Training and Education for the CBFWA

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

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Executive Summary

The Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority (CBFWA) is an agency at a turning point. Although faced with a number of internal and external barriers, including declining influence, stagnation, decision gridlock and a drastically changing policy dynamic within the basin, the CBFWA has the potential to remold itself into a highly effective and valuable player in the Columbia Basin.

The CBFWA has a number of bridges to this future, including a core group of leaders who are ready to change the agency and enough institutional flexibility to redefine its mission and vision of self.

This document discusses both the bridges and barriers faced by the CBFWA, and then outlines a strategy for training and education that will help the agency remold itself, as well as laying out several possibilities for funding of activities that the revisioned agency might undertake.

Summary Diagnosis of CBFWA Strategic Position[1]

Influence waning. The Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority's (CBFWA) effectiveness in influencing policy within the basin has seriously eroded over the years. The caliber of leadership among members has declined; agencies now send second and third tier personnel to meetings and high levels of personnel turnover among member representatives are reported. CBFWA is viewed by many as a group of "self-serving" fish and wildlife agencies whose main function each year is to argue over how Bonnieville Power Authority (BPA) money should be parsed among them.

Stagnation. CBFWA is rebuked for its narrow "field biology" and "hatchery" mentality. The Authority is also criticized for its lack of timely, incisive and professional guidance to policy makers. Members characterize CBFWA's current consensus decision-making model as "torturous" and "too drawn-out." The Authority's decision process engenders ways of "wandering in the weeds" that delay decision-making and dissipates member energy, commitment and enthusiasm. CBFWA's policy deliberations trigger more heat than light – providing the "lowest common denominator." in direction, guidance and advice.

Decision gridlock. CBFWA's decline in influence has been exacerbated by regional policy failure. Initially, considerable decision-making accrued to the policy level within the basin but centralized decision-making has become more constrained as salmon stocks have steadily declined and more federal regulatory procedures (e.g., biological opinions) have taken precedent. As a result of regional-level decision gridlock, more emphasis is being placed on sub-regional planning and action (i.e. establishment of Sustainable Northwest and sub-basin planning).

Policymaking distortions. In fairness to CBFWA, over the past 20 years, policymaking has made a fine art of distorting and berating science. Decision makers who do not like the policy implications of a scientific study decry it as bad or junk science. Rationality tends to drain from the system, replaced by raw politics based in part on demonizing of science, scientists and their agencies. In response, scientists sometimes depart from strict science and start dabbling in policymaking. Government agencies therefore spend a lot of time and effort trying to keep science advice (in the strict sense) separate from policy-making. A commonly agreed upon set of "rules of engagement" are nonexistent.

Grassroots organizing. Due in part to regional policy failure, there has been rapid growth of grassroots and national organizations and publicity campaigns fighting to save a species or a resource, a tract of land, or to change a specific practice. A 'win-the-battle' mentality has now become institutionalized, and a 'win-lose' extremist mentality pervades public policy and interest group campaigns. Agricultural and conservation communities are stuck in an ideological and rhetorical stalemate

[1] Based on diagnostic report prepared for CBFWA under separate cover.

Watershed organizing. In addition, watershed partnerships attempting to develop more holistic solutions at local levels have sprung up over past 15 years and are gaining more momentum and funding support especially in Washington and Oregon. These groups are characteristically organized around local problems (e.g., loss of base flow, stream bank erosion, depletion of fish stocks), include a cross-section of local constituencies and are led by citizens and grassroots organizers with little or no formal training in resource management. Many of these groups organized initially because of unresponsiveness by state and federal agencies to local concerns resulting from lack of cooperation, red tape, or bureaucratic inertia

In summary. While the policy dynamics within the basin have changed dramatically in the past 20 years, CBFWA by comparison has stagnated, and failed to face up to the new strategic realities that are shaping its fate. The Authority's attempts at reform has been constrained by: (a) policy makers who do not want science taking the initiative when the implications are threatening; and (b) reliance on a primary source of funding who has vested interest in maintaining the status quo. Still, CBFWA's vision of itself and its future has been self-imposed; the potential for recasting its functions, mission, and image in the basin is measureless.

