

Tom Karier
Chair
Washington

Frank L. Cassidy Jr.
"Larry"
Washington

James A. Yost
Idaho

W. Bill Booth
Idaho



Joan M. Dukes
Vice-Chair
Oregon

Melinda S. Eden
Oregon

Bruce A. Measure
Montana

Rhonda Whiting
Montana

November 1, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: Committee Members

FROM: Lynn Palensky

SUBJECT: North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership

Greg Delwiche and I will provide Committee members with an update on the progress of the North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership, organized by the Wild Salmon Center. The Wild Salmon Center (WSC) is a non-profit international Pacific salmon organization, based in Portland with offices in Port Angeles and Russia.

At the June 2006 council meeting, Paula Burgess and Malin Pinsky, staff of the WSC, presented their work on the Pacific Salmon Conservation Assessment; an in-depth review of the most important salmon rivers of the North Pacific. During that presentation, they introduced the idea and desire to establish areas along the Pacific Rim where they would create partnerships to help protect the best remaining salmon habitats. The WSC has been working with a large group of people to establish a framework and strategic concept for the Salmon Stronghold Partnership. The group has met over the last year and a half to develop a strategic concept document, a Charter for membership organizations (both attached) and a workplan.

The parameters for selecting strongholds are based on an "index" for each species, and then the single species indexes are aggregated into a multi-species index. The factors considered in calculating the indexes include species abundance, productivity, run-timing richness, genetic diversity within the species, and resilience. The areas in the Columbia River Basin that are on the initial list for consideration include the John Day, the Upper Salmon, and the Wenatchee subbasins. We will provide an overview of the Partnerships' progress and the next steps. Following is a description of the Wild Salmon Center, provided by the Center:

The WSC is dedicated to working with partners in the U.S. and Russia to protect salmon, steelhead, char, and trout stocks and their ecosystems across the entire Pacific Rim. The Center's mission is to identify, understand, and protect the best wild salmon ecosystems. The Center devises and implements practical strategies, based on the best science, to protect forever the most intact ecosystems and their biodiversity. WSC published the March 2005 book Atlas of Pacific Salmon, the first map-based status assessment of salmon in the North Pacific.

w:\lp\packet materials\2007\november\salmstronghold memjh.doc

DRAFT
NASSP Strategic Concept

October 21, 2007

Introduction

This paper defines the strategy for the North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership (NASSP) by outlining desired outcomes, approaches, and resources in place at the end of one year from the October 2007 meeting. The accompanying NASSP work plan sets this strategy into motion by displaying a theoretical implementation schedule. The strategy is a joint public-private effort put into operation consistent with the terms and principles of the NASSP Charter, and built around the rigorous scientific process through which stronghold candidate basins were identified. It will be entirely voluntary, to be managed by the Partnership and grounded in local cooperation and support. Activities of the Partnership are separated into a series of manageable “tracks,” and the lessons learned from one track will be incorporated into others. Each track may consist of proposed projects in pilot stronghold basins, as well as pilot approaches to address cross-basin systemic threats. Track 1 will begin at the October 2007 Partnership meeting, with the expression of interest in assistance from five pilot stronghold basins. The Partnership will develop and manage subsequent tracks at the three meetings of the Stronghold Partnership per year, as outlined below.

One Year Outcomes

By the end of October, 2008, the NASSP will have accomplished the following:

1. A short work plan is complete for most of the pilot stronghold basins and programmatic approaches on Tracks 1 and 2. Work plans – which were already approved by the Organizing Committee and basin conservation interests – identify the kind of assistance requested from the Stronghold Partnership.
2. The Stronghold Partnership has determined that work plans submitted to them are adequate, and that the organizational infrastructure is in place to provide the requested assistance. Implementation of most Track 1 and 2 projects have begun.

3. For the remainder of Track 1 and 2 projects, work plans are still underway, and/or needed organizational infrastructure is not yet in place so implementation has not begun.
4. A planning process is established which identifies one or several systemic threats (threats affecting multiple basins).¹ Program options are being developed to address those threats.
5. Track 3 pilot stronghold basins have been identified, and work planning is underway as outlined in the Partnership work plan, consistent with available resources and local support.
6. Lessons learned from the pilot projects are being identified and incorporated into subsequent track activities.

