

Chehalis Basin Lead Entity -- Habitat Work Group

Monday, December 2, 2019

~ 9:30 am – 12:30 pm ~

Chehalis Tribe Community Center

Gathering Room - 461 Secena Road, Oakville, WA

Alissa Ferrell, RCO Ann Weckback, Lewis County Bob Amrine, Lewis Cons. District Brandon Carman, RCO Caprice Fasano, Quinault Indian Nation Chris Dwight, WDFW Claire Williamson, WDFW Devin DeBono, Lewis County Public Works Emilie McKain, WDFW ASRP Manager Jamie Glasgow, Wild Fish Conservancy Jennifer Riedmayer, Ecology	Jonathan Bradshaw, Citizen/ CBLE Minutes Kathy Jacobsen, CBLE Outreach Coordinator Kirsten Harma, Lead Entity Coordinator Mara Healy, Thurston Cons. Dist. Ned Pittman, Coast Salmon Partnership/Fdn Patrick Shults, WSU Extension Paula Holroyd, League of Women Voters Rickie Marion, Chehalis Tribe Ryan Williams, Mason Cons. Dist. Thom Woodruff, Capitol Land Trust Tom Kollasch, Grays Harbor Cons. Dist.
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1. Welcome, Introductions

2. Organizational Business

a. Review Minutes

Thom Woodruff made a motion to accept November's minutes without comment, which Tom Kollasch seconded. Motion passed without objection.

b. Subcommittee/Updates

Outreach:

Kathy Jacobsen had few updates:

-She has booked the River Table at three schools in December. It will be at Grand Mound Elementary (12/4, 12/5), Rochester Middle School (12/12), Washington Elementary (12/17, 12/18). Visitors are welcome!

-The Saving Tarboo Creek (Scott Freeman) event will be taking place on Friday, March 6th at Centralia College at the Student Union Building. Centralia College is co-sponsoring the talk with the Chehalis River Basin Land Trust. The day will begin with a quarterly STEM College lecture series at noon. In the evening, from 5-6, the SUB foyer will be open with informational tables, and a second talk will take place at 6. Book signing to follow. Any groups that have information for how individuals can get involved in salmon recovery are invited to table. Sign-up solicitations will come the following month.

-Don't forget to keep World Fish Migration Day (May 16th) in mind for putting together a relevant

community education activity.

Culvert Subcommittee:

The subcommittee is working with Aspect Consulting do continue the wrap-up work on their GIS model. This includes QA/QC work, adding John Winkowski's temperature information, working with chinook numbers and chinook culverts, and working with Tim Beechie to get some of the data the NOAA model has. The team is hoping to wrap up this month. A culvert subcommittee meeting followed the present meeting.

Newaukum Subcommittee:

WDFW biologist are out on the ground doing instream Coho redd surveys, but will also be collecting information on habitat and restoration potential. They're noting where there are disconnected floodplains and where wood can be used to reconnect the river. February 3rd is the next Newaukum Subcommittee meeting and the survey results will be shared at that time, followed by a discussion of where some important areas are for doing headwater restoration projects.

3. Small Forest Landowners Presentation

Patrick Shults, a WSU extension forester, presented on a study project being launched to explore the potential of silvopasture practices among local small forest landowners. Its main goals are to understand how this method can be used to both restore and manage forests. Briefly, such systems, when managed intentionally for foraging, can allow for both annual income (livestock) and long term products (timber). There is also good potential for nutrient cycling and carbon capture--and improved cattle productivity in such systems has also been observed. The research is being carried out by a WSU PhD student, and consists of 5 phases. The first phase, which is looking to find landowners and partner organizations, is expected to run through December. Phase 2 will follow, in which sites will be chosen and funding will be applied for. Ideal sites would be 10+ acres in SW WA that are cleared pasture and can be reforested. Rotational grazing will be a key element of the process.

Anyone with input or potential landowner contacts should contact Patrick at:
patrick.shults@wsu.edu

DISCUSSION:

Q: Is this aimed at pasture for dairy cows or beef cows?

