



February 11, 2015

Dungeness River Management Team Meeting

2:00 – 5:00PM, Dungeness River Audubon Center, Sequim, WA

APPROVED Meeting Notes

Notes prepared by: Shawn Hines

DRMT Website: <http://tinyurl.com/DRMTweb>

Team Members/Alternates in Attendance:

Mary Ellen Winborn, Clallam County
Cathy Lear, Clallam County (al)
Scott Chitwood, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe
Shawn Hines, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe (alt)
Robert Beebe, Riverside Property Owners (RM0-3.25)
Don Hatler, Sports Fisheries
Robert Phreaner, OPAS/Conservation Committee
Peter Walker, OPAS/Conservation Committee (alt)
Michele Canale, North Olympic Land Trust

Judy Larson, Protect the Peninsula's Future
Matt Heins, Estuary –Tidelands/Riverside Property Owners
Joe Holtrop, Clallam Conservation District (Advisory)
Cathy Lear, Clallam County (alt)
Robert Brown, Dungeness Beach Association
Ann Soule, City of Sequim

Others in Attendance:

Shannon Luoma, GEI Consultants
Jeff Bohman, citizen
Marguerite Glover, Sequim Assoc. of Realtors

I. Introductions/Review Agenda/Review & Approve February 11 DRMT Draft Meeting Notes

Scott Chitwood called meeting to order. Introductions were made, sign in sheets circulated. Meeting notes were tabled until end of meeting, when a quorum membership was expected.

Public Comment:

- Judy Larson requested that the DRMT website URL be posted on all agendas, notes – and on the email that forwards the DRMT agenda.
- Judy Larson described a concern, brought to her attention by Darlene Schanfald, related to proposed SB 6513, which deals with reservations of water in WRIA 45. Darlene is hoping for support to add WRIA 18 to the language. Judy's understanding of the bill is that it would ensure that the instream flow protections would be upheld. Scott reminded the group that the reservations of water rights that the new bill refers to were from the Swinomish case. Judy proposed that DRMT send an email to Sen. Hargrove asking him to include Dungeness in the bill. After some discussion, and the fact that team members had not read the bill, no action by DRMT was made.
- Judy also expressed concern about SB 6568, companion to HB 2840. It was noted that Robert Phreaner will discuss that HB 2840 later on in the agenda.
- Matt Heins noted that the screw trap is in and is fishing.
- Michele Canale said Pete Schroeder noticed big machinery and new rock dike across from his property. He noticed it yesterday. Robert Beebe said the riprap was right next to hatchery and installation has been going on for a while now. Scott Chitwood confirmed that WDFW is doing the work and would be the contact.
- Joe Holtrop stated that the blue pipe mentioned last meeting off of Priest road has been completely installed. Stryder Construction did the work very quickly, 6,842 feet of pipe.
- Cathy Lear reminded the group that free Hazwoper training is happening on 2/27 and oil spill/wildlife rescue trainings on 3/26 and 4/9, sponsored by MRC.

II. Ocean Conditions Presentation, Brian Burke and Correigh Greene, NOAA Fisheries

Brian Burke:

- Brian Burke discussed his project which looks at physical and biological consequences of recent ocean conditions. Talk included information on the metrics they measure in the ocean, formation of blob, PDO, El Nino, biological response to ocean conditions, and specific information on conditions before and after September 2014.
- Multiple samples are taken along the coast up to three times a year, in May, June, Sept. Much of the information in this talk can be found on website: www.nwfsc.noaa.gov/oceanconditions.
- Formation of blob, the big warm area of water in the Pacific basin -- Normally in winter there is an area of low pressure (low pressure is like a vacuum, lots of wind, stirring up water, moving heat up out of water, bringing cold

water from down below). However, an unusually high pressure over the North Pacific in winter 2013/14 occurred, blocking storms that normally redistribute ocean heat to atmosphere and deep water. This ridge, high pressure system, prevented heat from getting off of surface of water, prevented cold water from circulating up. “Ridiculously resilient ridge” has lasted for years, and allowed the water to get warmer than normal – the “blob”.

