the necessary sections. The Team agreed to consider the public comment NOAA received on the Oregon Coast Coho recovery plan, to see if there are any lessons learned to apply to this planning effort.

The Team considered options to speed up the development of the recovery plan, including:

- Splitting up the final plan and an implementation plan, to get to a published final plan sooner;
- Different public outreach opportunities; and
- More resources for watersheds to do their local chapter work.

Workgroup Progress Reports

- The Stresses and Pressures Workgroup decided to do a pressure assessment instead of a linkage library. They will continue down this path and will have a more in-depth update at a future Team meeting.
- The Habitat Protection Workgroup met and agreed to put most of the habitat protection plan in the DPS-level plan, including strategies and actions for federal and state agencies. This will allow the local chapters to focus on local habitat protection strategies and actions.

Next Steps – The Team set their next three meetings, locations to be determined: April 21, May 24, and June 24. The April meeting will include a discussion on critical habitat and continued work on the recovery goals.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00pm.

Participants:

Name	Affiliation
Joe Anderson	Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife
Elizabeth Babcock	NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service
Alan Chapman	Lummi Nation
Ned Currence	Nooksack Indian Tribe
Ken Currens	Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
Jeanette Dorner	Puget Sound Partnership
Jeff Hard (phone)	Northwest Fisheries Science Center
Neala Kendall	Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife
Susan O'Neil	Long Live the Kings
Tristan Peter-Contesse	Puget Sound Partnership
Phil Sandstrom	Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife
Amilee Wilson	NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Services
Bob Wheeler	Triangle Associates
Claire Chase	Triangle Associates