

**Chehalis Basin Lead Entity -- Habitat Work Group
June 7, 2021 – AGENDA**

Zoom Meeting

~ 9:00 am – 12:00 pm ~

Ann Weckback, <i>Lewis County Public Works</i> Alex Gustafson, <i>Trout Unlimited</i> Alexa Brown, <i>CBFTF/GH Stream Team</i> Ben Amidon, <i>Chehalis Tribe</i> Bob Amrine, <i>Lewis CD</i> Brandon Carman, <i>RCO</i> Caprice Fasano, <i>Quinault Indian Nation</i> Chris Dwight, <i>WDFW</i> Claire Williamson, <i>WDFW</i> Devin DeBono, <i>Lewis County Public Works</i> Elena Fernandez, <i>Thurston Co.</i> Emilie McKain, <i>WDFW/ ASRP</i> Jennifer Holderman, <i>ASRP Implementation</i>	Jonathan Bradshaw, <i>HWG Note-taker</i> Kathleen Jacobsen, <i>HWG Outreach</i> Kirsten Harma, <i>Lead Entity Coordinator</i> Kelly Verd, <i>Lewis CD</i> Key McMurray, <i>Grays Harbor Citizen</i> Lee First, <i>Twin Harbors Waterkeeper</i> Mara Healy, <i>Thurston Conservation District</i> Mara Zimmerman, <i>Coast Salmon Part/Fdn</i> Marian Abbett, <i>WA Dept ECY</i> Miranda Plumb, <i>USFWS</i> Ned Pittman, <i>Coast Salmon Part/Fdn</i> Paula Holroyde, <i>League of Women Voters</i> Rebecca Lawson, <i>WA Dept ECY</i> Sarah Watkins, <i>Citizen Rep</i> Steve Hagerty, <i>Mason CD</i>
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- 1. Welcome, Introductions**
- 2. Networking Time in Breakout Rooms**
- 3. Minutes Approval – April**

Ben Amidon motioned to approve April’s minutes, and Key McMurray seconded. The motion passed without comment.

- 4. Organizational Business**
 - a. Outreach updates**

Kathy shared a new Beaver/BDA outreach publication she’s put together.

Look for an upcoming Local Habitat Biologist article with Megan Tuttle: the article has been shared with local school districts and with the Daily World.

Watershed Heroes stories are forthcoming with both a Grays Harbor Stream Team volunteer, as well as with Sabra Noyes, who has restored 20 riparian acres of her 40 acre parcel on the Black River.

- b. Newaukum Sub-Committee updates**

There are no updates on the Newaukum Subcommittee; there will be a meeting after the July HWG meeting.

- 5. Salmon Recovery Funding Board**

- a. June 2nd SRFB Meeting – Summary of Highlights**

We already know that the 2023 Salmon Recovery conference will be in Vancouver, WA. It was slated to happen there this year, and so the conference is obligated to take place there in its next in-person occurrence.

SRFB made some decisions on grant round funding amounts. This year, the state has received 18.4 million from PCSRF. While this is a slight drop from the previous year's 18.5 million, it is still well within range. Of that 18.4 million, 10.5 million will be distributed to projects. This 10.5 million, with some additional state funding from a previous grant round, will be used in part to raise both the 2021 and 2022 grant rounds to 20 million, and 3.7 million will be set aside for statewide, targeted-investment funding. These changes result in a 7.5% increase in salmon funding for each Lead Entity this year.

b. SRFB Grant Round Updates

Kirsten reviewed the projects that applied for funding, shared their preliminary rankings, and opened a discussion. A significant question brought up for discussion was how to distribute funding to projects falling close together around the funding line. One of the three projects was one that the ranking committee felt merited some extra support beyond its objective score; it was proposed that this project be given that boost by selecting it from the projects that ranked around the funding line. These considerations will be discussed with relevant parties in the coming weeks, and group discussion about a final ranking will take place at July's meeting.

Bob Amrine expressed concern that the LCD's focused approach to restoration in the Newaukum watershed has resulted in a remainder of less-critical projects in the basin, which are harder to get funded as they don't rank well against other Chehalis-wide projects. Kirsten noted that this will be a good concern to have in mind as the pilot watershed white paper comes out - the document aims to, among other things, target funding at completing whole-system restoration in the Newaukum.

6. Contaminated Site Clean-Up in Grays Harbor -- Presentation by Marian Abbett, Ecology

Marian Abbett and Rebecca Lawson, of Ecology's Toxic Cleanup Program in SW WA, met with the group to discuss concerns about a number of toxic hazard sites brought to the department through a letter submitted by the group. They shared a presentation and fielded a discussion, which is briefly summarized as follows:

Responsible/liable parties are ultimately responsible for the cleanup of sites, and the cost to do so. Owning a property, however, comes with the responsibility for the cleanup of any present hazards - if the hazard was caused by a previous owner, the current owner must be able to prove that is the case.

