Using social media to build and strengthen a community of practice for the salmon research and management working groups

by: Emily Lescak elescak@alaska.edu and Scott A. Akenhead scott@s4s.com date: 2025-06-05

Scope. The Salmon Research and Monitoring Interest Group (SR&M IG) within the Research Data Alliance aims to participate in public fora to accelerate the uptake of interoperable methods and data from research, management, and monitoring. This will empower the salmon community to further mechanistic understanding of what drives salmon declines and develop methods to counter those declines. To do this, we will build an online community of practice that shares and practices advances in all aspects of salmon data mobilization. To maximize impact and engagement, the **Working Groups** will engage researchers and managers in the hundreds of agencies that are actively collecting and applying datasets for salmon research and monitoring worldwide – in a coordinated fashion. These agencies include colleges and universities, research institutes, academic societies, and fisheries management organizations.

Approach*.* We have a Salmon Mobilization Data server on Discord with thematic channels for each of the working groups and a *#resources* channel that points to our Google Drive and our GitHub repositories. We propose building a simple webpage that explains our aims and approach and points to our online spaces. We will explore the use of online platforms to reach different audiences. For example, we can form a group on LinkedIn that will likely target professional fisheries scientists in management agencies and research institutes. Academics, NGO's, and community members may be more active on BlueSky, where we can create a profile for the interest group and add it to the salmon starter pack, so that we have an community to interact with immediately. Through a combination of hashtags and scheduled posts, we can keep the dialogue going on both platforms between our regular meetings. For example, #DataMonday (featuring interesting datasets), #WisdomWednesday (research tips and best practices), and #FridaySpotlight (highlighting member achievements). We will develop a social media schedule internally to ensure regular engagement.

Timeline*.* In 2025, we aim to reach out to key researchers via email, establish a social media presence, identify opportunities for conference presentations, and create basic communications content. We aim to establish partnerships with salmon-oriented organizations and begin publishing regular content on social media and partner newsletters. In 2026, we aim to build our own content and events, including a regular webinar series, create mentorship opportunities, and build self-sustaining community engagement through member contributions and advocacy.

Metrics*.* We will measure the success of our outreach efforts by tracking membership growth, active participants in activities and projects, datasets posted to shared repositories, results from collaborative research, website traffic, social media engagement, and conference presentations. We could also conduct a network analysis of individuals and organizations involved in our efforts to ensure we have broad, international representation.

background and a commentary: see Spread_The_Word.pdf