

**Chehalis Basin Lead Entity -- Habitat Work Group
February 7, 2022 -- Minutes**

Zoom Meeting

~ 9:00 am – 12:00 pm ~

<i>Ann Weckback, Lewis County Public Works</i> <i>Alex Gustafson, Trout Unlimited</i> <i>Alexa Brown, CBFTF/GH Stream Team</i> <i>Andrew Deffobis, Thurston County</i> <i>Ben Amidon, Chehalis Tribe DNR</i> <i>Bob Russell, Lewis County Citizen</i> <i>Brandon Carman, RCO</i> <i>Caprice Fasano, Quinault Indian Nation</i> <i>Chantell Krider, RCO</i> <i>Elena Fernandez, Thurston County</i> <i>Garrett Dalan, Nature Conservancy</i> <i>Greg Green, Ducks Unlimited</i> <i>Hannah Coe, Ecology Non-Point</i> <i>Kathy Jacobson, CBLE Outreach Coordinator</i>	<i>Katrinka Hibler, Thurston Conservation Dist.</i> <i>Kirsten Harma, Lead Entity Coordinator</i> <i>Kelly Verd, Lewis Cons. Dist.</i> <i>Keith, Mason Conservation Dist.</i> <i>Key McMurry, Grays Harbor Citizen</i> <i>Lee First, Twin Harbors Water Keeper</i> <i>Mara Zimmerman, Coast Salmon Partnership</i> <i>Megan Tuttle, WDFW Region 6</i> <i>Mike Scharft, WDFW Fish Program</i> <i>Nat Kale, Office of the Chehalis Basin</i> <i>Ned Pittman, Coast Salmon Part/Fdn</i> <i>Paula Holroyde, Thurston Citizen</i> <i>Sarah Watkins, Grays Harbor Citizen</i> <i>Tom Kollasch, Grays Harbor Cons. Dist.</i>
---	--

1. Welcome, Introductions

Key McMurry served as Chair in Bob's absence.

2. Networking Time in Breakout Rooms

3. Minutes Approval – January

Elena motioned to approve January's minutes, and Alexa seconded. The motion passed.

4. Organizational Business

a. Outreach Updates

Kathy is planning a public walk at the Chehalis Discovery Trail for World Fish Migration Day, May 21st. A Watershed Heroes story will soon be coming out about William and Dan at the Chehalis Tribe. The story celebrates their first traditional burn in 100 years! Lee First recommended a new candidate for a Watershed Hero story – Kyle at Pacific Foods who is picking up yellow rope on the shoreline.

Several members shared stories about their experience on the February 4th tour of restoration project sites impacted by the Chehalis basin flooding. Participants found collaboration opportunities while learning about the impacts of the floods. At Wisner Creek, they were happy to learn that plantings survived, while noting blown out beaver dams. There will be a Lewis County Stream Team planting event at the site this coming weekend. On the Big Buffer tour, the project manager had thought they had lost wood chips placed as mulch over the young plantings, but they did not – there was just fine sediment piled on top.

Mara provided an update on the Coast Salmon Partnership staff's plan to roll out a signage project for signs at restoration sites. The plan still needs to be approved by the Partnership board. If it goes through, the CSP will pay to develop signs for up to 4 projects per Lead Entity. It sounded like there was enthusiasm for signage in the Mill Creek area.

Tom Kollasch reported that Anthony and the project team took a tour of the ASRP restoration site on the Satsop. There were 2 historic floods on this river within 5 days of each other – there were places where overland flow flowed over 8 feet high. The engineered log-jams faired well. What eroded was loose material where they were re-buried. Now, there are multiple side channels on the gravel bar. Tom will ask Anthony when they're ready to host a tour for other interested parties.

b. Newaukum Subcommittee

The committee will meet after this meeting. Alex provided a recap of the previous meeting. Kirsten encouraged folks to attend even if they don't have a specific interest in the Newaukum. This "pilot watershed plan" is intended to be replicated throughout the Chehalis and could be an important part of the update to the Lead Entity strategy.

c. Coast Salmon Partnership representation

There are still seats available on the Coast Salmon Partnership to represent the Chehalis Lead Entity. Hope Rieden, Chehalis Tribe, recently vacated a seat. Alexa Brown volunteered to serve in this role.

Megan Tuttle made a motion to nominated Alexa for this role. Tom seconded. All in favor.

5. Salmon Recovery Funding Board

a. Targeted Investment

No updated. No project applications were submitted to the Chehalis Basin Lead Entity.

b. Project Presentations.

Camp Creek Schafer Boom Rd. Fish Passage Const. (Alexa Brown, Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force)

Alexa provided an overview of the project and its benefits.

Q) Is there potential for engaging the landowners west of Schafer Boom Road to address the reed canary grass?

A) We will plant a high density of willows in that area, but there are no current plans for removal of reed canary grass. There may be some cultural resources in this area, and thus barriers to additional excavation and planting in the field to the left.

Q) Where does the ranking percentile come from?

A) All Chehalis barriers have been ranked thorough a rigorous effort by the WDFW and culvert subcommittee. This barrier is very highly ranked in the basin.

Q) What is the schedule?

A) Construction will happen in 2023.

Q) Will the rip-rap in the channel be addressed? It looks like that is pretty severe and could become a juvenile passage issue.

A) Yes, we have plans to take that out.

