

January Call Agenda (1-13-09)

Item 1: Discussion. Partnership Staff Updates, *Mark Trenholm*

- Plans to hire administrative support staff?

Item 2: Discussion. Latest Strategic Plan Draft, *Jay Nicholas*

- Draft (v7) of Strategic Plan reflects all comments received to date. The only significant change from previous draft is devoting 2009 to increasing robustness of expert rating database and additional vetting of strong populations with OR, WA, ID, and CA. Existing maps of strong populations will guide partnership activities during 2008 and revised maps will be developed based on analysis in first quarter of 2010.

Follow Up: Coordinator recommends Steering Committee provide final comments on draft Strategic Plan v7 with any additional edits provided on by January 23.

Item 3: Information. Annual Report, *Jay Nicholas*

- Coordinator reports on status of report preparation.
- Provide Executive Summary (one page 2008 accomplishments and 2009 objectives)

Item 4: Discussion/Action. 2009 NASSP Budget, *Sue Knapp and Kevin Shaffer*

- Update on progress to date. Determine next steps and participants.

Item 5: Discussion/Action. Basin Outreach Priorities for 2009, *Jay Nicholas*

- Discussion: The Steering Committee is not likely to endorse very many basins as Strongholds during 2009. However, basic communication and outreach to currently endorsed strongholds and a small set of potential strongholds is an essential element of maintaining momentum for the Stronghold Partnership. Outreach to potential strongholds is most needed in WA and CA.
- Action: Coordinator recommends that SC approve outreach as needed to maintain relationships in currently endorsed Strongholds and strategic outreach to WA and CA as partnering opportunities are communicated via state entities on Steering Committee.

Item 6: Information. February Stronghold Partnership Meeting, *Jay Nicholas*

- Location: Billy Frank Room; February 18th 8:30 – 3:30
 - Reception held in WSC Office 5-7 PM February 17th; pizza and soft drinks provided.
 - Proposed Theme: Moving forward in 2009.
- 1) Review 2008 – key accomplishments.
 - 2) Overview of Strategic Plan.
 - 3) Review key objectives for 2009.
 - 4) Open discussion: Steering Committee commitments to provide leadership and resources to accomplish Strategic Plan outcomes.

Action: Coordinator recommends Steering Committee approval of Meeting theme and approval or modification of theme and content for the February meeting.

April Call Minutes (4/14/09)

Attendees:

Doug DeHart (FWS)
 Nick Hetrick (FWS)
 Kevin Shaffer (CDFG)
 Bruce McIntosh (ODFW)

Sue Aspelund (ADFG)
 Sue Knapp (OR Governor's Office)
 Phil Miller (WA Governors SRO)

Jack Williams (TU)
 Mark Trenholm (WSC)
 Laurele Fulkerson (WSC)

Jay Nicholas (NASSP)
 Trozell Weaver (WSC)
 Christopher Estes (ADFG)-Guest

Item 1: Partnership Administrative Updates. Lead: *Mark Trenholm*

- Mark summarized the NASSP budget.
- Programmatic costs budgeted to NASSP total roughly \$510,000. Major costs reflected in this figure include expenses associated with a recently-received \$100,000 grant from Resource Legacy Fund in CA, and salaries for roughly 2.5 FTE. Additional expenses include travel/lodging, WSC administrative/overhead costs, and other misc expenses.
- Mark stated that typically the steering committee does not review the budget supporting NASSP legislative work.

Item 2: NASSP Product Updates. Lead: *Jay Nicholas*

- It was recommended that Jay actively engages the SC to: 1) brief them on the status of Strategic Plan deliverables and 2) seek Steering Committee support/resources to accomplish deliverables and/or solicit Steering Committee advice and approval to modify time tables for deliverables.

Item 3: June 24th Partnership Meeting-Agenda Proposal. Lead: *Jay Nicholas*

- Draft June Partnership Meeting Agenda looks good.

Item 4: Legislative Update. Lead: *Laurele Fulkerson*

Senate

- The Pacific Salmon Stronghold Conservation Act of 2009 was re-introduced on April 2nd by Senator Maria Cantwell, with co-sponsorship from all her West Coast Senate colleagues.
- Based on significant outreach with stakeholders, we incorporated the following significant changes to the revised version of the bill: 1) Grants process-states administer site-based projects; NFWF administers multi-state programmatic initiatives, 2) Board Representation-addition of 3 to 5 tribes or tribal commissions and local government representative, 3) Climate change language added, 4) International cooperation section added.

House

- Congressman Mike Thompson (CA-1st) plans to introduce the House bill by the end of the month.
- Sue Knapp, Phil Miller, and Sue Aspelund offered to help with OR, WA and AK House delegation.

NFHAP

- David Anderson has been coordinating with NFHAP legislative team to ensure messaging reflects that both bills are complementary and mutually supportive.

