

Chehalis Basin Lead Entity -- Habitat Work Group

September 14, 2020 -- MINUTES

Held virtually on Zoom

Alexa Brown, <i>Chehalis Basin Fisheries TF</i> Anne Weckback, <i>Lewis County PW</i> Bob Amrine, <i>Lewis Cons. Dist./Chair</i> Brandon Carman, <i>Recreation and Cons. Dist.</i> Cade Roler, <i>WDFW</i> Caprice Fasano, <i>Quinault DFW</i> Carol Schultze, <i>Embedded Cultural Resources Consultant for WDFW</i> Claire Williamson, <i>WDFW</i> Colleen Suter, <i>Chehalis Tribe DNR</i> Dan Penn, <i>Chehalis Tribe THPO</i> Garrett Dalan, <i>The Nature Conservancy</i> Greg Green, <i>Ducks Unlimited</i> Hope Rieden, <i>Chehalis Tribe DFW</i> Jamie Glasgow, <i>Wild Fish Conservancy</i> Jeanie Abbott, <i>Recreation and Conservation O</i> Jennifer Riedmeyer, <i>Ecology</i>	Jonathan Bradshaw, <i>LC Citizen Rep/Minutes</i> Kelly Verd, <i>Lewis Cons. Dist.</i> Key McMurry, <i>GH Citizen Rep</i> Kirsten Harma, <i>LE Coordinator</i> Mark Gray, <i>Chehalis River Basin Land Trust</i> Miranda Plumb, <i>USFWS</i> Mara Healy, <i>Thurston Conservation Dist.</i> Mara Zimmerman, <i>Coast Salmon Partnership</i> Megan Tuttle, <i>WDFW</i> Naomi Brandenfels, <i>Quinault THPO</i> Ned Pittman, <i>Coast Salmon Partnership</i> Ryan Walker, <i>Forterra</i> Steve Haggerdy, <i>Mason Conservation Dist.</i> Tom Kollasch, <i>Grays Harbor Cons. Dist.</i> Thom Woodruff, <i>Capitol Land Trust</i>
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1. **Welcome, Introductions**

2. **Social Time in Breakout Rooms!**

3. **July & August --- July minutes approval postponed until Sept. meeting**

Tom Kollasch moved to approve both July and August's minutes. Thom Woodruff seconded the motion with a caveat: August's minutes need to be modified to state that approval of July's minutes was postponed, rather than June's.

The motion was passed unanimously.

4. **Organizational Business**

a. **Membership Update**

Omroa Bhagwandin is no longer able to participate as a Lewis County citizen representative. As such, one more citizen representative vacancy remains unfilled.

Rick Rouse is no longer with the Port. Randy Mueller, Port CEO, is interested in joining in the future.

b. **Chair/Vice-Chair Nominations:**

Key McMurray nominated Bob Amrine to continue as Chair, and Hope Rieden nominated Key McMurray to step in as Vice-Chair. Thom Woodruff nominated Ann Weckback to serve as Vice Chair. Ann was grateful for the nomination, but would be happy having Key as Vice Chair. Voting on these positions will take place next month.

c. Culvert Subcommittee

Cade Roler shared a brief update on the work of the culvert prioritization tool. The consultant has finished the culvert priority model, which is just a few tweaks away from the final product. Going forward, the group will update the barrier layer on a quarterly basis to keep the tool relevant, also updating information on corrected barriers. This will be a living tool for use by reviewers, conservation practitioners, funding organizations and the like. Cade offered to walk the group through the tool at a future meeting, and is open to suggestions for further outreach opportunities.

d. Outreach Update

The lead entity was able to secure another outreach contract, and so Kathy will be able to continue as our outreach coordinator. She will continue to develop ideas for Covid-conscious group/outdoor/virtual education and outreach activities.

Working with the RCO's social media staff, the Coast Salmon Partnership (CSP) is showcasing some of their WCCRI projects. This kind of outreach may be of interest to some of our SRFB projects, as well - any RCO-funded project would be welcome. Kirsten will be in conversation with RCO: reach out if you're interested in showcasing a project.

Mara also noted that the CSP is putting together a letter to the governor's office to document wide support for WCCRI projects. The partnership is looking to get support from project sponsors, and also from any community members or groups who support or have benefited from projects. The letter has been distributed to project sponsors; if anyone knows of further interest, please share the opportunity.

5. Salmon Recovery Funding Board

All of this year's Chehalis Lead Entity SRFB projects are going through, and funding awards will be officially announced at this weeks' funding meeting. Brandon expects all of this to go smoothly - contracting will follow, which should be completed by the end of the year. The transition to the LEAN schedule this year has been a challenge, but it has gone well overall - RCO is making improvements as they go, so input is welcome.

Some immediate feedback from the SRFB review panel was that the virtual presentations that were a necessity this year were helpful and will likely be a part of future grant rounds - in addition to onsite visits. The RCO is also looking for information about the challenges across the state on acquiring permits, so reach out with any relevant updates.

Submissions for the next grant round are open, and are not due until January.

6. Cultural Resources Review Discussion

Dan Penn, Chehalis Tribe's Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), and Naomi Brandenfels, THPO for the Quinault tribe, led a discussion for the group on the intersection of the interests of conservation work and of cultural resource preservation.

Naomi shared a presentation with the group, which was distributed afterward to HWG members and is available on request. A brief summary of the presentation and the surrounding discussion follows:

After an introduction to what can constitute a cultural resource, Naomi identified a particular sticking point that she sees coming up when conservation work is done. As projects that involve in-water work often involve working with the ACE, there is the danger of an assumption that the ACE will take care of the necessary section 106 review for the project. However, the ACE operates under alternative guidance for some elements of section 106 review. In those situations, when project permit applications trigger review of cultural resource work done, it becomes evident after-the-fact that the project is responsible for a more rigorous cultural review than the ACE was required to complete. When executing a project, then, it is important to take care of necessary CR review at the very beginning of project development, before construction - usually in conjunction with project design development.