One Year Approach

1. Infrastructure for the Partnership is in place:
 - Partnership members indicate their commitment to the NASSP by signing the Charter.
 - Staff for the Partnership has been hired as described in Annex 1 to the NASSP Charter.
2. The organizational infrastructure is in place at the local level for each pilot basin. Basin programs and projects are coordinated through a local “basin liaison.” Basin liaisons are recruited or appointed based on the following characteristics:
 - Aware of conservation efforts underway in the basin (the more trust already established with in-basin partners the better),
 - Some connection to the Stronghold Partnership (public or private entity willing to report frequently to the Partnership on activities), and
 - Able to dedicate 10 to 50 percent of their time to coordination between community conservation efforts and the Stronghold Partnership.

¹ It has been recommended that, rather than limiting the first set of systemic projects to only a few of the pilot basins, it should be expanded to include threats or limiting factors common to 10 to 15 of the identified potential stronghold basins.


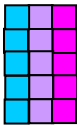






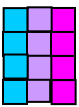






3. Work plans are in place at the pilot basin scale (see NASSP work plan for specific approach to each basin).
 - Recognize that program and project planning and development are dependent on local involvement and support and will be accomplished in an iterative – rather than linear – process in order to consider adoption of ideas developed in other basins.
 - For those pilot basins where work planning is underway, provide local planning entities with resources to assist in the development of large-scale, complex projects with high value benefits.
 - For those pilot basins where such planning has not taken place, assist in the building of local basin partnerships and work with them to develop a basin-scale conservation plan using an accepted approach (e.g. Conservation Action Plan, as developed by The Nature Conservancy).
4. Projects are selected based on the following criteria:
 - Projects address complex public/private/multi-agency/multi-entity issues and problems not easily resolved in other forums,
 - Projects enjoy broad local support and address major limiting factors to healthy ecosystems, and
 - Projects demonstrate the potential for major conservation benefits and potentially exportable results.
5. Programs or projects that address systemic threats and limiting factors are being developed:
 - Identify macro status and trends,
 - Identify and apply comparable salmon conservation metrics,
 - Identify 2 or 3 (as pilot projects) threats or limiting factors that affect multiple pilot basins,
 - Develop options for programmatic approaches to those threats, to include incentives and delivery mechanisms, and
 - Work with basin liaisons and partner organizations to ensure programmatic approaches are broadly acceptable.
6. Incentives to encourage participation of landowners are being developed.

7. This approach is managed through a series of standing Partnership meetings, and meetings of the Organizing Committee (Charter signatories):

- The Partnership meets every four months (February, June, and October).
- At each meeting, the Partnership will: (see Figure 1)

Figure 1: Actions of North America Stronghold Partnership

1. Hear expression of <u>interest</u> from candidate stronghold basin;
2. <u>Hear proposal</u> from candidate basin or programmatic approach;
3. Make a decision to <u>proceed, defer, or reject</u> projects;
4. Determine if <u>sufficient resources and organizational infrastructure</u> exist to initiate next track of stronghold basins and programmatic actions; and
5. <u>Review lessons learned</u> from ongoing projects and programs, and ensure lessons learned are shared with stronghold basin liaisons (i.e. implement adaptive management and share good ideas).

	Oct 07	Feb 08	June 08	Oct 08	Feb 09	June 09	Oct 09
Track1							
Track 2							
Track 3							

One Year Resources

Funding for projects to restore and protect ecosystems in North America are available from numerous sources, such as the Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Funds, the Northwest Power and Conservation Council, and the California Salmon Recovery Fund. NASSP member entities may be able to provide some funding for projects, but in addition they can assist basin work plan and programmatic work plan development and implementation by:

- Providing endorsements to projects and programs that meet NASSP criteria.
- Encouraging partner agencies and organizations to assist with NASSP endorsed projects.
- Encouraging non-government partners to support NASSP activities in state and federal legislative forums.
- Assisting local stronghold basin organizations with grant applications for NASSP endorsed projects.
- Identifying and providing incentives to support local stronghold basin organizations.
- Develop more effective tools that address limiting factors and threats in multiple basins (programmatic tools).
- Develop streamlined delivery mechanisms for funding and other basin assistance.
- Assist with basin conservation plans, scientific assessments, or work plans.
- Providing a NASSP coordinator – funded by partnership members – that offers basin coordination, facilitation, education, and outreach to stronghold basin organizations.
- Taking other actions approved by the Organizing Committee and within the resources available to Partnership organizations.

