

RIVERS SMITHS SALMON ECOSYSTEMS PLANNING SOCIETY
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

March 15.2005

Conference Call

Present:

David Stevenson, Bruce Burrows, Sandi MacLaurin, Karl Wilson
The call started at 9:30 a.m.

1. DOCEE FENCE

Minutes from the previous TAC meeting raised some questions which were discussed. Sandie clarified the staffing of the Docee Fence. The DFO provides 2 full time staff for 30 days. Their days off are covered by other DFO staff. The GNN supplies another person who is on site for 10 days at a time.

2. Fin clipping of Amback Creek fry

The fin clipping of both the fry from the Amback and Inziana creeks was discussed. Sandie's spreadsheet shows the percentages of mark recapture that could be expected from each brood year. It was agreed that the estimated percentage of marked fish from this year was too low to justify the expense of doing the fin clipping. Sandie reported that 295 otoliths have been read and 5 marks have been recovered. This is a lower percentage (1.7%) than the 3.5% that was expected.

3. Juvenile Survey – Owikeno Lake

Sandie has received data from Kim Hyatt on Long Lake fry surveys. She will distribute it to the group. There is very little Owikeno data. Gordon McEachen has agreed to try and hold on to the \$14K budgeted for the fry survey work in the DFO budget discussion for this year. The proposed funding of \$8K was to augment the working being done by Kim. Sandie suggested that we should issue an RFP with deliverables and a time line to enable us to decide on who could best do this work. Bruce was concerned about the continuity of the data if someone else was to do the survey work. Kim presently does 2 days of surveying one in the fall which is just a trawl and one in the spring which is a sounding program. They do not do enough sounding in Owikeno Lake to give a reliable estimate of abundance. The costs of doing the extra work on the fry survey can be reduced by using one crew from the Wuikinuv.

4. Sockeye Enhancement Evaluation Project

Sandie has asked for \$13k from the Society for this year's Sockeye Enhancement Evaluation project to enable the reading of the otoliths. The proposed DFO budget of \$149k will go towards the egg take but it is not enough to cover the reading of the otoliths. Bruce asked how we know how many carcasses need to be recovered. Sandi explained how the formula works based on the brood year data and the escapement estimates. Bruce is working on a budget for the dead pitch on the Amback and needs to know how many fish need to be recovered and therefore how many days of work are required. Sandie suggested that 900 fish would be needed to give a sufficient sample size.

5. Early Marine Survival Project

The Early Marine Survival Project was discussed. Rick was asking for \$50k from the Society for this year's survey but because of our budget cutback it looks as if we will not be able to fund it fully. Rick has offered to drop the fry sampling portion of the survey and focus on water quality and plankton populations. Sandie said we were looking for an early marine survivor predictor and she was wondering how far along we were to achieving that goal. The merits of sampling fry in the lake were discussed to provide a sub sample of fry size. It was agreed that we still need a plankton survey to provide an early marine survival index.

Ron Tanasichuk's work in Barkley Sound was discussed as an example of the kind of work that Rick is doing which might provide an index of marine survival. Also this is an El Nino year so it would be important to how if higher temperature's affect plankton populations. It was proposed that we have a conference call with Rick and possibly include Ron to clarify the value of the work, the progress to date and the expected outcomes. The conference call was set for Monday March 21 at 4:00 p.m.

6. Critical Habitat Survey

Karl clarified Gary's request for a critical habitat survey. It would include a literature review, interviews with people experienced with the streams and any TEK that Bruce could provide. It that would pull together all the information that we have on critical habitat for spawning and rearing in both Owikeno Lake and Long Lake. It was suggested that we put out an RFP to identify a suitable consultant for the project. It would be good to have maps showing these critical areas to guide future logging developments or any other economic development. It was agreed that \$10k would be a reasonable amount for this budget.

7. Sounding Program for Rivers Inlet

Sandie has talked to Ron Goruk for assistance in developing a plan to guide us in implementing a good sounding program for Rivers Inlet. It was agreed from our last meeting with Lyle that a test fishery using 1 or 2 boats would not be sufficient for an in-season indicator. Lyles's idea of a small bite fishery needs to be discussed further. A commercial fishery in 2006 is a possibility. It was suggested that a workshop be held at the end of November to discuss abundance targets and in season management tools. Sandie suggested that this would be a good time as the DFO meet at that time for their "expectations meeting" in Prince Rupert to develop their Integrated Fish Management Plans.

8. Tentative 2005 project list

The following is the tentative list of 2005 projects:

1) Juvenile Survey – Owikeno Lake	\$10K	RFP
2) Sockeye Enhancement Evaluation	\$13K	Sandie
3) Early Marine Survival	\$30K	Rick
4) Docee Fence	\$8K	Doug
5) Critical Habitat Survey	<u>\$10K</u>	RFP

Total budget = \$71 K

Please Note: the PSF funding for this year for field projects is \$73 K. In addition we have a surplus from last year's budget of approximately \$10K.

The conference call ended at 11:00 a.m.