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February 7, 2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: Fish and Wildlife Committee members

FROM: Tony Grover

SUBJECT: Report on January NOAA Regional Partnership (CBP Task Force) meeting

BACKGROUND:

Presenter: Staff and Council members

Summary: The Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force (CBP Task Force), a special task force organized under NOAA Fisheries' Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC), met for the first time January 24 & 25, 2017. The goal of the CBP Task Force is to make recommendations on common goals and helping to define a shared path to long-term salmon recovery. The CBP Task Force will recommend a shared vision for Columbia Basin salmon and quantitative goals to meet conservation needs and provide harvest opportunities.

Relevance: The Council's 2014 Fish and Wildlife Program ([Page 31](#)) calls for a collaborative regional effort to survey, collect, identify, and refine a realistic set of quantitative objectives for program focal species, beginning with adult salmon and steelhead. The CBP Task Force has very similar goals using a similar process. On [February 3, 2015](#) the Council decided to merge the Council's objectives process with NOAA's regional assessment process, which has ultimately resulted in Council member and staff participation in the CBP Task Force.

Background (from Draft Operating Principles - MAFAC CBP Task Force):

NOAA Fisheries has Endangered Species Act (ESA), tribal trust, and sustainable fishing responsibilities that require integrating conservation and harvest needs. The discussions and products of the Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force (CBP Task Force) will help advise the Marine Federal Advisory Committee (MAFAC), and through MAFAC, NOAA Fisheries on ways to integrate those responsibilities. NOAA Fisheries anticipates that the work of the CBP Task Force, through MAFAC, will help inform decisions and consultations on viable ways to recover listed species while meeting NOAA's tribal trust and sustainable fishing mandates and ensuring an opportunity to consider regional views.

Purpose, Scope and Product. The purpose of the CBP Task Force is to provide a forum for a science-based, results-driven, transparent, and publicly embraced process to recommend integrated goals for Columbia Basin salmon and steelhead, listed and non-listed, that incorporate long-term conservation and harvest/fishing, and support regional and local efforts. The CBP Task Force's recommendations will address quantitative goals for salmon and steelhead at the species, stock, major population group (MPG), and population levels for Pacific salmon and steelhead in the Columbia Basin. The recommended goals will be collaboratively developed by the CBP Task Force to address conservation needs while also providing harvest, including those necessary to satisfy tribal treaty rights and fishing opportunities. CBP Task Force's recommendations will be developed in light of habitat capacity, climate change, and other ecosystem conditions that control natural production. The CBP Task Force's recommendations will be submitted to MAFAC.

The CBP Task Force will provide Columbia Basin states and tribes with an opportunity to engage with a broader stakeholder community to discuss process, substance, and policy issues. It will also serve as the forum for CBP Task Force members discuss and understand the rationale for disagreements; to discuss integrated efforts across habitat, hatchery, harvest, and hydro activities; to discuss opportunities to exchange, influence, and develop relationships; to discuss and develop input and feedback; and to lead discussions on basin-wide issues.

The scope of this effort covers:

- All ESA-listed and non-listed salmon and steelhead in the Columbia Basin, above and below Bonneville Dam;
- Ocean, main stem, and tributary fisheries that harvest Columbia Basin stocks, including commercial, recreational, and tribal fisheries;
- Multiple geographic scales (Basin-wide, evolutionarily significant unit (ESU), and MPG);
- All impacts across salmon and steelhead life-cycle (e.g. habitat, harvest, hatchery and hydro); and
- Consideration of ecological conditions and current and future habitat capacity.

This process should generate recommendations on quantitative, adult return goals at the species, stock, major populations group, and population levels for both listed and non-listed stocks. The recommended goals will address expectations for conservation and be based upon the latest science, including current understanding of habitat capacity and climate change effects.

In addition to enhanced engagement and understanding among CBP Task Force members, the outcome of recommended goals may be a concise, common definition of success. Numerical adult return goals may allow a means to measure progress, and a clear way to maintain public support for regional efforts. Additionally, chances of achieving long-term salmon recovery may be enhanced through better coordination and effective use of resources.

The recommendations of the CBP Task Force will not result in any regulatory decision by NOAA Fisheries, obligate any CBP Task Force member to undertake certain activities, or diminish treaty/trust obligations. It is NOAA Fisheries' sincere hope that the prospect of a common, long-term set of goals for salmon and steelhead will inspire our many partners to integrate efforts to achieve those shared goals.

More Info: [Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force website](#)