

**Chehalis Basin Lead Entity
Habitat Work Group Meeting**

Monday, March 4, 2019

9:30 am – 12:30 pm

Chehalis Tribe Community Center Gathering Room
Oakville, Washington

In attendance:

Amy Spoon, WDFW
Ann Weckback, Lewis County
Alissa Ferrell, RCO
Brandon Carman, Grays Harbor CD
Bob Amrine, Lewis CD
Bill Wamsley, Lewis Co. Noxious Weed Bd.
Brett DeMond, Citizen
Cade Roler, WDFW
Chris Dwight, WDFW
Emilie McKain, WDFW
Jason Gillie, Chehalis Tribe DNR
Jennifer Riedmayer, WA Ecology
Jeanne Kinney, Thurston Co. Public Works

Jonathan Bradshaw, HWG Note-taker
Kirsten Harma, Lead Entity Coordinator
Lonnie Crumley, Chehalis Basin Fisheries Taskforce
Luke Kelly, Trout Unlimited
Mara Zimmerman, Coast Salmon Partnership
Mark Gray, Chehalis River Basin LT
Nicholas Carr, Forterra
Omroa Bhagwandin, LC Citizen Rep.
Rich Osborne, Coast Salmon Part./ONRC
Ryan Williams, Mason County CD
Stu Trefry, WA State Cons. Commission
Thom Woodruff, Capitol Land Trust
Tom Kollasch, Grays Harbor CD

Meeting Summary

1. Welcome and Introductions

It is of note that Ryan Williams was in attendance as the new representative for the Mason County CD.

2. Organizational Business

1. Review minutes from February 4, 2019

Thom motions to approve notes without comment, Lonnie seconds. All in favor.

2. 2019 HWG Election

A quorum was present and elections were held. Lonnie and Omroa nominated Bob to continue as chairman, which was unanimously approved. For the position of vice-chairman, Bob nominated Omroa, who was also unanimously elected.

3. Outreach Update

Kathy Jacobson has been subcontracted by the Lead Entity to facilitate community outreach. She has been doing community outreach work within the basin for some time and will be a resource for any HWG members going forward. Bob suggests having her do outreach at the Willapa Ride, which Kirsten will suggest. Omroa then gave a rundown of

the Ride the Willapa event, which will be happening June 22-23. The Lead Entity has hired Katie Lutz as Grays Harbor Stream Team coordinator. She is available to bring volunteers to help with lower basin restoration projects.

4. Chehalis Lead Entity Strategy – Presentations

Section 3: Conceptual Model for Sub-basin Profiles – Chris Dwight

Chris walked through the conceptual model used to help the Lead Entity identify short- and long-term options for restoration in the basin, which, for management, is broken down into subbasins. Seven limiting factors are assessed for each subbasin, which involve physical process effects, and their effects on fish. These include sediment load, fish passage, flood plain conditions, riparian conditions, LWD and water quantity and quality. Each subbasin was analyzed to understand subbasins' limiting factors in terms of symptoms, causes, and actions to be taken. Assessments categorize these limiting factors into three Tiers: 1 most pressing, 2 and 3 reduced in priority. The strategy emphasizes that while Tier 1 factors may be most environmentally important, it is also important to work carefully to balance objective priorities with what is best and/or acceptable for the community of interest.

Subbasin Profiles- Satsop & Newaukum- Cade Roler

Cade presented a run-down of the Strategy's assessment of the Satsop and Newaukum subbasins. In addition to a brief overview of the primary limiting factors for the two subbasins, he also offered suggestions regarding the Strategy update on the subbasin profile assessments. He expressed concern that the resolution offered by the WAU units is not sufficient to prioritize the diversity of limiting factors on the ground within each subbasin. He suggests reassessing how the Strategy breaks down each subbasin for assessment of limiting factors. Would using Management Units and Hydraulic Unit Code (HUC12) be more appropriate?

Newaukum subbasin Tier 1 concerns include riparian conditions, fish passage and water quality (with some quantity). For the Satsop subbasin, Tier 1 concerns include riparian conditions, fish passage, water quantity (some floodplain and water quality for mainstem). From his on-the-ground work, Cade noted that quantity seems to be a concern in Dekker Creek, but not much of an issue elsewhere. Generally, however, the tiered concerns for Satsop seem to be relatively consistent with needed actions. He also noted that a lot of RMAP barriers that have been done in this area have become barriers since no-slope culverts were installed when bridges or stream sim solutions should've been employed.

