

**Chehalis Basin Lead Entity**  
**Habitat Work Group Meeting Minutes**  
**February 14, 2014**

The February 14, 2014 meeting of the Chehalis Basin Lead Entity was held at the Lewis Conservation District Office, Chehalis, Washington. Chair Bob Amrine called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. In attendance were:

Amy Spoon, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Eric Delvin, The Nature Conservancy  
Cindy Wilson, Thurston County  
Jamie Glasgow, Wild Fish Conservancy  
Lonnie Crumley, Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force and Streamworks  
Tad Schwager, AMEC  
Jenee Penn, Chehalis Tribe  
Rich Osborne, Coast Region Technical Panel  
Rebekah Brooks, HWS Data Technician

Omroa Bhagwandin, Chehalis Tribe and Onalaska Alliance  
Ann Weckback, Lewis County Public Works  
Jane Atha, LE Coordinator  
Caitlin Guthrie, Capital Lands Management  
Bob Amrine, Lewis County Conservation  
Miles Batchelder, WCSSP  
Janet Strong, Chehalis River Basin Land Trust  
Miranda Plumb, USFWS  
Dave Geroux, Center for Natural Lands Management

**Agenda Items**

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Review team 2014
  - Site visits
  - Members
3. Review Conceptual Project List
4. Time for project sponsors to discuss projects
5. Regional habitat project list for WRIAs 22/23
6. Rich Osborne presentation on Habitat Work Schedule
7. Agenda for next HWG meeting March 14, 2013

**Updates and Announcements**

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Grays Harbor Salmon Management Plan

Jane Atha informed the group that Steve Thiesfeld from WDFW will update the HWG regarding the Salmon Management Plan in April or May.

Manual 18

RCO sent out an email with the updated Manual 18 in addition to an applicant workshop in March. If you haven't yet received the email either through RCO or through Atha; let her know. Site visits are being scheduled with the technical review panel. The priority dates for

the Grays Harbor/Chehalis lead entity are May 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. The 9<sup>th</sup> is over a scheduled HWG meeting with the hope that it fits with the HWG's schedules. The alternative dates are that next week. Atha will let everyone know when they are confirmed. Additionally, RCO mentioned that some lead entities would like to have review panel members at some of the meetings for project presentations and rankings in addition to the site visits. Atha asked if this is something that the group feels would be useful this year. Glasgow expressed that there has been a lot of frustration in other lead entities among sponsors that they're not getting feedback from the review panel until the very end. The sponsors felt that they were responding to questions, moving forward, but then at the end there was a disconnection and unexpected issues. Amrine mentioned too that the review panel is also trying to tighten the screws to ensure that there will be a good set of projects early on so that there are not as many projects of concern at the end of the process. Amrine said that it is important to be sure that they're answering the committee questions so that they understand your answers. Sometimes it is a matter of understanding the question – it could be from the perspective of an engineer or a biologist, for example, with two very different perspectives. Glasgow said that there seems to be a perception lens among the review panel that can be hard to quantify. He feels that if the panel is more involved in person a lot of these issues could be resolved. Atha said that the review panel could either be present for a presentation or a site visit, but not likely both. Amrine wondered if presentations on the projects, for acquisitions as an example, would be more compelling in a meeting setting to really communicate of the ins and outs. Strong said there is nothing like a field visit to get a depth of understanding to see firsthand the land, the surrounding areas, access, etc. Atha said that we may be able to have a subsequent meeting with review panel members present to go over questions and fill in gaps. Atha will see if the review panel can meet with us in June.

\*Amrine told the group that Mike Nordin was unable to make it today, but he has an RCO project that he would like lead entity approval to use existing funds to do some culvert replacements that they originally did not think that they would be able to do. They would extend the grant until the end of 2014. Atha confirmed with the group that there was no objection to using the extra funds and extending the grant deadline.

#### **Review Team 2014**

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Atha asked review team members from 2013 if they would like to serve on the lead entity review team again this year and has gotten a positive response. The following people have committed to serving again in 2014: Caprice Fasano, Amy Spoon, Frank Gordon, Dave Geroux, Miranda Plumb, Chad Wiseman, Miles Batchelder, and Key McMurray. Currently, that is seven people. Would it be advantageous to have more people on the review team or would we be concerned about too many cooks in the kitchen? Batchelder thinks that the

more people that can review the projects the better. Atha will solicit a few others to be on the review team.