Item 5: Open Discussion. Lead *Jay Nicholas*

- Need for a clear outreach message regarding the criteria for identifying strongholds in relation to the process of endorsing strongholds. Steering Committee needs to address.
- Basin Liaisons are in the best position to share the stronghold concept.
- How do basin liaisons in a stronghold obtain support for the stronghold concept from neighboring basins that don't qualify as a stronghold? This should be addressed in the June Partnership meeting by endorsed basin liaisons.

Proposed Agenda Items for May 12th Steering Committee Call:

- NFHAP recognition
- Discussion of 2008 Year in Review, Report on Endorsed Basins and June Partnership Meeting Agenda
- Steering Committee members will let Trozell know if they would like to present at June Partnership Meeting by May 12th call

May Call Minutes (5/12/09)

Attendees:

Sara LaBorde (WDFW)-Chair	Eric Volk (ADFG)	Rob Masonis (TU)	Laurele Fulkerson (WSC)
Doug DeHart (FWS)	Kevin Shaffer (CDFG)	Wendy Millet (TNC)	Trozell Weaver (WSC)
Nick Hetrick (FWS)	Sue Knapp (OR Governor's Office)	Mark Trenholm (WSC)	Ken Beeson (PFRCC)
Dave Heller (USFS)	Phil Miller (WA Governors SRO)	Greg Block (WSC)	Christopher Estes (ADFG)-Guest
Jeff Uebel (USFS)			

Item 1: Information. Applying the Salmon Stronghold Concept in Canada, Ken Beeson

- Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council (PFRCC) is a policy focused council that was created by the federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans on 9/18/98. PFRCC provides independent advice on conservation and environmental sustainability of Pacific Salmon and their habitats. Their role is to advise the federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, the British Columbia Minister of Fisheries and the public.
- Last summer the Council was looking for other innovative options to salmon conservation and was impressed by the Salmon Stronghold concept. The council is evaluating the suitability of the stronghold concept in Canada.
- The Council has generated a draft report, which they anticipate finalizing in June '09.

Item 2: Information. June 23rd-24th Partnership Meeting, Mark Trenholm

- Steering Committee reviewed the draft agenda and understands the need to add another half day meeting.
Outcome: Half day meeting will take place on June 23rd for Steering Committee members and select guests from 11:30-5:00 at Northwest Power and Conservation Council.

Item 3: National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP), Christopher Estes

- Mr. Estes invited a NASSP representative to discuss the stronghold partnership at the June NFHAP Workshop for all candidate and recognized fish habitat partnerships. This workshop conflicts with the June NASSP meeting, but financial support remains to cover one representative from NASSP. The SC agreed to look for a person to send, recognizing that most who were able to speak on the subject would be attending the June NASSP meeting. It was agreed that this representative should be well versed in the science and technical aspects of NASSP and be able to discuss the expert database analyses undertaken.
- The next rounds for NFHAP reorganization are October and December.
- Steering Committee asked questions and provided thoughts on recognition. It was agreed that NASSP does not have the capacity to apply for recognition and is still trying establishing itself.
Outcome: Sara and Greg will work on finding a representative to attend the NFHAP June workshop.

Item 4: NASSP Product Updates-2008 Year in Review: Mark Trenholm

Outcome: Hard copies requested by Kevin Shaffer.

Item 5: Open Discussion & Other Updates

- Dave Heller briefed us on the work of USFS's in identifying and characterizing key watersheds in NE OR. It was recognized as a good opportunity to provide input and align strongholds with their efforts.
Outcome: Greg Block proposed to have a technical staff exchange of our stronghold data w/USFS data.
- Kevin Shaffer expressed interest in ensuring NASSP will work with CDFG in identification and prioritization of strongholds in California. Battle Creek mentioned as a possible Chinook stronghold. Mark indicated that the project funded under the RLF grant will ensure that strongholds identified in CA will be driven by local expertise, and CDFG is encouraged to participate in expert scoring of CA watersheds.
- WDFW will release a draft on hatchery reform for the 21st century in a news release this month.

June Meeting Minutes (6/23/09)

Attendees:

Sara LaBorde (WDFW)-Chair
 Dan Diggs (FWS)
 Nick Hetrick (FWS)
 Jeff Uebel (USFS)
 Lynn Palensky (NWPPC)
 Rob Walton (NOAA)
 Dan Free (NOAA)

Eric Volk (ADFG)
 Mike Edmondson (ID OSC)
 Thomas Stahl (ODFW)-Guest
 Kevin Shaffer (CDFG)
 Sue Knapp (OR Governor's Office)
 Phil Miller (WA Governors SRO)
 Wendy Millet (TNC)

Rob Masonis (TU)
 Mark Trenholm (WSC)
 Greg Block (WSC)
 Laurele Fulkerson (WSC)
 Jay Nicholas (NASSP)
 Trozell Weaver (WSC)