North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership

CHARTER

October, 2007

North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership Charter
October 2007

Article 1 – Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership (“the Stronghold Partnership”) is to identify and protect a network of the healthiest remaining wild Pacific salmon ecosystems in North America to ensure the long-term survival of salmon, steelhead, and the many species that depend on them and inhabit these watersheds. A distributed network of wild salmon strongholds capturing key centers of productivity, abundance and diversity (species, run-timing and life histories) provides a foundation for a range-wide strategy to ensure the viability of wild Pacific salmon into the future.
- 1.2 The Stronghold Partnership is a voluntary, incentive-based initiative intended to supplement ongoing ecosystem protection and restoration efforts by providing leadership, enhanced coordination and public and private resources to support priority actions.
- 1.3 Specifically, the Stronghold Partnership will engage in the following activities:
 - 1.3.1 Identify a distributed network of wild Pacific salmon strongholds in the western United States. The network will be sufficient in size, number and location to ensure the long-term survival of wild Pacific salmon and steelhead;
 - 1.3.2 Focus initial efforts on a small number of strongholds per state in order to develop replicable partnership models resulting in effective and enduring conservation;
 - 1.3.3 Integrate existing assessments and conservation plans to identify priority actions needed to accelerate restoration and protection of key ecosystem processes and functions;
 - 1.3.4 Work with communities to build local support and participation for conservation activities and develop innovative, science-based approaches to protect or restore each wild salmon stronghold;
 - 1.3.5 Utilize streamlined delivery mechanisms, where possible, to channel resources towards priority salmon conservation and restoration actions;
 - 1.3.6 Secure resources via federal, state or local legislation, public and private grants or contributions, or other means within participants’ organizational constraints;
 - 1.3.7 Monitor long term trends and ecosystem health in strongholds, and

- 1.3.8 Identify and pursue avenues for international cooperation with jurisdictions and nations within the range of wild salmon across the North Pacific Rim.

Article 2 - Definitions

The definitions set forth below apply to this initiative:

- 2.1 Biological Diversity** The full range of variety and variability within and among living organisms and the ecological complexes in which they occur. This definition encompasses diversity at the ecosystem, community, species, and genetic levels and the interaction of these components.¹
- 2.2 Learning Network** Linking the knowledge, experiences and know-how of participants in this initiative by sharing conservation approaches and best practices, research and monitoring methods and data; conducting joint training; and striving to create compatible and comparable data systems to assess the status, trends and health of salmon ecosystems.
- 2.3 Network** A conservation concept operating on multiple scales that expresses the importance of ecological processes, ecosystem function and connectivity across the range of wild Pacific salmon. A network at regional scales implies the site-specific delineation of an interconnected set of freshwater and estuarine habitats. Through the continuum of habitats, the network supports life history diversity and productivity of salmon populations and run/race. At continental and global scales, a network supports an interconnected set of distributed metapopulations that are resilient to long term anthropogenic changes or changes in climate and habitat suitability.

A “Network”, as defined herein, is based on the following principles of conservation biology:

- 2.3.1 Provides sufficient habitat and sustains the ecological processes necessary for persistence of the target species;
- 2.3.2 Is sufficient in size to maintain the range and variability necessary to stimulate the evolutionary changes likely to maintain species diversity;
- 2.3.3 Is adequately protected from edge and external effects;
- 2.3.4 Supports populations within the stronghold that are at sufficient distance to reduce likelihood of being affected by the same disturbance;

¹ Canadian Policy for Conservation of Wild Pacific Salmon, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Vancouver, Canada, June, 2005

2.3.5 Supports populations large enough to be self-sustaining in the face of demographic or genetic stochasticity.

2.4 **Protection** Putting in place mechanisms which allow the natural ecosystem processes of a site to continue to function over a short or long time span. Examples include the purchase of riparian conservation easements, purchase of land by a conservation land trust, or establishment of a fish or wildlife refuge.

2.5 **Restoration** The manipulation of the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics of a site with the goal of returning the site to natural or historic conditions.²

2.6 **Salmon Stronghold** Status conferred to a defined geographical unit which meets biological criteria for abundance, productivity, diversity (life history and run timing) habitat quality, or other biological attributes important to sustaining viable populations of wild Pacific salmon throughout their range. The term stronghold refers to a watershed, multiple watersheds or other defined spatial unit including habitat with high intrinsic potential to support a particular species, or suite of species.

2.7 **Viability** Capacity for survival; capacity for living, developing, and reproducing under favorable conditions. Viability indicates the ability of a population to persist for many generations or over long time periods.