### **Time for project sponsors to discuss projects**

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Atha distributed a list of projects that have been submitted this year for consideration. She asked the group who may be interested in discussing their projects. This is the time where feedback is important to the applicants. Lonnie Crumley corrected a few project sponsors on the list of projects that he submitted. Atha incorrectly labeled some as Chehalis Basin Fisheries Taskforce sponsors that are in fact Grays Harbor Conservation District projects. Two of the four conceptual projects submitted to Atha by the Chehalis Tribe were not added to this list. Atha let the group know that the projects are all submitted in Habitat Work Schedule. Ann Weckback talked to the group about a barrier removal on Scammon Creek that will open up 10.98 miles of habitat, as well as significant spawning habitat, and rearing habitat. This is a 33% barrier with lots of riparian area above it. It is ranked number 4 when they made the priority culvert list. Weckback is going to submit to do the design and construction.

Bhagwandin said that all of the Chehalis Tribe projects being submitted this year are for design only. The Newaukum project is an oxbow off of the main-stem of the Newaukum. It would be good floodwater refuge for salmon. The landowner is willing and is interested in a conservation preserve enhancement program; if the oxbow can be reconnected, trees can be planted, and it would act as a jump-start to a possible acquisition. Bhagwandin asked the group how to recognize the group that it would like to work with during the design phase (like Wild Fish Conservancy). It is a tribal grant policy that it will have to go out to competitive bid; however, he believes the grant application would be more competitive with WFC as a named partner. Plumb said that the Tribe would just go out for the money and then sub-contract out to whoever is going to do the design. Plumb said that the application can mention partners without explicitly saying “we will be giving WFC money”. Penn said that you do need to follow your agencies’ financial policy, which at the Tribe for anything over \$25,000, it must go out for competitive bid. Bhagwandin discussed the Lincoln Creek project on property with returning coho. Bhagwandin wants to make a straightened channel into a more sinuous feature with riparian features. Amrine said that the landowner is very interested in helping fish and make an off-channel area for rearing. Whenever there is landowner willingness it is always a good time to get things done. There is a ditch that was straightened so they can graze. They would possibly create a pond and a stream that goes into it, or some other high-flow off-channel refuge. With the right geometry they can restore a lot of the channel functionality in that reach. There is another project put forward at the Tribe on the main-stem Chehalis to remove a log jam near a historic channel. Bhagwandin is not yet comfortable with the project since he has not had a site visit yet. The last project is

similar – not something that Bhagwandin is comfortable with at this point in time. The group is not going to consider these projects until further notice.

Lonnie Crumley detailed his barrier removal projects. He submitted six projects this year. All appear ready to move forward, would open up significant habitat, and include the necessary budget information. Caitlin Guthrie said that the Black River Conservation Initiative is an acquisition of 54 ac on the Black River main-stem adjacent to the Thurston County rails-to-trails, and surrounded almost on all sides by conserved lands. They're looking at a budget of about \$180,000 with a 50% match.

### **Regional habitat project list for WRIAs 22/23**

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Atha distributed a list for the regional habitat project list for on the ground priority projects for 2014-2016. This list needs to be updated and perhaps refined (the Chehalis has a LOT of projects). Input is requested.

### **Rich Osborne presentation on Habitat Work Schedule**

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Rich Osborne presented on a new structure for the coast region's Habitat Work Schedule. The projects will be categorized by tributary, so that it is possible to roll up projects to get metrics for greater geographic areas, even up to the regional level. Osborne discussed the different categories within HWS, but that most of the projects for the lead entity are in habitat protection and restoration. There are other categories such as education and outreach. If there is a project that covers multiple management units then it should be listed in each management unit. The projects go into HWS as conceptual projects. Osborne discussed the interface with PRISM and the structure of HWS with PRISM in the future. Osborne discussed HWS historical projects that are not PRISM projects, such as tribal projects or R-map projects. Bhagwandin asked how far back the historical projects go in time. Osborne said that is still an open question. Osborne said that the projects will go into HWS by Brooks and then when there is budget information, etc.; Brooks will give the sponsor a PRISM number. Osborne gave the lead entity maps for the group to fill out with hatcheries, landowners, and future projects for regional prioritization.

Delvin and Batchelder updated the group on the Washington Coast Restoration Initiative. Delvin mentioned that he just got a text that the House is very supportive of the WCRI. Batchelder is going to meet with Senator Hargrove and invited others to help rally about the cause. Delvin reminded the group that this is setting the precedent for the future.

### **Agenda for next HWG meeting March 14, 2013**

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We will hear from Fronterra about Wishkah Gardens. We will also discuss which projects the sponsors would like to move forward with this year. Amrine said that next month we need

to invite sponsors to come to the meeting and get an idea of what projects everyone would like to put forward.

**NEXT MEETING:** Friday, March 14, 9:30 AM at the Lewis County Conservation District, in Chehalis.