In general, Cade also pointed out that there has been much restoration work and study since 2011, and that a revamp of the Strategy would be appropriate. Additionally, he pointed out that the only limiting factor that addresses habitat complexity is LWD. A broader consideration of habitat sources would be worth including. Broadly speaking, however, it can be said that much of the tiered concerns do reflect much of what needs

done in these basins.

Subbasin Profiles – Boistfort - Jonathan Bradshaw

Jonathan presented a basic summary of the Strategy's assessments of each of the WAUs within the Boistfort Subbasin. A few points of note include:

- Across the WAUs, Tier 1 concerns often included riparian conditions, fish passage and sediment load.
- Road densities for the Boistfort subbasin are especially high, as much of the basin (especially the Upper Chehalis) is under commercial timber.
- Neither fall nor spring chinook salmon are listed to occur in the Lake Creek subbasin.
- The Lake Creek subbasin is noted to have particularly abundant winter rainfall events, and is thus subject to higher hydrological stress than surrounding areas.

Kirsten asked for future presenters: Luke Kelly will summarize the Wynoochee Subbasin, Mara Healy the Skookumchuck, Brandon Carman the Hoquiam and Wishkah basins. These presentations will take place in May or June. Other members wishing to contribute are welcome, and may contact Kirsten.

5. Lead Entity Strategy – Cleaning Up Conceptual Project List

Kirsten laid out the need to clean up the Lead Entity's Conceptual Project List which is housed in Habitat Work Schedule. Old or irrelevant projects should be either removed or updated to reflect their progress. The list shouldn't be thought of as an artifact of submitting projects for the assignment of a PRISM number. Rather, this list could and should be an opportunity to create an actively used database of projects that need done across the basin. Further, the Conceptual Project List isn't limited in scope to those projects seeking SRFB funding. In fact, in broadening the usefulness of this list, it may be prudent down the road to convert actions recommended in the Strategy into conceptual projects that can be added to this list.

Bob Amrine, Ann Weckback and Rich Osborne volunteered to develop a subcommittee to start this work.

3. Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB)

1. 2019 Grant Round and RCO Updates – Alissa Ferrell

The 2019 grant round is officially open. Draft applications are due April 22nd, site visits will occur May 14th and 15th. The RCO Application Workshop, a live webinar, will take place March 14th. Alissa provided a draft of the project planning guide.

Manual 18 Changes Re: Design & Assessments: The guidelines for design-only projects with no match are essentially unchanged: \$200K limit, no match requirement, must be finished within 18 months.

Funding of assessment/data gap projects will be scaled back. They will be limited to \$200K per region/year, and will need to use state funds. As a result, applicants will need to coordinate within their regions when submitting such projects. The impetus for this

change is that such projects are not eligible for federal PCSRF funds. All other criteria for this type of project will continue to apply. It is worth noting that an alternate option for funding such projects is to include an assessment project as a portion of a larger design project. Such an application may avoid being subject to that 200K/region cap.

2020 grant round changes of general interest include:

Do we want to consider a biennial grant-round option? In this scenario, projects would be submitted for the present year, and those projects earmarked for the following year would be listed as alternates. That following year, alternates would be submitted as that year's ranked list. What are the benefits? Other lead entities use this format to alternate yearly between the work of developing and submitting a project list, and tackling other major projects such as overhauling their Strategies. There is concern among members, however, that this format does not fit our basin's needs. Since we work year-to-year, the general feeling seems to be that we should avoid what would be in effect the closing-off of a full one-year project application window. We don't have the history or structure to appropriately develop 2 years-worth of projects in a single season.

April 1st, the next Habitat Work Group meeting, will be followed by a Chehalis-specific pre-application workshop. Alissa offered to run it and the group asked her to do so.

2. SRFB discussion: a large-project funding program

Kirsten and Alissa discussed that the LEAN study pointed to the potential need for a statewide pool of funding oriented toward large, complex projects. This would be a separately funded, additional pool to provide the extra push for large scale projects across the state. This pool may not be relevant to our region: such a setup may favor WRIsAs with species close to de-listing. There is concern that this pool may overlook the importance of the less charismatic work of preserving what is intact. It was also pointed out, however, that a large fund source could be put toward large expensive projects such as stream re-meanders. The topic is on the agenda for the next weeks' Salmon Recovery Funding Board meeting, and public comment will be taken.

