

Chehalis Basin Collaborative for Salmon Habitat

Grays Harbor County Commissioner's Hearing Room

100 W. Broadway, Montesano, WA

And Zoom

MINUTES

April 7, 2025

Adam High - <i>Thurston County PW</i> Alex James - <i>Capitol Land Trust</i> Alex Gustafson - <i>Trout Unlimited</i> Alice Rubin - <i>RCO</i> Ann Weckback - <i>Lewis County PW</i> Anthony Waldrop - <i>Grays Harbor C. Dist</i> Ben Amidon - <i>Chehalis Tribe</i> Brandon Carman - <i>WDFW</i> Brett DeMond - <i>CBFTF Streamworks</i> Brian Combs - <i>Mason Conservation District</i> Caprice Fasano - <i>Quinault Indian Nation</i> Cindy Wilson - <i>Thurston County Citizen</i> Daron Williams - <i>WDFW</i> Donna Albert - <i>Chehalis River Basin LT</i> Drew Mealor - <i>ASRP Implementation Mgr</i> Bella Padgett - <i>Ducks Unlimited</i> Farley Youckton - <i>Chehalis Tribe</i>	Jacob Murray - <i>Mason Conservation District</i> Jeff Mach - <i>Grays Harbor CD</i> Jennifer Lewis - <i>Office of Chehalis Basin, ASRP</i> Kathy Jacobson - <i>CBCfSH Ed. Coordinator</i> Kelly Verd - <i>Lewis Conservation District</i> Key McMurray - <i>Grays Harbor Citizen Rep</i> Kirsten Harma - <i>CBCfSH Coordinator</i> Lee Ann Frank - <i>Lewis County PW</i> Mack Hunter - <i>Grays Harbor Conserv Dist</i> Sarah Longacre - Non-Point, Ecology Shannon Shula - <i>Thurston County PW</i> Olivia Williams - <i>USFWS</i> Sophia Sherman - <i>Chehalis Tribe</i> Tina Niels - <i>Grays Harbor Citizen</i> Vanessa LaValle - <i>Conservation Northwest</i> Victoria Knorr - <i>ASRP Program Manager</i>
--	---

1. Welcome & Introductions

2. Minutes – February and March

No corrections or additions were offered.

3. Organizational Business

a. CBC-fSH Outreach Updates

Kathy Jacobson shared that she is continuing work on the Watershed Heroes series. She has just published an article through the Chronicle on prairie restoration work done at the Glacial Heritage Preserve by Gail Trotter and Dennis Plank. Further, in an upcoming watershed hero

feature, she will be highlighting Trina Young, a volunteer with Friends of Schaefer and Lake Sylvia State Parks (FOSLS).

Kathy further shared that a team gave five water table presentations to Simpson Elementary School in March. She also shared that she and the Grays Harbor Conservation District (GHCD) are looking to collaborate on a follow-up field trip for these students to conservation work at the Satsop early reach restoration site. Additionally, she shared that GHCD will likely work with fifth-graders at Simpson Elementary with the water table in the near future. Kathy also noted that she has been meeting with both the Lewis County and Grays Harbor Stream Team coordinators.

Kathy finally shared that she would be tabling at the Tenino Earth Day Challenge on April 19th, and reminded the group that Prairie Appreciation Day is taking place on May 10th.

b. Website

Kirsten and Kathy then led a discussion about updates to CBCfSH's website in the interest of making it more useful and streamlined, and sought input from the group.

Kathy shared that hopes for the website include: making the site very specific to the Chehalis Basin; clearly highlighting and featuring SRFB work; making the site more compatible on mobile devices; replacing niche acronyms in order to promote public understanding; archiving information that is over two years old; making resources and brochures highly accessible; making more multimedia resources available.

She then sought input from the group, and led a discussion on: why and how often members use the website; specific information that is sought out on the website; information, resources and links that should be added to the site.

Information suggested for addition included: a link to fish barrier prioritization; access to the Salmon Recovery Portal; salmon stock trend data; public-oriented information about locally relevant species; subcommittee-specific sections of the website; archived examples of grant applications; native plant resources; clear links to ASRP documents; sponsor FAQs; links to ASRP project videos. Kirsten and Kathy then asked sponsors to share multimedia resources highlighting the basin and work done in it.

Kirsten then shared three options for a CBCfSH logo, and sought input from the group. Feedback included reducing or eliminating the role of hands in the image, inclusion of a border, and stronger contrast between colors. After discussion, the group decided to form a small committee to discuss the suggested changes and finalize the logo.

c. Committee Updates

Committees have no new updates at present

4. Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB)

a. RCO Updates

Alice Rubin shared draft budgets for the salmon team of the RCO, which included the agency's request (total: \$386M), as well as the draft budgets from the governor (\$208M), the house (\$169M), and the senate (\$182M). She noted that a significant part of the wide disparity between the agency request and the other budgets represents about \$80M in federal funding that is not included in the other budgets.

