

# Chehalis Basin Collaborative for Salmon Habitat

## MINUTES June 2, 2025

Adam High - <i>Thurston County PW</i> Alex James - <i>Capitol Land Trust</i> Alex Bradberry - <i>CSP Outreach</i> Alex Papiez - <i>Thurston Conservation Dist</i> Alice Rubin - <i>RCO</i> Amelia Schwartz - <i>Thurston County</i> Ann Weckback - <i>Lewis County PW</i> Anthony Waldrop - <i>Grays Harbor C. Dist</i> Bella Padgett - <i>Ducks Unlimited</i> Bob Russell - <i>Lewis County Citizen</i> Brandon Carman - <i>WDFW</i> Brett DeMond - <i>CBFTF Streamworks</i> Caprice Fasano - <i>Quinault Indian Nation</i> Chanelle Holbrook - <i>Dept of Ecology</i> Donna Albert - <i>Chehalis River Basin LT</i> Drew Meador - <i>ASRP Implementation Mgr</i> Bella Padgett - <i>Ducks Unlimited</i> Jane Atha - <i>Coast Salmon Partnership/Fdn</i> Jacob Baker - <i>Coastal Interpretive Center</i> Jacob Murray - <i>Mason Conservation District</i>	Jennifer Lewis - <i>Office of Cheh. Basin, ASRP</i> John Stepanek - <i>Grays Harbor CD</i> Julie Grobelny, <i>WDFW</i> Kathy Jacobson - <i>CBCfSH Ed. Coordinator</i> Kelly Verd - <i>Lewis Conservation District</i> Kelsey Mach - <i>Aspect Consulting</i> Key McMurray - <i>Grays Harbor Citizen Rep</i> Kim Figlar-Barnes - <i>WDFW</i> Kirsten Harma - <i>CBCfSH Coordinator</i> Lauren Dennis - <i>OCB consultant</i> Mack Hunter - <i>Grays Harbor Conserv Dist</i> Mara Healy - <i>Thurston Conservation Dist</i> Martin McCallum - <i>Thurston Co Citizen</i> <i>Rachel Haneysmith ?</i> Sarah Longacre - <i>Non-Point, Ecology</i> Shannon Shula - <i>Thurston County PW</i> Sophia Sherman - <i>Chehalis Tribe</i> Olivia Williams - <i>USFWS</i> Vanessa LaValle - <i>Conservation NW/CSP</i> Victoria Knorr - <i>ASRP Program Manager</i>
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### 1. Welcome & Introductions

Determination of Quorum: upon introductions, a sufficient quorum was found to be present.

### 2. Minutes – April

No changes or additions were discussed.

### 3. Organizational Business

#### a. Completed Projects Tour; Spring Renewal - Reviews

Martin McCallum and Jennie Lewis shared their appreciation for the tour given by the Grays Harbor Conservation District of their Satsop restoration project, and Jennie further shared that she really appreciated seeing lamprey spawning at one of the Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force's restoration sites, as well.

Kathy Jacobson recapped last month's CBC-fSH Spring renewal event, an opportunity for the group to connect personally and reflect on the direction of both the group and the individual members. Donna Albert, with the Chehalis Basin River Basin Land Trust, shared her experience at the event, and the opportunity it was for her to share her own motivations for entering conservation work in the area.

**b. CBC-fSH Outreach Updates**

Kathy Jacobson then shared an outreach update. She highlighted the group's participation in the 30th annual Prairie Appreciation Day at the Glacial Heritage Preserve, and shared that the public responded well to the groundwater model, which is particularly relevant to the site. Kathy further shared that she spent time with Trina Young, the current featured Watershed Hero and president of the Friends of Lake Sylvia and Schaefer State Park (FOSLS). Trina is working to preserve her prairie lands as well as the associated forestlands, all of which are near the Satsop River. Further, Kathy described field trip for local students who had been engaged with the River Table to visit a restoration/ELJ site on the Satsop River.