Barriers and Bridges to The Authority's Future

Barriers – CBFWA's efforts to reform are constrained by:

Internal

- A dysfunctional decision process that needs serious revision; a decision process that fails to effectively reconcile differences among its members.
- A mission that does not face up to the new strategic realities of the basin and what does and will drive change in the foreseeable future.
- The lack of an image and vision that expresses concern for the overall health of the biophysical system and the spectrum of constituencies that reside in the basin.
- Turnover in membership representation that thwarts effectiveness of members meetings and overall organizational effectiveness.
- The preemptive nature of regulatory actions that are convenient reasons to frustrate greater cooperation, coordination and collaboration among CBFWA members.

External

- Erosion of nation-wide public trust and credibility in science-based agencies, which has suffered over the years, as has government in general in the eyes of the public.
- Its dependence on Bonnieville Power Authority for funding.
- The dominance of salmon recovery that overshadows other fish and wildlife purposes in the basin.
- A lack of institutional relationship and influence on Columbia Basin "action" agencies (i.e., Corps of Engineers, US Forest Service, US Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management).
- Efforts by state governors and legislatures to control policy by limiting discretion and voice of science-based agencies.

Bridges to the future – CBFWA's strategic advantages include:

Internal

- The core of leadership is prepared to reform CBFWA.
- CBFWA is *the* major science forum for the 13 tribes in the basin.
- A dedicated CBFWA staff is eager to work with members and others to improve overall performance of the Authority.
- The Authority's structure as a non-profit organization provides a measure of flexibility under the aegis of performing educational functions to:
    - Attract private foundation and single donor funding sources;
    - Develop proposals for federal level funding through USDA, DOI, NSF, EPA, etc.;

  - Increase potential to leverage existing funds with new money;
  - Partner with other organizations;
  - Act as a re-granting agency; and
  - Charge fees for services rendered.
- Institutional flexibility to redefine mission and potentially add associate members in response to the changing needs of the basin.

External

- The power of best scientific knowledge to influence policy and public perception.
- The power to convene others to address pressing scientific issues.
- Its function as regional forum and clearinghouse where:
  - Synthesis of best 4-H science (habitat, hydropower, harvest and hatcheries) can be vetted;
  - Gaps in scientific understanding identified, and prioritized; and
  - Pertinent information can be continually undated and made available to everyone.
- The potential for CBFWA to speak basin-wide with unified voice for best science and management.
- It has the principal voice for increased accountability (in project design, management, tracking and reporting) and measures of performance in managing fish and wildlife projects.
- Its capacity to function as the major source of science-based feedback to policy and public though monitoring and evaluation at local to regional scales.
- Assessing inter-agency coordination within the basin to determine what is working, not working and to facilitate what needs improving.
- Working with others including communities, and sub-regional, grassroots, and watershed entities to:
  - Develop more regional, strategic and ecosystems perspective;
  - Provide outreach and technical assistance to others; and
  - Provide a clearinghouse for technical and scientific information in a user-friendly manner.
- The power to expand CBFWA networking capability with NGOs, local governments, private landowners, and watershed councils.

Training and Education Recommendations For CBFWA

1. Authority Level

1.1. Team Building for CBFWA Members

1.1.1. Skills for managing effective groups – e.g., dealing with conflict, managing constructive debates, moving discussion through to conclusion.

1.1.2. Successfully working through phases of team development – forming, storming, norming, and performing.

1.1.3. Develop guidelines for communicating and dealing with differences.

1.1.4. Team learning-based approaches to monitoring and evaluating team and organizational effectiveness.

1.2. Staff Training for managing groups

1.2.1. Process facilitation

1.2.2. Team building

1.2.3. Collaboration

1.2.4. Dispute resolution

1.2.5. Group dynamics

1.3. New Member Representative Orientation

1.3.1. Develop orientation manual for new member representatives.

1.3.2. Require new member representatives to take orientation course before participating in member meetings.

1.4. Mission, Vision and Shared Values

1.4.1. Avoid self-limiting thinking.

1.4.2. Take long-term, strategic view based on new realities.

1.4.3. Consider fuller range of potential Authority functions including:

- Monitoring, assessment and evaluation,
- Science synthesis,
- Outreach and education,
- Interagency coordination,
- Fund raising and re-granting, and
- Partnering.

