

Chehalis Basin Lead Entity
Habitat Work Group Meeting Minutes
October 11, 2013

The October 11, 2013 meeting of the Chehalis Basin Lead Entity was held at Centralia College's New Science Center, Centralia. In attendance were:

Caitlin Guthrie, Capital Land Trust	Miles Batchelder, WCSSP
Janet Strong, Chehalis River Basin Land Trust	Ann Weckback, Lewis County Public Works
Andrew Randall, Lewis County Public Works	Jane Atha, Centralia College / LE Coordinator
Omroa Bhagwandin, Chehalis Tribe and Onalaska Alliance	Amy Spoon, WDFW
Mark Swartout, Thurston County Citizen	

Agenda Items

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Updates and Announcements
 - a. Chehalis Basin Watershed Festival
 - b. Humptulips sub-basin committee meeting
 - c. Knotweed sub-committee discussion
3. Aquatic species enhancement plan discussion for the upper Chehalis with John Ferguson (John is a fisheries scientist with Anchor QEA)
4. Coastal Legislative Initiative projects for WRIAs 22-23
 - a. List of projects moving forward
5. Legislative outreach
 - a. a regional approach
 - b. updates from LEAG
6. SRFB scheduling for 2014

Updates and Announcements

Jane recapped the Chehalis Watershed Festival on September 21, 2013 and told the group of a grant that was submitted by Kim Ashmore with the City of Centralia for a regional FIN the 25-foot fiberglass salmon. Jane told the group that she drafted a letter of support on behalf of the lead entity for the endeavor. Mark Swartout mentioned that the EDT model being used by the Flood Authority work group may be used as a tool for the Humptulips. Atha told the group about an upcoming Humptulips sub-committee meeting that will be scheduled for next month in order to refine the strategy for the Humptulips.

Aquatic species enhancement plan discussion for the upper Chehalis with John Ferguson

Prior to the phone conference, Mark Swartout updated the group on a meeting that took place with Karen Valenzuela, Jim Kramer (project manager for Flood Authority work), and Jane Atha in addition to himself and Cindy Wilson. Swartout would like to see Atha act as a bridge between the Flood Authority and the Habitat Work Group. The ASEP and others need to know how much enhancement has already been done in the basin. Swartout is encouraged that they're using EDT and there is hope that the database may be used by the Habitat Work Group. Miles Batchelder supports continuing that linkage with the Flood Authority through Atha particularly in light of Swartout's retirement. There was a bit of discussion regarding EDT and the kind of details of where to house it, where to store the data, etc.

John Ferguson, a lead consultant for the Aquatic Species Enhancement Plan for the Chehalis Basin, called into the meeting to provide an overview of the study. The study has been developed as part of the Flood Authority's plans to reduce flooding in the Chehalis and assess the possibility of a dam in the upper basin of the Chehalis. The project is in its preliminary data collection phase, however, it will be completed within the next year. There were many questions for Ferguson relating to the study such as field data collection, physical processes considerations, the inclusion of tributaries, and the expectations and timing of results. Omroa Bhagwandin expressed that it would be important to leave an opening in recommendations and conclusions to have other alternatives rather than a large retention structure so that some potential partners aren't excluded from the effort. There was discussion among the group surrounding the realities of what moving forward with the dam project in the Chehalis will entail.

Coastal Legislative Initiative projects for WRIAs 22-23

Atha updated the group on the latest iteration of the coastal legislative initiative being compiled by a group of partners across and the region and being headed by Eric Delvin. Atha distributed a spreadsheet with the list of projects.

Legislative outreach

Atha updated the group on the legislative outreach strategy underway with LEAG. They will be visiting the legislature towards the end of January to reiterate the importance of salmon recovery funding and not reduce the current funding any further.

SRFB scheduling for 2014

The group decided to wait on SRFB scheduling due to time constraints and that the 2014 SRFB schedule is not yet available.

NEXT MEETING: Friday, November 8, 2013, 9:30 AM at the Lewis County Conservation District, in Chehalis.