

Chehalis Basin Lead Entity

Habitat Work Group Meeting

March 5, 2018

9:30 am – 12:00 pm

Chehalis Tribe Community Center Gathering Room
Oakville, Washington

In attendance:

Alice Rubin, Recreation & Conservation Office	Kelly Verd, Lewis County Cons Dist.
Ann Weckback, Lewis County Public Works	Kirsten Harma, Watershed Coordinator
Anthony Waldrop, Grays Harbor Cons Dist.	Lonnie Crumley, Fisheries Task Force
Amy Spoon, WDFW Region 6	Luke Kelly, Trout Unlimited
Bob Amrine, Lewis County Conservation Dist.	Mara Healy, Thurston Conservation Dist.
Brandon Carman, Grays Harbor Cons Dist.	Mark Gray, Chehalis River Basin Land T.
Cade Roler, WDFW Habitat Program	Miranda Plumb, USFWS
Colleen Suter, Chehalis Tribe DNR	Omroa Bhagwandin, Citizen
Darcey Hughes, Forterra	Rich Osborne, Coast Salmon Partnership
Greg Green, Ducks Unlimited	Rick Rouse, Port of Chehalis
Janet Strong, Chehalis River Basin Land Trust	Rod Lakey, Lewis County Public Works
Jarred Box, WDFW Habitat - intern	Ron Figlar-Barnes, Citizen
Jason Gillie, Chehalis Tribe DNR	Stu Trefry, Washington State Cons. Commiss.
Jess Helsley, Coast Salmon Partnership	Thom Woodruff, Capitol Land Trust
Jonathan Bradshaw, Citizen	Tom Kollasch, Grays Harbor Cons. Dist.
Kathleen Berger, Thurston Cons Dist.	

Meeting Summary

1. Welcome, Introductions.

Everyone provided self-introductions.

2. Organizational Business

a) Review of Minutes from February 2018

Bob Amrine and Thom Woodruff sent their proposed corrections to Kirsten prior to the meeting. Thom moved to approve the minutes with those suggested edits. Tom seconded. All in favour.

b) Subcommittees

The culvert subcommittee has not met for a while. Cade Roler has been chairing these meetings and will likely call one in the next month.

The Newaukum subcommittee has not met in a while. Rich Osborne has been chairing these meetings and suggested the next meeting be in June or July. Kirsten mentioned that Cynthia Carlstad has been conducting landowner interviews in the Newaukum and hearing the results of those conversations might be a good reason to convene a meeting. Alternatively, she could come and present the results to the whole HWG. Bob mentioned that he's been involved with setting up landowner contacts for Cynthia. 15 people have agreed to participate in an interview so far. People are still confused about the various river related initiatives. We haven't lost the landowner willingness to do habitat projects yet.

3. Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB)

a) 2018 Grant Round Updates

Kirsten reminded the group of the SRFB grant round schedule and next steps in the Lead Entity process. She passed out a paper schedule.

Alice thanked everyone who had submitted Milestone worksheets. She is working on issuing contracts this week. March 21st is the next Salmon Recovery Funding Board meeting.

b) Conceptual Project Presentations

Wishkah Gardens Riparian Restoration – Forterra

Darcey Hughes presented this project concept. Forterra acquired the Wishkah Gardens parcel in a previous SRFB grant round. The parcel is in relatively good shape. It is a forested wetland and has ¼ mile shoreline on the Wishkah. Forterra is proposing some restoration work before transferring the parcel to Chehalis River Basin Land Trust care. Wild Fish Conservancy (WFC) completed a survey and determined what types of restoration work would improve the property. They identified removal of knotweed, holly, blackberry and reed canary grass. No instream modification were recommended. Large woody debris addition was not recommended given limited research on how this affects habitat in tidally influenced areas. The SRFB proposal will be to treat the invasive species and plant native plants, both using a Washington Conservation Corps crew. WFC recommends 5 years of maintenance.

Q) How will you get funds for the other 4 years of maintenance?

A) The Quinault have provided stewardship funding as match for this project. We may come back for a third phase of SRFB funding if we need longer maintenance.

Q) How will you arrange a site visit here?

A) We might have to access via the boat launch. Definitely bring your waders.

Q) The SRFB and WCRI has criticized other similar projects that look at a parcel-only treatment of knotweed. How will you address the impaired process that is impacting your site?

A) We've talked with the County about this. We have been talking about doing something system wide on the Hoquiam and would likely be happy to do something on the Wishkah too, but haven't done anything yet.

Frase Creek – Lewis County

The ASRP Barrier funds will likely fund this project. The County is looking for additional SRFB funding for the restoration component at about \$255,000. This will included adding large woody debris and vegetating the riparian corridor over 300 feet. The County has applied for USFWS funds for this work but doesn't know the status of that grant program.