Bob then shared that he was impressed with the level of outreach that is taking place, and stated that he would plan to share Kathy's outreach summary at an upcoming public meeting with Lewis County.

Kirsten shared that with the end of the biennium on June 30th, Kathy's outreach work will be on hiatus, and that hopefully with the coming biennium's budget her next contract will be extended.

Martin McCallum then shared about his and Kirsten's participation with a group of Grays Harbor Community College students in a forestry, fisheries, and botany class. These students looked at this round of SRFB grants, and ranked them as if for funding. Martin noted that he was impressed with the sincere investment and rigor of the student's ranking.

**c. Committee Updates (Cloquallum, Newaukum, Barrier)**

Kirsten shared that the Cloquallum committee has been somewhat on hold lately, with some of the core members moving on to different positions. That said, Kirsten has been working individually with involved folks. With Jane Atha stepping into the Executive Director role with the Coast Salmon Partnership, however, Kirsten noted that the group's capacity should be ramping back up in the coming months.

Kirsten then shared that next steps for the Newaukum subcommittee will likely involve reconvening folks about outreach work, as well as working with Alex Gustafson as she begins implementing her restoration work in the Newaukum. Kelly then shared that the Lewis Conservation District has been putting out postcards to the public for awareness around rock dams instream. She also shared that LCD has been in conversation with the Onalaska Alliance, who needs to either replace a failing standpipe or else re-engineer a solution for the dam at Carlile Lake.

**d. Logo**

Kirsten shared the group's updated logo, which was developed with input from the previous meeting, as compiled during a small follow-up meeting. The logo features a pair of hands

supporting a salmon with three trees in the background, all of which is contained within a thick-lined circle. “Chehalis Basin Collaborative for Salmon Habitat” is featured below the logo. The group was excited about the new logo, and felt that the rework addressed their input well.

#### **4. Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB)**

##### **a. RCO Updates**

Alice Rubin shared an update for the Brian Abbot Fish Barrier Removal Board (FBRB), stating that with the newly approved budget, the FBRB was awarded \$32.5M, which funded down to project #13 of those which applied. There was one project in the Chehalis Basin which was funded: the project on Van Ornum Creek at Bunker Creek Road.

For SRFB, Alice noted that the group has an upcoming meeting, at which they will talk about the 2025 grant round funding allocations, in addition to making some policy decisions. This biennium, the board received \$25M in state funding for projects, and \$20M in riparian funding.

##### **b. 2025 SRFB Project List**

Kirsten noted again that a quorum is present to vote on the ranked list.

##### **i. Presentation: Projects and Local Review Team Ranking**

Kirsten shared that the projects up for funding are as follows:

Berwick Creek at Bishop Fish Passage Construction (Lewis Co PW); Ripple Creek at Haywire Fish Passage Design (Lewis Co PW); Ripple Creek at Romerman Fish Passage Design-Build (Lewis Conservation Dist); Independence Creek Trib @ Backman Rd Fish Passage Design (Thurston Co PW); Thompson Creek at RM 3.5 Habitat Design (Thurston Conservation Dist); and West Fork Satsop RM 3 Riparian Restoration (Grays Harbor Conservation Dist).

Kirsten listed and briefly described each project as a reminder to the group.

First, Kirsten noted that none of the projects received a “Project of Concern” ranking. The projects which received a “needs more information” were Berwick, Independence, and Satsop. Both Haywire and Thompson received a status of “conditioned”, and Romerman was “cleared.” Alice Rubin noted, however, that even the ‘cleared’ project was sent back to the sponsor with comments from her. These applications are due back by June 23rd.

*Question: (Bob R.) Berwick Creek’s project is related to a development project at the site. For sites like this which are so public-facing, and will benefit the public at large, is there a scoring metric for that benefit?*

*Answer: (Kirsten) Local benefit, community support, and outreach opportunities are all elements of scoring, all of which touch on that consideration.*

Kirsten then noted that CBCfSH’s ask from the SRFB totaled \$1,027,365 for regular projects, and \$471,362 for riparian projects. The total funding made available from SRFB for regular and riparian projects were \$673,000 and \$689,000 respectively. Kirsten noted that that riparian funding is for this and the coming year’s projects.