Ken Beeson (PFRCC)
 Megan Duffy (WA RCO)-Guest
 Teresa Kubo (EPA)-Guest
 Hope Menore Smith (FWS)-Guest
 Tom Weseloh (CAL Trout)-Guest
 Dan Siemann (NWF)-Guest

Item I: Updates

- Ken Beeson, *Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council* developed a report on applying the salmon stronghold concept in Canada. He announced BC's endorsement of the stronghold approach and plans to implement a pilot project in the Harrison River watershed within the next nine months.
- The Quileute Indian Nation submitted an application for recognition of the Quileute basin as a salmon stronghold. They submitted an outstanding proposal, presenting a model partnership with diverse stakeholders already in place. However, the Steering Committee needs to refine the science before endorsing additional strongholds. The Steering Committee will consider the application upon completion of the expert database review in WA. This is scheduled for fall 2009 -winter 2010.
- The NFHAP workshop in DC was scheduled for the same time as NASSP meetings, so the Steering Committee was unable to send a representative. David Anderson, who is lobbying for NASSP on behalf of WSC, attended for several hours one day on behalf of NASSP.

Item II: Stronghold Classification Strategy

- Jay reviewed discussions and recommendations from the June 2nd stronghold network workshop and presented the proposed approach for stronghold classification.
- There were a number of questions on why ESU's are not used as the organizing geographic unit. Jay responded that ESU's are used, but are applied as a filter on top of ecoregions. There are circumstances where ESUs are split by ecoregions, such as in CA. A core stronghold may be a sub-unit of an ESU.
- Criteria for strongholds may be different between northern and southern divides. Flexibility is important in Alaska because the metrics are different, especially with abundance and productivity.
- Strongholds will ultimately be determined by the conservation goals that we set, ie the answer depends on the question asked.
- After stronghold identification, the Steering Committee will have to determine the filters used in prioritizing resource allocation; climate change is likely to be on the top of the list.
- Phil Miller summarized next steps: 1) improve the database; 2) place the nine endorsed strongholds in context (of being endorsed to demonstrate and advance the stronghold concept) and tell their story in relationship to one another; and 3) to ensure scientific rigor, identify and establish the next round of strongholds by applying conservation goals approach used and Marxan.

Outcomes and Actions:

- Jay will send out a draft clarifying policy and science considerations for each of the 9 endorsed strongholds.
- Steering Committee requested that WSC staff run analyses that use ESUs as the geographical unit around which to identify and report back on these findings.
- Steering Committee agreed to use the proposed naming conventions of "core" and "contributing strongholds"
- Steering Committee agreed on the following next steps:

Next Steps - Improving the database

1. Review and update stronghold expert database and identification of strong populations. Refine database in CA & WA by winter of 2009 and OR & ID in 2010.
2. Develop compatible, but differentiated, methodology of stronghold identification with Alaska by fall 2009. Establish meeting dates with Eric Volk (ADFG). Engage BC partners.

Next Steps – Updating stronghold identification

1. Identify contribution of populations (potential strongholds) to various conservation scenarios (e.g., MARXAN. Run 20%, 30% and 50% of highest expert scores for ecoregions in lower 48 states). Consider ESU's in identifying strongholds.
2. Identify Core Strongholds across spatial area of interest, consistent with naming conventions.
3. Adopt interim core stronghold map (Steering Committee).
4. Provide data layers base on modeled impacts of climate change, habitat resilience, intrinsic potential, hatchery management, etc. These modeled "overlays" will be provided to Steering Committee as each becomes available in the future, to guide management actions and investment decisions in stronghold basins.
5. Revise stronghold partnership implementation policy periodically, base on best available scientific information, including consideration of models (noted in above).

Item III: Process for Awarding Grants

- Laurele Fulkerson led a discussion on the need for the Charter to be amended to include the process by which eligible projects may be individually ranked in priority. Steering Committee must draft language for outlining the criteria.
- General consensus that NASSP should avoid the "peanut butter approach" (spreading money around evenly) and not guarantee a certain amount per state. The best project wins; this sets the bar high to ensure the biggest impact and ecosystem return.
- NASSP is unlikely to receive significant funding in the first few years; therefore, we should focus on programmatic projects with "transformative investments" until we obtain significant funding (\$8-10m per year suggested as "significant"). Steering Committee needs to identify most important programmatic pilots.
- The group discussed some principles to consider in determining criteria for prioritization:
 1. How a project contributes to lifting strongholds
 2. Does it promote long-term viability
 3. Improving and protecting NOR
 4. Improving high abundance/productivity
 5. Greatest ecosystem return and function
 6. Maintain ecosystem function
 7. Enhance local regional efforts
 8. Meets program goals
- The Steering Committee raised several questions to consider, which could not be fully discussed in the time allowed:
 - How will the Board (Steering Committee) prioritize projects? What parameters will be considered in establishing the criteria and what would the criteria look like at the outset?
 - Important to keep the grant application unique-what are the projects' strengths, "protecting" or "enhancing"?
 - How are these parameters different from other PCSRF projects? Limiting factors under ESA and limiting factors for a stronghold are not going to look the same.
 - Does the project promote long-term viability, and how does it contribute to lifting strongholds?

