

# Chehalis Basin Lead Entity -- Habitat Work Group

March 9, 2029 -- AGENDA

~ 9:30 am – 12:00 pm ~

Chehalis Tribe Community Center

“Gathering Room” 461 Secena Road, Oakville, WA

Ann Weckback, Lewis County	Kirsten Harma, Lead Entity Coordinator
Bob Amrine, Lewis Conservation District	Mark Gray, Chehalis R.B. Land Trust
Brandon Carman, RCO	Megan Tuttle, WDFW
Greg Green, Ducks Unlimited	Miranda Plumb, US Fish&Wildlife Service
Jen Riedmayer, Dept. of Ecology	Ned Pittman, Coast Salmon Partnership/Fdn
Jonathan Bradshaw, HWG Minutes	Ryan Williams, Mason CD
Kathy Jacobsen, LE Outreach Coordinator	Rick Rouse, Port of Chehalis
Kelly Verd, Lewis Conservation District	Thom Woodruff, Capitol Land Trust

## 1. Welcome, Introductions

## 2. Review of minutes from February 2020

Mark Gray moved to accept the minutes and Ann Weckback seconded. The minutes were passed without discussion.

## 3. Organizational Business

### 1. Culvert Subcommittee

The next Culvert Subcommittee meeting had been planned to immediately follow the April HWG meeting, but not enough of the key participants are available that day. A new date is needed so Kirsten or Chris will send out a Doodle Poll.

### 2. Newaukum Subcommittee

The Newaukum subcommittee will meet in May after the HWG meeting. Ned has completed his model, and will be getting together with WDFW in the coming week. They will work to combine the spawn survey ground truthing with this model, and will hopefully be able to bring these results to May’s meeting.

### 3. Outreach

Kathy Jacobson shared that the Scott Freeman event, held March 6<sup>th</sup> at noon, had 70-80 student attendees, and that it was an impactful presentation. The evening presentation had several groups tabling, but attendance was lower than hoped, with only about 30 attendees. Scott’s presentation and the Q&A that followed, however, was great.

Coming up:

- We will be participating in the upcoming shorebird festival in Hoquiam April 24-26th. We'll be tabling with the Grays Harbor Stream Team with the water table.
- 5th Annual Ride the Willapa participation. This year it will start in Adna and bike out to Pluvius.
- World Fish Migration Day: We'll have two event locations that day (Lake Sylvia Park, Chehalis Discovery Trail) for sponsors to participate through tables/activities. Kathy passed around participation forms--events will take place Saturday, May 16th.

#### **4. Other updates**

Ann Weckback gave a brief overview of the superfund clean-up project that will be taking place on Berwick Creek. The site is in the vicinity of the County's Labree barrier removal project, which had presented potential concern. In looking at the details of the clean-up, however, the County's project looks to be essentially unaffected by the proposed work.

Briefly: Roughly 700' upstream from the Labree project, the clean-up will involve stream modification within its current channel. The work will involve the grading out of the channel for about 100', where an insulation/liner of rock and foam will be installed. After installing this insulation, the surrounding soil will be heated with a treatment that will burn out the contaminants. This treatment will last for two years, after which everything will be removed and restored.

#### **4. Presentation: Shaping your projects to help Lamprey (Miranda, USFWS)**

Miranda Plumb presented on the importance of incorporating Lamprey concerns into salmon-focused projects. In short: anything you do for salmon/steelhead will likely help lamprey. That said: think about Lamprey as well while the work is being done. The life history of Lamprey is mentionably different from salmon in relevant ways. The freshwater portion of their anadromous cycle includes a juvenile stage anywhere from 2 to 7 years long--as such, preserving build-up of fine sediment is critical for lamprey. From fine sediment to cobbly transition layers to large rock--all types of river bed serve a different portion of the lamprey's life cycle. As a result of their life history, lamprey are also always present in local rivers: there isn't an in-water work window as there is for salmon. Adults of anadromous lamprey may overwinter in the river, and there are also resident lamprey which are not anadromous. As such, proper dewatering/salvage techniques are important for the survival of lamprey (also consider freshwater mussels).

Lamprey also have different needs with regard to getting through culverts. High velocity, sharp/90 degree edges, and corrugated culverts, can all negatively impact lamprey. Much lamprey locomotion depends on the ability to create suction with their mouths on flat surfaces. As such, they're notably more sensitive to culverts than salmon so additional design alternatives may need to be considered to help lamprey, too.

Resources with further information include:

- BMP to Minimize Adverse Effects to Pacific Lamprey (USFWS, 2010, being updated)
- Pacific Lamprey Habitat Restoration Guide. (Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation)

DISCUSSION:

Q: What eats the lamprey larva?

A: Birds and fish, mostly. They're a "predation buffer" for salmon: someone else to eat. Also, crawdads love them. Further down the system, adults also act as a predation buffer for larger salmon against Harbor Seals.