Ecology is, unfortunately, unable to directly address the large number of sites of concern in the area; they are simply not staffed to do so. The department keeps a confirmed and suspected site list, which they progress through as they can.

The group is transitioning their ranking protocol from the present WA Ranking Method (WARM) to a Site Hazard Assessment Ranking Protocol (SHARP). The former method had a fairly superficial 1-5 ranking system; SHARP's system has more information embedded in its ranking.

As Ecology is able to get to projects of concern, they enter the following processes: initial investigation; site hazard assessment; remedial investigation; feasibility study; cleanup action plan; engineering design; clean up; monitoring and site-use controls.

Until Ecology gets to individual projects on the list, site owners may contact the department to enter into voluntary cleanup: owners may do so independently, or may

request technical assistance from Ecology. The goal is to achieve a “No Further Action” designation. This process can often occur preceding a property sale: banks typically want to see an NFA before providing a loan.

As Ecology does get to projects, working down its list, the department attempts to enter into a legal agreement that initiates the cleanup process.

Abbett and Lawson noted that it is helpful to Ecology to have groups of concerned citizens and community members emphasize sites of particular concern to the department. Ecology is juggling a lot, and while there are no guarantees, it is absolutely helpful to have information about community priorities.

They also briefed the group on the information Ecology has on the sites brought to their attention, (Dike Access Road Repair IDD1; Pakonen Boat Yard; GH Paper LP; Wiskah Bridge; Bergs Marine Construction and Repair) and shared the status of each site.

Of particular note is the Pakonen Boat Yard Site. Pakonen boatyard. This site - through partnering among the Seaport, the City of Aberdeen, and its private owners - may be developing toward a public shore access site. Plans are preliminary at this point, but there is good potential here, and support and participation from the HWG would be helpful in moving this possibility forward.

Questions are welcome to either Rebecca Lawson (rlaw461@ECY.WA.GOV) or Marian Abbett (mabb461@ECY.WA.GOV). Contact Lee First (leefrider7@gmail.com) if you would like to be involved in working with the City of Aberdeen on the Pakonen Historical Seaport site.

7. Associated Programs Updates (10:50)

a. Coast Salmon Partnership

The Pilot Watershed whitepaper is nearing completion; Ned is looking forward to working with LEs’ individual plans.

The CSF is looking for a participant from each LE to join a communications team; these members would carry out communications work to support the CSF work plan, as the CSF is looking to join efforts more directly with partner LEs. These members would provide a direct, on-the-ground link to the work and community of their LEs. These positions would likely come with a monthly, 2hr meeting; but details are a work in progress.

The CSP will be hosting a Coast-Region habitat restoration symposium at the Ocean Shores Convention Center on October 27th.

b. Chehalis Basin Partnership

None of the HWG members present were at the most recent CBP meeting, but Kirsten did note that the Partnership has approved draft guidelines for providing letters of support.

c. Aquatic Species Restoration Plan – other updates

Emilie McKain shared that the ASRP is completing their Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan. This is a supplement to Phase 1, and should be out in early summer. It will include all monitoring components proposed for funding in the coming

years, as well as clarity on how the steering committee plans to use that monitoring to inform the adaptive management of the ASRP.

The Steering Committee is shifting the ASRP into Implementation/Adaptive Management, starting this summer with the new biennium. The structure and groundwork is established, and the committee is now looking to work with partners; internal leadership will shift in order to focus that change. Look forward to a more comprehensive presentation on this at July's HWG meeting.

d. Other

Lewis CD:

The SF Newaukum project is on hold: permits didn't come in, and only 2 land owners signed agreements. This project will likely take place next summer. At Stillman Creek, the CD is looking to get their permit application complete, as well as acquire landowner agreements in the next month. They have 5 of 6 landowners signing on that reach, with the help of a great Watershed liaison.

The Weyerhaeuser Marker 19 project is going well, and will be done this summer.

Chehalis Tribe Restoration:

The Tribe has been pushing to get their lowest fish barrier - in Harris Creek - resolved this August, but it looks like it won't happen this summer. The restoration team is hoping to do this in-house, and will be reaching out for local expertise. Members of the HWG expressed interest in setting up a visit to the site. Look for that in the future.

At the Tribe's "Big Buffer" project, there's a lot of maintenance need. The team is looking at options, and input is welcome.

Grays Harbor CD:

The CD is closing in on starting construction for the Wynoochee and East Fork Satsop early action reaches. Wynoochee work started the morning of the present meeting. The District is also in the midst of a preconstruction freshwater mussel/western toad survey; they should have some neat results and some protocols for future pre-surveys, as well.

Twin Harbors Waterkeeper:

The EPA will be hosting a virtual show-and-tell for the Hamilton cleanup site, and attendance is encouraged.