Outcomes:

- Steering Committee established a subcommittee to determine parameters for setting prioritization criteria.
 - Lynn Palensky, Northwest Power & Conservation Council
 - Dave Heller, U.S. Forest Service (nominated by Jeff Ubel)
 - Phil Miller, Washington Salmon Recovery Office
 - Kevin Shaffer, California Dept. of Fish & Game
 - Mark Trenholm, Wild Salmon Center
 - Lauri Aunan, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

Next Steps - Developing grants process language for Charter

1. Establish meeting dates for subcommittee on grants process & consider Charter language for grants prioritization process
2. Present progress at next Steering Committee call (8/11/09).

August Call Minutes (8/11/09)

Attendees:

Sara LaBorde (WDFW)-Chair	Kevin Shaffer (CDFG)	Rob Masonis (TU)	Laurele Fulkerson (WSC)
Lynn Palensky (NWPCC)	Eric Volk(ADFG)	Wendy Millet (TNC)	Jay Nicholas (NASSP)
Dan Diggs (FWS)	Sue Knapp (OR Governor's Office)	Ken Beeson (PFRCC)	Trozell Weaver (WSC)
Jeff Uebel (USFS)	Phil Miller (WA Governors SRO)	Mark Trenholm (WSC)	

Item 1: Information. Updating Population Scores. Jay Nicholas

- Increase the breadth and depth of experts with the intent on identifying Core Strongholds using updated population ratings from California and Washington.
- California meetings will be held starting in the first week in September.
- The status and methodology of planning for rating Alaska population is still being explored. Eric expressed caution about recognizing certain areas over others and wondered if Alaska should be an eco-regional stronghold. Phil asked if potential risks or threats could be used to rate need for action. Eric agreed and noted the threat posed by fish hatcheries. The discussion on Alaska will need to be continued.
- Is Idaho's rating status comparable with Oregon's? Idaho is interested in updating their database. Oregon may wish to revisit their own data in the future.
- Status of planning for updates in B.C.: They are moving fast to adopt the stronghold concept by using the existing criteria for OR, WA, and ID to assess B.C. The Alaska approach may be useful.
- The B.C. strongholds are relatively undeveloped and the steering committee needs to think about how to apply the current assessment criteria more effectively. Mark stated that consistency is important, but we must remember that there are differences in these populations.

Item 2: Action. Consider Charter Language for Grants Prioritization, Mark Trenholm

- Steering Committee reviewed draft amendments to the Charter. Edits were made to create a more positive tone. Suggestions were made to lower the number of bullets and combine the amendments into five groups to help improve clarity.
- **Outcome:** Laurele and Mark will revise the document and circulate for critique.

Item 3: Information. Legislative Update, Laurele Fulkerson

- Senate hearing: the Senate is still waiting on a hearing date. The target date is the end of September through October.
- A sub-committee in the House is still reviewing the bill.
- Additional House Co-sponsors: we started with eight Co-sponsors, now we have 33 Co-sponsors. We still need Idaho's support.
- Greg Block, Laurele, and Sara will be going to D.C. to have a meeting with Monica Madino. The focus will be to seek funding for strongholds. A goal is to receive funding from the President's budget. The funding is not expected to come in until early 2011.

Item 4: Information. NASSP Product Review, Jay Nicholas

- The document, "Stronghold Investment Partnerships: *Science & Policy Considerations Guiding Steering Committee Basin Endorsement*" was distributed to the Steering Committee. A concern was raised about the question in the document of whether the nine strongholds identified represented the best of the best. "No" is clearly an insufficient answer. All agreed that the issue will be re-phrased.
A suggestion was given about broadening the contents to show what areas are "good" areas.
- Kevin suggested that we notify organizations that this evaluation has been done to gain other candidates for strongholds outside of the nine. Possibly produce a 1-2 page document to show where the money should go. Sara expressed that breaking this into lots of little chunks will not make the impact needed. The large funding is still probably four years out. With the small money we have what one basin would we fund now?
- Kevin asked for more ecological context for the nine existing Investment Partnership basins.
- Jay noted that any additional information like Kevin requested would need to be provided by SC members or their staff.
- Jay noted that the Steering Committee has not yet established a comprehensive "standing" among current or new SIP basins.
- Action 1: Jay will revise page one of the SIP document and re-circulate it for critique.

- Action 2: SC members are responsible for providing additional ecological context to basin descriptions.
- Action 3: The Steering Committee needs to develop a draft document describing potential cross-state, cross-basin programmatic action.