Additionally, Naomi pointed out that the *vertical depth* needs to be considered when determining area of potential effect. Particular to our region is the alluvial nature of much of our land: such areas are deposited in ways that can bury important cultural resources to depths of 4 meters. Samples that are 50cm deep are often insufficient in our region. Care needs to be taken that probes are made at appropriate volume, at appropriate depths - and that they are done thoroughly.

Naomi stressed that these resources are not only critical; they are also irreplaceable. The archaeological landscape by its very nature *cannot be restored*. The Chehalis River Basin has been a rich place for human habitation for millenia, and we have to work with that important reality responsibly. There is even developing knowledge around the real possibility that this basin may have been the original entryway of peoples migrating into the Americas - an intact archaeological landscape is critical for the development of such theories.

In sum, Naomi pointed out that the conflict between restoring the current resource of fish population and preserving historic cultural resources isn't a necessary one. If sponsors plan and budget properly at the beginning of the project's development, the conflict can be avoided. Be certain that your contractor has sufficient protocol for their research design and field methodology. If contractors are trying to bid for low cost, corners may be cut in cultural resources with the initial bid - unbudgeted costs may be an unpleasant surprise down the road.

DISCUSSION:

Q: *Can you share a list of dependable cultural resource contractors?*

A: Yes, I can do that. I'll follow up - I have a list of 5 or 6 people in the region.

Q: *In order to execute conservation responsibly as well as head off project issues, what is the opportunity to work with tribal representatives in terms of designing CR work?*

A: I can review methods that have been scrubbed of individual contractor information. Reach out to me if that's helpful. Some common errors include insufficient sampling depth: depth is much more important in this area; and the shortcomings of CR-presence predictive models.

Dan Penn followed up to say that their THPO office is relatively new, and so the tribe is more set to respond to 0505 reports, etc., than previously. At this point, each request is being received and reviewed. He also emphasized that his office is *not* trying to stop conservation and restoration work - such work is important, and we want to see it happen. It is simply the reality of working in this basin that almost everywhere in this region provides an opportunity to find cultural resources. This place has seen thousands of years of life on a moving river: you're going to find cultural resources everywhere, and we all need to work with that.

Naomi stressed again that this kind of work can be done without causing significant interruptions if the work is properly planned ahead of time.

COMMENT: The need for this conversation may have come from frustration from some parties, but on the whole, this group really values cultural resources: it's just not something we do everyday. Also, the baseline has changed recently, so there's some learning and adjustment here. We need to understand what the standard is so we understand the steps the first time. This will be helpful for moving things forward.

7. Washington Salmon Coalition – Permit Streamlining Exercise

Prior to the meeting, Kirsten shared a spreadsheet from the Washington Salmon Coalition outlining potential solutions toward streamlining the process of acquiring habitat restoration permits. While the group didn't have a lot of feedback at the meeting, Kirsten welcomes feedback submitted after the meeting.

8. Coast Salmon Partnership Updates

a. Vote on Hope Rieden as Chehalis Basin Lead Entity representative

Currently, Hope attends the meeting as a representative for the Chehalis Tribe. She and the Tribe are both open to having her also represent the Chehalis LE at the CSP meetings. Bob Amrine entertained a motion to approve Hope as the LE's representative at the CSP, which Thom Kollasch moved. Key McMurray seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

b. CSP Website Updates:

Mara Zimmerman shared that the CSP website has a couple updates. There are two new tabs, *funding* and *events*. On both of these pages, relevant regional information is presented, and the

CSP welcomes input on additional information. Contact Mara if you have information on either additional funding opportunities or relevant regional conservation events. The CSP hopes for these pages and their site to be a common resource across the community for events, conferences, and funding sources.

9. Aquatic Species Restoration Plan

a. Implementation Team Recommendations & Request for Feedback

Kirsten gave a presentation sharing the recent work of the ASRP Implementation Team. Emelie McKain and Anthony Waldrop were unable to attend the present meeting, but Kirsten shared briefly in order to start a discussion about what the next steps are for the ASRP and how that affects this group. The ASRP will bring an influx of restoration funding to the basin many times the level of a round of SRFB funding. With the goal of 550 miles of restoration by 2050, what must we do to expand our regional capacity to implement restoration efficiently and effectively? Practical next steps the Implementation Team is discussing include: Identifying impediments and challenges to the ASRP recommendations; streamlining process and policies already in place; ensuring equitably and inclusively distributed funding; understanding what must be done to continue to build restoration capacity in the basin. Kirsten highlighted that the ASRP must work for the basin itself, and with the current practitioners. With the funding levels being discussed, there will be plenty of work to go around for some time going forward.

At October's HWG meeting, anticipate the opportunity for more proposed ideas and discussion.

b. Other Updates

The Skookumchuck early action reach is really rolling along: 21 of 26 log jams have been constructed and being wrapped up - the remaining jams should be installed next August. The CD is now transitioning to planting and invasive species control. There should be some exciting outreach materials and opportunities coming out, so stay tuned.

10. Other/Closing

A final reminder to all sponsors, please sign and share the CSP's WCCRI support letter. Even beyond sponsors: any local officials, businesses, organizations or individuals would be significantly helpful to representing strong, wide local support for this program to the governor. These signatures need to be together by **October 19th**, so get started now if there is interest, as it can take time.

This meeting was followed by a Newaukum Subcommittee meeting at 1:00 pm