Jenny Lewis: Is there timing in terms of when we might get resolution on these budgets?

Alice Rubin: Our legislative liaison shared that there isn't any certainty here - there is a real possibility of a special session.

Alice then shared that the SRFB grant round is well in motion, and other upcoming grant programs are in the works. Other grant rounds will be starting between October and February.

b. Cost Increase needs

Kirsten shared that Ann Weckback's project scope change has released \$1,038 in funding. Any active grant with a cost increase request would be able to access this funding. If it is unused within the LE, it will become available to the rest of the Coast Salmon Partnership.

Kelly Verd shared that a barrier project has fallen through as the result of a property sale, and that funding for that project will likely be returned for redistribution to other Lead Entity projects soon.

c. SRFB Schedule

Kirsten shared an update on the SRFB timeline. She noted that site visits will be taking place in the coming week, and that all comments will be due April 28th. Supplemental questions will also be completed on that date, and the Ranking Committee will then meet May 8th.

Kirsten shared that in lieu of the Grays Harbor College students participating in site visits, she will instead be presenting the SRFB grant process to them, and then leading them through a ranking process of this year's grants. Anthony Waldrop shared that students will also be joining the GHCD for a site visit at some of their restoration sites.

d. SRFB Applications – Climate Resilient Projects

Kirsten led the group through an exercise using climate resilience resources and tools at the project level, as compiled by the Coast Salmon Partnership. She walked the group through a sponsor questionnaire that discusses various elements of climate considerations and actions, and guides sponsors through quantifying climate resilience factors for their projects. She also navigated to the various resources listed in the worksheet. These resources included the Climate Adaptation for Habitat Restoration interactive webmap (which predicts future site-specific changes in various climate factors); as well as an "Impacts on Salmon by Life Stage" timeline chart.

5. Associated Program Updates (11:00)

a. Washington Coast Restoration and Resiliency Initiative (WCRRI)

Alice Rubin requested feedback from the group on whether a shift in the WCRRI grant schedule would be helpful for sponsors who have participated or are planning to participate. She has

sent out an email to potential and past applicants, and noted that this email is public information and can be forwarded to any interested parties.

b. Coast Salmon Partnership

No CSP staff were present at the meeting, but Kirsten shared that there is a new Executive Director, Dr. Jane Atha. Kirsten also shared that their Annual Report is nearly complete.

c. Aquatic Species Restoration Plan

Victoria Knorr shared that nearly all of the implementation funding is slated to be obligated this by the end of this biennium. She also shared that the ASRP had a lessons-learned workshop for project sponsors on March 20th. She noted that the workshop, which takes place every two years, focused on implementation of large projects; project development; and maintenance and stewardship.

d. Office of the Chehalis Basin

Jennie Lewis shared that Deena Resnick has joined the OCB as their public outreach coordinator. She will be helping engage the public on the long term strategy for the Chehalis Basin. She also shared that the Local Area Non-Dam (LAND) alternatives consultants also presented at the last meeting on analysis they have done on proposed flood storage work. She also shared that the federal funding coordinator, Janel Bistrika has left her position with the OCB, though she will be working with the OCB occasionally on a volunteer basis.

Jennie also shared that the OCB requested \$80M for the next biennium of the Chehalis Basin Strategy. At this point, the Senate has written that full amount into their budget, while the house has assigned \$70M. She also noted, however, that this is all subject to the state-wide budget cuts currently in discussion.

Additionally, she shared that the \$17M in match approved for the Levee on the North Shore is again in limbo. Further details are still up in the air.

Kirsten then noted that Deena will be giving a presentation at a future Habitat Work Group meeting.

e. Fish Barrier Removal Board

No FBRB members were present, but Alice Rubin noted that they have a board meeting in the coming week. She also noted that local Tribes have requested a return to negotiations with the state, as the DOT has projected that they are not going to be able to complete mandated barrier replacements by the required deadline of 2030.

f. Other

Bella Padgett introduced her new position with Ducks Unlimited. She will be supporting DU projects in Western Washington, and is also contracted with NRCS to provide connections to landowners.

Sophia Sherman is the new noxious weed coordinator throughout the Chehalis Basin, with her position housed at the Chehalis Tribe. She will be working extensively with counties, stream teams, and various regional entities to ensure that this work is well-coordinated.

6. Closing

This meeting was followed by an optional “Spring Renewal” activity at Lake Sylvia State Park.