A: Beef cows is the focus. We'd certainly be happy to work with a dairy, but we feel there's less synergy here.

Q: Are you looking to reforest just upland, or would you do a project in a riparian area?

A: Upland is easier, but we're certainly open to riparian. That would be just a bit more complicated, though there may well be good crossover. Grays Harbor CD has been in conversation with some landowners regarding silvopasture as restoration on some Wynoochee riparian areas--but this is still in the idea stage. This system hasn't really been explored on the west side of the mountains.

Q: How big of an area is desired? And do you need any control plots?

A: At least 10 acres, 15 better. We're hoping to establish controls, yes. This is all in progress.

Q: Are you looking at different species?

A: Yes, we're looking at timber species (Douglas fir, likely. Possibly also red alder?) but we'll use a variety for sure. Regarding cattle, we'll be working with what we've got to figure out research questions--we obviously will have less control over cattle breeds.

4. Chehalis Lead Entity Strategy Chapter Review

a. Black River Management Unit (MU)

Thom Woodruff presented on the Black River MU section of the Lead Entity Strategy. Some highlights from his discussion are as follows (his full presentation can be either accessed on the Lead Entity website, or by request):

It's of note that the Black River no longer flows from Black Lake. The Black Lake now runs into Percival Creek, and then into Capitol Lake, out to the Sound. As a result, the Black River has a very low gradient (9"/mile), and a low flow. This is a source of many of its issues. Also, the river's width varies widely. It's braided in places, as well. It ranges anywhere from 15' to 120' across. About 15% of the river is under conservation status.

Tier 1 issues include: Water quality (Low dissolved oxygen levels), Water Quantity, Riparian conditions. Tier 2 issues include: LWD, Fish Passage.

Also of note, there is a Natural Gas Pipeline just south of Black Lake. There is proposed action in the Strategy to work to change the pipeline route--this could restore natural passage and flow that was blocked in the pipeline's installation.

DISCUSSION:

Q: Is moving the pipeline even a possible option?

A: If it was in the company's best interest, it might be a possibility. But it's doubtful that this is the case. The recommendation to move the pipeline might be something you consider removing in an update of the Strategy.

Q: As we consider and update to the Strategy, did anything stand out as needing to be changed?

A: I'd like to see more clarity about how to address the limiting factor of road density. This probably isn't anything that can be fixed.

Comment: Road removal generally involves removing logging/forest roads, which can be decommissioned pretty easily. That, or vestigial roads can be removed from property line sloppiness, etc. For established, immovable roads, road integrity and failure issues can be addressed, and best practices on the waterflow journey can be implemented.

Comment: Jay Roach is an expert on the history of changing the Black Lake drainage, re: attempts to create a channel to Puget Sound.

b. Cloquallum Management Unit (MU)

Ryan Williams presented on the Cloquallum MU section of the strategy. The presentation can be accessed in full, either on the Lead Entity website or by request. Brief highlights are as follows:

Tier 1 issues for the basin include: Correcting barrier culverts, restore riparian areas, improve water quality.

Ryan noted that this seems to reflect the reality on the ground: the Cloquallum is very incised. Possible actions listed in the Strategy involve close monitoring of water withdrawals, as well as strategies that would aid in slowing down water flow.

Tier 2 issues: Protect, reconnect and restore floodplain connections; control sediment sources

DISCUSSION:

Q: There was a CNLM project a couple of grant rounds ago to address knotweed on Wildcat creek. What happened to this project?

A: Unsure--the project was funded, but then the funding was returned. We're not sure what the story is here.

- c. Upcoming:** We just need 2 more! Devin DeBono volunteered for the Skookumchuck, and Caprice will present on the South Bay.

5. Fish Barrier Removal Board

a. Solicitation of projects and coordination

The RFP came out recently, along with a letter from Tom Jameson, WDFW, emphasizing his awareness of the opportunity for Lead Entities to have role. This is a great opportunity to involve cities, counties, local folks in doing barrier correction projects.