- PDO is a measure of spatial temperature patterns – usually warm water along coast, cold water in central Pacific. PDO measures how close to that pattern we are. Positive PDO value. Warm water along coast tends to be bad for salmon. Positive PDO not a good thing for salmon. PDO tends to be positive or negative for long periods of time, at least 10 years usually. Currently in a positive PDO phase, one of the longest we’ve seen.
- El Nino, not a measure of a spatial pattern, but literally how warm a particular location (Nino 3.4 region). Whether water is warm or cold in Nino 3.4 region determines whether we’ll have an El Nino. Time scale for this index more a frequent, around 2 years. Right now we are experiencing strongest or second strongest El Nino on record. PDO tends to be a response to a lot of atmospheric pressures, whereas El Nino can be a generator of atmospheric trends. When you see strong warm water along equator, tends to drive atmospheric patterns that affect the rest of the world.
- What tends to happen during El Nino is low pressure system in Central North Pacific. But, it was a high pressure system formed the blob. So, atmospheric scientists were thinking that going into this El Nino, the low pressure response stirring up the water and cooling off, could defeat the blob. That is what seems to be happening now, though every El Nino is different in terms of biological response, and this one is particularly different because of the blob. It still is unclear how biological responses will play out. We won’t really know responses to this El Nino until spring. Will still see effects of it long after the water cools off.
- Before September 2014, the water along the coast was actually not that warm. The blob was out in central north pacific, but coastal waters were still around average. A lot of our salmon spend the first summer fall in coastal environment, so conditions were not that abnormal. Whereas in Sept 2014, the upwelling that kept it at bay dropped off, and that warm water literally came right up to shore and had huge effects to coastal environment.
- Chlorophyll data showed very high levels in summer 2014, very productive year. That created situation where salmon looked great, despite the blob. They were large due to all the food available at the time. Growth rate estimates for coho were actually the highest on record.
- Then, warm water eventually came onshore. The ecology and organisms of that water (more subtropical species) were different, and impacted salmon populations. For example, the Northern Copepod Anomaly (the “cheeseburgers” for salmon) went down, while the Southern Copepod Anomaly (“salad” for salmon) went up.
- Examples of anomalies: Species normally found here were found much further north. Sockeye salmon (around 90%) went more North (diverted through Johnston Strait), implications for harvests. Timing of seeing certain species changed as well. Huge change in jellyfish community. Hardly any in 2015, whereas they normally clog the nets. High returns of adult spring, summer and fall Chinook, and sockeye, but low Coho returns. Coho fecundity below average. California sea lion strandings. Coast-wide bird die-off, e.g., Cassin’s auklet.
- Interior conditions: seasonal outlooks, precipitation/temperature. High growth rates early spring/summer 2014, but fish that went to sea in 2015 had really low growth rates.

Correigh Greene

- Correigh Greene presented on some ongoing work related to Ecosystem Indicators of Marine Survival, and modeling techniques used to estimate returns. Collaboration with WDFW, University of Washington, and others. A number of different measures you might take, some of which might correlate with marine survival. Hope to take advantage of trends and correlation data to help with future for forecasting.
- Large effort going on right now between Canada and U.S. to look at changes in marine survival over last 40 years within the Salish Sea, including Puget Sound (Salish Sea Marine Survival Project: <http://marinesurvivalproject.com/the-project/>).
- Have seen some long term trends, but also a lot of variation in marine survival over last 10 years. Talk focuses on coho salmon (best dataset available), but also trying to do this work for steelhead and chinook, but they have less data on marine survival for these species.
- Developing indicators at various special scales. How to break down the various indicators to fit various special scales. Based on paper, see “Spatial and Temporal Patterns in Smolt Survival of Wild and Hatchery Coho Salmon in the Salish Sea”: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/19425120.2015.1012246>.

- Figure 6 in paper: comparing Strait of Georgia and Puget Sound with Pacific Coast: Coast has booms/bust cycles consistent with Pacific decadal oscillation cycle, whereas Puget Sound and Strait of Georgia, while they have some consistent bumps with the Coast, the long-term trend indicates decline for both sets of stocks. Also, blue line higher than black lines, indicating wild stocks survive at higher marine survival (about twice the marine survival) as hatchery stocks.
- Discussed clustering of data, Figure 3 in paper. How related the marine survival population data was within each area (Pacific Coast, Puget Sound, Strait of Georgia), using all the data:

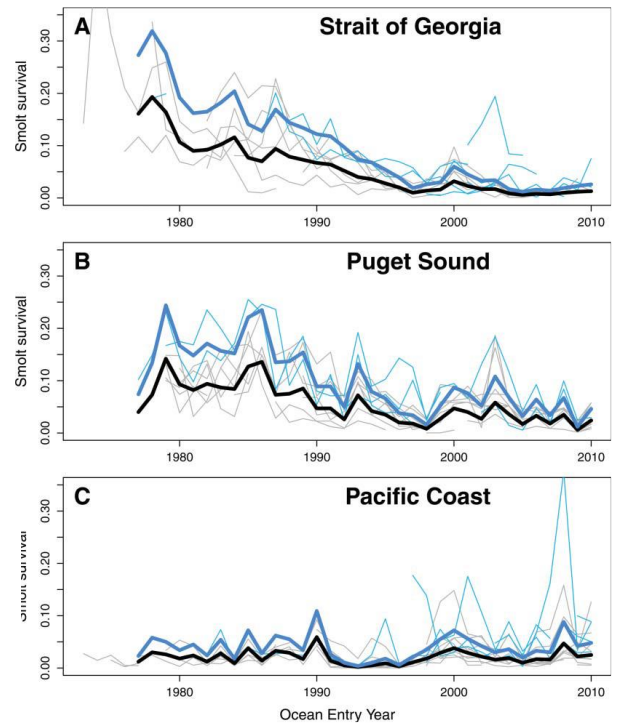
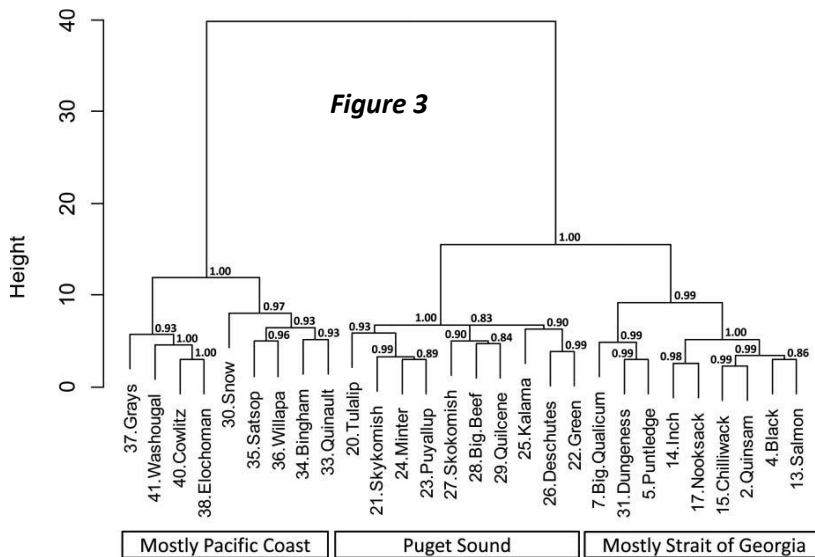


Figure 6

- Have actually seen trends at all different scales. Variations can be explained for each scale, since the fish have different life stages.
- Based on the indicators used, a guess at what is expected for next return year: DO conditions expected to be Poor, Temperature conditions expected to be Average, Copepod axis 1: Average, Copepod axis 2: Poor, PDO: Poor. So overall, might adjust our expectations of what's coming this year to be on the lower end. This a very qualitative way of how we might use this tool; in future might be able to make some actual predictions about adult returns. Still in science/study phase.
- For more information on forecasting adult returns, including ocean indicators, see: <http://www.nwfsc.noaa.gov/research/divisions/fe/estuarine/oeip/g-forecast.cfm#Table1>

III. House Bill 2840, Water Discharge Permits, Bob Phreaner, Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society

- Robert Phreaner provided the team with some information on HB2840 (SB6568 is the companion bill), regarding establishing a water discharge permit for concentrated animal feeding operations that is issued under the sole authority of state law. The bill proposes to move agricultural waste discharge permitting authority from Washington Department of Ecology to the Washington Department of Agriculture. Robert stated that the Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society (OPAS) opposes the bill, and he shared a letter with the Team that OPAS submitted to Representative Van De Wege, describing their opposition. A proposal went forward that the DRMT sign on to the letter, as well as provide comment as an entity itself.
- After some discussion, an amended motion by Judy Larson (seconded by Matt Heins, abstained by Don Hatler) passed, in which DRMT members would: be distributed by email the information presented today on the bill, including the OPAS letter; have time review the materials and research the bill themselves; and then make a vote on whether or not to sign on to the OPAS letter and provided additional DRMT comment. [Follow-up: A quorum did not respond by email by the due date. Therefore, the DRMT did not sign on to the letter, nor did it submit comment to the legislature. Regardless, both bills eventually "died" and are no longer being considered in the legislature].