Item 5: Open Discussion. Sara LaBorde, Chair

- The next conference call is scheduled for Tuesday, September 8th at 10am
- The next SC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 21st. Location Portland. The October meeting could be strictly for steering Committee members or could be for the full NASSP partner distribution list. Potential agenda topics for the October meeting include:
 - Charter language
 - Work on document describing programmatic actions that would benefit across states and Strongholds
 - Update on results of the Expert Rating Database work in CA
 - Review of revised SIP document
 - Draft proposal to engage Climate change in Stronghold basins
 - Budget for 2010 (note: this would be a discussion limited to steering committee members)
- Action 1: Decide whether October meeting will be limited to Steering Committee or include full Partnership.
- Action 2: Create draft agenda for October meeting for review at September conference call.
- Action 3: Draft agenda for September conference call.

September Call Minutes (9/8/09)

Attendees:

Lynn Palensky (NWPCC)	John DeLapp (FWS)-Guest	Phil Miller (WA Governors SRO)	Laurele Fulkerson (WSC)
Dan Diggs (FWS)	Kevin Shaffer (CDFG)	Alan Moore(TU)	Greg Block (WSC)
Dave Heller(USFS)	Sue Aspelund(ADFG)	Ken Beeson (PFRCC)	Trozell Weaver (WSC)
Mark Bagdovitz (FWS)	Sue Knapp (OR Governor's Office)	Jay Nicholas (NASSP)	

Item 1: Information. Region Updates

California - Kevin Shaffer & Jay Nicholas

- Stronghold Partnership Expert Rating Database meetings were held in Arcata, Davis & San Luis Obispo (8/31-9/3). The meetings were well attended and productive, with over 30 participants from NOAA, USFS, USFWS, BLM, CDFG, Yurok Tribe, TU, Cal Trout, TNC, and independent consultants.
- The following Steering Committee members attended: Wendy Millet (TNC), Kevin Shaffer (CDFG), and Nick Hetrick (USFWS).
- Participants emphasized that ecoregional or ESU/DPS delineation decisions would be crucial to achieving an accurate product (identification of core strongholds).
- Participants raised three issues: 1) Missing cohorts were a strike against viability; 2) Production of smolts by resident O. mykiss was a positive on the life history diversity (more so than on the viability side of the population score); 3) How do you have a relative stronghold in a particular eco-region with so few fish? (Kevin noted that the key will be defining the floor)
- Participants discussed assigning the same viability score to southern and northern CA populations, which have drastically different numbers.
- Dave asked about consistency in the meetings. Jay noted that there was but that there was no scoring during these meetings, mostly discussions and clarifications in the scoring criteria and process.
- The goal is to make the scores public by November and develop a working document by January. Jay noted the possibility of synchronizing all 3 database efforts (AK, WA, and CA) earlier in the year.

Outcome 1: Trozell will forward the follow up letter for meeting participants to the Steering Committee.

Alaska - Greg Block

- The primary outcomes of WSC's call with FWS Region 7 were: 1) to update the region on the results of the expert workshop on stronghold identification and network methodology 2) to suggest that FWS work with Eric Volk, Gordie Reeves, and other NASSP AK Partners to determine AK related science issues 3) agreement on the need for coordination with NFHAP to avoid duplication of efforts.
- Next steps: 1) Gordie Reeves will meet with FWS on 9/16 to further discuss the stronghold classification framework and methodology; 2) Explore meeting possibilities in the next couple of months with NASSP partners in Alaska to further discuss application of the classification framework and methodology in Alaska (John DeLapp recommends attending the Matsu meeting on 11/18-19 or making separate trip up to AK this fall).

Item 2: Information. D.C. Update, Laurele Fulkerson

- Laurele and Greg had productive meetings in D.C. on August 18th-21st. The primary purposes of the trip were to: 1) garner support for our FY11 budget requests for the implementation of NASSP; and 2) seek additional co-sponsors for the salmon stronghold bill (H.R. 2055).
- Key outcomes: 1) Made progress in obtaining agency and administration support for inclusion of funding for the implementation of NASSP in FY11 budgets; 2) Acknowledgement from high level officials in FWS, NOAA, Interior, and Commerce of the need for stronghold approach as a necessary preventative measure to ensure long term viability of wild salmon populations; and 3) Obtained helpful input from OMB on the appropriate budget lines to include funding.
- On the legislative front, we are still waiting on a hearing date for the Senate bill. We currently have 35 co-sponsors on the House bill, including Chairwoman Bordallo (Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans & Wildlife). Congress returns this week from recess; focus this month will be on obtaining additional supporters in the House subcommittee.

Item 3: Action. Consider Revised Charter Language for Grant Prioritization, *Laurele Fulkerson*

- Overall, the proposed grants process language looks good. A few suggestions were provided to shorten/synthesize the language.

Outcome 2: Laurele will revise the language for Steering Committee approval during the upcoming October meeting.

