
**HABITAT WORK GROUP
JANUARY 13, 2012 MINUTES**

In attendance:

Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County Lead Entity Coordinator	Lonnie Crumley, Streamworks
Bob Amrine, Lewis County Conservation District	Mark Swartout, Thurston County
Bob Burkle, WDFW	Miles Batchelder, WCSSP
Bruce Treichler, Citizen	Miranda Plumb, USFWS
Chanele Holbrook-Shaw, Heernett Foundation	Patrick Dunn Center for Natural Lands Management (formerly with TNC)
Chris Conklin, Quinault Indian Nation	Rod Lakey, Lewis County
Janel Spaulding, CBP Watershed Coordinator	Tim Hume, HDR Engineering
Janet Strong, Chehalis River Basin Land Trust	Tom Gow, Citizen
Larry Durham, Chehalis Tribe	Debbie Holden, CCS

AGENDA

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS
2. CONCEPTUAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION
 - Ann Weckbeck, Lewis County Public Works
 - Janet Strong Chehalis River Land Trust
 - Chanele Holbrook Shaw, Heernett Foundation
 - Lonnie Crumley, Streamworks
3. SRFB CYCLE FOR 2012
4. NEXT MEETING FEBRUARY 10, 2012

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Bob Amrine, Chair, called the January, 2012 meeting of the Habitat Work Group to order.

Miranda Plumb made an announcement that the Chehalis Fisheries Restoration Program (CFRP) starts next week. To apply, complete a Project Summary Sheet. If USFWS has questions someone will contact you.

CONCEPTUAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION

ROD LAKEY, LEWIS COUNTY

Projects include four culvert replacements and a bank stabilization.

The County culvert replacement fees are based on county laws. The county is required to replace the roadway width, guardrail, replaced with pavement, pay prevailing wage, and accept competitive bids which raises the cost.

1. Independence Creek Road

Design & construction is a 2 year process design through construction.

This culvert has an outfall drop. The creek width is currently 50% more than culvert. This is a box culvert 6 ft wide, fish barrier 0% passable, and requires a complete replacement. Will remove riprap /rock acting as a weir. The culvert will restore .36 miles of habitat and an additional 6.61 miles seasonal access.

The culvert is a high priority, ranking #8 on the culvert replacements list for the entire basin; the culvert upstream (priority #28) can be fixed relatively easily. The Priority Index is 14.84.

(View project on HWS: <http://hwsconnect.ekosystem.us/Project/120/17589>)

2. Bunker Creek Road - Prairie Creek

This project will replace an existing box culvert with a 3 sided (bottomless) span. (The project is less than 20ft; over 20 ft would require a bridge). The culvert is 33% passable due to an outfall drop.

The culvert is a high priority, ranking #14 on the culvert replacements list for the entire basin. The Priority Index is 16.22.

Bob Burkle asked how wide the stream is -- to get idea of how long the culvert needs to be. He suggested that when proposing a project you should always include the stream width as it's a basic metric.

Bob asked how this project rates for Lewis County culverts. He explained that it is useful to characterize the project as “#8 on basin-wide culvert list, # _____ in Lewis County ownership.” On your list, these will be #1 and #2 culvert replacements in Lewis County.

Lee described that it is helpful for the HWG to understand how the culverts rank in the area of proposed project.

Rod stated that Lewis County has a certain amount of funding budgeted, and he can give a rough estimate for the County but maybe not for the entire basin. Their focus is to replace the higher priority culverts in Chehalis Basin as a whole based on what they've heard from the HWG in the past.

Bob Amrine offered to help with ranking. He can go out and re-evaluate culverts to see if they've changed. Bob discussed that after the storm of 2007 some culverts that were previously impassable opened up.

Lee said if anyone on the HWG sees something that looks bad to let the group know so the barriers can be checked for their current condition.

(View project on HWS: <http://hwsconnect.ekosystem.us/Project/120/17587>)

3. Ceres Hill - Unnamed Creek #09.56

This is a smaller, 6' x 44' culvert with outfall drop, ranked 15 on priority culverts basin-wide. It flows into Bunker Creek right now but will be moving itself into the Chehalis River shortly. The creek is flowing in a relic channel of Chehalis River which parallels the road for about a mile. This project will open up about 7.66 miles of habitat.

Lee asked if this could be a higher priority.

Bob Burkle stated there will still be a blockage and asked Rod if he knows anything about the size of the creek? Rod stated it is significantly wider than the culvert.

Bob Amrine brought up the fact that there's a special rock in that area (deep blood red clear agate, petrified wood, jasper) that people are digging for and the area is getting pretty dug out.

Is Lewis County aware of any mitigation projects needed? Consider talking to Kim Ashmore about educational aspect -- tree planting, etc. stream team.

(View project on HWS: <http://hwsconnect.ekosystem.us/Project/120/17590>)

4. Bunker Stream Project - Bunker Creek Rd. MP 2.386

This culvert is 0% passable due to an outfall. It is ranked #17 on the culvert replacements list for the entire basin. There is a culvert blockage 1/5 mile upstream on Van Ornum Creek which is a current conceptual project submitted by Lewis County Conservation District. This project will open up 7.4 miles of habitat.

(View project on HWS: <http://hwsconnect.ekosystem.us/Project/120/17591>)

5. Ceres Hill (Bridge) Road Bank Stabilization

This project will provide soft bank armoring to 750 feet of an unstable, eroding bank. The armoring techniques will include a log toe with rock overlain with soil wraps and vegetative plantings or a brush mattress, barbs, groins, an engineered log jam and/or equivalent techniques.