Article 3 – Background and Conservation Assumptions

3.1 Wild Pacific salmon are a central part of the culture, economy and environment of Western North America. Salmon generate billions of dollars of economic activity, provide thousands of jobs and are a keystone species, supporting food webs in freshwater and marine environments.

3.2 Wild Pacific salmon have suffered severe declines throughout their southern range, leading to large-scale restoration efforts. Many of the efforts to reverse population declines have been directed at highly impacted systems.

² Webster

- 3.3 Salmon will continue to face significant challenges in the future. During periods of rapid environmental change like that anticipated over the next several decades, maintaining key ecosystem processes and functions is vital to ensuring the health of wild salmon populations. In light of these challenges, it is vital to make strategic investments now as a cost-effective strategy to establish a range-wide network of salmon strongholds to ensure wild salmon survival for future generations.
- 3.4 Salmon are often a keystone species and an indicator of ecosystem health. Maintaining healthy populations of salmon requires the close coordination and cooperation of federal, tribal, state and local governments, public and private land managers, fisheries managers, power authorities and others. No single government agency has the authority to lead a broad-scale effort to protect salmon strongholds.
- 3.5 Current measures to recover threatened or endangered stocks should be complemented by identifying and sustaining core centers of abundance, productivity and diversity in the healthiest remaining wild salmon ecosystems throughout their range. A synergistic network of core wild salmon centers of abundance and diversity is intended to complement, not substitute for, work in impacted systems and will maintain and can increase long-term resilience by securing genetically diverse source populations of wild Pacific salmon that may also help re-populate or provide other ecological benefits to adjoining areas.
- 3.6 Creating a learning network to share best practices and approaches, employ consistent and comparable metrics, and assess regional status and trends will benefit wild salmon conservation and sustainable use. An ecosystem approach to protection, restoration and management is imperative.
- 3.7 Greater coordination between public and private actors can help deliver conservation benefits to strongholds by marshaling and focusing resources on high priority protection and restoration actions.

Article 4 – Principles

The principles set forth below provide important guidance for this initiative:

- 4.1 **Voluntary Cooperative Approach** The Stronghold Partnership is a voluntary public-private partnership entity promoting cooperative conservation.
- 4.2 **Ecosystem Function** During periods of rapid environmental change like that anticipated over the next 50 years, maintaining key ecosystem processes and functions is vital to ensuring healthy wild salmon populations and the ecological and economic benefits they provide.
- 4.3 **Best Available Science** The Stronghold Partnership will employ a science-based approach to salmon ecosystems, informed by and using the best available science.
- 4.4 **Long Term Reliance on Natural Processes** Management within strongholds will be encouraged to rely on natural processes rather than engineered approaches to increase biological diversity (e.g. hatcheries, fish farms), particularly where it is deemed important to the long term survival of wild salmon and steelhead,
- 4.5 **Building on Local Efforts** Extensive efforts are underway to identify causes for decline and promote recovery of listed salmon and steelhead throughout much of North America; the Stronghold Partnership will support and build on these efforts.
- 4.6 **Improving Delivery Mechanisms** Where possible, the Stronghold Partnership will seek to streamline and improve existing conservation delivery mechanisms in salmon strongholds.
- 4.7 **Ecosystem Monitoring** Long-term monitoring and assessment is essential to assess ecosystem trends, identify limiting factors and threats, and monitor ecosystem health. Stronghold Partners will support ecosystem monitoring and assessment through enhanced coordination, information sharing and funding, as appropriate.

- 4.8 **Policy toward Local Communities** Stronghold Partners will work closely with local communities and their elected representatives to ensure that actions taken under this initiative are locally supported and, where appropriate, are led by local groups or individuals.
- 4.9 **Governance** Participation in the Stronghold Partnership is voluntary. Membership is established by concurrence of existing members. A Stronghold Partner may cease participation at any time. The members will adopt guidelines for decision-making, in-kind and financial contributions, staffing and related matters. Nothing in this Charter diminishes or limits the authority of any Stronghold Partner.

