

Chehalis Basin Lead Entity

Habitat Work Group Meeting

October 2, 2017

9:30 am – 12:30 pm

Chehalis Tribe Community Center Gathering Room
Oakville, Washington

In attendance:

Adam Lowrey, *Chehalis Tribe DNR*

Amy Spoon, *WDFW Region 6*

Bob Amrine, *Lewis County Conservation Dist.*

Brandon Carman, *Grays Harbor Conservation Dist.*

Brett Demond, *Citizen*

Brett Raunig (*via Skype*), *Ecology TMDL*

Cade Roler, *WDFW Fish Biologist*

Garrett Dalan, *Nature Conservancy*

Greg Green, *Ducks Unlimited*

Jason Gillie, *Chehalis Tribe DNR*

Jess Helsley, *Coast Salmon Partnership*

Kirsten Harma, *Lead Entity Coordinator*

Lonnie Crumley, *Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force*

Mara Healy, *Thurston Conservation Dist.*

Maria Hunter, *WDFW ASRP*

Miranda Plumb, *USFWS*

Rich Osborne, *Coast Salmon Partnership*

Thom Woodruff, *Capital Land Trust*

Meeting Summary

1. Welcome and Introductions.

Everyone provided self-introductions. A few members provided updates.

2. Review of Minutes from September 2017

Brett Demond made a motion to approve the minutes. Lonnie seconded. All in favor.

3. Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB)

a) Update on POCs and Schedule

There are two projects on our “Alternates” list that have received a Project of Concern (POC) status from the state’s technical review team. Sponsors have an opportunity to discuss review panel project in person before the final list is submitted to the SRFB. The Lewis Conservation District has decided to pull their project from the list given the passing away of the landowner. The Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force plans to defend their project

at the review team meeting on October 23rd.

b) Other

Kirsten provided an update on the rest of the SRFB grant round. SRFB will approve the 2017 project list at their December meeting. Staff will look into preparing contracts so that they can be signed as soon as there is a budget. The state might not even be able to spend PCSRF funds since state funds aren't available as match. Thus, if there is no capital budget, there is a risk that there won't be projects funded in 2017. Members expressed a lack of optimism that the state's capital budget would pass in November or even by March. The notice of the 2018 grant round starting might be delayed until March. Miranda Plumb mentioned that the USFWS grant program to fund Chehalis projects is on hold (typically there is a December deadline for grant applications so sponsors know if this can be used as match when they apply for SRFB). Given the uncertainty, everyone will need to be ready to be flexible about timing of applications, what can be used as match for what, etc.

4. 2018 Salmon Recovery Funding Board project development

This conversation followed up on the conversation at the September meeting. The Lead Entity's strategy includes a chapter on the Habitat Work Schedule's conceptual project list and mentoring projects. Kirsten presented a possible idea for using this approach. One option the group could look at would be to dedicate some of their SRFB funds towards design of a larger project. A maximum of \$200,000 can be awarded to design with no match. The rest could be an open competition with a few conceptual projects mentored by others in the group. The group could choose to focus mentoring on some priority types of projects that haven't been occurring in the watershed.

Discussion: An update of the Lead Entity's Strategy might help focus where to prioritize efforts and what types of projects to do and where, but it would behoove us to wait until the ASRP is done to start that work. The larger collaborative design projects might not be necessary since the ASRP is planning on taking this approach. We could wait and see how that plays out before trying something similar. Alternatively, we could target projects in areas that aren't in one of the 5 priority basins for the ASRP. Cade warned that having larger scale projects might not pull in new sponsors since it's hard for multiple sponsors to each carve out a role on one project. Jess suggested that doing a needs assessment in a specific subwatershed, followed by developing a tool box for meeting restoration needs, would mean then sponsors can come and choose which parts of the habitat restoration they would like to develop to the project level.

Brett Raunig joined the meeting via Skype to explain how the prioritization and design process in the Lower Columbia works. They use the assessment process focused in a single subwatershed. They start with an EDT model to determine where to focus to get the most

benefit for salmon. An assessment grant hires a consultant to analyze the whole system to see what's most needed. That process leads to rough conceptual projects. Sponsors then come in and pick those projects off of that list for further fine tuning. Then those projects are put in a regular grant round and compete for funding among the whole Lower Columbia, though given that they've already be vetted and partially designed they generally rank higher. Brett suggested doing assessments and larger projects could be a good option for our group.

5. Aquatic Species Restoration Plan (ASRP) (11:20)

a) ASRP Barrier Project RFP

The ASRP Steering Committee has agreed to move forward with sending out a Request for Proposals to solicit barrier projects so that there is a list of options for once there is a capital budget and therefore Chehalis Strategy funding. Best case scenario is to release something at the end of October. Project applications will be due December 13, 2017.

b) Update on “early action reach” RFQ

The Steering Committee sent out a Request for Qualifications for engineering firms to design large-scale projects. A committee will be ranking those applications. Most of this process is stalled until there is a capital budget.

c) Discussion: Group to provide input to inform ASRP Chapters: “Planning; Institutional Capacity; Community Engagement” - Led by Maria Hunter, WDFW

A few strategies in the ASRP will not be informed by EDT, but rather need to be derived from practical considerations. Three chapters that could benefit from Habitat Work Group member input include: Planning, Institutional Capacity and Community Engagement. Kirsten led the group through a brainstorming exercise to get input for these chapters. Members provided input on each chapter which Kirsten recorded and passed on to Maria.

d) Other

Dave Price is no longer the WDFW rep on the ASRP Steering Committee. That role is now filled by Justin Allegro.

Next HWG meeting: November 6, 2017.