V. Proposed Off-stream Reservoir Status Update, Joe Holtrop, Clallam Conservation District

- Reminder of proposed project: proposed reservoir off River Road on state land managed by DNR; could be as large as 88 acres of surface water, 318 acres of land. Numerous partners working on proposals, including to Floodplain by Design. DNR favorable to a land exchange. Don't want to manage reservoir, but open to exchanging land of equivalent value. Commissioner agreed to push it to State; would likely need special proviso to fund.
- Anchor did engineering proposal, not finalized.
- Ann Soule said ownership and operational costs still big questions.
- Joe said the reservoir will be 20 feet deep at its deepest, and average depth of ten feet.
- Tom Butler asked about the reservoir's potential to have utility for wildlife purposes. Joe suggested it may not be desirable to provide habitat for waterfowl, since the water is to be used for irrigation. But they welcome input on design.
- Bob Randeau mentioned that stated that he has a large farm served by SPT Irrigation, across from Sunland. They used to winter cows on that property. Now wintering on Boyd property, east of River Road, which is going to be developed. Our family is willing to trade commercial forest property that we own for DNR property for the purpose of filling that reservoir. Discussions need to be made, but in process in drafting a letter outlining proposal. Other options might be possible, too. Envision using the property for reservoir, and secondarily for over-wintering cows. Willing to make investment.

VI. Other Business / Announcements / Follow-ups

- Follow-up: Lower River Floodplain Restoration Dike Design Update, Cathy Lear, Clallam County
 - Last month three consultant teams were interviewed by the County and their six-person interview team (including representatives from Clallam County, North Olympic Peninsula Lead Entity and Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe).
 - They chose Shannon/Wilson, led by Dave Cline. Working on scope for contract.
 - FEMA thinks this the project would coincide perfectly with a flood insurance study. Ultimately would have new flood insurance maps. The old maps date from 1980s. Matt Heins said the study would also help to ease the Army Corps of Engineers' minds. Cathy said the study would be great, but would take years.
 - Timeline: for next year, designing and permitting (e.g. shoreline exemption permit, etc.).
 - Matt Heins asked about Towne Road design. Cathy said the first task is a cost/benefit analysis of the three alternatives: 1. No Towne Road through floodplain, 2. Town Road through floodplain, 3. Road on levee.
- Follow-up: Woodcock Bridge Work, Mary Ellen Winborn, Clallam County
 - Mary Ellen passed around some very preliminary plans for the Woodcock Road Bridge. She stated this project has always been on the six-year implementation plan. Divers looked at scouring. Multiple permits will be necessary. Permitting hasn't started yet. NEPA, HPA, Cultural Assessment, bio-assessment, shoreline permit, critical areas, etc. All will be necessary. County talking to Tribes. The scouring occurred mainly on east side.
- In response to Ben Smith's query last month about adult salmon escapement numbers and smolt out-migration. Scott Chitwood said that Aaron Brooks of JSKT staff will provide presentation next month. Not looking good. Flooding at Hurd Creek, which held Elwha Chinook, caused 20-30% of the fish in the rearing ponds to escape with that flood. It's actually amazing more didn't escape. We don't think those escaped will survive (they were not smolts). Stay tuned. Matt Heins commented about major changes in the river on that stretch. Gravel bar shifted to other side. Scott said – safe to say the entire lower 10 miles has changed significantly with the 3-5 freshet events we've had.
- In response to Judy Larson's previous request for Tribe to summarize some of its waste water plans, Scott said he would try to summarize at March meeting. *[Follow-up: this item is now scheduled for the May 11 DRMT meeting].*
- January meeting notes: Judy made motion to approve notes. Robert Beebe seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment:

- Concern raised again by PPF about Carlsborg Sewer Project and having the pipe go across 101 bridge. Judy Larson said hearing examiner made no changes whatsoever following PPF request for reconsideration. They requested that all the necessary protections be done, but examiner made no change. Concerned about the pipes going under the bridge. Especially with the changes in river courses, concern that WADOT does a good enough job to make sure there are protections, with seismic bearings, for example. She hopes folks do express concerns if they have any. Changes have been made since original proposal and that information wasn't available at the time of public review.
- Robert Brown asked about the “~” symbol in front of the Ecology flow value listed at top of agenda; he wondered if it had to do with the fact he noticed a technician working on the gage yesterday. Shawn clarified she inserted that

symbol to indicate “approximate” since the flow value is read off of a graph. See:
<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/eap/flows/station.asp?sta=18A050#block2>

VII. Adjourn

Action Items or Items Requested for Follow-up	Date Requested	Scheduled Update
Presentation on Tribe’s resort and related water use	10/14/15	Scheduled for 05/11/16
Update on Battelle’s water right application	10/14/15	TBD
Update on SMP	10/14/15	Scheduled for 04/13/16
County LID projects	10/14/15	Scheduled for 05/11/16
Dike setback	10/14/15	Request for regular updates.
Drift cells	10/14/15	To be scheduled for spring 2016
Oil spill response	10/14/15	TBD
Bassett vs. Ecology	1/11/16	TBD