Kirsten then shared the project ranking, which are as follows:

Thompson (82%), Romerman (79%), Haywire (78%), Berwick (74%), and Independence (69%).

With the funding available, this leads to Thompson and Romerman receiving full funding, with Haywire or Berwick under consideration for funding. As both Haywire and Berwick have the same sponsor, the sponsor may decide which project receives funding. If Haywire receives these funds, an additional \$106,812 will be available as partial funding to Berwick. If Berwick is funded, Haywire will receive no funding, and Berwick will still require ~\$48K. Alice noted that this decision does not need to be made at the present meeting - this sponsor (Lewis County PW) can be in conversation with her about how to distribute that funding.

Regarding the Riparian Funding available, the only project up for funding was the Satsop project. The project received a strong 85% ranking, and the funding ask (\$471K) is under the available funds of \$689K. That said, it was noted during the ranking that the cost of this project is relatively quite high, and that as this \$689K in funding is for two years, and using over half of it for a single project this year asks for careful consideration.

ii. Local Review Team comments on ranking process

Key McMurray noted that the projects were all great projects, and also noted that the projects that ranked 2nd - 4th were all very close, and that there was very robust discussion around those three projects.

iii. Discussion

Martin McCallum noted that funding Haywire would complement the Romerman project directly, but also that it is very noteworthy that Berwick is shovel-ready and has a very large match ready to go.

Kirsten then noted the possibility of surplus funds from other Coast Salmon Partnership member lead entities is a normal part of the process. Two of the three other LEs already have grant asks that exceed their allocation, and so the availability of surplus funds is not looking likely.

*Question: (Jane A) Are the comments from SRFB consistent with the local reviewers' comments and rankings?*

*Answer: (Alice R) Yes, they were pretty well-aligned.*

iv. Decision –

Jacob Murray moved to approve the SRFB ranked list of regular projects as presented, which Bob Russell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Bob Russell moved to fully fund the riparian project, which Ann Weckback seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

c. **2025 SRFB Grant Round Next Steps**

Kirsten shared next steps in the grant round, stating that: the state review team's input will need to be incorporated by sponsors; the Coast Salmon Partnership will have to vote on the

ranked lists for each of the four constituent lead entities; and that the funding then being awarded in September.

d. **Scope Change Request, Mill Creek**

Kelly Verd shared a scope change request on behalf of the Lewis Conservation District for their project in the headwaters of Mill Creek. The District is requesting to expand their treatment to the upper half of the property, adding 9 acres of planting to their original work area. Their initial treatment went well enough that the district had enough volunteer and internal help that funds are still remaining. As such, under their original funds, they are requesting to adjust the scope of the project to include this upper area. The district is confident that they can do this additional area and maintain both sites without issue.

*Q: (Anthony Waldrop) This is an ASRP match project. Will that impact this scope change?*

*A: It's a consideration. The ASRP funds are the funds that have already been spent on this project, but the project still is operating under the jurisdiction of ASRP. As such, both the ASRP and the SRFB need to do the no-cost scope adjustment.*

Anthony Waldrop moved that the CBCfSH approve the expansion of this Mill Creek project as stated. Bob Russell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**5. Associated Program Updates**

a. **Office of the Chehalis Basin**

i. **OCB Outreach Plan**

Lauren Dennis, with Ross Strategic, stood in for Deena Resnick to share about OCB's upcoming public outreach work. The Chehalis Basin Board is looking to bring together their recommended long-term strategy for restoration and flood reduction in the Chehalis Basin for the next several decades. Early next year, they are looking to have that delivered. This will be informed by both technical and community input - as such, there is an important need for the public to be educated on the scope of both the issues and the possible solutions.

She shared that the board will be deciding in the coming weeks the options they want to advance into technical evaluations, and that through the summer they will be reaching out for public education and input. In the interest of this work, Lauren requested that CBCfSH members reach out with any advice or recommendations for this public outreach.