The landowner (no cows, no crops) has contacted Lewis County to do something because the eroded hillside is starting to get close to the bridge which is the only access out for residents.

Group Discussion: Could do plantings with rock barb --

Engineered armoring would be better (Bob Burkle). You can soften the flow and control erosion -- make more material drop out of stream, but erosion will accelerate and continue to take out land upstream which creates a vicious circle of chasing and stabilizing bank erosion. Bridge abandonment is the ultimate decision here.

Not appropriate for SRFB funding -- is this a fish issue?

Bob Burkle stated that Puyallup was able to get funding for bank stabilization on the Puyallup River. They had to move river away from revetment, 5 engineered log jams to move the river over. Couldn't put flood plain back -- getting through SRFB was difficult. Pierce County matched at 5:1 ratio to make it palatable to SRFB. Even though it's been done, SRFB probably won't do.

(View project on HWS: <http://hwsconnect.ekosystem.us/Project/120/17593>)

JAN STRONG, 174 ACRE ACQUISITION - ELLIOTT SLOUGH

Elliott Slough is located in lower basin right outside City of Aberdeen. The State fish hatchery on Van Winkle Creek is located near Elliott Slough.

The project was submitted last year. Jan and Nancy Ness, Invasive Species expert, have walked the property and concurred the wetland itself is in very good shape with invasives only along access PUD access road. They mapped out invasive species and it would not be expensive to eradicate them.

This is a valuable piece of property. It is very close to the harbor and used by small species. It is also very close to the protected surge plain and could be considered part of the surge plain. The slough is deep enough for water life, the wetland is laced with flowing water and surface of the ground is often covered with water. There is an old road and a couple of bridges on the property.

The landowner is Sea Port Authority. Most adjoining properties are owned by Weyerhaeuser. Jan is concerned because the property is zoned industrial. If not protected, the wetlands could be damaged considerably.

Discussion:

Bob Burkle: Is that an old waterline? (Yes. It's all collapsed.) It may be a recommendation to remove old waterline.

One of the questions from last year was the appraised value. Jan has spoken with Les Bolton about lowering the price and believes it has been lowered significantly. Currently at \$2,000 p/acre.

Jan reported that Rich Carlson very supportive of this project. Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor have small amounts of refugia for plants and animals for sea level rise. The bull trout forages in area.

Mark Swartout wanted to know if there are other funding sources that could help with the noxious weed removal to use as a match. He also suggested that Jan find a funding partner to remove the waterline. Audubon could also be brought in as a partner.

Jan stated that Chris Hulcome thought it was in really fine conditions. Invasive plant species are mostly relegated to disturbed areas where road is. It is a very diversified wetland.

(View project on HWS: <http://hwsconnect.ekosystem.us/Project/120/17545>)

Chanele Holbrook, Heernet Foundation Acquisition Wein's Farm

The South of the Sound Farmland Trust has been working with landowners for a long time to acquire this property. Heernet is interested in purchasing 60 to 100 acres of the 150 acres available. In addition, 260 acres of water rights are on market and Heernet would like to purchase 60 acres of water rights. The property is very close to the Mills property recently acquired by Heernet. The landowner has agreed to sell at appraised value.

Heernet is interested in purchasing two portions of the property. Both sections have fish habitat, Scatter Creek and Chehalis Mainstem both flow on property. There are restoration opportunities including cottonwood flood fencing, bank protection, and buffer planting. There would also be an ongoing educational program at the site.

There is flooding higher on the portion of property the South of the Sound Farmland is buying to turn into certified organic farm.

(View project on HWS: <http://hwsconnect.ekosystem.us/Project/120/17559>)

Lonnie Crumley Chenois W. Fork culvert replacement

The west fork culvert on Chenois creek is on Ocean Beach Road about 4 to 5 miles up from road. It is 0% passable for juveniles due to high velocity and outfalls. Lonnie plans on correcting the West Fork barrier this year and the East Fork barrier next year. There's a culvert in between but not a very long stream from the culvert. Would like to replace the current culvert with a bottomless arch, about 24'. This will open up be 6.5 miles habitat above the county road for Chenois Creek.

This is on County owned property. The plunge pool for West Fork is bad. Lonnie will walk stream to check out other culverts. Downstream there are some FFFTP documented projects about 67% passable.

Discussion:

What is the Grays Harbor County culvert ranking? These are ranked #2, #3 according to Lee.

Will get Rayonier on board with correcting additional culverts upstream. Rayonier is mandated by state law to fix their culverts. We heard from Meagan that these were culverts they want to replace.

(View project on HWS: <http://hwsconnect.ekosystem.us/Project/120/17558>)

SRFB CYCLE FOR 2012

- Handouts: 2012 SRFB Grant Cycle Process and Schedule
- The HWG is recruiting people for the review team. Lee prepared a letter (attached) which she will send out electronically to the Partnership.
- Next week is the last call for conceptual projects for this grant cycle. We will continue to accept projects for next year's round.
- In February we will continue to discuss the projects we've heard from, review and decide which to bring forward.
- An RCO webinar is coming up and it may be a good idea to take the workshop.
- Would like to arrange a coastal lead entity workshop and invite project sponsors. Lee will discuss this with Miles Batchelder, WCSSP. The workshop would need to be scheduled in March.
- There is a SRFB change: before the review panel goes out the project application must be completed on PRISM. If we're scheduling site visits by May 10, 11, need PRISM entries done by April 20, 201 -- will get a chance to update after review. Need estimated budget.

NEXT MEETING:

February 10, 2012