2. Authority – BPA – NWPPC Level

2.1. Developing rules of engagement for integrating sound science into policy forums

2.1.1. Engage others in clarifying boundaries between what is science and what is policy.

2.1.2. Engage others in understanding the separate and often conflicting cultures of science and policy.

2.1.3. Determine the best ways can science most effectively serve citizens and society, knowing that science is not a democratic process and has time-tested methods of examination.

2.1.4. Learn what changes in policy process and preparation of science for policy can be made to improve communication and understanding.

2.1.5. Learn how and where to create "safe space" for dialogue between policy and science.
2.1.6. Explore ways to make science and policy dialogue more preventative than crisis driven.

2.2. Improve project accountability

2.2.1. Project administration skills – including design, estimates of benefits to natural systems, sequencing and scheduling, tracking, and reporting.
2.2.2. Establish basin-wide project tracking system – identify what, where, when, how and how much of BPA/Authority funded projects.

2.3. **Research Performance**

2.3.1. Identify state of science in 4-Hs and major gaps in understanding hydrologic, physical and ecological dynamics of the Columbia Basin.
2.3.2. Establish research priorities based framework of key ecological parameters, processes, and relationships involving 4-Hs.
2.3.3. Develop project-specific and system-wide performance measures and how best to integrate individual projects into overall purposes of recovery, protection and preservation.
2.3.4. Targets for evaluating and monitoring overall progress toward goals and objectives.
2.3.5. Establish principles and standards for implementing adaptive management in interdisciplinary and collaborative settings.
2.3.6. Establish overall goals for recovery, preservation and protection of Columbia Basin ecosystems through habitat, hatcheries, hydropower and harvest beyond those goals stated in the BIOP.

2.4. Working with Differences

2.4.1. Disagreement, conflict, and political extremes are reality in managing fish and wildlife.
2.4.2. Rules and principles for how to deal effectively with differences are a source of learning and healing within the basin.
2.4.3. Methods for working though differences that focus on "raising all boats," "leaving no one behind," mitigating for anticipated economic or social consequences have proven effective in achieving key ecological objectives.

3. Columbia Basin Level and Beyond

3.1. Overall science-based inter-agency coordination

3.1.1. Assurances that best available scientific and technical methods and information are being used in the projects.
3.1.2. Provisions for cooperating with independent scientific review, consideration of advice.
3.1.3. Assurance that interdisciplinary and inter-agency approaches to scientific investigations are being used.
3.1.4. Development of system wide monitoring plan, conducting assessment activities that provide timely and pertinent information to action agencies such as Corps of Engineers, US Forest Service, Bureau of

Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management and Bonneville Power Administration.

3.2. Outreach and Education

3.2.1. Explore ways (e.g., incentive programs and technical assistance) to work effectively and cooperatively with private farmers and ranchers.

3.2.2. Establish outreach to rural communities engaged in developing basin-related plans and projects.

3.2.3. Explore willingness of others to share technically, financially, and socially, and networking with others to expand and multiply ground-tested experimentation.

- The need for an organization to coordinate networking among the swarm of organizations working on basin-related issues is staggering.
- The potential for gleaning the collective learnings and successes of others has considerable education value.
- Mobilizing grassroots and watershed support for CBFWA functions is a very potent source of influence on policy.
- Coordination of networking within thebasin would provide a powerful way of communicating indigenous cultures and ways to others.

