

Chehalis Basin / Grays Harbor Lead Entity

Habitat Work Group Meeting

February 10, 2017

9:30 am – 12:00 pm

Lewis Conservation District Office - USDA Service Center
1554 Bishop Road
Chehalis, Washington

In attendance:

Ann Weckback, *Lewis County*
Bennett Harbaugh, *Center for Natural Lands Management*
Bob Amrine, *Lewis County Conservation*
Brandon Carman, *Grays Harbor CD*
Cade Roler, *WDFW*
Doris Small, *WDFW*
Garrett Dalan, *The Nature Conservancy*
Jamie Glasgow, *Wild Fish Conservancy*
Janet Strong, *Chehalis Basin Land Trust*
Jason Gillie, *Chehalis Tribe DNR*
JB McCrummen, *Thurston County citizen*
Jordan Rash, *Forterra*

Jonathan Bradshaw, *Citizen*
Kathleen Berger, *Thurston CD*
Kirsten Harma, *Lead Entity Coordinator*
Kim Smith, *Grays Harbor CD*
Laurence Reeves, *Capitol Land Trust*
Lonnie Crumley, *CBFETF*
Luke Kelly, *Trout Unlimited*
Mara Healy, *Thurston CD*
Mitch Redfern, *Mason CD*
Rich Osborne, *WCSSP*
Thom Woodruff, *Capitol Land Trust*
Tom Kollasch, *Grays Harbor CD*

Meeting Summary

1. **Welcome and Introductions.**

Everyone provided self-introductions.

2. **Review of minutes from January 2017**

Thom moved to approve the minutes, Lonnie seconded. All in favor.

3. **Salmon Recovery Funding Board**

a) **Discussion on Call for Proposals**

Kirsten asked the group if it might be appropriate to specify in this year's call for proposals that we are specifically interested in non-culvert projects. This is due to the fact that so far, the discussions at the ASRP Steering Committee level have been that they are wanting the next biennium's round of "near term" funding to go to barrier corrections. Someone

suggested that if good non-culvert projects aren't lined up, this would be a good opportunity for a sponsor to propose a "design only" project. Lonnie recommended casting the net wide to get applications for a full range of projects.

b) Call for Proposals to go out February 13, 2017

The call for proposals will go out February 13.

c) Scope Change proposal – Capitol Land Trust – Laurence Reeves

The scope change proposal was to take unused funding from one acquisition project in the Black River watershed and move it to a new conservation easement project on an adjacent property. The first project, on the "Ramos" property, purchased a piece of land whose property line was defined by the river. The river has moved since the project application went in for the 2014 SRFB round, reducing the size of the property and therefore the price of the purchase. Capitol Land Trust proposes that the unused \$30,000 go to start a conservation easement on a property to the north, the "Wilson Farm."

Q) *Will you have an opportunity to restore the ditch running through the northern property?*

A) The landowner currently wants to farm the property, precluding a restoration opportunity. However, it is likely that the owner won't continue to farm over the long term. Restoration could begin once the landowner stops farming.

Q) *What is the cost of the Conservation Easement on the Wilson Farm?*

A) \$94,000 for 94 acres. Capitol Land Trust will apply to the "HRP return funds" and then SRFB to obtain the remaining funds.

Q) *Is there a possibility of getting back the east 3rd of the Ramos property (lost due to boundary line change)?*

A) We (CLT) tried to do a boundary line adjustment, but it was legally complicated and didn't work out.

Q) *Will you watch the area for invasives?*

A) The site is pretty infested with Reed Canary Grass already. We may try to shade out the grass with trees or shrubs at some point, but since it's in a wetland, it's hard to get equipment out there to do that work. Mason Conservation District is trying a new approach to planting willows in wetlands, so we will watch that project closely and see if we can adopt any of their methods.

Bob Amrine convened a vote on the proposed scope change. There was consensus by the group to recommend to RCO that the scope change be approved.

d) SRFB Proposal – Capitol Land Trust – Thom Woodruff

This proposal is for acquisition of the “Holm Farm” property. The site is in the Black River watershed and fits in Capitol Land Trust’s Black River Conservation Initiative. Capitol Land Trust will undertake the project in partnership with the South of the Sound Community Farm Land Trust. That group will work to acquire the agricultural portion of the property. CLT will work separately but simultaneously to acquire the “non-ag” riparian section of the property. The stream on the property, “Bloom’s Ditch” is currently a ditch, but is documented by WDFW as fish habitat that was once a free-flowing. Acquiring this property will allow for future restoration such as revegetating the ditch’s bank and thereby to address temperature issues in the subwatershed. The site is near a recent WDOT barrier culvert correction.