## **5. Salmon Recovery Funding Board**

- 1. Reminder of site visits: planned for April 14 & 15. Accordingly, final applications are due March 30th.**

- 2. RCO Updates**

Brandon Carman updated the group on behalf of the RCO. Marnie Taylor and Michelle Cramer will be the reviewer board members joining the site visits. This year, the entire review process will take place within an online review module. If questions or issues arise while using PRISM, please reach out to Brandon.

Q: *Who will be submitting comments online?*

A: There will be a combination: the two dedicated RCO site reviewers will comment, and any projects which need attention from the rest of the Board will receive comments from the full board. Additionally, Local Review Team comments will show up here, as well as input/discussion from and with project sponsors. The hope is that this will streamline the whole process.

Q: *Can the public see project costs?*

A: Yes, this is all public in PRISM.

*Comment:* There is some concern about consultants using these public project budgets to adjust where their bids come in. This emphasizes the importance of going out to bid early and advertise well, so that a good response can enforce meaningful competition at bid.

The SRFB meeting will take place online on March 19th, given concerns about the coronavirus. The agenda can be seen online.

- 3. Past projects**

- i. Lessons Learned**

Thom Woodruff shared some 'lessons learned' from the Wilson Conservation Easement, a previously SRFB-funded project that has fallen through. In sum, recommendations include:

-Keep aware of land owner's motivation and this effect on the process. Financial? Personal commitment to the land? These motivators provide very different kinds of investment from the land owner in the conservation easement process.

-What roles do financial pressures play in the agreement? If the CE agreement is developed when the financial benefit is a significant factor for the landowner, that same landowner may lose motivation if the financial leverage offered by the conservation easement becomes less important.

-Ensure that conservation easement agreements explicitly grant 3rd parties the right to carry out restoration. Otherwise, necessary access by 3rd party restoration contractors may be denied by the land owner, and the project can be halted.

-Get pen to paper and get a binding agreement established as early as possible. This is important in its own right, but is especially so in light of all of the stated factors at play. Also, be mindful of and keep up-to-date with options expirations.

## DISCUSSION:

Q: *Are there resources for grant guidance, given all these factors to consider?*

A: Not a lot of explicit guidance: much is gained through experience. However, it is helpful to work with the RCO, and the Land Trust Alliance Learning Center has some resources.

### ii. **Habitat Work Schedule Update:**

Coast Stewards are getting the Habitat Work Schedule up to date. They would like to be back-checking different metrics: fish-miles, etc. They would like feedback from different sponsors/parties: have these projects happened? Are these fish miles and other metrics accurate? They are working to put this information into a report to the Coast Salmon Board on progress for the whole coast region, based on HWS metrics. This starts with ensuring accurate data.

Kirsten will send out a spreadsheet of information to be fact-checked by parties.

## 6. **Aquatic Species Restoration Plan**

### 1. **Grant Round Update**

Site Visits happened last week. A total of 16 site visits over 3 days. A good variety of project types were submitted.

#### Timeline & Next Steps:

These decisions will take place before the SRFB site visits, but the Lead Entity will evaluate the overlapping SRFB proposals anyway.

### 2. **Steering Committee Update**

Kirsten solicited the group for ideas on better rolling out ASRP implementation. Input would be appreciated and carried into the conversation going forward.

Q: *When does the final document come out?*

A: There won't be one: it's a living document. In fact, to this end, the "phase" structure is being shifted: rather than this next being termed "phase II", it will simply be called the 2020 Work Plan. The focus is continual, adaptive management.

Going forward, the Steering Committee is looking toward having a better implementation structure and providing best practices for projects. On a technical note, with legislative funding in the coming years, the Chehalis Basin Board has proposed splitting the designated Strategy

money in half: half for fish action, half for flood action. The hope is that this can emphasize the independent needs of habitat restoration. In this case, however, there is the possibility that legislators will want to see project lists on the front end, which is a challenge given that are basin isn't used to developing habitat projects well in advance of funding availability.

### **3. Early Action Reach Update (CDs)**

Skookumchuck: The project is pursuing permits, and hoping for construction this summer.

Newaukum: The final design is completed: the next step is checking in with landowners.

Lessons learned: ensure complete landowner cooperation up front. Several changes to the design have come from a failure to do so. Lessons are being learned however: future work should happen faster.

Satsop/Nooch: The Wynoochee is set to go forward at this point. There are, however, some landowner questions still needing to be resolved on the Satsop.

## **7. Dam Environmental Impact Statement (11:10)**

### **1. Group comment letter on dam?**

The group doesn't feel comfortable putting out a blanket statement as the HWG. Different parties have to tread lightly and be very careful about what they put their name on. Parties that are able to do this individually, however, are strongly encouraged to do so.

Of note, Mara Zimmerman will be submitting a comment letter for the entire Coast Salmon Partnership. Comments will be on the integrity of the info, and will not be taking a stance.

**This meeting was followed by an optional pre-application workshop.**