Item 4: Action. October Agenda, *Jay Nicholas*

- October meeting will be for the Steering Committee only; the next full partnership meeting will be held in February 2010.
- The current agenda was written under the premise that we will have high level FWS and NOAA staff attending the meeting. We will determine the likelihood of their attendance and alter the agenda accordingly.
- Mark will provide a 2009 budget synopsis that reflects carry-over and projections in 2010, so the SC can better determine timing and needs.
- Phil said that the WA Governor's RCO may be able to provide some funding in 2010.

Outcome 3: Revise October agenda and resend to the Steering Committee.

Save the Date

- The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 21st in Portland. Location TBA.
- The next conference call is scheduled for Tuesday, December 8th at 10am.

October Call Minutes (10/21/09)

Attendees:

Sara LaBorde (WDFW)-Chair	Kevin Shaffer (CDFG)	Mike Edmondson (ID OSC)	Jay Nicholas (NASSP)
Lynn Palensky (NWPCC)	Sue Aspelund (ADFG)	Wendy Millet (TNC)	Mark Trenholm(WSC)
Mark Bagdovitz (FWS)	Tom Stahl (ODFW)	Jeannette Howard (TNC)-Guest	Laurele Fulkerson (WSC)
Dave Heller(USFS)	Sue Knapp (OR Governor's Office)	Rob Masonis (TU)	Trozell Weaver (WSC)
Christopher Estes (ADFG)-Guest	Phil Miller (WA Governors SRO)	Ken Beeson (PFRCC)	

Item 1: Administrative Updates, Sara LaBorde

- Steering Committee approved September call minutes.
- Post call: Meeting & conference call dates for 2010 conflict with others schedules and therefore the SC will explore new dates.

Item 2: NFHAP & Alaska Trip Updates, Mark Trenholm and Jay Nicholas

- Mark gave a brief update on his trip to Alaska with Jay and Laurele. In Juneau Mark and Laurele met with TU, NOAA, United Fisherman of Alaska, and Rivers Without Borders. In Anchorage Jay met with TNC and USFWS. (Mark and Laurele were unable to present to these groups because of illness.) In the meeting with FWS, there was representation from TNC, ADFG, and NFHAP-Matsu & Kenai. The intent of the trip was to: 1) update partners on the Stronghold Partnership and Pacific Salmon Stronghold Conservation Act, 2) explore with partners how the Stronghold Partnership could best work in Alaska and complement existing conservation efforts, and 3) explore approaches to stronghold identification.
- Overall, partners voiced support for the stronghold partnership but questions arose within the USFWS meeting regarding how strongholds would be identified, what values-added the stronghold partnership could provide, how it would complement existing programs, it's role in climate change, and others. Jay explained that local leadership in NASSP is critical to the success of the stronghold partnership, and that partners in AK would play a vital role in shaping how the stronghold partnership works here. We look forward to discussing these and other questions when we convene a meeting of the AK partners in the spring.
- Christopher Estes gave an update on NFHAP and the related legislation. NFHAP has secured a Senate hearing for NFHAP bill (11/2). Currently, there are 4 Fish Habitat Partnerships (FHPs) that benefit AK, including a national Reservoir Fish Habitat Partnership. The Board also received a letter of intent from Pacific Marine & Estuarine Partnership of becoming an FHP (will be posted on web). There are currently 14 recognized FHP's with CA Fish Passage Forum & Kenai Fish Habitat Partnership pending.

Next Steps:

- Laurele will follow up with NFHAP on legislative efforts.
- Christopher requested consideration of adding status update of stronghold efforts to seek formal NFHAP FHP status.
- WSC will forward Sue a copy of Jay's trip report.

Item 3: Consideration and Review of SIP document, Jay Nicholas

- Jay summarized the relationship of Stronghold Investment Partnerships (SIPs) to identified strongholds saying that "core strongholds" are being identified based on the population assessments completed and underway across the ecoregions. Over time, a subset of these core strongholds will receive (as funds are available) SIPs based on project opportunities and in-basin support for the stronghold partnership. (ie, while core stronghold status will be conferred based on the science, investments in these places will depend on additional factors and reflect the voluntary nature of the stronghold partnership.)
- A question arose concerning how SIPs related to the existing nine strongholds. Jay explained that these nine strongholds were endorsed to demonstrate support for the stronghold concept and ensure that the methodology being used for stronghold identification was appropriate. Investments have been made in some of these basins (as funds have been available) and all nine will continue to be eligible for SIPs.
- Questions arose whether a quota been established for strongholds? The group agreed that there should not be a cap, but we should be strategic. Question arose whether basin liaisons are confused by their "endorsement" as a stronghold. What do these basins get from this designation? Need to continue to communicate where we're at w/our Partners and basin liaisons.