Dempsey Creek Trib. at Shawn Dr. Fish Passage Const. (22-1053) Elena Fernandez, Thurston County

Elena provided an overview of the project and its benefits. The project ranked 349 for replacement in the Chehalis Basin and is a Priority 2. There would be 1.73 miles of forested land upstream fully opened to fish use. This is a 67% passable barrier with a plunge pool downstream. Fish can only make it upstream under the right flow conditions. The County's proposed correction is a bridge. Match has been secured through the County's Real Estate tax. They have also applied for funding through the National Fish Passage program.

Q) Stream re-grading?

A) ?

Q) What will you do if there is active scour? What will the treatment be for the bank?

A) We don't want to have to rely on rip-rap. The fact that the whole stream width will be made available for flows should make this not a problem. We will place wood or rock if required because of scour.

Q) Will you move the driveway?

A) We won't need to. We will move the streambed so we won't have to move the driveway.

Q) How is a bridge the most cost-effective option?

A) We measured the bankful width

Comment – Consider your use of the word “incised”, these systems could just be spring-fed systems with the slight bank erosion being natural. I'd consider examining the stream and see if it is getting flow year 'round.

Chehalis Creekside Confluence Project – Thurston Conservation District

Katrinka Hibler from Thurston Conservation District presented the project. They are proposing the opportunity to ASRP, but may be seeking additional SRFB funds as match for an opportunistic project.

The work would take place on a 48-acre parcel owned by a farm land conservancy and a land conservancy – thus, much of the area can be dedicated to conservation. Species that could benefit include spring chinook, fall chinook, coho, winter steelhead, sea-run

cutthroat. A WDFW survey found Northern red-legged frog and mudminnow on the property. The proposal is to conduct design and permitting for a large wood installation along the mainstem Chehalis. They would reach out to the land owner on the other side of the river to see if they'd be open to engaging the south bank in the channel, too. A culvert on the property isn't high ranking, but could be corrected as part of the project. Limiting factors the work would address include high contributions of sediment, fish passage, floodplain connection, poor riparian condition and water quality.

Q) What's in the small side stream?

A) ?

Q) What's the total cost of the project?

A) \$140,000 for the first phase of the project. This would cover design and invasive weed management. It can be accomplished in 2 years.

Katrinka asked the group – would there be benefit in putting in hedgerows?

A) Megan liked the idea of hedgerows and thought there might be a way to make them profitable. They provide shade and production, too, as well as pollinator habitat in the middle of the field

Q) Is reed canary grass your main invasive?

A) Yes

Q) What is the purpose of adding large wood on the mainstem?

A) To make sure there is large wood because it is lacking. Habitat complexity.

Comment – Caprice recommends an alternatives analysis. Engage a firm to do so. Look at how the treatments might interact with each other so design from upstream to downstream at once.

6. Salmon Recovery Portal Training

Chantelle Krider from the Recreation and Conservation Office provided the training. She introduced the “umbrella” project feature of the Salmon Recovery Portal. She noted that Salmon Recovery Portal is intended to be used for all salmon recovery actions, not just those that are SRFB funded. It is a tool for planning and reporting. The umbrella feature is beneficial in that it shows how projects are related to one another and adds the ability to relate projects that are multi-funded and multi-year, or projects planned for phases. A small umbrella would relate 2-5 projects; a large umbrella would relate 6 or more.

The umbrella project can show how much of the project is currently funded, and how much additional funding is needed. It can be used to prepare cost estimates. There is a “gant chart” features that show timelines and breaks the project into phases. The information can be used to track a project relative to its goals.

There will be a way to convert the umbrella project features to a PDF that can be shared with funding sources, communities, etc. The information can also be embedded in a website.

Q) How would a sponsor access this and start setting up an umbrella project?

A) Identify just one project and it will bring in all related projects. You can then remove projects that you don't want to be part of the umbrella. Mara adds that this actual work will need to be done through the Coast's data steward.

Comment – the Lead Entity should discuss what levels it wants to use the umbrellas at, and the process for making them.

Chantelle has made a training video that is available for Lead Entity groups and sponsors.

7. Associated Program Updates

a. Aquatic Species Restoration Plan –

Kirsten asked the group how they would like to use our time on the agenda set aside for discussing the ASRP. Would folks like to just hear updates ASRP projects, or use the time differently?

Tom noted that Regional Implementation Teams are just working on priority areas identified and refined through the ASRP. There is a lot more work in the basin that can and should be done. The Lead Entity needs to keep moving forward on other priorities.

Kirsten clarified that of course we're here to implement the Lead Entity strategy and getting SRFB and other funds to do that work. She asked the group how they would like to use our time as people working together on salmon recovery in the basin, including the ASRP, to share ideas and learn from one another.

Ideas for cross-cutting information-sharing that could happen included:

- getting training on pesticide application, reed canary grass eradication, etc;
- keeping tabs on projects that aren't salmon-focused but happening in the same area (synergy!);
- creating maps of different projects happening in each area; and
- sharing ideas around signage and making sure that messages are consistent.

b. Coast Salmon Partnership

The WCRRRI grant round is open! There will be an application workshop on February 17th. Final proposals are due March 9. Ned will re-open the RFQ for the technical review panel. They are really looking for some citizen representatives to participate and provide their unique perspectives. The RFQ will be open for just 3 days so apply soon! The CSP February board meeting will be a joint board meeting. A roll out of the CSP communication plan will happen at that time.

c. Fish Barrier Removal Board

Dave Collins from the FBRB program was present. He said that they are in the process of screening projects for basic eligibility. As a reminder, the presence of downstream culverts makes a project ineligible! He doesn't know if the federal infrastructure funding is coming to the FBRB program yet or not. There are about 150 projects from across the state seeking funding.