

Chehalis Basin Lead Entity -- Habitat Work Group

July 12, 2021 -- Minutes

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> Cindy Wilson, <i>Citizen</i> Devin DeBono, <i>Lewis County Public Works</i> Elena Fernandez, <i>Thurston Co.</i> Greg Green, <i>Ducks Unlimited</i> Jamie Glasgow, <i>Wild Fish Conservancy</i> Jan Robinson, <i>Chehalis R. Basin Land Trust</i> Jennifer Holderman, <i>ASRP Implementation</i>	Jonathan Bradshaw, <i>HWG Note-taker</i> Kathy Jacobson, <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> Megan Tuttle, <i>Area Habitat Bio WDFW</i> Mike Sharpf, <i>WDFW</i> Miranda Plumb, <i>USFWS</i> Ned Pittman, <i>Coast Salmon Part/Fdn</i> Paula Holroyde, <i>League of Women Voters</i> Tom Kollasch, <i>Grays Harbor Cons. Dist.</i>
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1. **Welcome, Introductions**
2. **Networking Time in Breakout Rooms**
3. **Minutes Approval – June**

Key motioned to approve June’s minutes, and Megan seconded. The motion passed.

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

Kathy shared that Megan Tuttle was featured as a “watershed hero” in the news series. This story was published in the Daily World. Two other watershed hero stories have been written and will be published shortly.

Lynda Mapes, environment reporter for the Seattle Times made a presentation about her new book on Orca during a special meeting. Kathy provided an overview of the key points about Orca. It was an inspiring topic, and is recorded and available to view on the Chehalis Lead Entity website.

Kathy’s contract will be renewed for the new biennium. Please reach out to her directly if you have outreach support needs or ideas for activities.

- b. **Newaukum Sub-Committee updates**

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

5. **Salmon Recovery Funding Board**
 - a. **SRFB Manual 18 – Changes to Riparian Guidelines**

Kirsten shared that RCO is updating its guideline for projects that are primarily focused on riparian plantings. These changes are proposed for Manual 18. RCO is requesting input by July 23rd. With insufficient time to come up with a response as a full group, Kirsten asked if anyone had any comments or would like to provide feedback. Bob Amrine shared that he saw good comments coming from Steve Manlow with the Lower Columbia region. He will share those comments with the group.

Please send individual comments to Jeannie Abbott (jeannie.abbott@gsro.wa.gov).

b. SRFB 2021 Project List Overview

Membership was reviewed and it was determined that a quorum of members without a project at stake on the project list were present to vote today. Discussion of cleaning up the membership list was discussed as a need for future HWG meetings. Specifically, alternates are needed for two environmental organizations currently counting as voting members. Garrett Dalan suggested Alex from Trout Unlimited as an alternate. Changes are happening at the staff of the Port of Chehalis. Members were interested in keeping them involved. Kirsten will reach out and see if staff can participate in this group. Garrett suggested Missy Cain as a Grays Harbor County staff person who may be interested and available to represent the County. Kirsten will talk to the Commissioners to see if they would like to send a representative.

Kirsten reviewed the changed in project status since the last Habitat Work Group meeting.

*West-East Hoquiam Acquisitons project has changed. The Land Trust confirmed that one of the 4 properties dropped out since the property was sold to another party. This reduces the project cost to approximately \$84k. It also reduces the benefit from 122 acres protected and 0.94 miles of shoreline to 40.7 acres and 0.18 miles of shoreline.

-Discussion: Key spoke for the review team and suggested that the project would likely not have ranked as highly with this reduced benefit. Tom brought up that the remaining parcels still provide habitat value – including increasing habitat connectivity to other protected parcels. Kirsten noted that to fall off the funding list, the project score would need to be dropped by over 10 points. Time is not available for a full ranking review, so the decision will need to be made on this day. Work Group members decided not to move the project from above the funding line.

*Lucas Creek and Kruger: We recently learned that these two projects were not above the funding line through the FBRB for this year, so that the bulk of the funding needed for the projects will not be available. Brandon contributed that RCO would not likely put SRFB funding under contract for a project that isn't certain of being completed without the FBRB funding. Thus, these projects were bypassed on the list.

*Capitol Land Trust projects: Kirsten brought up the fact that Thom had sent the group and e-mail with concerns about the fairness of the ranking and the review panels' understanding of the projects, as well as detailed comments on the scores themselves. She asked if any of the review team members would like to speak to these concerns. Key shared that her scoring would likely not change based on the comments. Kirsten added that in reviewing the comments, there were only places where about 5 points could be added to each project if the review team were to agree to them. That likely wouldn't be enough to move the projects above the funding line. No other comments or

discussion ensued. *Note: Thom Woodruff was not present for this discussion or to further elaborate on his comments.

*Thurston County – County staff confirmed that they could accept partial funding for their project.

Vote: Tom made a motion to accept the funding list in the rank order presented. Ben seconded. All in favor.

After the break, the group discussed a cost increase request by Ann Weckback for project 17-1148 on Berwick Creek. A cultural resource review was completed and it was determined that more field work was needed. Ann asked for an increase in \$36,096.63 to cover 50% of the additional fieldwork as match to Lewis County's contribution.

Discussion:

Q) Will there be more funding needed if resources are found?

A) Yes, we don't know what they will find, but if there are significant resources, there will likely be more expenses.

Q) Will you be able to complete the project if significant archeological resources are found?

A) Yes. We may be required to do mitigation, but I haven't heard of projects not being able to go through.

Q) Would this cost increase come from the state pot or our local LE?

A) This is up for discussion. There is \$321,000 currently in the state pot. However, with the new RCO director, we don't know if she will approve this request or ask that we take the increase out of our 2021 SRFB allocation. With a full list of projects and alternates that far exceed the 2021 allocation to our Lead Entity, this is not an ideal place to take funds.

Discussion: The majority of folks who chimed in stated a preference that the request be made of the state funding pot. As long as we justify our case in writing we have done our best and this is our first choice.

Motion: Tom motioned to approve the request to RCO of the state funding pot, and Key seconded, all in favor.

6. Associated Program Updates

a. Coast Salmon Partnership

Ned provided updates

b. Chehalis Basin Partnership

Kirsten provided updates

c. Aquatic Species Restoration Plan

Jennifer Holderman provided an update. Emelie will go through a more detailed plan for implementation and request input at the August HWG meeting.

Presentation: Trip Down the Chehalis River: A Story in Photographs (Lee First)