Signature

Organization

Date

[illegible]

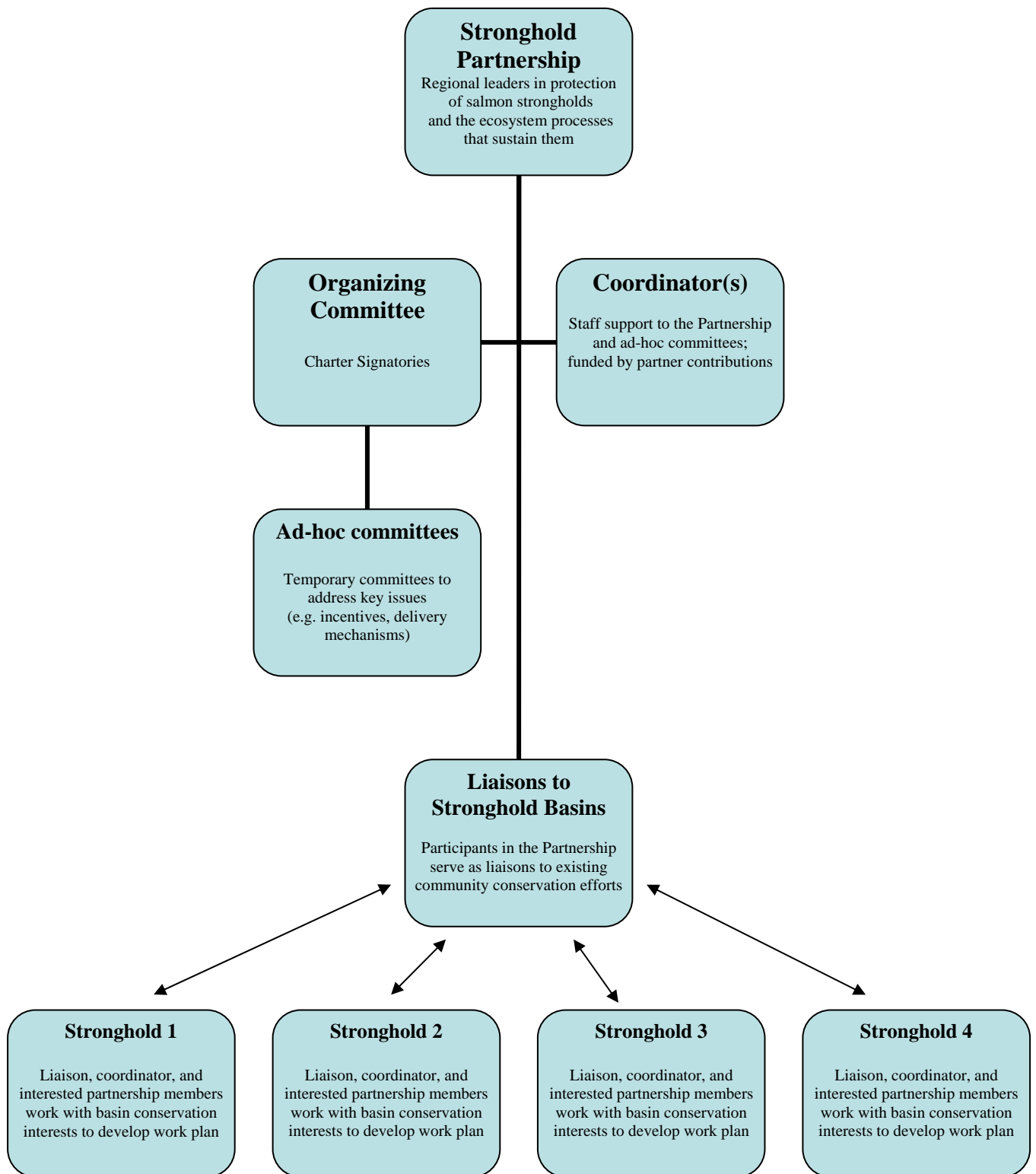
Signature

Organization

Date

[illegible]

North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership



ANNEX I

North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership Governance Framework

Functions and Services

The North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership (“Stronghold Partnership”) is a private-public effort working across political boundaries, government jurisdictions and land ownerships to identify and protect North America’s healthiest remaining Pacific salmon ecosystems. Entities participating in the Stronghold Partnership will use their collective knowledge and influence to provide services in the following areas:

- Improve the coordination of salmon habitat conservation and fish management activities within and across Salmon Strongholds.
- Enhance the mechanisms for leveraging and delivering financial and technical resources to support conservation and restoration initiatives in Salmon Strongholds.
- Support stronghold conservation planning by providing expertise and supporting local conservation planning efforts with best practices and lessons learned from elsewhere.
- Create a learning forum for communicating information on status and trends of wild salmon populations and ecosystems, conservation planning, restoration and fisheries management among Salmon Strongholds and local salmon stewards.

