

Salmon Basin Advisory Group
Meeting Minutes – October 9, 2014

Idaho Department of Fish & Game
Highway 93 North
Salmon, Idaho

BAG members present: Bruce Mulkey, Brant Tritthart, Fred Waidley, Betsy Rieffenberger, Sarah Baker, Chris Natoli (proxy for Bert Doughty)

BAG members absent: Bert Doughty, Hunter Osborne

BAG vacancies: Water Based Recreation, Forestry

Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) present: Troy Saffle, Andy Olson, Dave Pisarski, Lisa Cawley

Guests: Jim Gregory, Trout Unlimited; Phil Moulton, Pratt Creek Ranch; Ron Troy, TNC; Daniel Bertram, USBWP

With no BAG chairperson, the meeting was started by Troy Saffle at 2:05 p.m. Introductions were made. Troy introduced Andy Olson to those in attendance. Troy also explained Andy's responsibilities and his future role with the Salmon BAG.

TMDL UPDATE

Troy briefly explained the TMDL and Five-Year Review updates for the Panther Creek Subbasin and Upper Salmon River Subbasin. Public comment will be open in December or shortly thereafter. The public comment period will be publicized in the local newspaper.

Dave Pisarski from the State DEQ discussed the 319 Grant processes. Applications are received each year through August. Each application is reviewed for technical completeness. The applications are then presented at the regional BAG meetings, ranked by each BAG, then presented by each BAG chairperson at the Super BAG meeting generally held in December. At the Super BAG meeting, the projects are ranked.

Each year monies are funded to EPA then distributed to the States. This year, Idaho will distribute \$2 million dollars with 29 applications to review and possibly fund.

PRESENTATION OF GRANT PROJECTS

- ❖ Ron Troy of The Nature Conservancy presented the project for the Wimpey and Pratt Creek Restoration Project – Phase II.

With the cooperation of 4 private landowners, this project will increase the productivity of the Lemhi Basin involving over 2300 acres. Included in this project:

- fish-passable bridge on Pratt Creek
- decreasing irrigation diversions from 20 to 2 fish passable diversions on Pratt Creek
- eliminating a livestock feeding operation on Skinner Ranch
- fencing and grazing management along Wimpey Creek on the Moulton Ranch

Phil Moulton, who is in the process of purchasing the Skinner Ranch, has also offered labor and monetary contributions toward this project.

- ❖ Jim Gregory from Trout Unlimited presented the Yankee Fork West Fork Confluence Floodplain Reconnection project.

Past mining operations, the impact of the milling operations, and the tailings left behind from the dredging in the 40's and 50's have affected the habitat of fish species along Yankee Fork and West Fork Rivers. Vegetation and salmon spawning will improve by altering the existing dredge tailings piles and rerouting mainstem flows in the Yankee Fork and West Fork confluence. This project will re-establish channel floodplain interaction, increase hydraulic roughness both instream and on the floodplain, improve riparian vegetation conditions and improve water quality by trapping and storing sediment produced in basin. The project includes:

- 3900 feet of tailings will be altered by breaching existing dredge tailings piles and rerouting mainstem flows
- 2900 feet of side channels would be constructed or improved
- Approximately 3 alcoves would be constructed
- Approximately 4.48 acres of new floodplain habitat would be created
- Approximately 60 multiple piece and 125 single piece wood structures will be placed along the channel margins and on the floodplain areas

Both projects are requesting \$250,000 from the 319 Grant monies.

BAG RANKING

After presentations were made and questions were answered regarding each project, the BAG was asked to rank the projects. Betsy Rieffenberger asked the presenters to step out of the room while the BAG discussed the projects. This will be the process for future decisions to be made by the BAG.

Unanimous decision for ranking project:

1. Wimpey Creek and Pratt Creek Restoration Project – Phase II
2. Yankee Fork West Fork Confluence Floodplain Reconnection

BAG CHAIR NOMINATION

Troy discussed the consideration of a new BAG chairperson. He explained the duties of a chairperson to include planning the agenda, representing the BAG at the Super BAG meeting in December, and voting on projects. Betsy Rieffenberger volunteered to be the Salmon BAG chairperson. The BAG seconded the nomination.

The BAG discussed holding a meeting in the spring.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:38 p.m.