- Members of the SC stressed that we need to do more work on identifying, cross-boundary programmatic initiatives. Climate change is an example but what are the others? In 2008, we asked basin liaisons what their primary needs were that weren't getting addressed. Checkerboard ownership (Wenatchee), monitoring fish populations (Smith). Review minutes to make sure we have captured basin's "programmatic" needs.
- There was discussion about the SIP acronym and whether another name should be given to this program because the State of Oregon uses an SIP (Strategic Investment Partnership) as well.

Next Steps:

- Jay (and the rest of the SC) will communicate with basin liaisons to make sure they know status of NASSP and what their endorsement means.
- Recommend whether we need a new term to recognize the nine "endorsed basins" instead of SIP. Propose these on next call.
- Agenda item for next call: What are the conservation needs? Guided by existing documents; Prioritize strategies and conservation actions.

Item 4: Ratification of Charter Language, *Mark Trenholm*

- SC reviewed the final language on a charter amendment required to explain how the Stronghold Partnership would prioritize projects for funding. This language has been developed over the course of three SC meetings and several committee meetings.
- Proposed Charter language was reviewed and accepted with minor edits. Steering Committee reached consensus and formally ratified the Charter.

Next Steps:

- Trozell will insert new language into Charter and present updated Charter for the December call.

Item 5: Programmatic Initiatives Document, *Sara LaBorde*

- Sara discussed the need to clarify cross-cutting multi-basin "programmatic" issues that the Partnership will engage in and referred to a draft document that staff developed.
- Received many comments and feedback from Committee members on the draft, including:
 - Add toxics and water quality in limiting factors
 - Issue of consultation-expedited process for private land requirements and regulatory review
 - Item 7 & 8 are too broad. Degraded ecosystem processes (i.e. wetlands & estuaries)
 - Under programmatic remediation "add restore and maintain" to item 2
 - Items 4- 6: Programmatic remediation-a synchronic approach or multiple factors-all H approach to fish management based on sound science
- SC agreed more discussion is needed on this and directed staff to update the document for the next SC call based on feedback provided.

Next Steps:

- The SC will send comments/edits to Trozell or Jay.
- Staff will refine the document and present at next meeting.

Item 6: Climate Change Proposal, *Sara Laborde*

- Sara presented a proposal to NOAA that she had worked on with SOS re: climate change that has relevance to strongholds.
- The proposal takes three steps: 1) Gather and synthesize emerging climate/salmon information from leading researchers, promote their collaboration and have them determine through categories such as vulnerability, population growth, etc. which populations will be most/least resilient to climate change; 2) Expedite delivery of this information to regional and local resource managers; and 3) Facilitate dialogues with resource managers to adapt all H, protection and mitigation strategies in response to climate change.

- Steering Committee agrees to have NASSP take on this effort. NASSP is perfect for convening these dialogues and facilitating this project. Some commented that we should synthesize and sharpen proposals focus to salmon strongholds.

Next Steps:

- Draft has been disseminated to climate experts for review; hope to get draft to NOAA before Thanksgiving.
- Sara will send new draft to Lynn Palensky, who will run the proposal by key council members.

Item 7: California & Washington Population Scoring Updates, Jay Nicholas & Devona Ensmenger

- Sara said CA and WA population's assessments were moving forward on schedule and invited updates from Jay and Devona.
- Have received all the scores for CA and are beginning the analysis.
- Have solicited 40 experts to rate 133 populations along the coast of Washington (117 associated with the Seasonal Upwelling Cline Ecoregion; 16 associated with the Puget Sound-Georgia Basin Ecoregion).
- Ratings due Nov 13th. Presentations Nov 19th-20th. Will be inviting all fisheries managers that contributed plus city, county officials, state, federal, NGP partners, etc.

Item 8: 2010 Work Plan for WSC NASSP, Mark Trenholm

- Mark presented WSC's draft work plan for NASSP (did not include WSC's role in PSSCA legislation).
- Score populations in OR, western WA, and BC.
- Work with partners in AK to develop stronghold concept to complement existing efforts and determine appropriate methodology for stronghold identification.
- Partner with Trout Unlimited and Cal Trout in the development of threat assessments and prevention strategies for CA strongholds.
- Utilize SOS and other analyses of vulnerability of salmon populations in North America to conduct general evaluation of vulnerability in stronghold basins. Present findings to Steering Committee.
- Collaborate with partners in stronghold basins to develop model project(s) integrating hatchery improvements, habitat enhancement, and harvest reform.
- Coordinate Steering Committee meetings and activities, and provide leadership to implementation of Stronghold Partnership Strategic Plan.