Stronghold Partnership

The Stronghold Partnership is the governing body of the North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership comprised of representatives from private, federal, state, provincial and indigenous entities in the United States. Representatives (“Stronghold Partners”) are regional leaders in the protection of salmon strongholds and the ecosystem processes that sustain them. Entities joining the Stronghold Partnership will have the capacity to commit minimal financial or in-kind resources to carry out the Stronghold Partnership’s goals and functions. Stronghold Partners are signatories to the Stronghold Partnership Charter.

Organizing Committee

The Organizing Committee will serve as the executive body of the North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership, and will be responsible for developing the Stronghold Partnership’s annual work plan, naming and disbanding ad-hoc work groups, providing leadership to the Coordinator, determining the timing and

location of Stronghold Partnership meetings and conducting other business as appropriate. The Organizing Committee will be comprised of a subset of Partners selected by the full Stronghold Partnership.

Coordinator

The Coordinator will assist the Organizing Committee and Stronghold Partners by, inter alia,

- Working with Stronghold Partners to develop meeting agendas and supporting materials, including planning, drafting decision documents and meeting summaries;
- Helping coordinate Stronghold Partnership activities and communications, including internal and external communications, descriptive and outreach materials;
- Supporting activities in stronghold sites;
- Conducting outreach with key stakeholders

Liaisons to Stronghold Basins

The role of the liaisons is to work with local stakeholders to explain the purpose and intent of the North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership; gain a better understanding of local conservation needs and priorities; and explore local stakeholder interest in engaging with this initiative.

ANNEX II

Staffing

2008-2009 North American Stronghold Partnership Coordinator (1 FTE)

- Stronghold Partnership Coordinator will:
 - Work with Stronghold Partners to develop meeting agendas and supporting materials, including planning, drafting decision documents and meeting summaries;
 - Help coordinate Stronghold Partnership activities and communications, including internal and external communications, descriptive and outreach materials;
 - Support activities in stronghold sites;
 - Conduct outreach with key stakeholders

2008-2009 North American Stronghold Partnership Events Assistant (1 FTE)

- North American Stronghold Partnership Events Assistant will:
 - Provide logistical support for Stronghold Partnership meetings, events and workshops;
 - Support the work of the ad hoc Science Advisory Group and other groups established by the Stronghold Partnership partners.

Financing

For 2008 and the remainder of 2007, participants will be responsible for travel and meeting costs, with Wild Salmon Center contributing all meeting facilities costs through 2007. Upon execution of the Charter, Stronghold Partners will develop estimated budgets for participation and activities for the current year and future work plans.

Organizational Mileposts

- Recruit Stronghold Partnership members and complete Charter
- Develop and execute two-year work plan
- Hire core staff
- Establish Stronghold Partnership Organizing Committee
- Establish ad hoc stronghold area committees, as necessary

Conservation mileposts:

- Identify and describe candidate strongholds
- Select initial group of strongholds
- Establish site-based Stronghold Partnerships and assess conservation planning status and needs of initial strongholds
- Work with basin conservation interests to develop work plan for each stronghold basin

ANNEX III

Federal Annex

Section I: Support for the North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership

The federal agencies signed onto the Stronghold Partnership Charter support the protection and restoration of wild salmon strongholds around the Pacific Rim, and will participate in the Partnership to the degree that it does not compromise or jeopardize our agency responsibilities and authorities.

Section II: Federal Agency Limitations

- Federal participation in the Stronghold Partnership should not be construed as setting priorities or take actions contrary to the ESA, NFMA, FLPMA, NHPA, or other federal authorizing legislation; and
- Federal participation in the Stronghold Partnership will not interfere with federal agency responsibilities and limitations regarding lobbying or federal budgeting.

Section III: Definitions

- Accepting, as a long-term goal, the concept of a “distributed network of wild salmon strongholds” is assumed by the federal agencies to mean that protecting one or several salmon and steelhead strongholds within ecoregions and/or states is a sound conservation practice.
- “Utilize streamlined delivery mechanisms” is assumed by the federal agencies to mean that federal agencies will work with our non-federal partners to reduce any unnecessary and burdensome procedures to protecting and restoring salmon and steelhead habitat.
- “Securing resources” to implement protection strategies is assumed by the federal agencies to mean that we will work within our respective regulatory and policy guidelines to in support of these strategies.
- Federal agencies assume that the “Stronghold Partnership role in long term monitoring” of salmon strongholds will be consistent with our federal agency requirements if federal agencies are expected to participate.
- As with all Stronghold Partnership participants, federal agencies reserve the right to oppose any long term protection “mechanisms” that are not supported at the local level or consistent with agency missions and authorities.