4. Project Presentations

Newskah Road #2 Fish Barrier Correction

Lonnie Crumley presented two project proposals on behalf of the Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force. This CBFTF proposal is for permitting and design of a fish-barrier culvert replacement in the Newskah Basin. This barrier is essentially the last barrier in the Newskah watershed. While the barrier is listed at 33% passable, Lonnie characterized that as an optimistic rating. The barrier opens up just shy of two miles of stream. This barrier ranks 18th in the Chehalis basin ranking, in the top 2% in WRIA 22. The project would likely involve an 80' long 20'-span bottomless arch. This area is listed as the main spawning and rearing habitat from the mouth of the Chehalis and the John's River.

Kirkpatrick Road Fish Barrier Correction (Humptulips)

This project is for the development and engineering of a 95' long, 36' wide bridge to replace a 33% passable culvert. Above the barrier is 6.93 miles of habitat. Eight upstream barriers have been corrected and the final barrier is a 67% passable barrier on private forestland. The area above the project is tremendous coho habitat which dumps directly into the Humptulips. This 7' elevated squash pipe ranks 4th in the Chehalis basin ranked list, top 1% in the lower basin. The county will absorb the cost of the topo survey work, at a \$14.5k. Thus the project ask would be for \$73K of an \$87.5k project with 16% contribution from County.

Jones Road/Salmon Creek – Thurston County

Jeanne Kinney presented a project proposal on behalf of Thurston County's Fish Passage Program. The project is to replace a double-culvert velocity barrier on river mile 3 of Salmon Creek at Jones Road. Above the barrier is 5 miles of very flat, widespread wetlands (~250 acres). The likely solution would be a pre-fabricated bridge: the County's Fish Passage Program hopes to have their preferred alternative decision finalized by May. The SRFB grant would be put toward construction specifically, and in the case of the prefab bridge alternative, the funds would directly purchase the bridge structure. The remaining project cost, covered by the County, would be around \$700K. This SRFB grant request would be for a relatively small amount of money that would contribute to a large, expensive project that should break ground by 2020. Additionally, juvenile salmon were found 40m below barrier site. Upstream looks like good potential wintering and rearing sites.

5. Aquatic Species Restoration Plan

Inclusion of ASRP Reach-Scale Projects on Lead Entity List (Emelie McKain)

Emilie's presentation was prompted by the current lack of liability protection for landowners participating in ASRP projects. The ASRP Design Teams have learned that such protection is crucial to securing landowner participation and moving forward. Emelie noted that there is good potential to provide such liability assurance by expanding the reach of the Lead Entity's SRFB Conceptual Project List and then formalizing it as the "Lead Entity Project List" that is referenced in RCW 77.85.050. This law establishes liability protection for any project landowner of any project on the list, delegating liability to the project sponsor. While the Conceptual Project List in Habitat Work Schedule currently serves as storage for projects to be considered for SRFB-funding, it could be expanded to include and track restoration projects performed throughout the Chehalis Basin. Doing so would allow ASRP projects to fall under the already-established liability protection provided to project landowners.

Some points of concern and clarification:

-The legislation specifies that the protection applies whether or not the projects are funded by the SRFB.

-Inclusion of ASRP or other restoration projects on the Lead Entity list would not impact the Lead Entity's liability. Just as they do currently, project sponsors hold the liability, as they manage the design and construction of their projects.

-The inclusion of non-SRFB projects on the Lead Entity Project List will not affect the current process of SRFB project ranking or funding.

-Comment: This is very important. If we're doing hundreds of miles so something is going to go wrong. We need to let the landowners know they are protected.

-Emelie noted that using the Lead Entity List method would be only an interim measure while the Chehalis Strategy sets up its own process for protecting landowners.

Kirsten mentioned that she will reach out to other Lead Entity Coordinators to learn how they interpret the language "project list" in their work, and will ask if they have had any experience with the liability clause.

Bob suggested setting up a meeting with the Grays Harbor County attorney to ensure they are aware of and comfortable with the liability clause.

It was suggested that this discussion continue at the April meeting.

***There was no time left for the remaining agenda items:**

1. ASRP Implementation Update (Emelie)
2. Reach-Scale River Restoration Projects update (Kirsten & CDs)
3. Science Review Team Update (Hope & Colleen)
6. Other Business
1. Streamflow Restoration Act Planning