3.3. Develop International Center of Excellence for Scientific Training in Complex Adaptive Systems

3.3.1. Tools for Integrating Science into Collaborative decision processes include:

- Conceptual modeling
- Decision analysis
- Scenario development and analysis
- Simulation modeling

3.3.2. Integrative Science:

3.3.2.1. Methods for inductive science – ways of putting the pieces of the puzzle together.

3.3.2.2. Interdisciplinary research – working effectively in teams with multiple modes and multiple lines of evidence.

3.3.2.3. Ways of developing shared scientific understanding and identifying knowledge gaps.

3.3.2.4. Action Research – CRASP

- Critical collaborative enquiry by
- Reflective practitioners, who are
- Accountable in making the results of their enquiry public,
- Self-evaluative of their practice, and engaged in
- Participative problem solving and continuing professional development.

3.3.3. Managing Uncertainty in policy settings

3.3.3.1. Understanding the types of uncertainty and learning how to present them to policy makers.

3.3.3.2. Clarifying hypotheses and assumptions embedded in policy and management.
3.3.3.3. Alternatives for informing policy of divergence in scientific results.
3.3.3.4. Working through completing explanations.
3.3.3.5. Multiple hypotheses (designing experiments, testing alternative hypotheses).
3.3.3.6. Working with and incorporating local knowledge and field observation into scientific understanding.

3.3.4. Managing Complexity

3.3.4.1. Multiple levels of readiness – engaging science and society at different scales that make social and ecological sense, and being prepared to inject best science as opportunities for change emerge.
3.3.4.2. Designing processes that lead people through the inevitable "creative destruction" that comes when conventional science and policy approaches fail.

Zooming In

USDA – Re-granting Authority The 2002 Farm Bill has several provisions (Conservation Partners, Conservation Security Act, EQIP Innovation program) that provide increased payments to farmers for conservation – money for technical assistance, habitat projects, easements, water quality improvement. Currently, the Senate is experimenting with the Community Forest Restoration Act with establishing re-granting capacity to distribute $5M/year for community-based projects in vicinity of Albuquerque, NM. CBFWA could qualify as re-granting authority under the Farm Bill and make millions of dollars each year available to communities and private landowners.

Foundation Fundraising Based on analysis of over 80 foundations the following 17 foundations provide money for conservation, fish and wildlife habitat, water resource management. CBFWA should explore the potential for partnering with Foundations and other non-profit organizations.

• National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	• The Bullitt Foundation
• Curtis and Edith Munson Foundation	• Compton Foundation
• The Moore Foundation	• Flintridge Foundation
• The Ford Foundation	• General Services Foundation
• Pew Charitable Trust	• Harder Foundation
• Rockefeller Brothers Fund	• Packard Foundation
• Surdna Foundation	• Hewlett Foundation
• The Kendell Foundation	• Meyer Memorial Trust

Foundation fundraising is very, very competitive. The Authority would have to demonstrate willingness to transform its mission to be responsive to community and private land stewardship in order to be competitive.

Education and Outreach – A number of federal agencies (EPA, USDA, DOI) provide money for environmental education pertaining to fish and wildlife. The National Science Foundation also provides money for science-based education for schools, universities and the general public. These RFPs are competitive, but the Authority has the potential to compete successfully as a non-profit in partnership with federal and state agencies.

Discussion

Authority Level

- Reflect on Thomas Jefferson's admonition—"*if you think the people not enlightened enough to use their powers wisely, the solution is not to remove or restrict those powers, but to enlighten the people*" and its relevance to the role of the Authority in serving Columbia Basin citizens, community and policy forums.

- Think about reframing fish and wildlife concerns of saving a species or a resource, a tract of land, or changing a specific practice into more of a working landscape approach that broadens fish and wildlife concerns (e.g., over 600 wildlife and 305 freshwater species of fish – focus on Sturgeon, Burbot, Bull Trout, and Lamprey) into a more holistic strategy that encompasses changing land and water use patterns in the basin.

- Be concerned about the Authority's dysfunctional "consensus" decision-making process and turning it into strength (a center of excellence) for more effectively integrating science into policy and management processes.

- Contemplate radically changing the Authority's purpose and membership and a process for how such a transformation might come to pass.
  - CBFWA's narrow focus on fish and wildlife projects is artificially self-limiting and not supported by law or charter.
  - New structures (e.g., sub-basin planning at NW Power Planning Council; science advisory board) are evolving in the basin (some temporary, some permanent), which are assuming existing or potential role of CBFWA.

