



# Report on the Consideration of Forming a Coastal Regional Governance Unit for Salmon Sustainability

## LEAD ENTITIES

North Pacific Coast Lead Entity (WRIA 20)

Quinault Nation Lead Entity (WRIA 21)

Grays Harbor Lead Entity (WRIAs 22/23)

Pacific Lead Entity (WRIA 24)

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for the  
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Planning Group



June 20, 2007

## COAST LEAD ENTITIES 2007 PLANNING GROUP REPORT

### A: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### OVERVIEW

The Washington State coastal region roughly encompasses the coast from Cape Flattery to the mouth of the Columbia River. Between January and June of 2007, representatives of Lead Entity organizations along the coastal region and associated stakeholders formed a Planning Group to consider the opportunities, pros and cons, and benefits and risks for regional collaboration on common issues including salmonid recovery. The purpose of the Planning Group discussions was to determine whether to form a coast-wide regional body; and, if so, what the purpose and functions of this organization would be. Grant funding for this purpose was provided by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB).

The Report herein is the culmination of six months of diligent and collaborative work by the Planning Group members. On June 20, 2007 the Planning Group conditionally passed a Motion (pending the necessary subsequent approvals by the respective Lead Entity groups, expected by August 1, 2007) whereby it was unanimously agreed:

1. To submit the “*Final Report on the Consideration of Forming a Coastal Regional Governance Unit*” to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB), whereby said submittal affirms the agreement by all four Lead Entities (i.e., North Pacific Coast, Quinault Nation, Grays Harbor, and Pacific) to work together to form a regional organization as set forth in the Final Report;
2. That the basic findings in the report to form a regional group are supported and agreed that the listed issues, functions, staffing, membership, and organizational structure represent Planning Group guidance for moving forward in crafting a regional organization, with the caveat that all details have not yet been completed.
3. To move forward with the following steps:
  - a. By August 1, prepare the formal request for recognition of the Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership (WCSSP) as a regional salmon recovery organization in the form of letters from each of the four Lead Entities to the Governor’s Salmon Recovery Office that support recognition and formation of the WCSSP.
  - b. By August 1, obtain authorization from their respective Lead Entity groups for the Lead Entity coordinators to move forward to develop a grant request to further the efforts of the formation of the Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership.
  - c. By August 15, Lead Entities in consultation with their members will develop a draft work plan and budget (considering other regions’ work plans as potential models) to be submitted to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board in September 2007 and which includes:
    - i. Exploration of the development of an Interlocal Agreement
    - ii. Membership
    - iii. Staffing
    - iv. Priority functions and tasks
    - v. Deliverables
    - vi. Budget through June 2009
4. To recommend continuance of Grays Harbor County as the interim designated contracting agent and lead financial entity for the regional organization.

## **FRAMEWORK**

The Planning Group agreed to assign the name of Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership (WCSSP) for the regional group. The Planning Group determined a framework for issues, functions, organizational structure, membership, staffing, and funding. These items are summarized below:

### **Issues**

- Region-wide salmonid recovery and prioritization
- Need for a regional plan/strategy for salmonid recovery
- Save what we have
- Avoid ESA listings and further diminished populations through sustainability instead of ESA recovery planning.
- We are a unique region and we will create our own future
- All the partners need to support and buy into a regional strategy for this to work.

### **Functions**

- **Broad and Regional Functions for the Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership**
  - a. Develop a holistic view of the region, e.g., watershed planning, salmonid recovery, economic development (including tourism and recreation, business and others)
  - b. Continue participation in Council of Regions as the coastal region
  - c. Develop and advocate for regional policies
  - d. Influence federal or state salmonid recovery activities affecting the region
  - e. Promote “sustainability” to prevent new ESA listings
  - f. Coordinate and collaborate with all Lead Entities
  - g. Provide regional communication, community outreach, and education
- **Planning and Projects**
  - a. Develop a regional plan or strategy
  - b. Coordinate and track implementation of a regional plan or strategy
  - c. Support implementation of recovery plan(s) within the region (e.g., Lake Ozette sockeye)
  - d. Develop regional habitat project lists, schedules and priorities
  - e. Participate in activities to guide monitoring of salmon and their habitat
- **Funding**
  - a. Allocate salmon recovery funding within the region
  - b. Advocate for unused returning funds to stay within the Coast region
  - c. Identify funding options and obtaining funding for salmonid recovery activities

### **Organizational Structure**

The Planning Group chose a structural option that favored the formation of a “Federation with Strong Lead Entities.” For this option, the Lead Entities remain distinct and prioritize projects within their own WRIs. They also maintain relationships with project sponsors. The Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership would perform the functions listed above.

### **Membership**

As a starting point, the Planning Group recommended a caucus/Lead Entity approach to membership that would include consideration of representation within each caucus from a variety of interests (e.g., citizens, stakeholder interests, city and county representatives, tribal representatives, etc.). Consistent with the concept of forming a union of Lead Entities, each Lead Entity caucus would have one vote on

the Partnership. All decisions will be by consensus of the caucuses, and veto power exists within each caucus.

The Planning Group recommended that a final membership and voting structure be completed no later than October 2008.

### **Staffing**

The Planning Group acknowledged that regional staffing will be necessary in order to accomplish the functions agreed upon. The Planning Group recommended hiring a full time executive director and a full time assistant for the first two years. Components for staffing should include staff travel and operating costs, consultant needs, support for Lead Entity coordinators, and administrative costs.

### **Funding**

The Planning Group anticipated that appropriate funding from the SRFB will be available to the coastal region for both creating a coastal organization as well as continued operation of such a group. In order to support actual formation of the Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership, the Planning Group recommended that a grant be requested and obtained to further develop the necessary details for forming the group, hiring staff, and implementing the recommendations. The Planning Group also recommended that a mechanism that provides funding (per diem) to support citizen participation in the WCSSP be explored as a part of the grant.

### **THE FUTURE (PLANNING GROUP NEXT STEPS)**

With the submittal of its final report to the SRFB and with formal request letters to the GSRO from each Lead Entity that support recognition and formation of the regional organization, the Planning Group will move forward in crafting the detailed elements of the Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership. A work plan and budget will be prepared for submittal in September 2007 to the SRFB.