

RIVERS SMITH SALMON ECOSYSTEMS PLANNING SOCIETY
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

July 7, 2006
Conference Call
9:00 a.m. to 10:55

Present:

David Stevenson, Bob Bocking, Sandie MacLaurin, Dave Peacock, Bruce Burrows, Rick Routledge,

**1. Northern Boundary Fund applications:
Enhancement Evaluation:**

Sandie reported that the Salmon Enhancement Evaluation data is being reviewed by Brian Anderson. He is concerned about the lack of 4 year olds from the 2001 brood year in the 2005 Inziana sample. He suggested that we should try and get samples from the Inziana in 2006 to see if any of the 2001 brood year show up. The DFO have some funds in the budget for the collecting the samples but not for reading the otoliths. There may be as many as 3,000 samples required. Dave Peacock agreed that it would be worth applying to the Northern Boundary Fund for the funds to read the otoliths as it is important to verify the contribution that the enhanced fish make to the escapement.

Action: Sandie agreed to confer with Brian Anderson to put together a 3 page concept proposal for the NBF.

Juvenile Survey:

Dave Peacock reported that the work done last year on the Juvenile Survey in Owikeno Lake during the winter when the water was clearer proved to be very valuable. He indicated that this work would continue to be funded out of the DFO budget and would not be a good project for the NBF.

Rivers Echo Sounding Program

Bruce suggested that funding for next year's Echo Sounding program would be a good candidate for the NBF. Dave Peacock said that the fund might consider the cost of purchasing the equipment plus half the operation costs. There was some discussion as to who would own the equipment. It was decided to leave this decision to later.

Action: Bob Bocking will do the concept proposal for the NBF.

Bruce raised the issue of the need to proceed with the Wild Salmon Policy (WSP) goal of setting conservation units and benchmarks for all of the salmon species. There is a lot of work to be done on it. Sandie asked if it was possible to determine how many salmon with the adipose fin clipped are captured in Northern fisheries. There was some discussion about the feasibility of using this method to measure returns. Dave Peacock indicated that based on experienced in areas 7 and 8, it would take hundreds of thousands of samples to make it work. Voluntary reporting by fishers doesn't work. You need a directed effort at evaluating the catch when the fish are landed. Such a program would require significant funds and is not possible given present DFO budgets. Previous

records show that the contribution of Rivers and Smith Inlet stocks to the northern fishery is minimal.

Chinook tagging project

There was some discussion on the possibility of doing a project on the Long Lake Chinook and Wannock Chinook such as a mark recapture project. It was decided to have another conference call on July 21 at 9:30 to further discuss this project. Dave Peacock expressed an interest in the Docee Fence Chinook. He indicated that he would discuss this further with Ivan Winther. Species identification is a problem at the Docee Fence. Julian has put a camera there this year to help with species identification. It is possible to tag a significant portion of the run but it would need a program to collect the carcasses. A lot of the Chinook do not go past the fence according to the Doug and Karl's earlier research. Rick said we need more information on where they spawn. Dave Peacock said that the NBF may be interested in funding something on Chinook.

Action: David will contact Doug McCorquodale to discuss the possible design of the project.

2. Climate Change Monitoring.

There was some discussion on the need to develop a project to monitor climate change. Rick has two weather stations in the lake already to measure wind speeds and air temperature. Environment Canada measures flow data. Sandie suggested that we get in touch with Dr. Beamish at the Pacific Biological Station in Nanaimo to discuss his work on climate change. Rick said that we would also need to look at the glacial melting as well. There was a question on who would manage the data base. The best strategy would be to build on Rick's research and how it relates to fish survival. We would like to be able to identify the triggers for various events. Bruce reported that there was some evidence that high fresh water flows in the Inlet may have negatively impacted the oolichan stocks. We need to monitor water temperature, air temperature, siltation rates, water flows and timing over a long period of time to show trends. Sandie suggested that we also need to include data on terrestrial events such as changing tree species distribution. Sandie repeated the need to involve Dr. Beamish and the work done by the Ocean Sciences Group. There is a paper published by the DFO in 2005 called the State of the Pacific Oceans that will be relevant. Bob Bocking called for clear goals and objectives for monitoring climate change. He pointed out that there will be some overlap with the work of the WSP. Bill Crawford from the Institute of Ocean Sciences would be a good person to contact.

Watershed Plans

Sandie talked about the need for watershed plans to now conform with the new Ecosystem Based Management guidelines that came out of the CCLRMP process. There are now more rules for development proponents to follow to implement EBM so it would be a good idea to look at the EBM handbook and see how we can impact the process. EBM guidelines are on the web. This work links with the WSP pilot project as development plans will have to conform to EBM guidelines and WSP guidelines as well.

Wild Salmon Policy up date

Dave Peacock gave an update on the WSP and the pilot project for Rivers and Smith Inlet. Discussions on Conservation Units are still going on within DFO. An internal proposal has been developed which will be presented to the First Nation technical committees. RSSEPS is still being considered as a useful vehicle for carrying on the discussion on Conservation Units for Rivers Inlet. The Nuxalk, Kitasoo and Wuikinuxv are to meet on July 20 to discuss the CU. We are not at the stage to discuss bench marks yet. Early August would be a good time for a meeting in Port Hardy to discuss the Conservation Units. There are now three watersheds being considered for the WSP pilot project and Rivers Inlet is still on the list. There is \$20K earmarked for the pilot project but Dave has put in a request for \$40K. What aspects DFO Stock Assessment will do is yet to be determined. Terms of Reference need to be set for Stock Assessment, Habitat and the Ecosystem.

It was agreed to carry on this discussion at the next conference call on July 21 at 9:30 pm.

The conference call was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.