- The CBFWA staff is actively engaged in group and team processes. They and the Authority's image could benefit significantly from training in managing group processes.

- Take into account the remarkable opportunity the Authority has in working directly with the Tribes and the potential for improving overall relations with tribes in the basin.
  - Explore the potential for funding work among the Tribes and between the tribes and agencies in the Authority.
  - Think about how the Tribal culture, myths and values could help educate others to ecological approaches to managing the basin's land and waters.

CBFWA-BPA-NWPPC Level

- Exploit the current lapse in basin-wide accountability and performance measurement to reassert the Authority's position relative to BPA and NWPPC.

- Propose training and education programs that will increase cooperation and goodwill among BPA, NWPPC and the Authority.

- Continue to invite BPA and NWPPC to provide suggestions on how the effectiveness of the Authority can be approved.

- Identify science-related gaps at local, watershed, reach and sub-basin scales that could benefit from increased science, coordination, and capacity building.

Basin Level and Beyond

- As the locus of decision-making devolves to more local levels, CBFWA should think about a strategy for integrating the best available science into community, watershed and sub-basin planning, management, monitoring, and evaluation.

- CBFWA should take into account the criticisms that science-based agencies are arbitrary and dogmatic and weigh the benefits of championing a strategy for truly democratic and collaborative stakeholder processes.

- CBFWA should explore ways to emphasize programs and activities that feature carrots (incentives and outreach) instead of sticks (regulation, mitigation, and acquisition).

Facing Up to the New Realities – Some Observations

Scientific management was established in the 19th century, with the philosophy that the nation's landscape was too precious to leave to the vagaries of politics and personal gain. It placed primary accountability for resource management in the hands of highly trained experts. Unified river basin management and national land use planning as federal initiatives failed during the 1970s. This marked the high water mark in public support for top-down approaches to national land and water management. Up until then citizens were empowering agencies to take care of the responsibilities that they did not have the time to attend to personally.

A proliferation of agencies has led to fragmentation of responsibility and perspective. Each agency has focused on its functional mandate to the exclusion of other agencies and mandates. The propagation of laws and the latticework they now manifest create considerable administrative discretion -- discretion subject to capture by bureaucratic momentum and pressures from special interest.

In summary, top-down, agency-bound resource management lost its overriding responsibility for the whole, and citizens became so divorced and uninformed as to neglect the consequences of government action on the general welfare and even how their own interests were being handled.

During the 1990s two distinct trends emerged, both bent on rectifying the perceived excesses of government. One movement was based on the perceived loss of community or civic engagement, and lack of long-term perspective and public-minded leadership. The other focused on the intrusion of government into the rights of individuals, over-regulation, and hindrance of economic opportunity. One line of civic activism spawned watershed movement (and a counter movement of land rights activism). Guided by principles of public interest and equity, it began developing grassroots collaborative approaches to solving problems where agencies seemed to be stuck in red tape, conflicting missions, and ties to special interests. The other contour of action focused on political action, seizing control of "government run amuck" and the commitment to reduce taxes, the size and discretion of government, and its perceived interference with civil liberties. A countervailing political effort focused on reinventing government, increasing performance, and reducing waste.

Implications:

- Science and policy cannot get divorced. Means must be found to work through the differences that separate them to find new ways of functioning effectively together.

- There has been a growing hostility toward science and government to the point where almost everyone is angry at the federal and state government resource agencies and discounts their scientific expertise.

- Top-down command and control approaches to management are being replaced by bottom up, collaborative, incentive based, and voluntary methods of management.

- Grassroots and watershed organizing are reinventing natural resource and environmental management from the bottom up.

- Policy makers are increasingly looking for ways to improve stewardship of private lands through public-private partnerships and economic incentives

- The labyrinth of rules and procedures, most beyond local control or influence, frustrates and constrains individual and collective action of private landowners.

- Scientists and policy makers alike are reluctant to admit that humans and nature co-evolve. The implications are that terms like "sustainable," "natural," or "wild" are constructed realities, and not totally objective – facts and values commingle.