

Chehalis Basin Lead Entity
Habitat Work Group Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2012

The December 14, 2012 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:

Ann Weckback, Lewis Co. Public Works	Janel Bistrika, Grays Harbor County / LE Coordinator
Bob Amrine, Lewis Conservation District	John Kliem, Creative Community Solutions
Bob Burkle, WDFW	Lonnie Crumley, Streamworks, LLC.
Caitlin Gutherie, Capitol Land Trust	Mark Swartout, Thurston County
Caprice Fasano, Quinault Indian Nation	Miles Batchelder, WCSSP
Chanele Holbrooke-Shaw, Creekside Conservancy	Miranda Plumb, USFWS
Dave Giroux, Center for Natural Lands Management	Tracey Farrell, Washington Department of Ecology
Dave Roundtree, Washington Department of Ecology	

Agenda Items

CONCEPTUAL PROJECTS DISCUSSION

Janel Bistrika began the discussion by passing out a current list of conceptual projects. The group requested that she include the project sponsor or proposer. She agreed to do this and mentioned that a complete information profile is available online through the Habitat Work Schedule.

Capitol Land Trust

Caitlin Gutherie discussed the possibility of Capitol Land Trust pursuing two potential projects. The first was the acquisition of a 177-acre portion of a 400+-acre farm along the Mox Chehalis River in Grays Harbor County. The property has abandoned agricultural lands, 350 LF of riparian habitat, and a slough. If acquired, restoration work would occur within the riparian zone. The trust would like to pursue Salmon Recovery grant funding for this project.

The second project under consideration by the trust involves conservation futures for the Johnson Farm near Rochester. This a working dairy farm situated along the Chehalis River. This project likely is not eligible under the Salmon Recovery Grant program.

Quinault Indian Nation

Caprice Fasano spoke about the potential of revisiting a floodplain project at Schafer Park along the Satsop. State Parks is exploring the potential of abandoning a campground currently in the floodplain. While this project has come before the Habitat Work Group previously and has had trouble elevating on the priority list due to previous design constraints, the project remains a viable one for funding.

Wild Fish Conservancy

While not in attendance, Bistrika presented their conceptual projects on their behalf. The WFC will be seeking another year of funding for the Grays Harbor Estuary Juvenile Fish Assessment, along with requested funding to conduct a peer review of the work to date and to cover the costs of writing a paper on the survey results.

Other Conceptual Project Updates

Bob Amrine reported that the LCCD has applied for funding through the American Rivers nonprofit for the Bunker Creek conceptual project. He has yet to hear the results.

Bistrika informed the group that she will make additional calls by email for additional conceptual projects.

Miles Batchelder asked about the status of the Delezene project; Bistrika will contact the Wild Fish Conservancy and will get back to him.

There was also some discussion about the need for floodplain restoration work along the Skookumchuck River.

UPDATE FROM WASHINGTON COAST SALMON SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIP

Batchelder reported that WCCSP has a line item in its budget for developing a regional Habitat Work Schedule. RCO is encouraging the development of a single portal due to the savings it offers over the four regional Lead Entities operating their own. This effort, if the Lead Entities agree, would be coordinated through the Olympic Natural Resources Center.

The top three projects from the Chehalis Basin Lead Entity received funding approval by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board in December. These include the Wien's Farm, Grays Harbor Estuary, and Chenois Creek Projects. Unfortunately, the Chenois Creek project remains

\$25,000 shy of its total funding need. More money may become available through the region or other grant sources.

Batchelder added that he received word that the Washington Environmental Coalition agreed to begin “championing” the Coast Region for salmon recovery. It has already announced a \$5 million allocation to the region – \$2.5 million will go to the Upper Quinault River Basin and the remainder to other projects elsewhere in the watershed. The John’s River Estuary and Allen Creek were targets suggested by Batchelder.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ON CONCEPTUAL PROJECTS

Visitor Dave Roundtree from the Washington Department of Ecology came to discuss with the group about the connection of the Habitat Work Schedule and potential water quality projects. Habitat Work Group members explained the process to Roundtree and invited WDOE have a water quality person from the agency join. Co-work Tracy Farrell indicated her interest to attend future meetings.

MCDONALD CREEK PROJECT UPDATE

Bistrika and Lonnie Crumley reported that November storms caused flood damage to improvements on the McDonald Creek project. The project needs another \$7,000 to repair a section; the amount includes rock, gravel, and labor. RCO has requested a recommendation on authorizing the expenditure from the Habitat Work Group before it rules on the paying the extra amount. The Habitat Work Group unanimously agreed to recommend to RCO to approve the additional funding.

INTERIM LEAD ENTITY COORDINATOR UPDATE

Bistrika passed out a proposed schedule for the upcoming 2013 Salmon Recovery Grant application process.

Bistrika also informed the Habitat Work Group that she is intending to leave her position as Interim LE Coordinator and the Chehalis Basin Partnership coordinator in July to move to Yakima. Additional discussions on what will be happening next will be forthcoming.

FINAL COMMENTS

- Batchelder updated the group on discussions with the USFS on the use of its timber sale funds in the Humptulips Subbasin.
- Plumb is looking for volunteer grant reviewers for its USFWS grant program.

- Holbrooke-Shaw updated the group on the progress of her project at Wien's Farm. In addition, the Heernet Foundation changed its name to the Creekside Conservancy.

Next Meeting: Friday, January 11, 2012, 9:30 – 12:00 at the Lewis County Conservation District Office.