Q) *Is this the same Holm Farm as another Capitol Land Trust project?*

A) No

Q) *How close is the site to old Highway 99, where the WDOT project took place? Isn’t that site on the other side of I-5 from the project?*

A) Not sure – will have to verify this information

Q) *Has CLT looked at just restoration for this site, not acquisition?*

A) No, because the landowner needs to sell due to family and financial reasons. She is not interested in just a conservation easement. CLT overall is looking at increasing its restoration efforts. On this site, there could be lots of options, like the beaver dam analogs they are testing out on some other properties. This could lead to greater hydrological diversity of the site.

Q) *I see that the proposed property has timber on it. Would provisions be made to still have that timber available for harvest?*

A) We will evaluate the feasibility of timber harvest.

Q) *Has CLT ever harvested timber on one of their properties?*

A) We are developing a timber management plan for another site. The purpose is to enhance the habitat quality, not make money. We’ll only do the harvest if there is habitat lift. The financial gain is important in that it allows us to “break even” on the restoration efforts.

Q) *Is this a viable stream with fish benefits?*

A) WDFW says it is.

Q) *Will you do the subdivision before the sale?*

A) Yes, we will have separate ownership from South of the Sound. Our projects will have independent timing and independent funding sources. Our appraisal contract is already started and we can have this closed by June 30.

e) **SRFB Proposal – Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife – Doris Small**

This project is a partnership of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Grays Harbor Conservation District. It is a multi phase project. Doris presented all phases of the project. She did not know which part of the project they would propose for SRFB funding at this time.

There are two phases to the project: one related to a high flow channel that they plan to reconnect to a forested area, and one opening up large gravel pits on the site. Project components will include designing the pond filling and reconnection to occur slowly so that amphibian response can be studied, doing a dike removal, removing a riparian “bump” to let the river move, and doing work in a riparian area.

Q) *Are the concerns with the Port of Grays Harbor well on the site resolved?*

A) This is still a side board on the project. The modeler will determine how to protect the well in the design. The road will still be protected, too.

4. Culvert Subcommittee

Cade Roler provided an update. At the next meeting of the subcommittee ICF staff will be there to talk about their EDT prioritization method. Cade reported that in their analysis, they are only looking at 369 culverts. Their stream network is limited to streams with greater than 25 ft bankful width. He expects the committee to provide them with recommendation on how to improve their stream network. The committee is working on updating the formula that leads to the prioritization.

Q) *What will be in the formula? Passibility? Velocity? Drop?*

A) The committee is exploring what to include in the formula.

Q) *How will habitat quality be incorporated into the formula?*

A) We’ve been looking at various options, including the IP model

Q) *Is EDT used in any of your prioritization formula update ideas?*

A) No. It can’t apply because it can’t be used to drive prioritization for the whole basin.

Cade mentioned that there is a lot of interest in the outcomes of the committee’s work.

Ryan Gosling from WDFW was unavailable to make a presentation on the WDFW mapping tool at this meeting, as he was sick.

5. Chehalis Basin Strategy/ Aquatic Species Restoration Plan/ Habitat Restoration and Protection

a) HRP “return funds” process

Meeting participants discussed the ideal timeline for the solicitation, review and ranking of the “return funds” projects. Participants agreed that to have notice of funding in mid to late April would be ideal. To make that happen, Kirsten noted that the review team would have to rank project by mid-March. People who were suggested for, or volunteered for, the

review team, included: Miranda, Michelle, Amy, Garrett, Omroa, Steve, and Jason. Kirsten will invite reviewers to participate and will send out a Doodle poll with possible dates for the ranking committee to meet.

b) HRPv2 input or recommendations

The Steering Committee had not met, so there was nothing new to provide input on.

c) Early Action Reach Update

The Steering Committee had not met, so there was nothing new to report on this process.

d) Other Steering Committee meeting referrals for discussion

The Steering Committee had met, therefore there was nothing for referral.

The group discussed the ASRP process overall. There was frustration that the group had not met, and recognition that the Steering Committee needs to be functional if the Plan development and implementation is going to be a success. Jason Gillie, representing the Chehalis Tribe on the Steering Committee, expressed frustration about the choice of meeting facilitator.

6. Bylaw Subcommittee

JB provided an update on the subcommittee's progress. It was determined that the group already fulfills the requirements of the Open Meetings Act. Up for further discussion with this group will be discussing the role of Grays Harbor County in the "Lead Entity" process. There wasn't time for the full discussion intended for this agenda topic.

7. Newaukum Subcommittee

There wasn't time for this update. Meeting participants were invited to stay for the next subcommittee meeting, which followed this meeting.

Next HWG meeting: March 10th 2017