Q) Why are you doing a concrete box vs. another alternative?

A) We need the box for a guardrail post along the road. We have to put a concrete wall on the downstream side. It's a lot going on in a tight spot.

Middle Fork Newaukum Barriers – Lewis County

These barriers will likely be funded for construction with FBRB (Fish Barrier Removal Board) funds 2020-2021. The SRFB ask will be to do designs to get them a cost estimate for construction. The work will be on two culverts in that system. One on Centralia Alpha Road. One of these is downstream from the funded "Newaukum Trio" by the Lewis County Conservation District which will be replaced this summer.

Holm Farm Phase II – Capitol Land Trust

Phase II will be to acquire the second half of the parcel that was funded in the 2017 SRFB round. South of the Sound Farm Trust is no longer a partner on this project. For Phase II, only Capitol Land Trust will be working on the acquisitions. The property is along Bloom's Ditch, Black River watershed. The project fits in with CLT's Black River Initiative.

Q) What happened to Conservation Futures as a match source?

A) The program is on hold. 2017 obligated funds have not been awarded yet and the Commissioners have not made a decision about 2018. The program is currently working on addressing the pocket gopher issue, which affects mostly uplands in the south county.

c) Project Review Code of Conduct.

When Local Review Team does site visits as part of project review, they often go out onto

private land. There is still a concern among landowners that these site visits bring agency people to the land, which could lead to reporting problems seen on the property to regulatory agencies. A suggestion for protecting ongoing landowner willingness is informing people new to the process to what to do when they are on private land. The group discussed potential development of a Code of Conduct.

Constructive ideas discussed by the group:

- Get a process to make sure that if issues are noted at the project site, the information gets back to the Conservation District/sponsor. This would allow the CD to work through their process with voluntary approaches, and assure the reviewers that the issues will be dealt with.
- Don't put things on paper during review that might trigger regulatory action.
- Note that agency staff can't turn their heads from legal violations. This doesn't mean that they will begin regulatory action. They would first look at voluntary measures.
- The Lead Entity could come up with guidelines to remind project reviewers of their roles.
- Come up with a written "understanding" so both reviewers and landowners get on the same page. This could be a one page guidance document.
- We could just have this discussion again.
- People involved in the ASRP should also discuss this topic.

4. Aquatic Species Restoration Plan (ASRP) & Chehalis Strategy

Ecology and RCO have finally signed an interagency agreement so that RCO can manage Chehalis Strategy funds, which are housed at Ecology. RCO's rate overall is 1.5%, and to manage the ASRP projects is 4.12%. RCO is working on an MOU with WDFW.

a) ASRP Barrier Grant Round Update

There were 12 applications. A review team conducted site visits, and then ranked the projects. The review team recommended a project list. The Chehalis Basin Board approved up to \$4.3 million to be spent on barrier projects. The ASRP Steering Committee still needs to decide which projects get funded. We still don't know what the funding line will be. The Sand Creek project is the only project approved by the Steering Committee thus far, since it needs to start construction this summer so a decision was needed sooner. RCO staff person Josh Lambert will be managing the barrier grants.

b) Other Chehalis Strategy Updates

Also ongoing for the ASRP is development of a process to do reach-scale habitat restoration. They are looking for 1 to 2 engineering firms to do project designs. The second round of interviews of the firms is March 13. The Conservation Districts are involved and will be doing landowner outreach. The aim is to do one design per each of the 5 priority sub-watersheds.

Tom Kollasch discussed a conceptual idea of proposing large instream projects through the Lead Entity process. Originally this group had discussed waiting for the ASRP to be fleshed out before looking to do reach scale projects ourselves. Recently Tom was contacted by DNR staff who are looking to do a project in the Satsop. The Grays Harbor CD has been talking with them and is willing to sponsor a design project for that reach. Tom asked the group if we're at a point where we would support a project like this. The project would be about a \$250,000 SRFB ask, with DNR providing some match. Tom's concept is to do something like the ASRP is envisioning, with maximum habitat benefits in mind and which would work for landowners.

Comment: Note coordination with ASRP if you propose the project for SRFB.

Comment: Maybe ask for WCRI funds (Tom responded that they'd look for those funds for construction.)

Comment: Consider goals of project. Couldn't this just be the ASRP reach since it has so many interested landowners? Answer: There are 4 potential reaches in the Satsop so there is no guarantee that this project would go to design as one of the ASRP selections.

Other Business:

None.

Next HWG Meeting: April 2, 2018

****The meeting was followed by a mandatory pre-application workshop****