Tom Kollasch also explained that the FBRB wants to stress that their focus is not exclusive to priority watersheds as it was in previous grant rounds. Priority watersheds do get extra points, but they're not only focusing on them. They're also looking for opportunities where RMAP and state money has been invested upstream/downstream. They're excited about plucking out some of those last-barriers in a system.

6. Salmon Recovery Funding Board

a. Review 2020 Schedule

Please plan to present your conceptual project idea soon. Presentation time is coming to a close. The February meeting is the final meeting set aside for these.

Alissa provided an update: The SRFB application will be different this year, and as such, attending RCO's official workshop is strongly recommended. The application in PRISM will go live early in January. On January 27th, the conceptual project forms will be due. These are

available through Kirsten or the LE website.

March 30th, final SRFB apps are due. (Note: The ASRP application is due early February--it may be prudent to prioritize presentations accordingly.) Though the *final* deadline for SRFB applications is at the end of March, it is highly recommended that these be submitted early. In previous years, there was an intermediate step which allowed for follow-up review-team comments--this is not the case this year.

Site visits will be taking place mid-May, and funding decisions will be made in September. Funding will be available September as well.

Q: For applications that are construction projects that follow from design grants: How would we like these named?

A: Kirsten recommended, in general for passage projects, the ideal name format should be along the lines of: “ (XX Creek), at (XX Road passing/locator), Construction/Design ”

Note: The ASRP apps are due before the SRFB apps, so heads up to prioritize accordingly.

b. Update on Planned Project Forecast List

This list is still in progress: thanks for keeping your project forms coming! Please continue to do so.

c. Upcoming SRFB Meeting (Dec 12&13)

Alissa gave an overview of the upcoming SRFB meeting. Of particular note are planned conversations on data overview and on LE capacity funding. Also, WAC changes for the LEAN are going to be discussed in a public hearing. The 2019 projects will be discussed, and then funding decisions will be made.

d. Conceptual Project Presentations (None presented today)

****Conceptual Project Forms are due Jan 27, 2020****

7. ASRP

a. ASRP Document:

Regarding a Habitat Work Group joint public comment letter preparation:

Would the group like to produce this letter as an entity, or would you rather approach it as individual groups? The group decided to bring comments to the January meeting and decide how/if we'd like to go forward with a letter at that time.

b. ASRP Updates

In the past few weeks, Emilie has reached out to various media outlets about the ASRP. They're working to keep messaging consistent, and are laying out future phases and how the ASRP relates with the larger Strategy.

The ASRP grant round is open, and some questions have come in. The team will be replying to these questions on the 5th (Thursday), and an FAQ is planned for release on Friday the 6th.

Q: How many folks are ready that will apply? Is this enough time?

A: We do feel like there will be plenty of applications. Presentations aren't a requirement for the grant round; they're just helpful for early-on feedback. We can always bring in some reviewers to see presentations.

Q: Do you have an idea of how much of the funding you will have apportioned to this first year? How much should I lean on this funding?

A: At this point, no. The Steering Committee wants to see what comes through this grant round. On the other side of that, when we've seen how sponsors are lined up with our goals as the ASRP, we'll be able to figure out what that means for going forward.

c. Early Action Reach Updates

i. Newaukum/Stillman:

Landowner meetings are still in progress. The land trust is just beginning to meet with landowners as well. This has been a long, cumbersome project, but things have come together well.

ii. Satsop/Wynoochee:

Things are moving along as expected: discussions are making progress, but nothing terribly new. There are some land ownership issues being ironed out. There is going to be a design team "lessons-learned" workshop next Tuesday, as well. As this is the first go-round with *big* projects, and they're learning a lot as they go. They're working to be proactive about documenting these lessons for next time. For one thing, ownership issues have a lot to do with shifting rivers. Another takeaway: bring in the land trusts earlier. Bringing them in at the top of the process would smooth communication and cause less confusion down the road.

8. Other Business

Conflict of Interest policy for the Habitat Work Group: We've gotten some input on a draft policy- is there still interest to pursue this? Ideally we'd also have legal review: does anyone have potential pro bono connections here? Thom Woodruff will move this forward.