December Call Minutes (12/8/09)

Attendees:

Sara LaBorde (WDFW)-Chair	Mark Bagdovitz (FWS)	Bruce McIntosh(ODFW)	Ken Beeson (PFRCC)
Lynn Palensky (NWPCC)	Mary Lou Soscia (EPA)	Sue Knapp (OR Governor's Office)	Jay Nicholas (NASSP)
Scott Peets (USFS)	Kevin Shaffer (CDFG)	Wendy Millet (TNC)	Mark Trenholm(WSC)
Rob Walton (NOAA)	Eric Volk (ADFG)	Rob Masonis (TU)	Trozell Weaver (WSC)

Item 1: Administrative Updates, Sara LaBorde

- Steering Committee approved October call minutes and 2010 Meeting & Conference Call dates.
- Presented updated Charter that included the addition of Article 5-Funding Priorities and the omission of Annex II (2007-2009 Financing). Decided to keep the 2007 signatories instead of resigning the ratified Charter of 2009.

Item 2: Climate Change Proposal Update, Sara LaBorde

- Sara said that USFS's State Wildlife Implementation Grant (SWIG) could fill in the holes of the Moore Foundation's vulnerability assessment of salmon resiliency to climate change. Although, SWIG is not bull trout or salmon-centric, our Proposal would fit under aquatic ecosystems Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCC) framework. Will hope to find other funding sources through NOAA (~60k) and FWS (~50k).
- The Moore Foundation has four work groups of diverse scientist that are working on this vulnerability assessment, which include Mary Ruckelshaus, Tim Beechie, Nate Mantua, and Rich Lincoln.
- The application for SWIG is due the first week of January and requires letters of support. Kevin Shaffer will look into seeing if CDFG might support this external proposal.
- Rob Walton would like to coordinate with Sara to see if this information aligns with NOAA's 5 year status review.

Item 3: Washington Coast Population Scoring Updates, Jay Nicholas

- WSC conducted initial scoring by experts in 2007 and updated it in 2009. The intent of this effort is to obtain expert scores from more individuals and to obtain scores for populations that were not previously scored.
- Jay said they solicited 20 experts to score Washington coast salmon populations and nine submitted their scores. These ratings were presented in Montesano, WA on 11/19 to about 30 attendees (Forks meeting was canceled due to weather).
- Participants raised issues about mapping anomalies, SASI population delineations, and scoring hatchery and wild fish together. These prompted good discussions and any mistakes identified have been remedied. We hope to produce preliminary maps as the remaining experts provide population scores.
- It was noted that expert raters benefit from a face-to-face conversation about the process and an opportunity to work-through several population scoring trial situations as a group. Providing written materials to experts prior to meetings has proven to be an ineffective means of communicating with individuals who have heavy work-loads and are already over-committed. During the CA workshops, it helped to explain the scoring process to raters who were the most familiar with these rivers. We are essentially trying to develop a formalized process of asking experts "how are the fish doing?" We need to consider a better description or quantitative profile for the analysis methodology.

Item 4: 2010 NASSP Work Plan, Mark Trenholm

- Presented the 2010 Work Plan and how it fits within NASSP's Strategic Plan. There are four main activities planned for this year: 1) Populations scoring, 2) Needs assessment, 3) In-basin projects, and 4) Funding (development).
- Members approved the Work Plan. However, some members did not receive the plan prior the call and will send comments post-call.

Follow up: Sara will send Jay and Mark the six watersheds that are going through the all H process.

Item 5: National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP): Partnership Potential, Sara LaBorde

- Recognition is included in the Work Plan, to be revisited in August. Mark Bagdovitz with USFWS updated the committee on the NFHAP schedule, and indicated a decision in August would leave little time to prepare an application. The committee moved the date of this activity up in the workplan to July.

Item 6: SIPs and “Endorsed Basins”, Jay Nicholas

- Jay stated that the term “Stronghold Investment Partnerships” indicates a relationship in which NASSP financially supports partner(s) in stronghold basins who implement conservation projects. He added that in the past this topic has raised questions about funding for the nine endorsed basins (specifically, since NASSP is now conferring stronghold status to basins, would previously endorsed basins still be eligible for funding through an SIP?). Jay reminded the Steering Committee of a previous decision it had made that the nine should remain eligible since all will be either “core” or “contributing” strongholds once the population assessments and ecoregional analyses are completed.
- Jay recommended keeping the term “Stronghold Investment Partnership (SIP)” to reflect strongholds that receive funding through NASSP. Steering members agreed.

Item 7: Update on Programmatic Initiatives Document, Mark Trenholm

- We have not updated the programmatic initiatives document and will revisit this on the February call.
- Sue noted that Programmatic (funding priorities under the Charter) includes collaborative improvement in efficiencies by government and does not refer to remediation of limiting factors. If we lump programmatic initiatives-governance issues, we define them too broadly. Several committee members voiced a range of opinions on what defined “programmatic issues” and resolved to discuss it further once the updated document is produced.
- Steering Committee members agreed that it would be helpful to have actual examples of these initiatives.

Follow up: Will revisit this document and send out to members for input prior to next call. Rob and Sue will send additional examples of programmatic initiatives.