

Ocean and Plume Science and Management Forum
January 24, 2014
Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Approved Notes from Conference call and GoTo meeting

Participants: Phil Rockefeller (WA Council member), Patty O'Toole (NPCC staff), Jim Ruff (NPCC staff), Karl Weist (NPCC-OR staff), Jeff Allen (NPCC-ID staff), Marc Trudell (DFO), Doug Olson (USFWS), Rich Carmichael (ODFW), Bill Maslen (BPA), Ben Zelinsky (BPA), Ann Creason (BPA), Lynne Krasnow (NMFS), Elizabeth Gaar (NMFS), Kurt Fresh (NWFSC), Eric Robinson (Pew), Catherine Corbett (LCREP), and Dan Rawding (WDFW). See list of meeting participants (Attachment 1).

Welcome and Introductions.

Chair Rockefeller welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the Ocean and Plume Science and Management Forum and led a round of introductions. The October 24, 2013, notes were then approved by the group.

Review and Discuss Management Questions.

The main agenda item for the conference call was to review and discuss the draft list of management questions developed by a subcommittee consisting of Rich Carmichael, Dan Rawding, Kurt Fresh and Jim Ruff (Attachment 2). Rich began the discussion by describing the approach used by the subcommittee to develop the list of management questions was to build from objectives 3a, 3b and 3d in the charter for the Ocean and Plume Forum. Rich then described the intent of the four management questions, and related sub-questions, was to help form a logic path for the Ocean and Plume Forum. The logic path, however, should be developed further by all Forum members.

The subcommittee members then discussed the draft table that was developed to address management question #1 – how have estuary, plume and near ocean ecosystem functions, processes and relationships been altered? The work group broke out alterations or changes in tidally-influenced estuary, plume and near ocean environments into a) physical/chemical characteristics, b) food web and c) species interactions. Other considerations include invasive species, fish health or condition, and whether changes identified in the table are the result of natural or human-induced changes. The Forum members then spent some time discussing the table and draft management questions.

A key outcome of the Forum will be how managers will use the information once ocean and plume data is collected pertaining to these management questions? It was suggested the Forum needs a comprehensive synthesis of the state-of-the-knowledge of science and research information related to the near ocean, plume and tidally-influenced environments.

Rich suggested the Forum should first try to answer or address management questions #1 and #2 to provide background information and context for this effort. Also,

completing the table should help the group identify limiting factors and threats, then the Forum could consider potential management actions to address those threats.

Discuss Next Steps and Timeframe for Next Forum Meeting

There was discussion about how best to connect or link the draft management questions and who should do it? A first step would be to try to identify the critical or key information needs to address each management question. Also, what is the likely magnitude of change or influence of the alterations identified in the table? The Forum members agreed more work was needed on both the table and draft management questions to prepare a package of materials for scientific peer review.

Action: Chair Rockefeller asked that the draft management questions and table be posted on the Council web site and invited all Forum members to comment. A small work group was formed, consisting of Kurt Fresh, Marc Trudell, Katherine Corbett, Ben Zelinsky and Rich Carmichael, to continue working on the table and management questions to bring back to the full Forum for further review and discussion.

The Forum members discussed briefly how best to proceed with this effort. It was suggested the work group needs to first synthesize available scientific information on each of the management questions, then develop a short narrative for each management question. Kurt volunteered to prepare a draft example of a narrative, including management implications, for one of the management questions for the Forum members to review. Kurt also volunteered to help fill out the table, too. Once the management questions, table and narratives are completed and approved by the Forum, then we can seek scientific peer review.

Schedule: It was agreed that the draft example of a narrative for a management question and a revised table should be completed and sent out to Forum members prior to the next Forum meeting.

Other Discussion and Information

Elizabeth Gaar informed the group that NOAA Fisheries is developing a species-specific ocean module as part of its Snake River Salmon and Steelhead Recovery Plan. It could be available sometime in the spring of 2014.

Doug Olson said there is an AFS workshop planned for February 25-26 on the topic of structured decision making that may be of interest to this group.

Catherine Corbett reminded the group of the annual Estuary Science-to-Policy meeting that will be held on May 28-30, 2014, in Astoria, Oregon.

Due to the workload of the Council's Fish and Wildlife Program amendment process, no date was set for the next Ocean and Plume Forum meeting. Council staff will prepare and send out draft meeting minutes, along with any materials from the small Forum work group, prior to the next meeting.