*Comment: (Kim Figlar-Barnes) Have as many of these public meetings in the evening as possible. It is challenging for the public to attend meetings during the day.*

Jennie Lewis shared that the next few OCB meetings will be very interesting as the board chooses various infrastructure packages to put forward for technical evaluation. She also shared that as the OCB is doing some restructuring, her position will not be continuing, and that this will be her last meeting with CBCfSH.

b. **Coast Salmon Partnership**

Jane Atha gave a brief overview of the role of the Coast Salmon Partnership (CSP), with which she has recently begun as the Executive Director. She shared that the CSP is currently putting a

pause on the search for the Program Director, as there is uncertainty regarding PCSRF funding. Jane also shared that the CSP does have a new salmon recovery coordinator on staff, Liz Allen. Liz is currently focusing on Lake Ozette sockeye, but in the interim while CSP does not have a Program Director, she will be assisting with some of those duties. Jane also shared that Vanessa LaValle will also be helping the CSP with GIS work as well.

Jane also made it clear that she isn't looking to change the direction or momentum of the CSP, but to continue the work that has been going on.

Finally, she shared that the CSP presented their monitoring project to the SRFB monitoring panel in the last month, and received feedback in writing in the last week. After the CSP responds to the feedback, a decision should be made in September. Jane described the monitoring project, which will be studying the residency time and survival of smolt in Grays Harbor. The project will be a companion study to an ASRP freshwater study in the mainstem Chehalis.

*Q: (Kirsten Harma) Is there anything we need to do as an LE in the next steps of the monitoring proposal?*

*A: No, the entity has fulfilled all of its roles at this point.*

*Q: (Jennie Lewis) Will there be any upcoming workshops or plans with the climate tools the CSP has developed?*

*A: I'll be in touch with Kristen about those opportunities; getting those setup are a priority.*

#### **c. Aquatic Species Restoration Plan**

Drew Mealor reminded the group that it is the turn on the biennium for the ASRP, and that the ASRP has received essentially level funding compared to the previous biennium. He also shared that the ASRP has spent down effectively their entire budget for the previous biennium. In the coming summer, Drew also shared that the ASRP will be working to improve their application process, which will involve a sponsor comment period for that process.

Further, Drew shared that the ASRP has begun basing outreach and internal evaluation around different geographical clusters of projects, stating that this has been a helpful process.

Drew also stated they are looking to roll out best management practices around mussel restoration as well as mitigation of project impacts on mussel populations.

#### **d. Federal Funding Program Status update**

Jane Atha shared a slide outlining that both West Fork Satsop Headwaters Restoration project (\$1,598,000) and the Chehalis Basin Cooperative Weed Management project (\$585,000) received funding through WCRI.

Kirsten shared that according to Jess Helsley, WSC, federal culvert DOT funding is unfrozen, but the timing on that is unknown. Olivia Williams shared that currently-allocated USFWS national fish passage funding is available, but the status of future funding remains uncertain.

Kirsten then shared that the Family Forest Fish Passage Program is coming up with a deadline of June 30th, and that the Department of Ecology Water Combined fund is opening July 22nd.

Chanele Holbrook encouraged sponsors to apply, as the fund has pretty strong funding available. She also encouraged CBCfSH to continue their good work, noting that she uses the group as an example for other groups statewide.

e. **Stream Teams**

Kirsten and Channele also shared that there is currently discussion about putting together a stream team-based project in Lewis County looking at citizen-science monitoring of 6-PPDQ, the tire chemical impacting coho populations. Chanele noted that this could be a good opportunity for receiving funding for the Lewis County Stream Team.

**6. Other**

Bob Russell shared that County Comprehensive Plans are being rewritten for the counties within the basin this year, and that on June 27th, the Chehalis Basin Partnership has requested presentations from those counties on their updated comprehensive plans. He encouraged that CBCfSH members attend.

**7. Closing**